

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 6124 Falcon Lane
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Jefferson City State MO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 65101-9751

County Cole County

Telephone (573) 634-2808 Fax (573) 634-3240

Web site/URL https://boe-bosd-mo.schoolloop.com E-mail tbishop@blairoaks.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Kimberley Walters E-mail kwalters@blairoaks.org

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

District Name Blair Oaks R-II School District Tel. (573) 636-2020

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. Jason Paulsmeyer
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	37	32	69
1	32	37	69
2	27	37	64
3	40	44	84
4	51	43	94
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	187	193	380

*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
 - 0.5 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 0.5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 95 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

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

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

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	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	380
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 43

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 17 %
66 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>22</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>23</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Children are the future and Blair Oaks Elementary is dedicated to the success of all children.

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

<https://boe-bosd-mo.schoolloop.com/file/1500178973677/1598172555538/7395659188590437191.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

The Blair Oaks R-II School District is located five miles Southeast of Jefferson City, Missouri. The entire district has approximately an 11% free and reduced meal rate. The Blair Oaks R-II School District encompasses many different small town communities such as Wardsville, St. Thomas, Taos, and Osage Bend. There are also three K-8 Catholic schools located in district boundaries. In recent years, Blair Oaks has been one of the fastest growing school districts in Missouri, the lowest per pupil expenditures, the highest of academic achievers, and consistent maintenance of a low operating levy. Blair Oaks Elementary is a K-4 school with approximately 385 students. It has a 17:1 student-to-teacher ratio, and 55% of the certified staff hold advanced degrees.

Blair Oaks is a sought after school district in which families intentionally relocate. The community has an “all in” and “family” attitude. You can find that community involvement is a high priority at all events. This includes athletic and extracurricular activities. Community members are invited to classroom parties, music programs, Thanksgiving dinners, Veterans Day assemblies, and even as guest readers, unless there are COVID procedures in place. Blair Oaks Elementary is supported by a Home & School (parent) organization that provides students and staff with appreciation gifts, fun activities, field trips, and learning and teaching resources.

The success of Blair Oaks Elementary starts with its dedicated staff. Over the last decade, the staff has implemented key strategies to encourage and challenge students’ development. While Blair Oaks Elementary has not been officially recognized as a PLC (Professional Learning Community) school, it has been successfully putting the fundamental ideas into practice for many years. Through the PLC work, some of the key strategies that have been implemented are curriculum alignment, data teams, revamping response to intervention time, implementing beneficial professional development, team-building activities, and goal setting. During curriculum alignment, grade level teachers determine priority standards, align them vertically among the grade levels, and then begin work on creating blueprints and common assessments. Teachers were given research-based resources and support in the area of RTI (Response to Intervention) time. Benchmark data is analyzed to help create RTI groups. During RTI, students are given appropriate interventions to aid in their academic development and are progress monitored every two weeks. Every 6-8 weeks, teachers, reading specialists, and administration meet as data teams to review student progress and analyze each student individually, academically, emotionally, and socially. Depending on individual needs, students either continue specific intervention or begin receiving another type of intervention.

Professional development is highly supported and encouraged. Administration is constantly sharing prospective trainings and conferences with staff. The district also provides in-house opportunities for motivational speakers and instructors on specific topics. The staff also has the option to find and apply for specific professional development opportunities. Staff are able to give input on specific needs of their school or district according to current events, grade level, or subject area through a needs-assessment inventory, which is initiated by the district PDC (professional development committee). Teachers feel as if they have a voice in expressing the needs that they currently have. Team-building games and activities are planned on a regular basis for staff. This helps build a sense of trust and a feeling of “family” in the building and amongst the district. At the beginning of each year, the elementary school sets SMART goals to work towards during the school year. This includes emphasis on attendance, academic scores, discipline referrals, positive praise home to students, etc.

One strong attribute that sets Blair Oaks Elementary apart is the implementation of community-building opportunities. Examples of this include Falcon Families, buddy classrooms, and school leadership jobs. Falcon Families were established to ensure each student became familiar with another trusted adult in the building, and to form connections with students from other grade levels. At the beginning of the year, all students are assigned to groups which include teachers, paraprofessionals, and office, and other district-level staff. This has also included administrators, curriculum directors, and counselors from other buildings in the district. Falcon Family activities were planned throughout the year on specific dates. The group of students ranged from kindergarten through fourth grade, while the older students were able physically to go get their younger Falcon Family buddies and walk them to the appropriate location. At the beginning of each year,

buddy classrooms are assigned. This is when two classrooms from different grade levels are paired to complete activities throughout the year. Specific dates are provided for buddy room activities and then planned by classroom teachers. Not only did this provide a chance for students to work with their older or younger buddies, but also it gave teachers a chance to work with each other across grade levels. Fourth grade students had the privilege of applying for leadership jobs around the building. This includes opening car doors, raising and lowering the flag, recycling team, morning announcements, breakfast assistants, greeters, technology leaders, and bus release monitors. This innovative technique helped students take pride in their school and instilled in them the character traits of hard work and responsibility. Character education is also highly promoted through weekly counseling lessons and character recognition. Teachers completed recognition that was shared each morning over the intercom or at the all school assemblies. The school would put these recognitions together in a paper chain in which they displayed in the hallway. Once a certain goal was achieved, the students (in all grades) received a prize. Once a month, a character student is chosen from each classroom. These students were recognized at the all-school assembly and received a character t-shirt.

Children are the future, and Blair Oaks Elementary is dedicated to the success of all children. This is evident in our combined efforts to live our mission statement each day. Together we will: Partner, Educate, Empower, and Provide (PEEP). Blair Oaks is committed to PARTNERING with staff, students, parents and community members to EDUCATE all students to become self-sufficient, lifelong learners while EMPOWERING them to be competent, productive, responsible, and caring citizens in an ever-changing world by PROVIDING a safe and nurturing educational environment with high academic standards.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Our approach to curriculum, instruction, and assessment has been an ongoing process of collaboration across the grade levels. Through vertical alignment meetings, we examine which priority standards are important for mastery in each grade and determine where the gaps are located in these standards between grades levels. As a building, we break down the learning standards into three categories: mastery, reinforcement, and introduction. We have found that this approach digs deeper into the standards instead of touching the surface of multiple standards. Every grade level creates or modifies assessments that are based on priority standards and attaches a blueprint to these assessments. Our blueprints include the priority standards, learning targets, Depth of Knowledge (DOK) question levels, and question types.

The Blair Oaks School District is also fortunate enough to have a curriculum director who aids in aligning the core standards of each subject to textbooks and learning resources. With our constant communication and collaboration, we ensure what we are teaching every day in our classrooms aligns with our standards and is a research-based instructional practice.

To meet the needs of all of our students, we have developed specialized RTI instructional groups in reading and math, utilizing small groups, Title 1 classrooms, and special education classrooms. This practice allows us to meet the needs of every student, no matter their level of instruction. Fundamentally, all students need to become self-sufficient, lifelong learners, and we feel that we have provided that with a safe and caring environment. Additionally, the first grade classes were fortunate to make use of additional curricular teachers to provide small group literacy support. These groups were tiered based on the needs of each group.

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

Aligning our curriculum to Missouri Learning Standards, teachers continue to create critical thinkers and lifelong learners. We utilize the best research-based practices and interventions in our classrooms to reach all students. We strive to find new resources to enhance students' learning experiences by attending professional development, communicating with parents and coworkers, and working one-on-one with students.

Our primary reading curriculum is Journey's. Journey's aligns with our standards in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. Journey's provides the basics for whole-group and small-group instruction as well as RTI instruction for those struggling, on level, or advanced. This curriculum works well with teachers' ability to adapt and meet students where they are by providing decodable readers in the younger grades as well as leveled readers at all levels. The anchor text as well as the leveled readers touch on a variety of reading skills that teachers have designated as a reading standard. Teachers also use a variety of research-based resources to enhance the Journey's curriculum in order to reach every student.

In the classroom, teachers create positive relationships and an atmosphere in which students feel safe and are risk takers no matter what lesson is being taught. We value mistakes as proof students are trying. Teachers teach in a variety of ways so students learn in a way that best addresses their learning style. These strategies include, but are not limited to, whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, individual conferences, cooperative learning groups, whole brain actions, technology-based instruction, hands-on experiments, and Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies. Our grade levels also pair up with another grade level for buddy rooms. Older students read to younger students or help younger students with a writing assignment or project. This allows the older students to gain confidence and own their learning by teaching what they have learned to others. The younger students are always excited to learn from the older grade levels.

We provide a variety of assessments throughout the year to determine how effective our teaching practices are and how well students are learning. Students are given the STAR reading assessment five times a year in first through fourth grade. This allows teachers to identify strengths and deficits of students' independent reading abilities in the areas of comprehension and vocabulary. Additionally, this assessment provides each student with their reading level, which allows them to choose books just right for them as they work hard to reach goals using the AR (Accelerated Reader) program. Students are able to reach goals by reading at their level and pace. Students are also assessed on their reading fluency using AIMSweb probes every other week. These reading assessments along with classroom performance allow teachers to come together for data team meetings four times a year with administration, grade level teams, and Title teachers. Looking at the data, we are able to confer and determine which students would benefit most from Title interventions, as well as examining students' needs for small group interventions or enrichment within the classroom.

Teachers in third and fourth grade also look at the MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) test results once they have been released. During professional development days, PLC time, or grade level meetings, teachers analyze the results and identify areas of weakness. Teachers use this information to help aid in their instruction now and in the future.

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

At Blair Oaks Elementary, we strive to make our students lifelong learners in math by helping the students realize that math is all around them, and they use it daily. We teach them to be problem solvers and critical thinkers by teaching math in many different ways that aide all different types of learners. Our curriculum follows the Missouri Learning Standards, and, while working with vertical teams, we ensure that all math concepts are covered at the appropriate developmental level. They are repeated and built upon as appropriate. We ensure that math fluency is introduced early on and is continued until mastery is met. Number sense is essential, and we emphasize its importance every year, as that is the building block to further success in math.

Our current math series (GOMath), allows our kids to use multiple approaches to each math concept that aids every type of learner. Our success in mathematics on the MAP test is due to our curriculum aligning with the Missouri Learning Standards, vertical alignment across grade levels to ensure all gaps in math are closed, and individualized learning that accommodates all students' needs. We take many approaches when teaching math, including small groups, whole-group instruction, partner work, peer groups, and one-on-one with the teacher during our RTI (Response to Intervention) block. We administer pretests and posttests on certain skills to ensure we are on the right path when planning and mapping out our instruction.

On top of pre and post testing, we also administer the STAR Math benchmark assessment throughout the year to follow students' progress and use intervention when needed. This data helps the teachers to know when further instruction is required or if enrichment might be appropriate.

Keeping students engaged in math is essential, so we use many resources to help boost learning. In math, we often use whole brain strategies, which are proven by research to help students retain knowledge by moving their bodies and keeping them active in their learning. Whiteboards, hovercams, mimio boards, manipulatives, 1-1 Chromebooks, and Google Classroom all help to enhance student learning by using different methods of instruction to encompass all depths of knowledge. At the height of COVID and school closure, we created instructional and engaging videos for each lesson that helped the students feel connected to their teachers and to school during that difficult time. We continue to use those videos in our instruction and link them to Google Classroom for any students who are absent and cannot be at school for any reason. This has helped our students and parents when in-class learning is not possible.

Every person uses math every day in some capacity, and the students at Blair Oaks are taught to feel confident in their math skills, no matter what their level, and how to see math all around them. Engaging them in math and connecting it to their lives is the ultimate goal.

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

Encouraging students to be natural observers and critical thinkers is the goal when incorporating science curriculum. We have created a science curriculum based on the Missouri Learning Standards that teaches students that science is all around them every day. Through our observations, we find that people and the environment interact with each other. Sometimes those interactions may be beneficial, and other times they are not. We want our students to question what is happening in the world and to realize that through our study of science, our world is impacted today, as well as the generations to come.

In our curriculum, we incorporate reading, math, and geography as we integrate the different learning styles of our students. In all of our classrooms, you will see hands-on experiments that require students to follow steps of the scientific method. We are fortunate at Blair Oaks that our science curriculum has been carefully aligned by our teachers with the assistance of our curriculum director to make sure that all standards are covered in our program. We are not only aligned to the standards, but we are vertically aligned kindergarten through fourth grade as well. The collaboration with our curriculum director has been invaluable to the success of our science program.

In third and fourth grade, students take the MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) tests. Through this testing and the need for a greater emphasis in science at the elementary level, the fourth grade teachers split classrooms to teach specific subjects so that science would have ample time to be taught, and the teachers would have the ability to go deeper into the concepts. We feel the extra time and focus given to science has allowed students to make real-life connections that have led to greater critical thinking, knowledge and understanding of science concepts, and vocabulary.

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

The social studies curriculum at Blair Oaks Elementary is based on the Missouri Learning Standards. Social studies is taught independently of other curricular areas; however, communication arts is integrated into the content.

In kindergarten through second grade, students have the opportunity to learn about family traditions, being a good citizen, and community helpers through a teacher-made curriculum. Students also learn about different communities and different cultures. Students are provided opportunities to work together to solve problems while learning about these skills. In third and fourth grade, students read articles and discuss with partners or groups the main idea of the article and look for supporting details. Students summarize the reading in those partnerships as well. Whole-group discussions then allow the teacher to help students dive deeper into the text and allow for critical thinking. Many writing activities revolve around the social studies content. Students are actively engaged in classroom discussions and complete many simulations or projects in social studies as they learn about economics, geography, government, history, and culture. In fourth grade, teachers are departmentalized and are experts in their core subject. Writing and grammar are taught through the Social Studies curriculum. This allows students to apply their knowledge of the Social Studies curriculum into their writing. Students write informational pieces about the government, immigrants, and explorers.

During social studies, students are learning to work with others to solve problems while making meaningful connections. This allows students to become active, productive and responsible citizens for our community and world.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Blair Oaks Elementary, the additional curricular classes are an integral part of providing a well-balanced education program. Each student participates once a week in Library, Art, Music, PE, and Counseling. For many students who struggle academically, these classes provide additional opportunities to be successful.

Our library classes promote an enjoyment of reading through the purchase of high-interest books, book-reads, and book talks. Students may also come to the library on their own throughout the week to choose from a wide array of books. Along with appreciation for reading, our students are able to implement research skills that are in coordination with the classroom curriculum.

In art class, the students have the opportunity to create, experiment, and learn about art materials, techniques, meaningful topics, and famous artists. They are encouraged to be problem solvers, try new things, and enjoy the process. The art room is set up as a safe space where students are taught to show respect to themselves, others, and the materials. The students are expected to take ownership of the materials they use and the subject matter they create. The students reflect on their art process and that of others. We create an environment where we look for ways to appreciate something about ourselves and others. Materials are arranged around the room to be easily accessible to the students. Students are responsible for taking out and putting away the materials. There are many opportunities to participate in art contests, have their artwork displayed in the school hallways, and have a piece of art on display at a fine arts performance. The fine arts performance is a collaboration of music class and art class, which includes an art show and music performance.

In music class, students have the opportunity to sing, play instruments, and perform. They learn about singing, playing instruments, analyzing music, and creating many types of music. Students learn about the different genres of music including past and present music composers. Students learn to play instruments in the classroom and explore and learn to appreciate many different types of music. We have a special instrument unit that includes recorders, ukuleles, bucket drumming, boomwhackers, and handbells. Every grade level performs one music performance per year. These performances include singing and the opportunity to perform on stage in our high school auditorium. Students have the opportunity to perform solos and speaking parts in their grade-level performance. Additionally, every third and fourth grade student has the opportunity to participate in the Honor Choir, which meets after school bi-weekly. The Honor Choir performs at school functions and community events throughout the school year.

Students have the opportunity to attend weekly Physical Education class. We focus on developing physical fitness and the ability to perform and enjoy day-to-day physical activities with ease. We encourage students to be risk takers and to learn that failure is part of learning to be successful. Learning to gain confidence within themselves is of the utmost importance. Students learn the significance of performing daily exercises correctly and the benefits from regular exercise. Class lessons help students obtain and improve skills such as running, catching, throwing, and striking. Students develop skills necessary to participate in a wide range of activities such as soccer, speed stacking, basketball, jump rope, and parachute. These activities provide a great opportunity for students to socially interact with their peers while learning to understand the importance of good sportsmanship. Class time is designed to prepare students to be physically and mentally active, fit, and healthy into adulthood. We utilize the FitnessGram Pacer Test, as well as other fitness tests, to help measure students' physical fitness levels. Students have the opportunity to earn a pacer foot on the designated pacer wall and foot tokens to wear that allows them to show others their achievements. Each year, we participate in the American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge program. This program gives our students a great connection with our community to help raise donations towards a very important life-alternating cause. Last year, our community came together to raise over \$14,000, our highest achievement to date. At the same time, students learn about the importance of their own healthy choices and the need for daily physical activity.

Our Counseling class gives students the opportunity to learn about many different topics that promote character-building, personal and social development, academic development and career development. During this class, students get the chance to stand out and be creative in a positive, caring, and supportive atmosphere that promotes kindness and teamwork. Students spend the majority of time working together as a class or in small groups encouraging each other. This is a time where students learn that differences are what make them unique and special, and those differences give us each our own unique outlook on life.

Students get a chance to learn from each other and are encouraged to be proud of who they are.

At Blair Oaks Elementary, we value the additional curricular classes our students get to experience. They help support the curriculum and build lasting relationships and additional skills our students need to be successful.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Blair Oaks is dedicated to reaching every student who is performing below grade level and bridging his/her gap to success.

Universal speech/language screenings are conducted for all kindergarten and second grade students at the beginning of the year. Students in other grades are screened per teachers' requests. Students identified from screenings are assigned to intervention groups. The speech-language pathologist develops objectives for each student and works with students weekly.

Title I Reading services are provided to eligible students based on multiple criteria. Nationally normed reading assessments are given school-wide and administered three times per school year (beginning, middle, and end of the year). Progress monitoring is completed every two weeks with students who have not met their reading grade-level targets. Teachers can also refer students for Title services by noting specific concerns with reading, phonics, and phonemic awareness skills.

Once data has been collected, Data Team meetings are scheduled and attended by the administrator, Title I teacher, and classroom teachers to analyze the data. Every student's performance on benchmark assessments, classroom achievement, behavior, and special education accommodations is discussed. Students with the highest needs who do not receive special education reading services are placed into Title I reading classes.

In addition to formal screening and benchmark assessments, Blair Oaks has a SST (Student Support Team). This collaborative approach allows teachers from kindergarten through fourth grade to discuss students who are struggling or exhibiting atypical behaviors. The SST offers suggestions for interventions and strategies to use to meet students' specific learning needs.

Students who are struggling academically, but are not eligible for special education services or do not receive Title I services, are encouraged to attend after school tutoring. Tutoring is provided in small groups and reiterates fundamental skills for reading, writing, and math related to grade-level curriculum.

Inside the classroom, we provide CWC (class-within-a-class) services for students who need extra support through special education as stated through their IEP (Individualized Education Plan). Each teacher has a designated RTI time to work with students on specific skills on which they are struggling or to reinforce skills that may need more practice. This time is tailored to the needs of each individual student.

Students at Blair Oaks are provided with an intricate support system to help them achieve their potential.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Blair Oaks employs a teacher certified in gifted education to serve students in first through twelfth grade. Students who show exceptional intellectual and creative abilities are referred for a gifted evaluation. Those identified to be in the 95th percentile or above receive 150 minutes of gifted instruction each week through the KIDS (Kids Inventing, Discovering, and Searching) program. KIDS curriculum is designed to emphasize both creative and critical thinking that challenges the nature and needs of gifted students. Students receive weekly instruction in effective, academic learning. Parents and teachers are provided weekly updates about local enrichment opportunities and teacher reflections on classroom activities.

Through our gifted program, students performing above grade level are given the opportunity to broaden their learning beyond the basic curriculum and grade level expectations. They have the privilege of experiencing a robust, well-rounded education that challenges them to fulfill and expand their intellectual potential, both in the educational setting and in their daily lives.

Within the general education classroom, students performing above grade level are also given opportunities to be challenged. Kindergarten students who excel in reading begin the AR (Accelerated Reader) program, in which they read books at their level and take comprehension quizzes. AR continues through fourth grade. Students in second through fourth grade, along with the AR program, utilize the online A-Math (Accelerated Math) program, in which students work at their own level in math. This allows students performing above grade level to receive individualized enrichment enhancing broad-based knowledge. This also allows for spiral and supplemental learning with math concepts that would not naturally spiral.

3c. Special education:

Students who require specialized instruction to access the general education curriculum are provided special education services that meet their individual needs in the least restrictive environment. We follow an inclusion model with resource special education classrooms. Services range from CWC (class-within-a-class), in which learning specialists serve special education students in the general education classroom alongside peers, to life-skills instruction where students spend the majority of the school day in a self-contained classroom. Along with these, small group and individualized instruction services in the special education classroom include providing academic support in one or more areas, teaching executive functioning skills, targeting language deficits, providing full instruction in specific academic areas, or a combination of these. In addition, students may receive related services from an occupational therapist, physical therapist, behavior specialist, and/or speech-language pathologist.

Learning specialists' services reach students with specific learning disabilities, autism, language impairment, intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, and other health impairments. Students with more complex needs also receive support from paraprofessionals throughout the school environment. Learning specialists provide differentiated instruction to meet each child's needs. This is accomplished with evidence-based programs, such as Foundations, Edmark Reading, Lalilo, TouchMath, Centervention, and Emotional ABCs, among others, which are incorporated in lesson planning and instruction.

At Blair Oaks Elementary, there is much collaboration between general education teachers and learning specialists to support our shared students. Classroom teachers' input is invaluable in the process of creating IEPs with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals based on grade-level standards and addressing each student's specific deficits as well as in identifying and implementing accommodations and modifications to ensure each student's success in the general education setting, with support from learning specialists. Additionally, general education teachers' shared lesson plans and curricula assist learning specialists in ensuring special education students' learning is as close to grade-level peers as possible.

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

1. Engaging Students:

Blair Oaks Elementary believes that the relationship between teachers and students is a critical element to the success of our students. From the moment students arrive at school, they are engulfed in a positive school climate and upbeat culture. Each morning, students receive a warm welcome by the principal and staff as we help them out of their cars and buses and enter the building. We also have student greeters, who greet students throughout the building each morning. As students walk down the hallways, they are immersed in positive and fun décor that is tied to our school-wide character theme. Students can look up and see a paper chain hanging from the ceiling with all of the examples of good character their peers have accomplished as the year progresses. Peaceful light covers also provide a calming environment in the hallway where student work is consistently displayed. Highlighting their work allows each child to have a sense of belonging and pride within their school. Upon entering their classrooms, students receive a cheerful and welcoming greeting from their teacher, such as high fives, hugs, fist bumps, and handshakes, which sets a positive tone for the rest of the day.

To keep our students involved daily, teachers implement a variety of engagement strategies. Within the classroom, teachers utilize whole brain teaching strategies and brain breaks that encourage students to cross the midline, which is vital to the development of using both sides of the body together. Students are given opportunities to use the sensory path to regulate attention, behavior, and emotions. In addition, students are also encouraged to use mindful moments and breathing techniques taught in counseling classes. Staff members also foster positive engagement and a love for learning by promoting participation in school-wide S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) nights and Maker Space activities.

In addition to our daily engagement strategies, fun events are included throughout the year to increase student excitement and a sense of community. Every Friday is “Falcon Friday” where students and staff are encouraged to wear their Falcon wear and show school spirit. We also gather in our gym on Friday mornings to celebrate student examples of good character, birthdays, and sing the school song. Another way we foster excitement and a sense of community is through our periodic school spirit weeks. Falcon Families and buddy rooms are additional activities that encourage students to feel more connected to staff and students that they do not interact with on a daily basis. In each of these gatherings, students have the opportunity to participate in themed activities with students and teachers from other classrooms and grade levels. Blair Oaks is not just a school, it is a family. As a district, we repeatedly find ways to bring students and staff together across grades and buildings, such as Homecoming, the Veteran’s Day Assembly, music programs, and sporting events. These events not only bring awareness to the event we are celebrating, but they also bring our students together socially, giving them a sense of family and belonging.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Blair Oaks Elementary uses strong communication and values opportunities to build relationships. Our teachers and administrators reach out to families through a postal district newsletter, our website, the Remind App, SeeSaw, Facebook, Twitter, DoJo, weekly newsletters, emails, phone calls, and conferences. When students cannot be at school due to sickness or travel, teachers utilize Google Classroom and virtual classrooms to share lesson plans. Blair Oaks Elementary teachers contact each student’s parents with positive messages throughout the year. The buildings on our campus make connections through Buddy Room activities, Cheer Fair, sports camps, and State Championship send-offs.

There are many opportunities offered to the family members at Blair Oaks Elementary for positive and memorable connections. For preschooler’s, we host a Kindergarten Round-up. Pumpkin Carving with Dads, Pajama Party with Moms, and Grandparent’s Day are activities for Kindergarten families. All grade levels have three classroom parties each year for parents to attend along with a music program, an art show, and a run through the halls for the fourth graders on the last day of school! All students participate in the Kids Heart Challenge to help the American Heart Association. Our Home and School parent organization plans a Back-to-School Bash, a STEAM night, a Falcon Fellas Hoopin’ It Up, a Little Ladies Dance, a family night

at a local miniature golf facility, and Field Day.

Community involvement at Blair Oaks is like no other. An annual tailgate event is hosted by a local bank at a football game drawing many fans to cheer on the Falcons! Homecoming is a campus-wide celebration involving a parade and a pep rally that community members enjoy. Area veterans are welcomed and honored for their service at the annual Veterans Day assembly. Blair Oaks Elementary fourth grade group, Falcon Flyers, participates in community service projects. In addition, second graders make cards for the residents of a local nursing home. We are always looking for ways to connect to our community.

The academic success of our students is a result of school, family, and community partnerships. Parent-teacher conferences are an opportunity to collaborate on goals. Interventions are given through high school A+ helpers, after-school tutoring, Accelerated Reader nights, and summer school. Read Across America week promotes extra reading opportunities and family involvement. Academic achievements are announced daily over the intercom and at the awards assembly at the end of the year. MAP testing week includes goal setting, Growth Mindset techniques, and daily positive notes from family members and teachers. We are very proud of our students' high achievements.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Creating and providing meaningful professional development opportunities is at the forefront of our yearly goals. We have created opportunities for professional development called Power Hours, where teachers can present on educational topics they are knowledgeable about for other staff to attend. The Professional Development Committee meets monthly to approve funds for teachers seeking outside professional development to stay current with practices, technology, and new ideas. Once teachers have attended, they are then asked to share this PD at monthly staff meetings.

We have designed our school in-service days according to needs assessment surveys sent out to all teachers. We have welcomed inspiring speakers such as Adam Welcome and Hamish Brewer. We have also provided training in Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures, Google classroom, CHADS Coalition for Mental Health, and active shooters.

Teachers and staff feel included at Blair Oaks Elementary with the many activities throughout the school year. We participate in numerous team-building activities including optional book studies, Mystery Mondays, Voxer shout-outs, and gatherings outside of school. Each Friday, teachers have the opportunity to purchase a Sonic drink with a parent volunteer making the delivery. We also have a lunch lottery, where teachers can participate and win a free lunch. In addition, teachers can earn dress down passes as a token of appreciation. During the holidays, the principal implements the 12 Days of Fun and 9 Days of Love.

Our amazing Home & School (parent organization) are committed to staff, parents and students. At the beginning of each year, they purchase a shirt for every student and staff that represents our yearly character theme. They also provide teachers with a starting monetary gift, holiday gifts, and provide treats and supplies in the workroom throughout the year.

During our time of distance learning, our principal sent weekly Google Forms inventorying how we were doing, how-to YouTube videos, and attended many Google Meets. The superintendent organized a teacher car parade, which traveled through our vast community in an effort to see those students we were missing. Our administrators also displayed signs in each teacher's yard showing their appreciation for them.

4. School Leadership:

One vital key to the success of Blair Oaks is an administration who portrays a strong model of leading by example. This perspective begins with a Superintendent who is visible to the staff and families at all grade levels, always portraying a professional and approachable image. He can be found greeting students in the drop off line, at daily classroom events, at numerous evening events or just walking the hallways. He lends a hand to shovel snow, clean a mess or even clean a window. His pride in Blair Oaks is evident and contagious.

The elementary principal honors a team-approach philosophy that results in a cohesive relationship among school leaders, staff and stakeholders. Blair Oaks is fortunate to have versatile staff with an incredible work ethic, including classroom teachers, specialty teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, office staff, counselor, nurse, cafeteria staff and maintenance. Every single staff person is involved in activities throughout the year and are celebrated for their contribution to the team.

The principal facilitates development, enforcement and monitoring of policies, programs, relationships and resources that focus on student achievement. To achieve the highest level of student achievement, the principal makes it a priority to view issues from the teacher's grass root perspective. The Leadership Team consists of the principal, representative from each grade level, specials and special education who serve as a liaison between the team and administration to share ideas. The Leadership Team is a comprehensive avenue for decision-making, implementation and monitoring. The Leadership Team meets approximately once a month.

To focus on student achievement through the implementation of data teams, individual student data is reviewed from benchmark scores, and progress monitoring is thoroughly analyzed with a plan created or edited for moving forward. Data Teams consist of the principal, Title I reading teacher, and classroom teachers, and they meet every 6-8 weeks. In order to create consistency among the grade level curriculum, all classroom teachers are assigned to a subject for vertical alignment. This creates a cohesive team in which all members share a voice. Teachers from different grade and subject levels are also part of committees within the building and district, ensuring the committees have a fair representation from all departments.

In recent years, the administrator's role has had to shift due to COVID. School preparation looked different as so many decisions and changes were needing to be made. Effective management and decision-making lead to a successful reopening after the COVID extended closure of 2020.

The goal of the principal is to make sure teachers feel that they are a valued member doing meaningful work, on a winning team, in an environment full of trust.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

At Blair Oaks Elementary, we strive to always put our students first. Every decision we make is based on what is best for our students. We focus on providing an environment where students can feel safe, happy, and healthy.

Many people look at diversity as a specific race, but it involves much more. Diversity is also learning abilities, socioeconomic status, family dynamics, physical needs, and mental health needs. Our teachers, administrators, counselors, and support staff work hard to build relationships with all students and families no matter where they fall in these categories. We provide programs such as clubs, small groups, individual counseling, mentoring programs, incentive programs, and support to meet basic needs.

Blair Oaks strives to emphasize positive interactions among staff and students. Elementary staff are encouraged to deliver "positive punches" to co-workers each month to share kind words with one another. Elementary students can receive "pause and praise" from staff members, which is a positive note about the student that gets shared with parents. Students can also receive "green slips" for showing good character, and they are read aloud in front of the school during weekly morning assembly. By promoting positive behavior in these ways, students and staff are motivated to be the best they can be.

Our staff continuously seeks professional development opportunities to educate themselves on diversity, trauma, and inclusion. We work together to share that information with each other to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students, families, and staff. We not only provide, but also encourage, many types of support to help our students, families, and staff. We have a counseling department that provides weekly lessons to all classes promoting acceptance, tolerance, and good character. The school also provides small group and individual counseling to meet diverse needs of students. We have programs where we work with community members to provide school supplies, coats, shoes, glasses, or any other needs families may have.

Most of all, we strive to create a family environment where students feel love and support that they need to succeed inside and outside of the classroom. We want our students to know we will meet them where they are and help them get to where they want to be.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Blair Oaks Elementary is a Falcon Family that encompasses students, teachers, staff, parents, and the entire community. The focus of the falcon family is always to do what's best for the kids.

Before Blair Oaks Elementary was officially enrolled in the process of PLC, the values of such a community were embraced and implemented. The PLC model is at the foundation of every success experienced at Blair Oaks Elementary. Open communication and collaboration in our school community is a priority to nurture strong relationships. Professional development time is used to align standards across the grade levels and sort standards by mastery, reinforced and introductory. Teams then create, submit and reflect upon those common assessments. Next steps may be re-visiting the standard with students who did not master the skill, changing the assessment, or adapting the teaching methods to better meet the students' needs. The team is very open to each other's suggestions. This openness has greatly strengthened the relationships that have been built over the years. Our team looks forward to and values the time spent together for collaboration.

The administration recognizes the importance of, and continually strives to build, a positive and innovative learning environment for the staff. A positive environment is sparked at the grassroots by affording staff a chance to get to know each other not only on an academic level, but on a personal level as well. Connections outside of the classroom strengthen respect for one another which naturally benefits collaboration in the classroom. One particularly popular event is Mystery Monday. It is coordinated by the principal and held once a month after school. Staff are invited to participate. The mystery is kept secret until it's time to depart. Examples of a Mystery Monday event are nature walks, crafting, painting, ice skating or helping our community in various ways. Staff love the excitement of the mystery and look forward to the personal experiences with colleagues.

The principal offers several opportunities for teachers to share successes in the classroom and to learn new ideas. During faculty meetings, the principal has a goal of learning more about each other and learning more from each other. For example, the principal will put staff into small groups based on something personal about them. Through discussions, similarities can be found. The meeting then moves into professional development which may include, Kagan strategy, whole brain action, or other professional development areas.

The principal holds meetings in classrooms so teachers can see firsthand the innovative and creative ideas of their coworkers. Periodically, the principal will highlight bulletin boards or activities from a classroom she recently observed and will ask that classroom teacher explain it. Power Hours are a popular opportunity to share classroom successes, where teachers are invited to prepare an hour-long presentation on a topic they're excited about. Some topics include: whole brain, Kahoot, GimKit, SeeSaw, GoGuardian, standards-based grading, mental health, positive behavior, technology, phonics, etc. These are excellent opportunities for teachers to be recognized for their creativity in the classroom and for staff to gain new ideas.

As you can see, the PLC model has created a firm foundation for Blair Oaks Elementary. Our Falcon Family continues to pursue ways to grow and improve in a united and invested fashion. The honor of being nominated for a National Blue Ribbon Award is attributed to the work of every member of the school district. Blair Oaks Elementary is excited to share with other school districts our recipe for success using the PLC model. For as one succeeds, we all succeed.

We are Blair Oaks!