

***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. Brenda Beiswenger  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 613 West Avenue B  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Bismarck State ND Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 58501-3451

County Burleigh County

Telephone (701) 323-4240 Fax (701) 323-4245

Web site/URL https://www.bismarckschools.org/roosevelt E-mail brenda\_beiswenger@bismarckschools.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.

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Jason Hornbacher E-mail jason\_hornbacher@bismarckschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Bismarck School District 1 Tel. (701) 323-4000

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.

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Jon Lee  
(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.

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

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):
- 16 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 23 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	11	6	17
1	12	9	21
2	8	12	20
3	5	15	20
4	12	7	19
5	12	11	23
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
<b>Total Students</b>	60	60	120

\*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):
- 10 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0.8 % Black or African American
  - 6.7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.8 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 80.9 % White
  - 0.8 % 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: 16%

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

Last year, our school started with the Hybrid model because of COVID-19. Some families chose to do home schooling during this time as childcare was difficult, or they were worried about COVID. This was a majority of our students that started after October 1 as our Hybrid model went to full day at this time.

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	118
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.16
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

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

Spanish

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

3 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 36 %

Total number students who qualify: 43

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 18 %  
22 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>0</u> Autism                  | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>4</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: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	6
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
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.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	94%	97%	95%	97%	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.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

At Bismarck Public Schools and Roosevelt Elementary School, our mission is to "Empower every learner to thrive" and our vision is "Together, our strong relationships build inclusive, collaborative, and innovative environments that create agency and inspire a passion for learning, excellence, and discovery."

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

<https://www.bismarckschools.org/cms/lib/ND02203833/Centricity/domain/199/board%20administrative%20policies/a%20-%20school%20board/AAC%20Nondiscrimination%20and%20Anti-Harassment.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**

---

Roosevelt Elementary School is one of Bismarck Public School District's sixteen elementary schools and is located in the central part of Bismarck, North Dakota. With 120 students enrolled, it is the smallest in population of all the schools and when you walk through its doors, you feel as if you are going back in time. It has a comfortable, cabin feel with the inside being modeled to look like a cabin located in the heart of the badlands of North Dakota, the place where President Roosevelt resided for several years the late 1800's. It gets its charm from the 26th president that it was named after, Theodore Roosevelt, with Teddy quotes, log furniture, paneled walls, and National Park signage sprinkled throughout its common areas, hallways, library, and classrooms.

Roosevelt Elementary prides itself on forming strong relationships with and among its staff, students, and families. We accomplish this not only by the small size of the school but the collaboration among staff to make every child feel like an important part of the community. To promote a sense of belonging, each kindergarten thru fifth grade student and staff member, is selected to be a member of one of four cabins. Each cabin has about thirty members and is represented by a color and a theme with a connection to adventure. We have the Pathfinder Cabin, the Discovery Cabin, the Trailblazer Cabin, and the Explorer Cabin. The Cabins meet once per week to connect, build community, and do an activity that is connected to our life skill of the month. We acknowledge positive behavior and following expectations by rewarding the students with Roughrider stickers that are collected monthly. We celebrate the number of positive behaviors each month at a Roughrider Rally where Cabins have some friendly competition to see how many they stickers receive.

Academic growth, social emotional learning, and student achievement have increased at Roosevelt over the past four years as a result of some key focus areas including Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports (PBIS). By utilizing and refining our systems, we are able to target instruction and be responsive to student's needs both behaviorally and academically. We use Professional Learning Communities as a tool to make data-based decisions on instruction, curriculum, and assessments to ensure that all students will meet the potential.

At Roosevelt, we follow the Roughrider Way, which is to be respectful, responsible, and safe. These core expectations serve as our foundation for Tier I behavior supports for all students. Each teacher conducts a morning meeting every day that allows students to have a soft landing and build community within their classroom. We utilize trauma informed practices knowing that they not only support some learners, but they are good for all. Students also engage in the Second Step which is our Core curriculum for social emotional learning. It provides explicit instruction on the problem-solving process and how to use calming strategies. The teacher will also use S'cool move techniques to help children self-regulate and get their body and brain ready for learning. All of these strategies connect back to our continuous improvement model of High Reliability Schools in providing a safe, collaborative culture.

A valued component at Roosevelt is the collaboration of the Student Support Services team which consists of the principal, social work, counselor, special education teachers, and school psychologist. This team meets weekly to review data around our Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) that provides social emotional supports for all students. The ISF report provides information on behavior tiers which is based on attendance, behavior, and course work. It gives the team data to make decisions on tiered supports for students. Some common interventions that come from these meetings include Check-in Check-out, skill building groups, lunch bunch, and individual counselor time. For more intensive behaviors that would be considered Tier III, the team may decide to move to problem solving with the Student Assistance Team or complete Functional Behavioral Assessment. All of these supports for teachers and students, promote a positive environment and learning experience for all.



## **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:**

During the past two years, Roosevelt along with our school district, has been working toward the implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC) in the content areas of literacy, math, science, and social studies. Guaranteed and viable means that we have identified essential content and skills necessary, based on state standards, for all students to learn in each content area and grade level. Viable means that the curriculum can be taught in the available time needed to master these skills and concepts. Teachers utilize a curriculum map that was developed with grade level teachers across our district to provide structure and pacing. The curriculum map is also a communication tool so that all teachers are providing their students with common experiences at the same time. Every student, in every class, will be taught the same essential knowledge and skills. Teachers focus on the lesson planning using the map as well as planning common assessments that will check student proficiency.

Our GVC is paired with our instructional framework based on Marzano’s New Art and Science of Teaching. Roosevelt has committed to utilizing the instructional elements and strategies that are proven to be effective with increasing students’ achievement. Teachers are encouraged to use the many strategies that are found within our framework to reach the various learning styles of their students. We are at the beginning stages of integrating our framework and will continue to grow in our knowledge of the effective strategies that it includes.

We assess students using standards based grading practices which have been in place for many years in our district. During the past school year, we engaged in professional learning around proficiency scales and understanding the learning progression that happens for each of our prioritized standards. This learning has brought meaning and motivation to our students as the teachers are utilizing student friendly scales in their instruction.

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

Our school is committed to using high-quality reading instruction with emphasis on The Five Pillars of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The teachers organize activities into a 90-minute reading block to grow successful readers. We utilize the district adopted Benchmark Literacy Curriculum to support instruction of the North Dakota State Literacy Standards. This curriculum uses a spiraling model aligned to developmentally appropriate instruction at each grade level. Students participate in explicit reading instruction during whole class interactive read alouds, comprehension mini-lessons, and differentiated small-group instruction.

Students learn strong decoding and word-solving strategies through phonemic awareness, phonics, and word study instruction individualized by grade level standards. It provides instruction through the I do, we do, you do model to support the application process and allow students to make literature connections independently.

Teachers use grade level assessments, Fountas and Pinnell Reading level, and NWEA Map Assessments to learn more about readers in their classrooms. Teachers use small group instructional best practices to provide individualized skills-based literacy instruction around assessment results. Conferring with readers allows teachers to adapt instruction to meet individual vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension needs. The spiraling curriculum allows teachers to connect whole group explicit instruction to individualized small group where students can practice and apply new learning.

Writing instruction at Roosevelt is based on three genres of writing including narrative, opinion, and informative which are a part of our North Dakota State Literacy Standards. Teachers use these types of

writing as a base to grow each individual student's voice. Teachers utilize mentor texts to build connections between reading and writing. Each day, students experience the writing process through explicit modeling and application. Our goal is that students will be able to use writing to communicate clearly with an audience.

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

Our school is committed to using an inquiry-based approach for mathematics instruction in which students actively explore mathematical ideas to develop conceptual understanding that leads to procedural fluency. During math instruction students collaborate, investigate, and take part in problem-based learning. They engage in whole class, small group, partner, and individual activities in which the teacher uses purposeful questions to assess and advance students' reasoning and sense making about important mathematical ideas and relationships.

We utilize the district adopted Math Investigations curriculum to complement our North Dakota state standards. This curriculum matches our hands on approach to instruction. All students also use DreamBox, an online math program that adapts to each student's individual mathematical needs in real time. It is standards aligned, builds confidence, and is engaging for students. Teachers are able to assign specific skills and concepts to each individual learner based on MAP assessment data, standards-based assessment data, or the concept they are covering in Investigations as it is aligned with that curriculum. This individualized approach has proven to show growth for many of our students. Review and practice and basic fact fluency remain important components of inquiry-based math instruction.

Opportunities to revisit concepts and build fluency are provided through mental math activities and number talks, math games, strategy-based instruction, and paper/pencil activities. Throughout all of these activities, deepening conceptual understanding and helping students make connections remains the goal.

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

Science at Roosevelt consists of a hands-on, project-based learning instructional approach. We utilize our North Dakota state standards to guide our instruction with Mystery Science as our tool for teaching and learning. Each teacher has access to their grade level content and our district created material kits that go with each unit in Mystery Science. This allows the teachers to have everything at their fingertips to conduct the experiment that goes along with the video learning from "Mystery Doug."

Through our standards, we not only cover life, physical, and earth science but engineering standards as well. Teachers incorporate many STEM learning activities with a focus on the design process. Our local science center provides STEM activities to schools for family nights which we scheduled this year. The response was overwhelmingly positive with parents excited to engage in the learning with their students.

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

Our Social Studies curriculum is focused on the North Dakota state standards with four domains consisting of civics, history, geography, and economics. A high-quality social studies program is essential for all students as it provides a foundation for intelligent and precise thinking. Social studies learning prepares students to contribute to society as an informed citizen and to be a responsible, productive member of society. Kindergarten students study about themselves, first graders study about their school and family, second graders study about their community, third graders study about their community and beyond, fourth graders study about North Dakota, and fifth graders study about America's past. Teachers plan units and projects around the themes presented in the standards, integrating technology and literacy skills where appropriate. Writing is also a key to demonstrating knowledge and teachers will integrate different genres of writing within social studies content.

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

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

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

All students at Roosevelt participate in physical education, music, library media, counselor lessons, and art each week. Each of these areas has its own standards and content that are taught in a systematic approach using a curriculum map or pacing guide. All of these subjects provide a well- rounded educational experience for all of our students. Students that struggle with an academic area will often shine in one of these areas, which provides a sense of pride and accomplishment.

All students receive 60 minutes of music education each week and consists of listening, playing musical instruments, singing, movement, and note reading. The music teacher plans performances for each grade level which are presented to the community. It was exciting to have musical productions being performed by our students this year, as the past year and a half they were on hold. We also had an optional, free after school dance club that students could volunteer to attend. Twenty-six boys and girls enjoyed this five-week session learning hip hop and jazz.

Physical Education consists of 60 to 90 minutes of instruction per week depending on the grade level. The PE teacher plans activities and lessons around movement, physical fitness, team building and health. Life-long physical activities are reinforced as well as sportsmanship and rule following. A culmination of physical education is Field Day, which is an annual tradition at Roosevelt that celebrates games and sportsmanship. Our 5th grade students are the field day facilitators and lead all the activities and promote school spirit. Another highlight for our school is the annual staff vs. 5th graders in a sporting event, often soccer. It gets competitive with either side not wanting to be showed up by the other.

The Library Media Specialist goes into classrooms for a minimum of 30 minutes per week, with flex time available for additional project work. Typically, the LMS will collaborate with the classroom teacher on content learning and plan for a technology integration or digital literacy project to integrate into the curriculum. Our school counselor also goes into each classroom for a 30-minute lesson per week. The counselor uses the standards to guide the instruction and lessons. Art is also taught regularly at Roosevelt with the teachers being the primary instructor.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

At Roosevelt, we use the Multi-Tiered System of Support framework, a systemic continuous improvement approach in which data-based problem solving and decision making is practiced across all levels of the educational system. The voice of and collaboration with students, family, and community is foundational to the MTSS framework. We use universal screenings three times per year to determine the level of intervention or enrichment of the core each student needs. Tier I has a focus of all students in core instruction with district academic standards being the foundation. If a student is identified as needing Tier II support, the team will decide the appropriate research-based intervention to utilize for targeted supplemental instruction in addition to the core instruction. If a student is identified as needing Tier III support, intensive intervention, in addition to core instruction, is adapted to address individual student needs. Progress monitoring is conducted regularly to determine if the supplemental or intensive intervention is working to close academic gaps.

Research based interventions utilized with students are provided by our Title I reading/math specialist, special education teacher, an instructional assistant, or classroom teacher depending on schedules. In several grade levels, this student support team will push into the classroom, providing instruction for small groups of students. This model provides opportunities for the specialists to collaborate with the classroom teachers on a regular basis in order to target specific needs and has been very successful for our students.

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

Eleven percent of our students are considered to be in the gifted and talented program, these students are also identified through our tiering process three times per year. Roosevelt has an itinerant gifted and talented teacher that comes to the school two times per week to work with small groups of students. This teacher provides enrichment instruction in math and reading as well as providing programming for the students to do during our What I Need (WIN) time. WIN is our intervention and enrichment time that we have schedule for each grade level. This consists of thirty to forty minutes depending on the student need per class.

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

Our special education program is fully aligned with our MTSS framework, and the teachers provide intervention for our most fragile learners based on their IEP goals and objectives. At Roosevelt, our team is called Student Support Services and includes our learning-disabled teacher, our teacher of the emotionally disabled, speech language pathologist, social worker, counselor, occupational therapist, and school psychologist. Services are provided in and out of the regular classroom based on each individual student, service needed, and goal. The teachers work closely with parents and guardians, communicating frequently in order to provide open dialogue on supporting the learner.

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

At Roosevelt, we have an itinerant English Learner teacher that comes to our school to work with three of our EL students. The teacher supports them through individual, small groups, and in the classroom during Core instruction. Materials and resources for the classroom teachers are also provided so they are able to communicate and teach the students within the classroom setting.

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

We do have several students that are considered Students in Transition or homeless. Our Student Support Team makes every effort to provide transportation to and from school, create attendance plans with families, and provide necessary items needed for school.

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

---

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

One of the Bismarck Public School District's values is innovation and at Roosevelt we strive to create and foster an environment that is innovative, engaging, and provides opportunities to explore with inquiry. One instructional strategy that we use directly connected to innovation is Project Base Learning (PBL). All teachers have training in this strategy and have developed projects that integrate cross-curricular standards. This strategy allows students to engage in critical thinking activities that solve a real-world problem. These activities give them a sense of ownership in their work as they think creatively and collaborate with others. Technology is often integrated into projects and the Library Media Specialist collaborates with the teachers. Programs that student often use include the Google suite, Brainpop, and Flipgrid. Teachers also utilize the Library Media Specialist to support inquiry through STEM. They partner to provide rich learning experiences such as coding, video recording, research strategies, and Lego Robotics. Providing students voice and choice within projects is also highly motivating.

We have also engaged in an all-school learning opportunity of hatching chickens. This provides teachers with multiple content learning opportunities but more importantly builds a sense of responsibility and community. The conversations and excitement around hatch time are priceless. This is learning that is not easily forgotten.

At Roosevelt, we are at the beginning stages of providing student leadership roles. We have developed a Cabin Council which gives students a voice in how the school is being run. They organize around special events and whole school community building activities. We find that students in these types of leadership roles make for a positive contribution to our school. Older students also partner with younger students to do activities such as letter tracing, math game practice, and Check-in Check-out role modeling. Here the older students take pride in helping the younger students which increases positive peer relationships.

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

Fostering strong family relationships through parental engagement is a high priority at Roosevelt. We are fortunate in that the size of our school makes it easier to build lasting partnerships with each of our families. With a total of 120 students and 92 families, we are able to make connections to each one of them. One way we are able to do this is through open communication and listening. We have a strong PTO that meets monthly to learn about what is happening at school and offer ways to support. This might be monetary support for teachers to purchase items for their classrooms that connect to learning or it might be volunteering for events. They host fun, community building evenings that include bingo night and a Welcome Back to School Family Fun night. These events are heavily attended and feedback from parents is always positive.

Because we are a Title I school, we also have a Parent and Family Engagement budget that we can utilize to support events for families to interact and learn together. Roosevelt staff have hosted various activities that promote community, provide opportunities to learn about school programming, and teach how to support learning at home. Several examples include STEM, reading, or math nights where a meal and activities are provided. We have also shared instructional videos about appropriate bedtime, structure at home, and managing behavior that our counselor and social worker have created. Our college extension agency has provided a training on social emotional regulation in the home. Each spring we survey our parents to determine specific topics of interest and plan forward based on the results.

We utilize various forms of communication such as Facebook, email, phone calls, parent teacher conferences, and in person connections to provide information about each child, how they are progressing, and what they are learning at school. The teachers use Take Home Folders and Student Planners as another tool for communication. At Roosevelt, we continually seek opportunities to strengthen every relationship.

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

At Roosevelt Elementary, creating a safe, collaborative culture is the first key to our continuous improvement model and this only happens through collaboration among all staff at the building. All voices are important, and feedback is considered when making decisions about school initiatives, student learning, or the optimal functioning of the school. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback through various surveys during the school year. We have a Google form that all staff have access to in order to provide their input any time throughout the school year. The leadership team views this form in order to be responsive to the ideas that are provided.

We use a system of professional learning communities as one means of creating a culture of collaboration. Each grade level PLC team meets Tuesdays after school. They use data to create an academic goal and set their weekly agenda based on the PLC questions including: What do we want students to know and be able to do? How will we know if they do? What do we do if they don't? What do we do if they do? The teachers are the leaders and facilitators while our instructional coach and the principal attend to be a resource as needed.

The teachers and staff at Roosevelt Elementary have a variety of professional learning opportunities that are provided by our school district or local colleges or universities. They can pick and choose what fits their learning needs and the needs of their students. Our district has also been working this school year on standards-based education. We all have received professional development on writing and utilizing student friendly proficiency scales. This work has proved meaningful for the teachers and engagement has been high.

The Culture and Climate committee at Roosevelt has also been instrumental in planning and organizing fun events and to encourage a sense of belonging among our staff. We have potlucks, birthday celebrations, Valentine pals, special celebrations for important events, and treat days. Although these alone do not build the culture, it does bring the staff together in a fun and meaningful way. Our staff has also engaged in a book study and monthly learning around the book "Onward, Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators" by Elena Aguilar. This practical book connected to experiences we are having and feeling each month and provides a framework to tackle stress and burnout. The connections were numerous as we were all experiencing and dealing with the COVID pandemic together.

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

At Roosevelt, the philosophy of school leadership is based on collaboration, communication, and cooperation. The importance of these three characteristics is evident as the principal is also the principal at another small school in close proximity to Roosevelt. The assistant principals and members of the leadership team must embody high levels of trust, they need to know important information so they can assist with making decisions when the principal is at the other school building.

It is the leaders in the building that have an obligation to provide a safe environment for all members, both students and staff, to learn and grow together. The High Reliability Schools continuous improvement model is used as a tool for planning and collecting data on the growth around a safe and collaborative culture. Based on this information, the leadership team is able to make meaningful data-based decisions regarding our school focus. Leading indicators, specific conditions known to be associated with successful school and continuous school improvement based on research and experience are reviewed. Lagging indicators, data or artifacts of practice that provide evidence, are measured.

The leadership team and the principal work together to ensure our school goals and objectives are carried out successfully. The leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principals, a classroom teacher, the counselor, the reading specialist, a special education teacher, and the instructional coach. The team meets at least once per month to plan professional learning based on feedback from the staff, review ways to optimize school functioning and safety, and develop the school's continuous improvement plan.

Distributive leadership and fostering the leadership potential in all members of our school community is also an important part of the philosophy. The administration seeks feedback and participation as well as provides opportunities for teacher leaders to share information with staff. The goal is to empower staff to find their

strengths and be vulnerable to share these strengths. The principal works next to the teachers to set goals, monitor progress both academically and social emotionally, and provide feedback.

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

One of our values for Bismarck Public Schools and Roosevelt Elementary is inclusion which embodies our views on diversity as a whole. At Roosevelt, we strive to celebrate culture, respect students and staff backgrounds, and make it a part of the learning experience at our school. We find strength in the diversity at our school, even though it is limited in number. Currently, our student population is made up of 10% American Indian, 1% Black, 7% Hispanic, 1% Pacific Islander and 81% Caucasian. Our team works to ensure high levels of learning for each demographic group through core instruction and intervention.

Culturally sensitive strategies are shared and practiced through our instructional framework, meeting the needs of all of our learners. This includes teaching inclusivity and acceptance of all backgrounds in order to be more culturally responsive, through our Second Step curriculum. Our Social Studies curriculum and standards also include specific units of study on American Indian history and culture. We provide our students opportunities to visit cultural areas and state parks to learn about and appreciate the indigenous people of our state. Experts are invited in to provide in-depth lessons on various tribal history.

We also have a Cultural Response Coordinator available to our school that works with families, small groups, and individual students on a need basis. This coordinator is able to attend meetings to be a support, present cultural programming to the students, push into classrooms for academic or behavior support, have a lunch bunch with small groups with a focus of culture, or provide any other academic or cultural supportive services to our school. This coordinator works specifically with our American Indian children but can also provide education for all around culture. This is a new partnership and our team at Roosevelt looks forward to seeing this opportunity and partnership grow.

Roosevelt's Library Media Specialist also ensures that our library supports and represents diverse backgrounds through books and author features. Professional learning around the books in our collection was presented to the staff. We recognize that this is an area of continued learning and will continue to strengthen our community by valuing people for who they are, nurturing our diversity, and embracing the contributions of all students, families, and staff.

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

---

There are many factors that contribute to the success of Roosevelt Elementary. The one factor that has ascended above all others and has made the most impact throughout our school is collaboration specifically revolving around and tied to Professional Learning Communities. Our system of PLCs has evolved and developed over time with COVID being the catalyst for change.

Collaboration and PLCs between teachers, the instructional coach, and the principal is necessary for student growth and success. Because we are a small school, and many of our support staff including the principal work at another small elementary school in close proximity to Roosevelt, our grade level PLCs are held in collaboration with that school. As a result of COVID and the need to collaborate around virtual instruction and learning, our schools came together so that a team of grade level partners could plan together versus the typical vertical PLCs at each school. This not only saved time of the shared staff but provided support from other educators at each particular grade level.

Joint PLCs is now the norm and take place after the school day for 60 minutes per week. Through the support of an external consultant, we designed our system to include specialists as members when needed for collaborating around a specific need or student. Each PLC creates an agenda based on the questions for a high functioning team including: What do we expect students to learn? How will we know when they have learned it? How will we respond when they don't learn? and How will we respond when they already know it? The PLC sets a SMART goal using baseline data that is typically measured through common formative assessments or other assessment methods. A focus this year has been the use of proficiency scales and student friendly proficiency scales. This has led to highly efficient PLCs around one element of our instructional framework.

Collaboration at Roosevelt is not just reserved for PLCs but happens throughout the school day and among many staff members. This is what makes our school a true family and a special place to learn and grow. On a typical day, you may find the music teacher planning a project-based learning activity with the kindergarten teacher or the reading specialist, special education teacher, and an instructional aide collaborating around the best instructional approach for a student struggling with phonemic awareness. You may find the counselor, social worker, and a classroom teacher reviewing check-in check-out data for a student with a behavior goal of following expectations. Maybe you will find the MTSS-B committee planning the next student celebration on a life skill for the month. No matter where you look throughout our school, you will observe and hear mutual respect and collaborating all around the success of our students. This is what truly makes Roosevelt a place where every learner is empowered to thrive.