

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 2033 Smith Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City West Chicago State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60185-1039

County Kane

Telephone (331) 228-2700 Fax (331) 228-2701

Web site/URL https://nortoncreek.d303.org E-mail anthony.white@d303.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. Paul Gordon E-mail paul.gordon@d303.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name St Charles Community Unit School District 303 Tel. (331) 228-2000

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. Heidi Fairgrieve
(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):
- 10 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 14 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	33	42	75
1	28	35	63
2	30	46	76
3	47	32	79
4	37	35	72
5	31	40	71
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	206	230	436

*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 18.8 % Asian
 - 0.5 % Black or African American
 - 7.6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 68.1 % White
 - 4.6 % 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: 6%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	445
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

Spanish, Italian, Polish, German, Korean, Tagalog, Arabic, Japanese, Urdu, Russian, Gujarati, Slovak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Malayalam, Portuguese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9 %
39 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %

Total number students who qualify: 23

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 15 %
64 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>3</u> Autism | <u>8</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>8</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>6</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>6</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

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%	95%	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.

Norton Creek is a community of learners. We collaborate to help each other reach rigorous, achievable goals. Our environment is safe, respectful, inclusive, and joyful. We value and support risk-taking and diverse thinking.

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

Policy 2:260 - Uniform Grievance Procedure -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838095

2:265 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=922806

Policy 4:130 - Free and Reduced Price Food Services -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838119

Policy 5:10 - Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838129

Policy 5:20 - Workplace Harassment Prohibited -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838129

Policy 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838204

Policy 7:20 - Harassment of Students Prohibited -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838206

Policy 7:180 - Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment -

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838220

Policy 7:185 - Teen Dating Violence Prohibited -
https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303&s=838221

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

St. Charles Community Unit School District 303 has a liberal intra-district transfer process whereby elementary families can complete an application requesting that their child attend a school other than their home school. Class sizes at the elementary level are capped at 25 in kindergarten and first grade and 27 in second through fifth grades. If there is room in the requested grade level, the requests are typically granted. Families attending elementary schools on intra-district waivers must apply annually as schools account for their new enrollments.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

At Norton Creek Elementary School, we believe that both students and staff members thrive in an environment that fosters a sense of belonging. Staff members work daily to encourage and support students to become the best version of themselves. Our school improvement work is centered around Chris McChesney’s “Four Disciplines of Execution.” In addition, our social-emotional learning centers on the concepts of trauma-invested schools presented by Kristin Souers and Pete Hall.

Located 35 miles west of Chicago, Norton Creek opened its doors on the east side of St. Charles Community Unit School District 303 in 2003 and currently serves approximately 459 students in kindergarten through fifth grades. Fifteen of our students are in our RISE (Reaching Independence through Support in Education) Program, which serves students from across the district with multiple disabilities. Students benefit from relationships with those in our RISE program by acquiring disability awareness and building life-changing friendships. The mainstream learning experiences our RISE students enjoy have proven beneficial to their learning as well as the growth and development of our entire student population.

In the fall of 2018, a nearby elementary school in our district was re-purposed into the Early Childhood Center, necessitating the move of approximately 200 students to Norton Creek. It was an emotional time for students and families, but the Norton Creek community embraced each of them and assisted in making the transition smooth. Both our student body and our staff nearly doubled in size, and it was important for our veteran staff members and new staff members to blend their experiences and skills to ensure our students felt welcomed and cared for in the “new” Norton Creek.

Staff members cannot do this important work alone and we are fortunate to have a community of parents and guardians who eagerly partner with the school to support students. Parents and guardians teach Art Volunteers in the Classroom (AVIC) lessons, run classroom activities, and coordinate after school clubs. The Norton Creek PTO supports our staff through allocating funds for classroom use, and showing appreciation by often providing breakfast and lunch. The PTO hosts Fall Fest, Loop the Lake Fun Run, and the Basket Raffle Bingo Night. Our families bring vital energy and an additional context to all that we do as a school community.

As we transitioned to a larger school population, Norton Creek also sharpened our learning focus to meet the needs of every student. The staff began a journey to become a trauma-invested school by screening the film, “Resilience” before also showing it to the community. We studied the works of Souers and Hall with an ASCD quick reference guide on “Fostering Resilient Learners.” The next year, we participated in a book study on “Relationships, Responsibility, and Regulation.” This focus has led to our use of noncontingent positive attention to ensure everyone receives at least one daily affirmation without having to “earn it.” We implemented a positive behavior recognition system of our school’s expectations for all students to Be Kind, Be Respectful, and Be Problem-Solvers.

Education is an experience-based industry, and after setting the stage for the right experience for students, our instructional strategies moved toward engaging students through voice and choice, increasing student talk, and providing them with projects with multiple points of entry. Learning experiences for students are intentionally designed to inspire them to think critically, explain their thinking, and own their learning in all subjects.

Often schools focus on too much at once. To ensure that our instructional strategies are used to their fullest, Norton Creek’s school improvement and PLC work centers on McChesney’s “Four Disciplines of Execution” by focusing on the wildly important and limiting the number of goals. The focus of each PLC at Norton Creek is clear. It directs teachers’ cognitive workload and leads them to place their efforts on what is wildly important and the specific actions they are taking to enhance student learning.

All District 303 elementary schools offered both in-person and remote learning during the pandemic. It was important for Norton Creek’s to emphasize to families and staff that the learning “looks different...feels the same.” While there were circumstances beyond our control such as a shortened school day, social

distancing, smaller classes, and remote classes with students from across the district, we were committed to providing our students, parents, and staff members with a sense of safety, community, and normalcy. The focus on tone and trust resulted in continued learning and development in our students.

Norton Creek is a school where passion and compassion meet. A passion for learning, teaching, and our school is combined with compassion for our students, families, colleagues, and selves. This vision is reflected in what we do every day to ensure our students are growing, thriving, and 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:

Our philosophy toward instruction is, “The one who does the work, does the learning” and is seen in a three-step process. 1) Students are presented with new concepts and ideas through explanation and demonstration; 2) They are given an opportunity to practice through active engagement; and 3) Students continue developing skills on which they are working through independent practice with teacher conferences that provide feedback and guide growth. We see this philosophy on full display in our reading and writing workshops, Eureka Math lessons, number talks, math tasks, and Project Lead the Way STEM labs.

Norton Creek teachers and staff ask questions and facilitate discussions designed to get students thinking independently and talking with each other about the content as they think through a strategy. In number talks, a strategy used in K-5 classrooms across our school, students are asked to mentally solve a math equation, share their answers with the class, and then explain (and often, defend) their thinking. As students explain and defend their thinking, their peers indicate their agreement nonverbally and may pose additional questions.

Essentially, Norton Creek’s instructional approach is designed to get students to make their thinking visible, as John Hattie would say. They are given opportunities to think for themselves, share their own thinking, and learn from each other by listening. We continuously seek to increase student agency and efficacy and are making progress by providing learning experiences for students be active participants as opposed to passive spectators in their classrooms.

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

In accordance with district objectives, Norton Creek implements instructional design and practices to achieve the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA). Our comprehensive curriculum and instruction provides students regular opportunities to engage in reading, writing, viewing, speaking, listening, and academic discourse. We believe students continually develop their literacy identities through engaging in intentionally planned, connected literacy experiences across multiple contexts. We use the balanced literacy framework, so our students engage in learning via interactive read aloud, shared reading, reading workshop, shared writing, writing workshop, close reading, vocabulary, and phonics or word study.

ELA curricular resources include Reading Units of Study and Writing Units of Study from The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and the 95 Phonics Core Program. These resources align with the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and provide a structured and coherent sequence of lessons within our curriculum.

In order to ensure success for all students, we regularly assess student growth and achievement and examine corresponding data. At the school level students are assessed using iReady which employs a diagnostic assessment showing both proficiency and growth related to the standards for the CCSS. We formally analyze these assessment results each fall, winter, and spring. In collaboration with specialists and administrators, teams use this data to determine lead measures or goals for instruction designed to meet students’ needs. This data also informs decisions about our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), thus instructional goals and decisions are made for core, or Tier I instruction, along with intervention instructional decisions at Tiers II and III. In the classroom, teachers use formative assessments from small group instruction, small group conferring, and individual conferences to monitor student progress, differentiate instruction, and respond to student needs. Classroom assessments and monitoring tools include the Units of Study pre- and post-assessments and learning progressions. Phonics assessments are administered weekly, results analyzed, and instruction tailored to support students’ growth toward

attainment of aligned phonics skills. Teachers engage in regular weekly meetings with their Professional Learning Community (PLC) in order to accomplish the work of analyzing student data, setting goals, and planning for next steps.

Our teachers incorporate multiple modes of instruction to facilitate student learning, all based upon the gradual release of responsibility model. Explicit instruction, teacher think alouds, modeling reading, writing, speaking and listening moves make thinking visible for our literacy learners and are regular practices of our teachers, as is providing learners with effective feedback in real-time.

During COVID-19 remote learning, teachers collaborated to design instruction that provided the most seamless transition for learners as possible. A large portion of Instruction was provided synchronously so students had real-time access to their teachers. Teachers utilized the video conferencing platforms Zoom and Google Meet during times of remote learning as a live, virtual classroom, using tools such as screen sharing, document cameras, and breakout rooms as appropriate to ensure students experience the gradual release of responsibility model and access to core ELA curriculum.

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

In accordance with district objectives, Norton Creek implements instructional practices to achieve the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. We believe that students become mathematically proficient when they build procedural fluency from conceptual understanding, and mathematical learning should include opportunities to engage in problem solving and mathematical discourse.

The resources we implement for math instruction include our core resource, and Eureka Math. This resource aligns with mathematics standards and delivers a coherent sequence of lessons taking students through the progression of mathematical concepts related to the mathematical unit. Within that progression, students explore concepts using a wide variety of representations and have opportunities to make connections among them. In order to build student competency in the areas of mathematical fluency and problem solving, we incorporate number talks into daily math instruction and implement challenging, open-ended math tasks to connect mathematics to the world around them. These instructional practices encourage students to reason about mathematical situations and connect their own ideas to the ideas of others by engaging in mathematical discourse. As students explain their thinking, explore problem solving strategies and, critique the reasoning of others, they deepen their understanding of mathematics.

In order to ensure success for all students, we regularly assess student achievement at a variety of levels and examine corresponding data. At the school level, students are assessed using iReady which employs a diagnostic assessment that evaluates student proficiency tied to mathematics standards. We use this data to formally analyze math achievement at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Grade level teams, in collaboration with specialists and administrators, use this data to determine lead measures or goals for instruction designed to meet the needs of their students overall. This data also informs decisions about our Multi-Tiered System of Support. In the classroom, teachers use formative assessments, exit tickets, mid-module and end of module assessments to monitor student progress, respond to student needs, and plan for instruction. Teachers engage in regular weekly meetings with their PLC in order to accomplish the work of analyzing student data, setting goals and planning for next steps.

During times when the school structure transitioned from in person to remote learning due to the impact of COVID-19, Norton Creek teachers worked collaboratively to design instruction and offer the most seamless transition for learners as possible. Paired with meaningful mathematical practice and problem solving tasks, synchronous online learning sessions with real-time access to teachers using video conferencing platforms made it possible for students to continue to engage in their math learning.

This year, data guided our professional development plan. Our focus was on Mathematical Practice Standard #1: Make sense of problems and persevere when solving them. Our school-wide and grade level goals all connected to the achievement of this standard. As we engage in our own professional learning, teachers have been dedicated to implementing the instructional practices that will best support students when problem solving, thereby preparing them for their mathematical learning journeys that lie ahead.

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

In accordance with district objectives, Norton Creek implements instructional practices to achieve Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Norton Creek students follow the District's K-5 Science Scope and Sequence, which was developed based on Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Units and district written units. Students engage in a progression of scientific and engineering investigations that prepare them for responsible citizenship and real-world problem solving. Student scientists at each grade level encounter units that invite them to learn about life science, physical science and earth science through the NGSS, Engineering Practices and Crosscutting Concepts. Each unit empowers students to discover solutions through a problem-based learning approach with real-world applied learning that offers hands-on and technology-supported activities. Units follow a predictable structure incorporating an introductory story, explicit instruction, three activities, a project, a problem, and a summative written assessment. Students also demonstrate their learning with student-centered and balanced formative assessments throughout the unit. Comprehensive rubrics also enable teachers to effectively communicate with students about their learning throughout the process.

Science instruction at Norton Creek allows for varied levels of differentiation, engaging students in learning that is tailored to their needs through the use of scaffolds like: technology, flexible grouping, and tiered assignments. Wide differentiation opportunities allows for many of the students from our RISE program to be included in instruction within the general education classroom.

During the 2020-2021 school year, both in-person and remote learning were available to students and direct instructional minutes were reduced. In response to this instructional change, adjustments were made to the K-5 Science Scope and Sequence and an additional instructional resource, Mystery Science, was made available. These changes allowed for both flexibility and supported a smooth transition in the event that a shift to remote learning for all needed to occur.

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

Social studies in primary grades focuses on ways in which students can be positive productive members of the community. The lessons include components of getting along, the reasons why we have and need rules, ways to respect property, and solve problems. Students learn about family systems, the interdependence of community, citizenship, civic responsibility, and economic needs connected to the needs of families. Third grade introduces map skills and learning about Native Americans, Immigration, and Global Trade. This year, third grade students engaged in a marketplace simulation activity where they were able to start their own business and offer their products to family members during an appropriately socially distanced event. Fourth grade social studies introduces students to life in America in the 1800s as they compare and contrast it to life in modern America based on their experiences. Students study key cities and large settlements and what separates a boomtown from a bust. Fifth grade social studies provides an overview of U.S. history from the Age of Exploration through the Colonies, Revolutionary War, and Civil War. In our district, we integrate social studies into ELA and intentionally choose nonfiction and historical fiction texts to use as springboards into these concepts and topics.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Norton Creek's art class has a studio approach where students learn about various media and then use the majority of class time, usually 30 to 40 minutes, for practice and application. There is also time built in for frequent teacher feedback. Artists have opportunities for formative and summative feedback from peers and

their teacher. Artwork is regularly shared with all students through displays on bulletin boards that are placed around the school. Our music program offers students two general music classes per week where they learn music literacy, how to sing, play percussion, and go deeper in their understanding of music through the app, Quaver. Students in grades three through five can join the orchestra, and fifth grade students can play in the band.

Physical Education/Wellness at Norton Creek provides students with learning experiences that teach them the values of teamwork and being good sports. Students get moving while learning about how their bodies work and ways to care for them through exercise and proper nutrition. Students learn ways to loosen up their muscles and joints through proper warm-ups such as yoga, calisthenics, and activated isolated stretching. They build their physical abilities through a learning progression of skill acquisition to playing full games.

Norton Creek's library is a Learning Resource Center (LRC), and is the hub of our school. Each classroom visits the LRC one to two times per week for a lesson or to check out books. During a lesson in the LRC, students work on literacy skills based on district curriculum and classroom teachers' needs. Technology lessons also include digital citizenship. The LRC is a collaborative atmosphere for teachers and students. Learners are encouraged to interact, build on one another's ideas, and problem solve.

In addition, the LRC/media specialist and assistant provide students and staff with text and multimedia materials to enhance learning. The LRC staff strives to offer a wide range of texts both fictional and non-fictional in order to inspire a lifelong love of reading and learning. Furthermore, the LRC staff supports students and teachers in the learning and implementation of multiple pieces of hardware such as Chromebooks and iPads and software.

This year, Norton Creek has a new course for all students - Empower. The course centers on the idea of students solving real problems that connect to a real context. Spencer's and Julian's "Launch Cycle provides the backbone for Empower," consisting of the following stages: Look, Listen and Learn, Ask Tons of Questions, Understand the Process or Problem, Navigate Ideas, Create a Prototype, Highlight and Fix, and Launch to an Audience. Students are afforded a hands-on approach, open-ended inquiry, metacognition, student dialogue, and student choice.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

In accordance with the district Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework, our school uses assessments and data to guide instructional decision making, including providing academic support for students performing below grade level expectations. Differentiation of core, Tier I instruction provides tailored instruction for our learners and is based on classroom formative and summative assessments. At both the grade level team, professional learning community level, and at the individual classroom level, teachers are responsive to math and literacy data and evidence as they scaffold and differentiate instruction and learning tasks to support students performing below grade level expectations.

In addition to differentiation at the Tier I level, instructional interventions are tailored and provided at the Tier II and Tier III levels for students who perform between the 11th - 30th percentile and the 0-10th percentile respectively on the nationally-normed iReady Reading and iReady Math Diagnostic assessments, which are administered in fall, winter, and spring. Following each iReady Diagnostic, we use a team approach to analyze data, determine intervention goals, and plan tailored intervention instructional experiences for identified students. These data team meetings are structured, facilitated, and composed of classroom and resource teachers, specialists, and the principal. Progress monitoring tools and timeline are determined for each student receiving a Tier II or Tier III intervention.

Tier II and Tier III intervention support happens while no new classroom instruction is occurring. We create a 30-minute protected block of time in our school-wide master schedule to ensure students receiving intervention do not miss core instruction. To ensure all students are engaged in meaningful and tailored learning during intervention time, students who do not receive intervention support are engaged in iReady

Personalized Pathway lessons and other tailored opportunities designed to provide practice of previously-taught skills and strategies.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Similar to the description outlined in the section regarding supporting students performing below grade level, expectations, assessment data and classroom evidence is also utilized at the PLC and individual classroom level to determine when students are performing above grade level expectations. Teachers differentiate at the core, Tier I level to provide students with appropriate levels of challenge to support their continued growth in math and literacy. In addition to providing standardized data related to a student's proficiency in each standard, the iReady Math and iReady Diagnostic and Growth Monitoring assessments we administer at all grade levels also provides information about the learner's growth and growth goals. We use this data to support instructional decision making for students who already demonstrated proficiency in order to support their meeting advanced proficiency levels.

Students in fourth and fifth grades who demonstrate specific high-performance data in the areas of math and reading receive instruction for Academically Talented (AT) learners. Students receiving AT reading instruction participate in differentiated learning with their classroom teacher. Students receiving AT math instruction participate in daily math learning taught by our Academically Talented (AT) math teacher. Students who receive AT math instruction participate in their core math learning in a separate setting, but during the same time period as their classroom peers, thus ensuring that AT math students receive instruction in all other parts of their day along with their homeroom classmates. As part of ensuring this, our Norton Creek master schedule includes planning for AT math instruction to occur at the same time as the classroom math instruction at grades four and five.

3c. Special education:

Norton Creek's special education program is rooted in intensive instruction, strong relationships and collaboration. Students entitled to receive special education services have already received targeted and intensive interventions in the areas of ELA, Math, and Social/Emotional learning; yet, their growth is below expectations. Special and general education teachers collaborate to ensure each student with an IEP reaches rigorous, achievable goals and is given access to the general education curriculum. We schedule push-in services as often as possible during the delivery of core instruction to avoid pulling students out. Small group instruction focuses on skillbuilding aimed at narrowing the achievement gap through intensive instruction.

Our related services team provides targeted skills instruction for growth and progress that results in most students who receive related services being dismissed before they finish at Norton Creek. There is a gradual release of responsibility to promote student independence.

The RISE (Reaching Independence through Support in Education) program serves students with intellectual or multiple disabilities. RISE focuses on providing rigorous learning experiences in a supportive environment to facilitate students leading meaningful, enriched, self-determined lives. Presumed competence is the philosophy that grounds the work of our program where we celebrate what our students can do and teach them to do things they didn't know that they could do.

We need to build strong relationships between our special educators/student services team and students, families, and colleagues rooted in clear, positive, proactive communication, empathy, and strong collaboration. Staff members are committed to demonstrating their belief in students through regular encouragement, and providing frequent updates to families about their child's progress. General education teachers and special educators/the student services team collaborate with each PLC analyzing student performance and standards and adapting and modifying assignments for individual students.

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

During registration, families complete a Home Language Survey that assists the staff in determining if the student is entitled to ELL services and the level of services provided. These services often combine ELL teachers or assistants as pushing into classrooms to support the English Language Learners, or when English proficiency is more limited, the student is pulled out for independent practice. The intensity of ELL services is adapted based on student performance in the classroom and services may change based on the student's performance on the annual WIDA ACCESS assessment. Our ELL philosophy is to expose our EL students to as much English language as possible using cognates, pictures, and decodable texts, to build their vocabulary as much and as quickly as possible. We seek to build upon the language skills EL students already possess in their primary language to acquire more English language vocabulary and fluency. The ELL teacher also works with students with higher levels of need using pull-out services with the SIPPS intervention program and personalized math instruction.

It can be difficult for students whose first language is not the same as their peers to feel a sense of belonging. Our ELL team strives to create a strong community that fosters a sense of motivation and encouragement to help students learn and grow. The ELL teacher and assistant recognize they may be one of the first anchors in the United States in some cases for students new to the country, and provide for them caring adults outside of their home who support and believe in them.

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

Norton Creek does not offer specific programs for migrant or homeless students due to the infrequency in which we have students who belong to either of these demographic groups. When we do have students who are homeless or whose family may be in need of assistance, we have resources at our disposal to support them. We follow the McKinney-Vento guidelines relative to immediate enrollment, transportation, access to our social worker, and free lunch. The school is fortunate to have the ability to provide students with backpacks, winter gear, school supplies, clothing, shoes, food, and books. The district has a wonderful partnership with Comcast to provide free Internet in the homes of families who cannot afford the service.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Norton Creek engages students using instructional strategies designed to provide them with opportunities to think critically, share their thinking with others, test their ideas, and choose the skills upon which they want to improve using reflection sessions with their teachers. The old adage, “the one who does the work does the learning” provides the philosophy for this approach. Our teachers believe that for learning to be authentic and lasting, students must own it.

The Norton Creek staff is intentional about working to ensure students feel a sense of belonging that will result in robust learning and high levels of achievement for all. Our interactions with students are designed to provide noncontingent positive attention that sends the message, “I’m happy you’re here and care about you.” We greet each student by name, ask how they’re doing, and inquire about something pertinent to their identities (a sport, a book they’ve been reading, etc.) every day. This practice continuously demonstrates to students that they are seen, heard, and valued by all adults at Norton Creek.

Norton Creek’s S.O.A.R. (Students On A Roll) program recognizes positive behavior choices including entire classrooms following any one or combination of our schoolwide expectations, the Three Be’s: Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be Problem-Solvers. As staff members witness a class following the expectations, they hand them a ticket with the expectation(s) observed circles, sign their name, and tell the class why they are giving them the S.O.A.R. ticket. Each classroom has a ten-frame where the teacher can display earned tickets with a laminated eagle made out of construction paper. Once a class earns ten tickets that fill up their frame, they earn a golden feather to place on their eagle and a reward decided on with their teacher. Rewards for the class have included an extra recess, a pajama day, or bringing a favorite toy to class day. Students’ enthusiasm for this program has not waned in any grade level as classes continue to cheer when they get S.O.A.R. tickets and earn golden feathers. Because students have directly contributed to the outcome, they have a sense of class pride and feel ownership of the reward.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Norton Creek strives to establish partnerships with families that stay true to our mission and vision and support student outcomes. We send out a weekly newsletter to inform families of upcoming events, school updates, and student learning. The principal is committed to including a weekly message that adds his personal touch to the communication on a variety of topics including equity, literacy instruction, and restorative practices.

In addition to the newsletter, Norton Creek ensures each interaction strikes the right tone with families. Even in the event that staff members must have delicate conversations with families, we strive to listen, be respectful, and show our commitment to collaborating to find a solution that is built on trust.

Norton Creek’s PTO plays an integral role in our community’s engagement. In concert with the staff, they host a welcome back event during the first week of school, Fall Fest, a variety show, and a basket raffle. The PTO adapted during the pandemic to host socially distanced outdoor events or virtually events. They also connect with local restaurants to host days where a portion of their sales are shared with Norton Creek’s PTO to benefit our students.

Norton Creek maintains strong relationships with municipalities such as the West Chicago Police and Fire Departments to routinely assess and refine our safety protocols through drills, observations, and reflection based on police and fire department best practices. The police department provides ten weeks of instruction to fifth grade students on drug awareness called Too Good for Drugs. Both departments also regularly participate in our annual Walk to School events (depending on health and safety protocols related to COVID) walking with our students, staff, and families. These partnerships enhance school safety and build a bridge of trust for our families if it becomes necessary for them to use police or fire services.

We have close partnerships with the St. Charles Public Library and the local Target, Culver's, and McDonald's as collaborative sites for our RISE program to visit for Community Based Instruction. The visits provide real-world application of the skills our students in RISE learn such as shopping for specific items with a list, paying at a cash register, and ordering food in a restaurant setting.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers and staff at Norton Creek are seen as valued members of a team and trusted as professionals with expertise in their respective areas. Building and sustaining positive professional relationships begins with simple acts of asking about each other's families, sharing reading lists, catching up over a meal, and providing support during challenging times. The whiteboards that hang outside each classroom become a canvas for friendly messages, words of encouragement, or motivational quotes. Norton Creek is a special place to work as teams sign up monthly to provide treats in the lounge and the social committee plans fun get-togethers and events. The professionals in our building play hard but also work hard.

The Norton Creek PLCs build capacity and provide a place for learning and growing through the PLC+ framework by Fisher, Frey, et al.. Norton Creek PLCs are growing together and consistently. In having the same five questions to focus their work around PLC+ meeting structures, pockets of excellence and inconsistencies are reduced. The school improvement work surrounding the work of these PLCs and grounding the new PLC+ framework guiding Norton Creek's staff is McChesney's work, "The Four Disciplines of Execution" (4DX). 4DX requires the staff to prioritize Wildly Important Goals (as few as one and no more than three), set Lead Measures (teacher actions such as a new instructional strategy or focus) that can be measured regularly on a Compelling Scoreboard to promote a Cadence of Accountability. 4DX also provides us with our School Improvement Plan structure to enhance clarity and bring consistency among all six grade levels. Professional learning this year was shaped by a new structure Norton Creek had created in which our reading specialist, math specialist, and instructional support coach provided whole staff learning in Math Practice Standard 1 and Vocabulary Acquisition and Application. After these sessions, the staff were given choice boards in which they could personalize this learning into actions taken in their classrooms and then shared with the staff at the end of the eight week "course." Providing teachers with increased voice and choice in their professional learning added to the relevancy of the work. PLCs and each teacher are shown the trust they have rightfully earned and deserve as respected educational professionals in this personalized structure as opposed to a "one size fits all" model.

4. School Leadership:

The Norton Creek principal sets the tone. His relatable charismatic delivery of a clear vision for the school has provided an anchor for the actions of others in the building. His work to promote a positive culture and warm climate allows teachers the opportunity to provide students with positive learning experiences that result in optimal learning and growth. It is important for the principal to evaluate instruction, environment, special programming, and resources through a lens of equity as Norton Creek strives to maximize all facets of student achievement. Leaders from all areas of the school see students as members of someone's family, recognize that their colleagues have aspirations, and that all members of the Norton Creek community want the same things everyday at school: to learn, to have fun, to have friends, and to be friends. In keeping these four goals at the forefront, it facilitates designing experiences and environments that get students what they want and need more readily.

When working with staff, the principal regularly provides targeted, relevant feedback and professional learning that focuses on one area at a time. He provides necessary materials and resources, and supports their desires to try new strategies. While helping them to plan he also demonstrates a sense of trust in their professional ability to implement ideas that result in increased student growth and achievement. In partnership with families, the Norton Creek leaders offer support, encouragement, and guidance to assist parents as they navigate the pressures their children face at school and at home.

Norton Creek has two leadership teams that propel student achievement forward - The Building Instructional Leadership Team (BILT), The Cabinet (instructional support coach, reading specialist, math specialist, student support interventionist, and school psychologist). BILT is a team of teacher leaders (one

from each PLC in the building) to represent the perspectives and experiences of the teachers and students in their respective areas to make decisions that shape the learning environment such as the school improvement plan goals and outcomes. The Cabinet analyzes student achievement data throughout the school year and makes recommendations regarding intervention and enrichment for students based on their performance, meets with individual grade levels to discuss them, and helps implement these interventions and enrichment programs across the school.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

We, the Norton Creek community believe that all learners and their families should feel valued and welcomed. To ensure this occurs, we strive to build strong positive relationships among students, families, staff, and our community with an awareness of similarities while respecting each other's differences. In addition to fostering strong, positive relationships, we are committed to ensuring that our students are continually building their cultural awareness and respecting other's differences. An example of how relationships are fostered among students, staff and the community, was the celebration of Diwali. Diwali, a holiday observed by many in our school community, was celebrated at a local temple where staff joined community members and families in celebration. This celebration is representative of the strong, positive relationships being built and maintained through learning about one another's cultures.

We are committed to building our school community as well. One way that we do this is through monthly, school-wide CommUNITY Day activities, a structure born from our Norton Creek School Equity Committee. During these activities, all students engage in learning activities that promote community building, cultural awareness, respect, individuality, kindness, self-esteem, and artistic expression.

Another way we demonstrate cultural awareness is through the books that students can access in the Norton Creek Elementary School Learning Resource Center. The texts provide windows allowing students to see into other worlds, mirrors reflecting their own worlds, and sliding glass doors allowing them to enter into other worlds. The school supported this belief through the selection of texts in our LRC for the 2021-2022 school year. More than 100 new texts, both picture books and chapter books, that promote cultural awareness have been added to our collection.

A portion of our annual school budget is dedicated to purchasing books for our LRC that promote characters, settings, and content that reflects our students' and families' cultures and structures. Our school's LRC/media specialist highlights the texts nominated for the Monarch and Bluestem awards which represent diverse backgrounds. Finally, we use texts that were purposefully selected and/or recommended at the district level to support our English Language Arts units that also provide mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The phrase, “emotion drives attention, and attention drives learning,” is the root of all of Norton Creek’s success. We intentionally set a tone that establishes the warmest climate and most caring culture possible. When students feel that they are seen as amazing individuals, it connects them to the larger sense of being a Norton Creek Eagle. As their passion for their learning and their compassion for others and themselves grow, students are poised to engage in their education with increased agency and ownership. We use research-proven instructional strategies that allow students to share their thinking, express themselves, and collaborate with one another to go deeper in their understanding, learning, and mastery of core standards.

Bearing this in mind, our decision to become a trauma-invested school has likely been the most influential, instrumental strategy in Norton Creek’s success. Whether a student has experienced trauma in his or her life or not, the shift in thinking about learning and behavior has proven beneficial for everyone. This is because with a focus on being trauma-invested comes a focus on ensuring cultural competency, restorative practices, and a growth mindset. Learning through the lens of Souers and Hall’s seminal works has led to a warmer climate in which individual students’ identities are affirmed and, at the same time, they feel connected to something larger than themselves. Considering the vastness of the concept of trauma-invested schools, there is nothing in our school not impacted by this journey. It may seem too large to call it “one practice”; however, the choice to become a school that works for everyone enabling students to tap into a sense of belonging and become who and what they want to be truly did transform Norton Creek.

We are certainly not finished with this metamorphosis — and in some ways are really just beginning. The impact the shift in thinking has had on our beliefs about behavior, student learning, lesson design, room layout, and relationships with families has been undeniable. The various instructional changes we have made over the years have been research-based, but we never would have empowered students to the success they have found without priming the environment to meet their needs.