

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 [] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 8064 Byron Center Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Byron Center State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 49315-8723

County MI

Telephone (616) 878-6200 Fax (616) 878-6220

Web site/URL https://www.bcpsk12.net/brown/ E-mail gmiddaugh@bcpsk12.net

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. Kevin Macina E-mail kmacina@bcpsk12.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Byron Center Public School District Tel. (616) 878-6100

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 Mr. Martin Phelan
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	75	65	140
1	54	52	106
2	79	49	128
3	50	46	96
4	54	60	114
5	0	0	0
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	324	283	607

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 82 % White
 - 5 % 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: 10%

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	33
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	25
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	58
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	584
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

Korean, Spanish, Punjabi

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %
11 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %

Total number students who qualify: 117

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 9 %
54 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>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>38</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</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: 6
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.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 25:1

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	87%	96%	97%	95%	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. 2015

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

Helping Student's Build Success Stories.

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

<https://www.bcpsk12.net/district/human-resources/title-ix/#:~:text=It%20is%20our%20expressed%20policy,or%20programs%20as%20required%20by>

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

You can tell that Brown Elementary is special as soon as you walk in the door. Whether greeted by our secretaries, principal, or student ambassadors, you are sure to see a friendly smile and feel welcomed. The hallways are filled with bright, colorful artwork that students proudly display. Our teachers love coming to work each day, and you can see this in their positive attitudes. The students you encounter in the hallways are proud of their school, and it is clear they believe they are valued members of our school community.

Like our students, the parents/guardians feel they are an important part of our school and are active participants in many school activities. They can be seen lining the school to watch our Halloween parade, circling the track to watch our Bulldog Bash, or coming out in droves to attend the annual school carnival. Our families fill a soccer field for our annual homecoming tailgate. We had so many people come to our drive-in diner last year that we ran out of hotdogs, and the principal and staff had to run to the local supermarket to grab more.

The parents are also involved with their children's academic achievement. Almost 99% of our parents attend conferences either in-person or virtually. They know it is important to work alongside the teachers to make sure their children get the best education possible. They sit at conference room tables with staff to discuss IEP's and make visits to school to meet when there are issues that need to be discussed.

The staff considers all the students at Brown to be "our kids". Teachers do not focus solely on the 25 students in their own classroom, but on the 607 students in our school. Students are surrounded by other loving, caring adults in all areas of the school including office staff, exploratory teachers, paraeducators, custodians, and lunch helpers. Our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) give us time as a whole staff to discuss our student population and decide what we can do to make our school even better.

At Brown Elementary, we strive to develop the whole child (academically, socially, and emotionally). We consider all parts of the child to be important, and we know that in order for children to have success they need to have all these things aligned and working together.

Academically, our teachers hold themselves to very high standards and believe that all children are capable of reaching their full academic potential. We have district curriculum teams that research curriculum programs to find out what works best in our school. We then offer additional support to students in need through our Super Switch program, Special Education department, and enrichment activities for any kids who are above grade level.

Our latest initiative is Leader in Me. This initiative is helping us develop our students socially and emotionally. It teaches students that they have skills and abilities they can use to be leaders in and outside of our school. Leader in Me is carried through the entire school and is reinforced by our principal during morning announcements and our teachers when the students leave their classrooms.

Another program for emotional support of our students starts in Kindergarten with our school counselor who meets with each Kindergartener weekly through small group lessons. During this time, they discuss things such as feelings, what to do when we have strong feelings, and how to treat others. Once this foundation is laid, our counselor can continue working with students who need additional support throughout their time at Brown. The entire staff has also done Professional Development on students' social/emotional needs, so that everyone is consistent in their approach with every student.

Brown Elementary offers many innovative programs that set us apart from other schools. For example, our Student Ambassador program has recently replaced our Student Council. Through this program, students take on leadership roles throughout the school. During parent/teacher conferences, they greeted parents at the door and led them to classrooms if they did not know where they were headed. In addition, they meet monthly to have meaningful discussions about how to make Brown even better.

We also work with local churches to offer an amazing mentor program. Students with social/emotional

needs are matched with a positive role model. These pairs meet once a week to catch up on schoolwork, discuss things that are going on in their lives, and just have fun together.

Another program we have adopted is Watchdog Dads. We know that it is important for students to have strong male role models in their lives, so we invite dads to come into the school during our lunch block to interact with kids in the cafeteria and on the playground.

Being a previous National Blue Ribbon School awardee has given us some amazing recognition. We have families who are moving into the region who come to visit our school based solely on this award. They tell us they have done their research on the area and know all three of our district's elementary schools are National Blue Ribbon School recipients. Because of this, we are a destination for these families, and this is where they want their children to attend. Our school continues to flourish; much of this growth has to do with the recognition we have received from our National Blue Ribbon School award.

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:

Brown Elementary School, as a part of Byron Center Public Schools, provides a vertically aligned curriculum for pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The curriculum follows the Common Core State Standards for reading, writing and math instruction, which is required by the state of Michigan. Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations are used for instruction of science and social studies. The teachers and support staff at Brown Elementary are dedicated to providing students with high level expectations designed to reach all students through explicit and differentiated instruction.

The Brown Elementary teachers work hard at aligning the curriculum through instructional practices and formative and summative assessments. Teachers meet weekly at Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and they are given time for professional development to analyze data to improve student and school performance. They also work to create district assessments to support mastery of grade level standards.

In addition to district assessments, Brown Elementary uses Fountas and Pinnell running records, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Map math, Map reading, Math Expressions assessments and science and social studies unit tests. The teachers use the assessment data to guarantee that students have mastered each standard to ensure outstanding achievement and progress for all students.

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

At Brown Elementary School, teachers and support staff follow the Common Core State Standards for Reading and English Language Arts (ELA). The standards for reading focus mainly on students being able to read and comprehend texts, with an increased complexity as they progress from grade to grade. In writing, the Common Core State Standards focus on three different writing types. Students at all grade levels are taught how to write informational texts, narrative texts, and argumentative texts.

Brown Elementary School uses the Lucy Calkins Units of Study for reading and writing instruction. Educators teach the Common Core State Standards through Lucy Calkins Units of Study by using the workshop model. Our district transitioned into the workshop model for reading and writing to maximize student work and to provide students with an ample amount of practice time focusing on growth and reflection within the learning process. The workshop model provides teachers an opportunity to get to know their students' strengths and weaknesses, which also gives students an opportunity to take ownership of their learning by setting goals and reflecting on those goals.

Direct instruction in ELA revolves around a ten-minute mini-lesson where students are given an opportunity to practice the new skill being taught. Once the direct instruction is completed, students then move to their independent practice time. During this independent time, teachers meet with individual students for a reading or writing conference. Within these one-on-one conferences teachers listen to what students are working on and give them suggestions on a specific skill they can work on to further their understanding of the standard taught. Teachers use differentiated instruction within their conference meetings with individual students. Teachers meet students where they are academically and support academic growth. The workshop model also provides students with choices, which increases their engagement. Students are given a choice in what books they would like to read based on their reading level and strategies taught to determine if their text is a “just right” level. Students are also given a choice on what they would like to write about within the parameters of the current unit of study.

Brown Elementary School uses several formative and summative assessments to analyze and improve student performance in reading. Teachers use formative assessments through conferring with students to meet individual student needs in reading and writing. Another formative assessment used to track student

growth is the SRI assessment. This test helps teachers and support staff understand a student's Lexile score. This score helps determine an appropriate text level of difficulty for each individual student. Teachers also administer the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment to determine a student's reading level. This assessment gives teachers data on a student's reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension of a specific leveled text. These assessments are used to identify students who are in need of intervention and to help develop a plan of action for the specific interventions needed to move individual students forward.

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

The Brown Elementary teaching and support staff members align our mathematics instruction with the Common Core State Standards. The standards addressed through our mathematics instruction focus on the areas of operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations, measurement and data, and geometry. Across all grade levels, students participate in a variety of different instructional models deepening their understanding of mathematical concepts. These concepts build successively each year providing the building blocks for future success.

Brown Elementary School utilizes Math Expressions as our core mathematics curriculum. Math Expressions is organized through a year-long scope and sequence that allows educators to align each lesson with the Common Core State Standards and our District Essential Standards. Each of the curriculum teaching guides provide unit overviews which can help educators align their instruction to meet the needs of standards-based learning for all students. The direct alignment with Common Core State Standards has helped our school to address the academic needs of our students in order to prepare them for state standardized assessments such as Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP).

Byron Center chose the Math Expressions Curriculum because it provides educators with ample opportunity to deliver flexible and diverse instructional models based on the needs of the students in each classroom. These instructional models include whole group direct instruction, small group instruction, and inquiry-based workshop models. The adaptability within the Math Expressions Curriculum provides teachers at Brown Elementary with the ability to address various student needs. Throughout the grade levels at Brown Elementary there are various teaching models that are used by the classroom teachers. The guidance provided by the Math Expressions curriculum ensures that all of the students at Brown are receiving instruction directly linked to the necessary grade level learning standards. Math Expressions also has additional technology resources that give teachers the opportunity to extend the curriculum beyond explicit classroom instruction. The technology integration is very valuable for addressing individualized student needs in both intervention and enrichment.

Brown Elementary School uses both formative and summative assessments to gain insight into student learning. Formative assessments are given throughout a unit to gauge if a concept will need additional support and instruction. Summative assessments are given at the end of each unit revisiting standards taught. The results of these summative assessments are then analyzed by teachers and grade level teams to determine next steps for whole or small group and individual intervention, along with Tier 2 and 3 instruction. The findings of these discussions foster ways in which staff can improve teaching practices and celebrate successes. Beyond Math Expressions, Byron Center uses additional assessments to gain a broader understanding of student learning. The additional summative assessments given by the teachers at Brown help assess student learning on a broader spectrum and provide additional data for assessing student understanding of our essential standards. This student data is very helpful when forming our math intervention groups and determining the direction for the instruction of those groups. Our support staff is able to easily access student math assessment data and collaborate with grade level teachers to determine best practices for mathematics intervention based upon this assessment data.

The current teaching practices used by teachers at Brown, as well as the guidance from our mathematics curriculum, has provided our students with the necessary instruction and intervention to further develop their mathematical skills.

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

Brown Elementary currently uses Mystery Science as our core science curriculum. Previously, Brown piloted several science curriculums before landing on Mystery Science as being the best choice for student learning and engagement.

The students at Brown Elementary love Mystery Science. With its engaging videos and exciting, hands-on activities, students are hooked from the start. The science units vary in topic depending on grade level, but dive into many physical, life and earth science topics. This curriculum provides teachers with a year-long scope and sequence along with standard correlation and alignment within each unit/lesson.

Mystery Science does an excellent job of keeping students engaged in lessons that follow Next Generation Science Standards. The lessons within the unit take the students through the scientific method, giving them ample opportunity to assess their learning as they go. A unique aspect of Mystery Science is that there are extra activities based on holidays or other culturally relevant topics. These guided videos allow opportunities for students to talk with each other about important questions, as well as get up and move. Mystery Science provides many options for students, whether they are learning in person or virtually. For example, each activity has options for students working in a group at school or individually at home, as the videos can easily be posted to Google Classroom.

All lessons end with an inquiry based, hands-on activity that encourages students to dig deeper into their learning and allows teachers to formatively assess the students' understanding of the topic. There are also summative assessments with a combination of short-answer and fill in the blank questions.

Mystery Science provides students with an opportunity to use inquiry to grow their knowledge and love of science.

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

Brown Elementary currently uses Social Studies Weekly (SSW) as our core social studies curriculum.

SSW is student-friendly and organized intentionally to the strands of civics and government, economics, history, and geography. This curriculum provides teachers with a year-long scope and sequence along with standard correlation and alignment within each unit/lesson.

SSW is a Tier 1 resource that keeps students engaged. Teachers are able to use these lessons in many different ways. Lessons can be accessed at home or at school. The curriculum can be directly taught through explicit instruction, or implicitly as students facilitate their own learning through lessons independently. There are many opportunities for students to work in groups through inquiry-based instruction and extend their learning through extra videos, interviews, and arts and craft projects. To ensure accessibility to all students, they have access to an audio reader and features that allow students to highlight and code text for a deeper understanding.

Formative assessments are given in each lesson in the form of comprehension questions to gauge the students' understanding of the topic. Summative assessments are available at the end of each unit. These assessments are used to understand and deepen students' understanding of the world around them and to make real-world-connections. One way the students implement this knowledge is by going to the Michigan State Capitol building in third grade.

Brown Elementary is constantly looking at students and their needs. As these needs adapt, so do we. Switching to SSW was part of this adaptation so that we were able to provide virtual learning opportunities to students at home.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Brown Elementary has a school population of 607 students from grades Developmental Kindergarten through fourth grade. In addition to their regular classroom setting, students attend Art, Library, Music, Physical Education, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) on a weekly basis. Brown Elementary uses a block schedule which ensures that each grade level attends these opportunities at the same time. This block schedule allows for grade level teams, along with specialists, to have effective collaboration time on a daily basis.

Library skills are needed for students to become information literate. Students participate in a whole group read aloud during each library period and are exposed to many different genres. They are encouraged to expand and explore their reading choices. Our librarian teaches students how to choose right fit books, appropriate library behavior, and research strategies. Students are involved in Reading Counts, “Reading Month”, and predetermined library celebrations to create excitement for reading. The staff at Brown Elementary strives to make reading an adventure and foster a lifelong enjoyment of reading.

Music education at Brown Elementary equips students for learning by preparing the brain for achievement and improving recall and retention of verbal information. Students attend class for 30 minutes, twice per week. All students are exposed to the fundamentals of music through song, dance, instruments, and collaborative games. They are exposed to a wide variety of activities and concepts and are encouraged to participate in music through an explorative manner.

The students utilize technology through interactive online instrument activities, sample videos, and collaborative games. Students at Brown Elementary can experience the performance aspect of music through informal classroom performance and involvement in grade level concerts. Morning choir is offered twice a week to third and fourth grade students with additional concerts and assemblies throughout the year. It culminates with a year ending performance of the “Star Spangled Banner” at our local minor league baseball team, the White Caps.

Students at Brown attend Physical Education (PE) class twice a week for 30 minutes. Our PE classes provide a planned, sequential DK-4th grade standards-based program of curriculum and instruction. Our class is designed to develop motor skills, healthy lifestyles, and enjoyment for physical fitness. Students have many opportunities to participate in a variety of activities from basic movement patterns in Developmental Kindergarten to playing team sports in fourth grade. We cover the three domains of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Cognitively, students are taught the sequences of movement patterns along with rules for specific activities. The affective side of learning is addressed by encouraging sportsmanship, a positive attitude about exercise, and excitement for lifelong physical activity through play. Psychomotor is the most important and integral part of the PE class period because it allows students to move as much as possible. This provides the foundation for a physically active lifestyle.

All students attend STEM for 40 minutes per week. STEM develops problem solving, reasoning, and critical thinking skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. Students learn to be creative, work together, and use the Design Thinking Model to learn how to tackle complex problems. The design process we use is: “Ask, Imagine, Plan, Create, Test, and Improve”. Working cooperatively, students plan and design their own inventions and structures, which are tested multiple times and improved to accomplish their designated goal. During “Makers Month”, students design new board games, marble runs, and arcade games through a process of design with trial and error. While working collaboratively, students share their talents with each other making learning fun. Students also use technology through using computer programming/coding and even creating robots. STEM reaches all types of learners and provides opportunities for real-world application.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

The Brown Elementary teachers and support staff tailors their instruction, interventions and assessments to meet the diverse needs of all students. Teachers at Brown continually adapt their Tier 1 classroom instruction to meet the individual needs of their students. Brown teachers use formative and summative assessments (SRI, running records, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and unit tests) to determine which students need additional support. Teachers meet regularly at PLC meetings to review student progress and data and adjust instruction if necessary. Students that are performing below grade level receive Tier 2 interventions. Brown staff implements strategic interventions to support these students. First is Super Switch (SS), which is a daily 30+ minutes of additional reading, phonics, and word work set up in small groups where students are grouped by reading level and area of concern. The groups are created by the grade level teachers, and intervention staff. All students that are below grade level are sorted by reading level and area of concern (comprehension, focus, sight words, etc.). These SS groups use Fountas and Pinnell's Leveled Literacy Intervention kits, Seeing Stars phonics, comprehension strategies, and other word work. Second, for reading and for writing, the classroom teachers will confer additional times each week with students that are struggling, giving these students more strategies and instruction. Also, students with the largest achievement gaps in reading get an additional five to ten minutes reading a book at their level, with one-on-one support, several times per week to help build fluency and confidence. Brown Elementary teachers give formative math assessments at the beginning of each new math unit and use this information to modify instruction so lessons can focus on areas of concern. Students below grade level receive an additional half hour per day in class math support, either in small groups or one-on-one. The goal of the Brown staff is that these differentiated instructions will help close the achievement gap and will improve students test scores.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Brown Elementary teachers and staff strive to ensure growth for all students including those students performing above grade level. As stated before, teachers at Brown continually adapt their Tier 1 classroom instruction, to meet the individual needs of their students. Brown teachers use formative and summative assessments (SRI, running records, MAP, and unit tests) to determine classroom instruction. At weekly PLC meetings, teachers review student progress and data then adjust their instruction if necessary. Brown staff provides engaging challenges and opportunities to boost learning. Students not in Super Switch get enhanced instruction from their classroom teacher. They might participate in book clubs, additional word work, phonics work and reading time, or IXL skills practice. Also, the students above grade level read books at their level, not just grade level books. Students succeeding in math work on math challenge packets from Math Expressions, Continental Math for third and fourth grades, and online math websites that let the students advance at their own pace, such as IXL Math, Moby Max Math and Prodigy. Students performing above grade level also get the opportunity to assist and encourage their peers after the teacher's lesson. Brown Elementary teachers and staff strive to meet the diverse and individual needs of all students, whether they are below grade level, at grade level or above grade level.

3c. Special education:

Regardless of the daily Tier 1 and Tier 2 classroom instructions provided, not all students make sufficient progress and master the concepts that are taught. Therefore, the Response to Intervention (RTI) process is utilized to determine which students are in need of more intensive instruction. Brown has a building RTI team that is made up of the special education teacher and includes our district psychologist, social worker, speech therapist, academic support interventionist, principal, and two teacher representatives who requested to be part of the group. The team meets as needed to discuss students that continue to struggle, despite the current interventions. A plan of action is written to decide on additional support needed to help students succeed. The Brown RTI team uses data from running records, SRI, MAP (math and reading), and unit assessments to make recommendations of new instructional strategies to help ensure appropriate grade level growth. If there is not sufficient growth, the team members may determine the need for a special education evaluation.

Brown Elementary special education students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are provided with Tier 1 instruction from the classroom teacher. In addition, these students receive the same Tier 2 support as general education students that are performing below grade level. These supports include Super Switch

reading intervention, additional math support, small group and one on one assistance. Special education students receive Tier 3 intervention as written in the IEP through the goals and objectives. The growth of all students is a high priority at Brown Elementary.

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

Students at Brown Elementary are offered academic, behavioral, and emotional support throughout the school day. A smaller, but equally important subgroup at Brown are English Language Learners (ELL). Each year students are given the WIDA test to provide data and feedback to support student learning. The students are supported by a team of educators that are part of the English Language Learners intervention team. Using the WIDA test and other screening assessments, the intervention team is able to support each child where they are in their English learning curve. Students meet with a member of the ELL team one to three times per week based on the individual child's needs. While meeting with each child the staff member has a predetermined plan and carries this out during their time together. Each year the students are retested to show the growth they have gained from the previous school year. Based on these results, students may test out of ELL support. Each staff member who is part of this team works to ensure a positive learning environment for every student. The students are able to work in a focused environment that provides a greater opportunity for learning.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Brown Elementary School continues to engage, motivate, and provide students with a positive learning environment by making learning relevant, developing a code of conduct for behavior by introducing positive behavior programs, helping students develop intrinsic motivation, and by reinforcing those positive behaviors through developing strong interpersonal relationships with students.

One way Brown Elementary makes learning relevant is by adapting lessons to include student choice. Teachers also adjust their instruction to fit the needs of individual students, which increases attentiveness and engagement. Through this differentiated approach, students feel successful which helps with engagement and makes school a place they want to come to each day.

Another way Brown Elementary engages, motivates, and provides students with a positive learning environment is by developing a code of conduct for behavior. One way to help students view the school as a positive place to be every day is through our Best Bulldog Behavior initiative. This initiative teaches students how to be respectful, responsible, and safe throughout the building. When the pandemic hit the world, staff realized they needed to pay closer attention to the students' social-emotional well-being, so the school adapted their Best Bulldog Behavior initiative and started teaching students about The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids, through the Leader in Me initiative. The Leader in Me initiative encourages students to develop leadership skills, focusing on taking ownership of their learning, prioritizing what is important, setting goals for themselves, reflecting on those goals, developing strong relationships with peers and teachers, and ways to still enjoy what makes them happy. These positive behavior initiatives support students' academic, social, and emotional growth, and college career readiness by giving students clear expectations for behavior and by providing students with the skills they will need to be productive citizens of the world. These positive behavior initiatives increase intrinsic motivation for students.

The Brown Elementary staff strengthens students' overall engagement and positive learning environment by creating positive relationships with all students. The staff at Brown understands the importance of building interpersonal relationships with students because they know positive interactions will encourage students to come to school each day. Having an enthusiastic attitude about coming to school creates a learning environment where students want to be successful.

By incorporating The Leader in Me initiative and focusing on positive interactions with students, Brown Elementary supports students' academic, social, and emotional growth by developing the whole child.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The parents at Brown Elementary are a foundation of the school community. Attendance at parent teachers conferences is regularly above 99%. The partnership with their child's teacher creates a positive social, emotional, and academic school year for each child. Teachers are also part of the Parents Undertaking Projects (PUP) Meetings. Teacher representatives create a continued partnership for our school community. Throughout the school year the PUP team creates positive experiences for our staff and students to celebrate success at Brown. The teacher representatives allow the PUP group to have a better understanding of the needs for each teacher. They also plan family centered activities such as the Daddy/Daughter Dance, movie night, Fall Tailgate, VIP Day, Carnival, and Mother/Son hockey night. The PUP group works with the Brown community and families to fundraise over \$60,000 yearly to support the students and staff. This money is raised from families and through community relationships. Many community partners offer sponsorships that allow our school to reach its goals. Along with financial support, our community partners regularly donate food, snacks, and resources that allow our teachers and students to be enriched by the community. Finally, during the holiday season, businesses work to support families in need. A local gym offers over 20 students food and gifts during the holidays. Other businesses provide support for families to pay for their utility bills. Community members come in to wrap these presents for anonymous families and sort out the presents, so they are able to be picked up before the students leave for break.

Brown Elementary is also supported by the Byron Center Community throughout the school year. Hand-2-Hand Ministries is a non-profit organization that provides a backpack full of nutritious food for our families in need each week. Students also form special relationships and interact with positive role models through weekly Kids' Hope mentoring and our Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program supports students during lunch and recess throughout the school year.

Brown Elementary truly values our partnership with parents and the Byron Center community. The partnership created with new kindergarten parents continues and grows over a child's five years in the building.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The environment at Brown Elementary is a place where all teachers and staff members feel highly valued and supported. We would be remiss to not acknowledge the vast challenges that both virtual and hybrid learning posed to our teaching staff. There were many different supports that were put into place to support the teachers at Brown during a time where everything in our world seemed so unpredictable.

The challenges that we were facing having to provide remote learning for our students was uncharted territory for all of our staff members. Due to the newness of remote learning, there was a lot of hesitation amongst staff. Throughout the transition to remote learning the staff members at Brown were provided with all the necessities to stay safe, materials to assist our students, and technology to aid in the delivery of virtual learning. For example, each of the teachers at Brown were given an iPad and tripod in efforts to aid in the recording and delivery of virtual lessons. Staff members at Brown felt immensely supported by this technology which allowed us to support our students throughout this time.

Another way teachers felt valued and supported was through the safety measures that were put into place to keep our staff healthy. Staff members were given all the necessary cleaning supplies and several different safety protocols were put into place in effort to keep our staff members and students healthy. Due to the safety measures that were put into place, Brown Elementary was able to remain in person for the vast majority of the school year. Teaching in an environment where all of our staff members felt safe helped to build trust throughout our school.

The professional development approach over the past school year has been very focused on self-care for teachers. This school year we are doing a staff wide book study using the book 180 Days of Self Care for Busy Educators. Having this book as a guide and common ground for all of our staff has been something that has truly helped to build a culture of support in our school. Working together on self-care has helped our staff to feel connected and supported beyond teaching within our classrooms. Though the past year has posed many challenges to our school, being a part of a staff that feels supported, safe, and valued has enhanced our school culture.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy and structure of leadership at Brown is centered around shared leadership, believing that all voices must be heard and considered in decision making with a focus on student success. The school improvement team, comprising a representative from each grade level, the principal, special area teacher, and academic support instructor meets monthly. These meetings also include additional representatives from the Leader in Me Lighthouse Team at Brown. Decisions regarding professional development are based on academic achievement data as well as staff surveys. Team members are responsible for communication between the leadership team and grade levels. Cultural issues and needs in the building are also discussed as well as ways in which the team can support the staff. Topics for the Brown Leader in Me initiative are discussed during these meetings as well. The plans for our staff and students are discussed and created at these meetings.

The Brown principal works to provide opportunities for sustained professional development embedded consistently throughout the school year to support teachers' professional growth. This includes coaching

opportunities, conversation, feedback, and encouragement. He firmly believes that well trained teachers have the most impact on student success, and intentionally organizes his time and energy to reflect this belief. While his immediate focus are the staff members in his buildings, he works to find ways to bring the three buildings together, so their learning opportunities are shared throughout the district.

Brown also has created a leadership team for the student body. The Student Ambassadors at Brown applied, received letters of recommendation, and attended monthly meetings to discuss how they can improve Brown Elementary. These meetings are planned by the Brown School Counselor and a fourth-grade teacher. Most recently, the student ambassadors gave a warm welcome to all visitors for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Many parents commented that their highlight of conferences was a child showing leadership skills by walking them to their own child's classroom.

Another key component of leadership is our Tier 3 Intervention Team. This team meets approximately every six to eight weeks to collaborate regarding strategies for at risk students. The Tier 3 Team is coordinated by the special education teacher and includes our district psychologist, social worker, speech therapist, academic support interventionist, principal, and two teacher representatives who requested to be part of the group. The team analyzes student data, brainstorms strategies, and creates individualized plans to ensure success for at risk students.

Each leadership team intentionally strives to remain student-centered reaching toward the goal of academic, emotional, and social success for each child.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

As you walk into Brown Elementary, you see the words, "What makes YOU unique, makes US strong!" Throughout the school, banners are hung on the walls of the hallways and in the cafeteria and gym reminding students that they are all different from one another and those differences are to be celebrated.

Within the past few years, Byron Center Public Schools took notice that our district was starting to become rich with diversity. With eager hands, staff members from each school joined together to create a Diversity Committee. This committee had a goal to make every student and family member who walks through our doors feel welcome and valued. Together, they created a mission statement, "Creating safe spaces for ALL as we welcome, celebrate, and value our differences. We strive to listen, understand, and learn from one another to grow personally and enhance our community."

As our school population continues to grow and change, education and ideologies should transform as well. As a district, monthly diversity newsletters are sent home to families sharing what each school is doing to celebrate diversity, monthly holidays and celebrations, along with upcoming events happening in the community. These newsletters, along with our district's demographics, are posted on our district website so they are accessible to all who are interested.

Amongst the staff, monthly emails are sent providing teachers with recent events, supports, and links with different lesson plans, professional development opportunities, and current world events we should be aware of. Brown Elementary has hosted meetings for staff members who would like to continue to grow in their awareness and knowledge of diversity and how to better support their students. The meetings include professional development opportunities, book clubs, and open discussions. It is important to have an accepting staff willing to learn and grow in their own ideologies to continue to support our community.

Within the classrooms, teachers are provided funding to build and purchase diverse literature so all students can be represented and see themselves in the books they are reading. Teachers read literature educating students about cultures and ways of life different from their own. At Brown Elementary, we promote classroom families and community. We accept and respect those who are different from us and celebrate ways in which we are all unique.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Brown Staff has embraced the Super Switch process as our platform of school intervention for reading and math. We focus our work and collaboration on the success of every child in the building. We continue to use a growth mindset to process through different interventions when others are not working. The staff never gives up on finding success for each student.

Everything we do to intervene for students at Brown is discussed in our Super Switch meetings. These meetings take place approximately every six weeks. Each grade level is given approximately one hour to discuss students who are below, on, and above grade level. The process continues to find an area of need for small groups for each of these areas. Students who are above grade level are given alternative assignments in the classroom while their peers are placed in small groups to fill in gaps and support their learning needs. Along with grade level teams, Super Switch meetings include the special education teacher, academic support interventionist, and the principal. The principal leads each grade level through their specific meeting, but staff members in each grade have the ability to run these meetings as well. They have comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum, supports, and students in each grade.

After these needs-based groups are created, specific interventionists are attached to each group. Interventionists are assigned based on content knowledge, ability to manage different students, and understanding of specific needs for each grade. Many interventionists end up being hired as full-time teachers in Byron Center. High quality interventionists provide the best instruction for students during this time. Due to the high turnover of this position, new interventionists are given time to learn their position by shadowing a tenured staff member. This goes on for several days as they learn how to use the Leveled Literacy Intervention program and phonics instruction cards used for individual and small group interventions.

Students are kept in Super Switch and supported by highly effective staff members until they have made gains necessary to show proficiency in their grade level. Students are also given math intervention support that focuses on student needs during the second half of each grade level's math block. During this time interventionists are able to support students in small and whole group settings. Their involvement with struggling students is one of the cornerstones to the success at Brown. The work and effort put into each interventionist continues to build efficacy for this group as they support students throughout the building. Over the years the superintendent has supported this initiative with additional hours and personnel. The time and people have created smaller groups and have allowed more focused instruction for students.