

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name R. L. Wright Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 400 W. 4th Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Sedgwick State KS Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 67135-1559

County Harvey

Telephone (316) 772-5604 Fax (316) 772-5294

Web site/URL https://www.usd439.com/domain/15 E-mail jscott@usd439.com

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Greg Lehr E-mail glehr@usd439.com  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Sedgwick Public Schools Unified School District 439 Tel. (316) 772-5604

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. Michele Rowley  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

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

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 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	12	11	23
K	21	16	37
1	15	21	36
2	19	19	38
3	15	15	30
4	18	27	45
5	20	14	34
6	16	27	43
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	136	150	286

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 84 % White
  - 7 % 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: 2%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	286
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

none

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

0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 49 %

Total number students who qualify: 141

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 18 %  
51 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>2</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>11</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>14</u> Developmental Delay    | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
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.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	95%	94%	84%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

To prepare students to be positive productive members of society by providing opportunities for basic academic skills, critical thinking, communication, and cooperative learning skills.

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

<https://www.usd439.com/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=5243&dataid=13517&FileName=GAAB%20Complaints%20of%20Discrimination.pdf>

<https://www.usd439.com/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=6964&dataid=13668&FileName=JGECA%20Racial%20and%20Disability%20Harassment.pdf>

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

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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“Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” is a quote from the late Rita Pierson. Ms. Pierson’s TED talk is one of the videos that inspires the staff of R.L. Wright in the important journey we take with our students each day.

R.L. Wright Elementary (RLW) is a pre-k through 6th grade school located in Sedgwick, Kansas. It is the only elementary school in the Sedgwick Public School District. Our district also houses a secondary building consisting of 7th-12th grades. Located about ten miles north of Wichita, Kansas, Sedgwick lies in both Harvey and Sedgwick Counties. The town of Sedgwick has a population of around 1,500. The main industry in the area is agriculture with some manufacturing. Many residents of Sedgwick work in Wichita or one of the other neighboring, larger cities. Our school district is roughly seven miles wide by six miles with a total area of 42 square miles.

Our community takes great pride in its schools. In the fall of 2021, the community overwhelmingly passed a 13.5 million dollar bond project to invest in our students and their futures. This allows us to connect our buildings with a centralized library and physical education building, new classrooms and a track. The project is expected to break ground in April of 2022.

The strength of RLW is the dedication, experience and commitment of our faculty and staff. In our school, everyone plays an important role in the lives of our students. The school secretary, our kitchen staff, custodians, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, and nurse work alongside teachers to provide our students with the best education possible. The level of love and care our students receive from the adults surrounding them is a testament to the increased attendance records and overall student achievement.

At RLW our teachers know our students and families well. Many teachers know every student, their hobbies, interests, and strengths. In 2019 we incorporated FAB families (Family Activity Building) into our school. This allows staff to strengthen relationships with more students, while allowing students to bond with older and younger students as well. FAB allows a teacher or administrator to bond with a student from each of the grades to work and have fun together. We take great pride in building relationships with our students.

To encourage respectful, responsible, and kind behavior, students earn “cardinal bucks.” These are school-wide bucks that any staff member can award to a student. Then each week when the weekly winners are drawn, cheers fill the hallways as students come to the office for a prize. Additionally, our front hallways are filled with student photos of positive office referrals, student of the week awards, and academic growth photos. We love to celebrate the positive things that our students are doing.

The past four years we have placed an increased emphasis on kindergarten readiness in ways such as adding a four-year old pre-k program, starting Parents as Teachers, and intentionally seeking out young children from the community for our free monthly developmental screenings. We believe this foundation is critical for the continued success of our students.

During our daily intervention times, we use a "walk to intervention" model where every student, regardless of their level, receives intervention specific to what they need. In addition, we have made a concentrated effort to ensure as many of our special education students are supported within their general education classroom rather than the more traditional pull-out type instructional model.

In 2019 our K-3rd grade transitioned to standards-based grading to more accurately measure and communicate a student’s learning growth and achievement. Some of our teachers have recently transitioned to student-led conferences that really encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and communicate that to their parents.

Since 2018 our district has been 1:1 with technology; Pre-k through first grade use iPads and grades 2-6 use

Chromebook or MacBook. This allows teachers to expand their teaching and student learning in ways that were difficult in the past. Since the pandemic, the use of See Saw and Google Classroom has significantly increased. These programs are helping students and families feel more connected to the classroom.

This past year we doubled our summer efforts offering a two-week session in June and a second session in July. Our intention was to spread out the learning in hopes to reduce the summer slide for our at-risk students. Additionally, we formed an after-school program called Cardinal Boost. This program offers the ability for teachers to reteach, practice and support students who struggle with learning loss or simply need a “Boost.”

Recently, one of our district’s seniors came over and said, “Man, this school is a happening place.” While our school may be small, it is certainly a “happening”, happy place where students and staff work diligently to love, accept and help each other grow in every way.

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

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

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

At R.L. Wright Elementary, our mission is to provide all students with opportunities for advanced academic skills, critical thinking, communication, and cooperative learning skills. Across grade levels, our curriculum and instruction are driven by the standards outlined by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). For grades Kindergarten through 6th, we use Multi-Tiered System Supports (MTSS) that closely monitor students by administering benchmark testing three times a year in both math and reading. Those students identified in the tier 3 group meet daily for 50-minutes for individualized instruction and are progress monitored biweekly to help guide that instruction. We have block scheduling to incorporate all staff effectively which allows grouping of students to be specifically placed to acquire what each student needs. Technology is utilized district-wide with a one-to-one ratio, K-2 using iPads and 3-6 using Chrome books, allowing a differentiated teaching tool for students. We also have an after-school program called Boost that we use to target students that are on the bubble and need a bit more help. It meets twice a week after school for an hour. Over the past few years, teachers have collaborated weekly during Professional Learning Community (PLC) either as a whole group K-6 or in smaller groups K-3 and 4-6 to adopt new math and reading curriculum, work on strategies and discuss skills, review diagnostic scores, engage in professional development with book studies, and discuss current or upcoming topics. Our focus for our meetings has always been to do what is best for our students.

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

In 2019, we began looking for a new curriculum that would positively support the implementation of the Science of Reading. At the time, we had been struggling with the problem of recurring low reading scores amongst our youngest students, and we believed that changing our core reading curriculum would help. Therefore, in 2020 K-2 grades began using a new curriculum called, Amplify. We added Pre-K and 3rd grade in 2021.

This has helped us because the scope and sequence are intentionally written with the science of reading as its anchor. This is important as it has supported our teachers with the overall instructional changes that we were trying to make. It uses the two-strand approach to reading instruction. The first strand addresses knowledge. It is grounded in oral language and listening comprehension. Students gain complex knowledge and vocabulary skills through teacher led read-alouds and classroom discussions. This is critical because it allows all students to be exposed and experience growth in knowledge rather than only the students who can read proficiently. Consequently, this encouraged ALL students to become richer in knowledge. This has also been especially beneficial for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and for those who have language disabilities. Best of all, content in the knowledge strand is intentionally woven and sequenced across grade levels so that students can continually build upon previous learned content, thus making it easier to make connections and learn difficult information. In contrast, our previous reading textbooks had many words that students simply memorized or were forced to guess through context or picture clues. This contradicted the science of reading approach to reading instruction.

Second, the skills strand is used to develop decoding and word-level automaticity. This portion of our instruction has been critical to the improvement of our students' reading skills. One-hundred-fifty spellings for the forty-four English sounds are organized in a sequenced progression; in regards to this, teachers are given lessons with scripts that guide them to teach explicitly. Additionally, specific phonics skills and irregular words that have been taught are intentionally sprinkled throughout decodable readers. Ultimately, students are able to practice decoding words rather than guessing. The decodable readers and explicit systematic instruction are invaluable components that have benefited our students.

During the 2020-21 school year, third through sixth grade used Houghton Mifflin Journeys 2014 Edition for

core reading curriculum. It is a comprehensive English Language Arts program that uses a balanced literacy approach to teach reading, speaking, listening and writing. Journeys uses a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts to promote deeper levels of comprehension. Journeys features complex anchor texts that challenge students and uses trade books to give students more opportunities to expand on the knowledge and skills that they've learned. Leveled readers supplement the anchor text, while giving the students a chance to read text that is on their level. Journeys is aligned with our common core state standards which helps our students prepare for the rigorous assessments they take for ELA. Third through sixth grade teachers also use iReady Reading to practice various reading skills.

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

R.L. Wright uses the i-Ready Classroom Mathematics program to encourage student ownership of learning. Within the classrooms, students use the try-discuss-connect routine to actively engage in their learning as they collaborate, discuss and clarify strategies and concepts with their classmates. The in-depth reports enable teachers to know their students at a much deeper level and they are able to address each student's individual learning needs. Teachers use the i-Ready Diagnostics to know exactly where each student is performing, what prerequisite skills the students need, and how well the students have acquired new skills. Students have personalized paths of engaging online lessons that mirror classroom instruction. Students are motivated in the lessons because they are active, supportive, and relevant to their lives. Teachers add and adjust the lesson sequence to fit the student's needs. Teachers use a variety of supplemental online resources to encourage students to become fluent with their math facts such as Xtra math, Reflex math and Splashmath.

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

At R.L. Wright Elementary School science instruction is a priority! Teachers use the Next Generation Science Standards to drive the instruction of their students. Most grades have science every day of the week with the youngest students splitting their time between social studies and science. Students in the younger grades use Mystery Science, which helps to foster a love for science through hands-on experiments. The lessons are engaging, and students actively learn. Some teachers use thematic units, experiments, and STEAM activities to supplement student learning. The sixth-grade teachers use the Curiosity Place (CPO Science) curriculum and focus primarily on life science. Independent learning and research is the priority of our annual science fair held in the spring for our fourth through sixth graders. This allows students to work collaboratively with their peers to conduct an experiment and display their results for the community to see. Students are judged on their visual displays as well as their effectiveness in using the scientific method. Field trips to places such as local zoos, the Kansas Cosmosphere, Great Plains Nature Center, and Kansas Learning Center for Health are wonderful opportunities for our students to see science in action.

Regardless of the content, teachers value student participation and assess the knowledge gained through formal and informal assessments. Our fifth-grade students take the Kansas state science assessment; this assessment provides summative results of learning from kindergarten through fifth grade. Science interventions are not structured, but reteaching information, shortening or adapting projects and assignments, and having the content read to struggling learners are just some of the ways teachers make learning easier for students.

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

Our social studies curriculum is aligned to the Kansas History Government and Social Studies Standards and focuses on helping students view the world around them by making connections to the past and present. Cross-curricular planning has helped to integrate social studies into other subject areas. Teachers use multiple non-fiction texts to teach the Social Studies Standards while overlapping with the Language Arts skills. Inquiry and project-based learning are strategies that teachers use to encourage participation from all students. Teachers use a variety of materials to cover the standards. Some teachers use Scholastic News, Studies Weekly and National Geographic to explore a variety of topics such as current events and to expose their students to different cultures and traditions that may not be represented in our small community.

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

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

The Kansas Early Learning Standards provide the framework for our Cardinal Kids Pre-K program. These standards guide our planning and refine our focus in the areas of literacy, math, science, social studies, physical health, creative arts, and social-emotional health.

To provide our students with a cohesive literacy foundation as they transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten, we opted to forego World of Wonders, the reading curriculum we had originally selected for our Cardinal Kids program for the 2020-2021 school year. Instead, we adopted the Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) literacy program already in place in our Kindergarten through 3rd grade classrooms for implementation in Pre-K during the 2021-2022 school year. We believe that the use of Amplify, coupled with the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness curriculum, provides our early learners with a strong pre-reading experience.

Because our Cardinal Kids Pre-K program is a full-day program, we have time to structure our days in a way that allows for exposure to content in multiple ways and multiple settings each day, from whole group to small group to center exploration. Reinforcing content in multisensory ways allows us to provide students with opportunities to learn through play. Learning through play continues to be an overarching goal of our Pre-K program.

With 2020-2021 being the first year for our school's Pre-K program, we have only one year of data collection as our students transitioned from Pre-K to Kindergarten. Data collected from the 2021-2022 Kindergarten class in September 2021 showed that students who attended Cardinal Kids Pre-K the previous year had average Fastbridge scores in the 58th percentile for literacy; while the average Fastbridge scores for those Kindergarten students who did not attend Cardinal Kids the previous school year were in the 36th percentile. Fastbridge math scores yielded similar results with former Cardinal Kids attendees averaging math scores in the 57th percentile and students who had not previously attended Cardinal Kids averaging math scores in the 40th percentile.

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

R.L. Wright Elementary is committed to a well-rounded education and offers many opportunities for students outside the core curriculum classes. Students are exposed to physical education, music, band, library classes, art, and a social emotional curriculum.

The physical education program at Sedgwick is an important part of keeping our students active and healthy. Our schedule allows for all students to have p.e. for 25-minutes every day. Besides learning basic movement skills and various life-long games and activities, students gain valuable life skills such as cooperation and sportsmanship. The physical education teacher plays a large role in our end of the school year field day event. He plans and organizes activities that have students moving all day long.

Music education is another wonderful asset for our students. With 25 minutes of music every day, students are exposed to not only musical terms, but also different musical genres, music history, and the reading of music. The music directors also work hard to prepare all students for at least one performance each school year. Parents and community members look forward to these wonderful performances by our students!

The fifth and sixth graders also get an opportunity to be in a band class every day for 30-minutes. The band teacher introduces students to various instruments and helps them choose an instrument that they would like to try. Band is a great way for our kids to apply skills they've been taught in music, and each school year allows for at least one opportunity for students to showcase their talents in a band concert.

R.L. Wright students have a 20-minute library time twice a month where the librarian exposes students to

many different genres of literature. Library skills are taught according to grade level and by the time students reach the sixth grade, they should be able to classify fiction and non-fiction books, locate books according to the author, be able to differentiate between an author and an illustrator, and use proper library etiquette. This school year our librarian has begun an all-school reading challenge and will be leading activities during Dr. Seuss week.

Our small school only has one art teacher for all students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. This only allows our students to receive art instruction twice a month for 45-minutes each time. Although their time is limited, students are always busy learning different kinds of art and are allowed to express themselves through various artistic mediums.

Lastly, R.L. Wright is committed to our children's social emotional education. Teachers use the Character Strong curriculum to guide their students toward developing healthy emotional behaviors and relationships. Some of the pertinent skills in the program are self-awareness, social awareness, developing and maintaining friendships, and making responsible decisions. Two days each week, teachers spend 15 to 20-minutes going through the Character Strong lessons and having authentic conversations with their students. In addition to these opportunities for social emotional growth, we have a counselor who visits each classroom twice a month for twenty minutes. The counselor spends her time reinforcing the skills learned in Character Strong, as well as, exposing students to career interests, role playing, and making connections with kids.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

We follow MTSS guidelines to keep our intervention groups smaller and we use the Walk to Intervention Model. This model allows us to provide more intense and individualized small group instruction for every student.

During the 2020-21 school year, we took interventions a step further in response to the effects of Covid19 instructional loss. As we were implementing the new reading curriculum, we decided to use our intervention teachers to teach the core curriculum to small at-risk groups in 1st and 2nd grades. Although this strategy and the new curriculum helped improve our core reading instruction, we still had students who needed additional intervention support to make adequate progress. Therefore, this school year we decided to implement a new intervention program called mCLASS.

There are a few important reasons we chose to use mCLASS for our interventions. First is that mCLASS was originally called Burst, and our current curriculum was derived from Burst. For this reason, it is valuable to our intervention program because we are using the same instructional language and similar instructional practices as our core reading curriculum. This provides coherence to our overall reading program.

Secondly, it is beneficial that mCLASS implements a systematic approach that uses student data to provide customized lessons that meet specific instructional needs. Fastbridge assessments are used 3 times a year as our universal screener. All k-4 students who score at the "some risk" or "at-risk" levels are additionally assessed with DIBELS 8th Edition. mCLASS then uses that data to group students with similar instructional needs. Based on those instructional needs, the system is able to create lessons ensuring our instruction is not random; there is a targeted instructional focus geared toward addressing specific needs.

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

MTSS is an academic support that is used for all students at R.L. Wright through a walk-to-intervention approach. While some students receive intervention services during this time, other students receive enrichment during their MTSS time. Students, who are performing on grade level or above, work together to deepen their understanding of concepts through a variety of activities. Teachers design lessons and activities to stretch thinking past basic classroom levels. These lessons might be extension of classroom units or based

on individual student interests. R.L. Wright also has a designated Gifted Facilitator. This facilitator meets one on one with identified students and guides the students through independent studies. She is also available to assist teachers by finding resources or introducing lessons that would further challenge students.

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

RLW elementary special education services for kindergarten to fourth grade are designed to meet individual academic needs for a variety of disabilities. Since early intervention is crucial to making the most significant gains, focus is on foundational skills. Pull-out instruction comprises 62% of Resource students for reading and/or math. Instruction is based on an Orton-Gillingham approach, centered on phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency and math concepts. Reteaching to mastery, concentration on weak academic areas, in conjunction with consistent practice and review, are key to instruction. Individual and small group lessons are designed to ensure that a strong foundational academic base is established, so that when a student transitions into a general education classroom they have a greater chance of success.

Special education staff also offers Tier III instruction to 45% percent of IEP students in reading, and 0.9% in math. Tier III services are also provided to several non-identified students.

Early elementary inclusion services are provided to 90.5% of students in reading, math, science or social studies depending on student needs.

Fifth and sixth grade students at RLW who receive special education services transition into building independence while still having their academic needs met. Following the process of early intervention, these students begin to transition into full inclusion at the appropriate times. Inclusion services are provided to 85% of students at the fifth and sixth grade level in core classes.

The philosophy for inclusion is to provide as much support to students as needed for the students to be successful. This is indicated by the current junior high inclusion rate of 98% in all core classes. With RLW following the transition from a pull-out model to inclusion in our elementary school, we are creating an environment and learning path for our students to be successful throughout their academic career and setting them up for success in life.

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

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

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

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

As a staff, we collectively recognize that our students' emotional growth bears much significance because it impacts all other areas of growth. We currently use the Second Step social-emotional health curriculum in all grades, Pre-K through 6th, as a means of equipping our students with the ability to identify their emotions, develop self-regulation skills, and apply calming strategies when applicable. Each grade level teacher strives to establish homeostasis amongst their students in the classroom as well as their students who are learning remotely. One way grade level teachers work toward maintaining homeostasis amidst their classroom community, is by devoting time each day for students to simply "check in" with one another and interact socially in person and via classroom meetings through Google Meet. In the event that students need or desire additional support, our guidance counselor is available to offer individual counseling as well as small group mediation and whole group opportunities.

While addressing our students' social-emotional growth, we remain mindful of their academic growth as well. In an effort to increase our students' depth of reading knowledge and to strengthen their reading skills, we recently adopted a new reading curriculum after our analysis of student data revealed to us areas in which we could improve our reading instruction. Despite our desire for this curriculum update occurring sooner than was anticipated by our school board, they supported our decision and agreed to make this purchase earlier than expected in order to better promote our elementary student's growth in the area of reading.

Throughout the school day, students take part in small group interventions designed to intentionally target the skills for which each group of students is ready. While some students are in need of reteaching and increased exposure to content, others are in need of enrichment and opportunities to expand the content. These groups of students remain fluid as staff collects student growth data, analyzes the data as a team during a Professional Learning Community session (PLC) and then structures the groups with intentionality related to the skills and the student progress that is demonstrated.

At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, we launched a new afterschool program targeted at narrowing the gaps in learning demonstrated by some students' performance in the classroom. This program, Cardinal Boost, is aimed at boosting student growth in the areas of reading and math. Students who are not yet demonstrating mastery of current grade level content qualify for Cardinal Boost. Students who attend Boost are able to practice and revisit current grade level content with a grade-level teacher for 45 minutes. Snacks are provided to aid students in being fueled up and ready to learn.

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

At R.L. Wright Elementary we believe that family engagement begins with a welcoming environment from which meaningful relationships can grow. For this reason, we create opportunities for our students and their families to interact with staff in a casual manner. This allows the teachers to better get to know various family members and allows family members to interact with their child's teacher in a relaxed setting. One example of this form of school-family engagement is our Back to School Picnic. The Back to School Picnic is open to our students and their families, as well as all other community members. School administrators grill hamburgers and provide a free meal to all attendees. The meal is served by high school students while teachers are free to eat alongside student families and engage in conversation with them. Another example of school-family engagement results when teachers and families work alongside one another to achieve a common goal. Playground Building Day and Elementary Classroom Moving Day are two recent examples of teachers and families working together in this fashion.

In recent years, our school has worked closely with community leaders and other members as we worked to envision and plan updates to our school facilities and then worked alongside builders to create and submit a bond issue. Our district's bond issue was passed overwhelmingly, and new construction could be underway as soon as May 2022. Therefore, more opportunities to collaborate with our community members are in the

future.

Our elementary school principal has provided our local city office with welcome packets to pass along to all families who are new to our community. These welcome packets provide families of children who may be too young for school a list of local support services and organizations that can assist with everything from infant-toddler screening to medical care. We have partnered with our county Parents as Teachers organization to assist parents in early learning opportunities for their young children. In the event that a family in our community struggles with finding consistent shelter or other basic needs, our school nurse, who also serves as our county's homeless liaison, works with families to obtain assistance and support needed.

We have a small, but active, PTO who creates meaningful events such as our daddy-daughter dance, mother-daughter paint night, mother-son bowling, father-son soccer games, our school-wide carnival and more. Our school partners with our local nursing home for our annual Halloween parade, Christmas caroling and different classroom projects.

Additionally, our school partners with our secondary school for our CHAMPS program, where high school students can serve as mentors to our elementary students who might need a little extra support. Communicating with parents is a high-priority task that RLW educators practice daily. Teachers use the digital platforms, SeeSaw and Google Classroom, to engage in two-way communication between a student's family and teachers. Other platforms such as Classroom Dojo are used to communicate with families regarding behavior throughout the day. In addition to daily communication regarding assignments, classroom needs and successes, RLW uses an official Facebook page to inform families about upcoming events, celebrate students as well as school achievements and to help families feel involved in what is happening within the walls of the school.

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

Our efforts to convey to our teachers that they are valued and supported have taken many different shapes and forms. For example, we originally established a Sunshine Committee of teachers and staff who would highlight special days of celebration and deliver small, unexpected treats. Simultaneously, our principal kept an updated Google Spreadsheet of each staff member's preferred Sonic drink and would surprise staff by delivering large Sonic drinks to teachers in their classrooms. This was a big hit!

When our principal first came onboard we spent a good deal of time building a collective, team culture with everything from leadership team escape room outings, to team scavenger hunts throughout our community. Team building and a positive, collaborative culture have been a part of our professional development each year. Additionally, our principal and Social teams have intentionally planned things such as lucky duck drawings, stock the fridge, motivational sticker days, turkey hunts, scrabble competitions, rock-paper-scissors March madness, class bingos, celebrity matchups and many more to create a fun culture within our building.

As the Covid pandemic led us to transition to distance learning, our teachers were provided with extra professional development in the area of technology as it related to video conferencing via Zoom and Google Meet, maintaining class activities through Google Classroom, trouble-shooting devices, and exploration of online resources. More specifically, our PreK-2nd grade teachers were trained in the application of Seesaw, an online platform for early learners. Throughout this professional development process, our teachers were provided with additional work time to become acclimated to the new approach to teaching.

In the meantime, our district has remained mindful of the stress our teachers are under. Some ways administration has worked to alleviate teacher stress include shifting the focus of staff meetings and professional learning meetings to "check in" on teachers' own social-emotional health. Self-care books were given to all staff members. Twice, staff have been surprised with a take-n-bake pizza meal. A staff favorite in the midst of teaching remotely was having a scheduled Teacher In-service Day turned into a day off for teachers! Our teachers like working within their teams and this spills over into their positive attitudes with their students.

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

R.L. Wright leadership strives to empower teachers through strong educational leadership. Our school leadership influences student learning by building an environment that allows teachers to flourish, which ultimately allows students to excel. Leadership aims to give clear and precise directions, holding teachers accountable and cultivating the talent the teachers have within them. There are always high expectations for both students and teachers, just as our leaders hold high expectations of themselves. Evidence-based approaches are used to help school leaders and teachers see any obstacles that may keep a student from learning.

R.L. Wright Elementary School incorporates both transformational leadership and servant leadership. This helps to provide a healthy learning environment and give students and teachers motivation through ownership. The leadership style at RLW could be broken down into the following sections:

Relationship building through communication; Motivation through shared visions; Professional Development - Explore new instructional practices; Team Building; Accountability; Create results that are sustainable; Challenge educators to innovate.

Our vision combines learning goals and the best teaching practices to help all students and staff see success. Leadership communicates their vision to teachers and staff so that everyone understands where we are headed. School leadership values and seeks input from staff so that the vision that we achieve is celebrated by all.

Our school principal has devoted more than twenty years to classroom teaching and building administration to lead our school in the right direction. Leadership is promoted by inspiring future leaders and helping to guide fellow educators. Through relationship building and finding the strengths of the staff, our principal strives to help empower students and educators. She communicates with all stakeholders and implements a positive learning culture both within and outside of the school.

R.L. Wright Elementary School adapts through professional development and seeking out new instructional practices. The only way forward is to have a clear vision and communicate the change that is needed. Our leadership works to promote positive attitudes, pride, and a desire to succeed through education.

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

Upon entering the front doors of R.L. Wright Elementary, the phrase “We are family” is prominently displayed on a nearby wall. We truly take those three words, “We are family,” to heart. Within our school we stress the importance of not only each classroom being a family, but also our collective school community being a family. The basic tenets that members of a family care about one another, take care of another, and continue to care about one another even if they disagree are reinforced through staff-to-staff interactions as well as staff-to-student interactions. This authentic form of modeling demonstrates for students that R.L. Wright Elementary is an inclusive environment and promotes positive student-to-student interactions.

Under the phrase “We are family,” you will find photos of our FAB families. FAB is the acronym for Family Activity Building. The FAB leaders are made up of nearly every adult in the building including the principal, counselor, teachers, and paraprofessionals. Each leader has students from different grade levels. There are approximately 9 to 10 students in each family. The members of a family stay the same from year to year with the exception of the addition of kindergarten students and the loss of former 6th grade students. FAB is beneficial to each member of a family. Adults and students that would not normally interact have the opportunity to spend time together and develop a bond through shared activities. Family members exhibit a sense of comfort upon seeing each other in the halls.

Within each classroom we utilize literature and media that represents a wide variety of cultural identities to increase the likelihood that each of our students will find a cultural connection between the content and themselves. In order to expose students to others’ ideas, perspectives, and life experiences, we incorporate

additional small group and partner learning activities while continually changing the groupings of students.

Knowing that students are aware of current events and social movements via social media, local news, or personal conversations, we facilitate classroom discussions that may arise as a result of the issues at hand. These authentic conversations take place in the respectful environment of the classroom and provide a safe place for students to share concerns and experiences. Our school guidance counselor is always available to 'team facilitate' classroom discussions with the teacher, if needed, as well as provide additional opportunities for students to talk one-on-one. We also partner with a nearby mental health facility to assist students and their families with arranging individual and/or family therapy.

In an increased effort to ensure high levels of training in cultural responsiveness, our staff have been provided with many professional learning experiences including a poverty simulation, INspired Leadership, book studies, etc. Teachers are taught to recognize when students are in need of any basic resources such as food, clothing, glasses, etc. Once a need is identified our counselor and nurse have collaborated with various organizations to provide resources such as our Food 4 Kids program which provides a bag of food each Friday for the weekend. Another such resource is our Cardinal Closet which is a closet full of new and gently used clothing, shoes, coats and more. Additionally, we have a group of parents which created an account, "Pay it Forward, Sedgwick " where anyone can donate, and we can ask for other items families may need. Examples of types of support might include feminine hygiene items, or money for therapy appointments. We truly believe that our school is a family, and family supports each other in every way.

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

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With the past two years of academics being so different with the pandemic, R.L. Wright Elementary has had to juggle more strategies than ever before to reach our students' needs. A combination of focusing on social-emotional health while maintaining relationships has been a constant during this period as much as showing grace throughout the entire district and community. However, the practice we've been most diligent with this past year would be academics. With the absenteeism that developed over the past two years from closed schools and quarantines, our students need help in filling those missed areas of study and review. This mirrors our focus on doing what is best for our students.

Our district's mission is that all students will be provided support academically, socially, and emotionally to achieve success. Teachers have come together to focus on what each student needs to be successful and grouped kids to work on said skills. The teachers along with the supplemental staff (with teacher guidance) are scheduled, during MTSS time, to help small groups with learning gaps in both math and reading. Constant progress monitoring has helped to maintain a successful growth in student gaps, allowing teachers to reteach or move forward. Weekly PLC meetings have helped to facilitate questions and cooperatively come up with strategies and solutions to maintain student growth. The after-school Boost program piggybacks on what is going on during the day which reinforces skills or, for some, gives extra instruction. Groups are kept small so that one-on-one tutoring can be achieved.

Everyone in the district works as a team to help our students achieve this goal. The size of our district welcomes a family-like atmosphere, as they are our neighbors, friends, and family; therefore, we care about our students and want them to reach their highest potential. Our students recognize this and work just as hard doing their part to reach that academic goal.