

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

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

School Mailing Address 146 Berkley Boulevard
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Baraboo State WI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 53913-1001

County Sauk County

Telephone (608) 355-3925 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://www.baraboo.k12.wi.us/schools/glw/ E-mail eblasing@barabooschools.net

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Rainey Briggs E-mail rbriggs@barabooschools.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Baraboo School District Tel. (608) 355-3950

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. Kevin Vodak
(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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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 | 16 | 24 | 40 |
| 1 | 23 | 29 | 52 |
| 2 | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| 3 | 24 | 34 | 58 |
| 4 | 33 | 24 | 57 |
| 5 | 34 | 22 | 56 |
| 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 | 157 | 158 | 315 |

*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):
- 7 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 81 % White
 - 7 % Two or more races
- 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 14%

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 | 21 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year | 21 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 42 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020 | 306 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.14 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 14 |

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

Spanish, Vietnamese

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

6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 52 %

Total number students who qualify: 165

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 21 %
67 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>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>9</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>27</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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: 2
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. | 17 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 12 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 15 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 3 |

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

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% | 97% | 95% | 96% | 95% |
| 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.

The School District of Baraboo will prepare and inspire all students to grow to their full potential and engage in an ever-changing world.

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

https://www.baraboo.k12.wi.us/cms_files/resources/Notice%20of%20Non%20Discrimination%20Letterhead.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

Gordon L. Willson Elementary School (G.L.W.) is a neighborhood school serving approximately 325 students annually. Most students walk to school, or parents bring them, which allows us to see parents regularly. Working with many of the same families from year to year enables us to better understand the needs of our families. To help meet the needs of our families, many of our teachers have been trauma certified, or received a certificate in English language learning. This continued professional development provides families with additional classroom supports and helps to provide responsive educational practices.

There are many curriculum opportunities for students. Our guidance curriculum focuses on decision-making, problem-solving, academic growth and growth mindset, social skills, and emotional well-being. Students have guidance class with the guidance counselor every other week, and the counselor meets individually with students who need additional intervention to cope successfully with the challenges in their lives. Additionally, to help students begin their day in a calm and positive way, the school utilizes a “Mindful Minute”. Following announcements, the guidance counselor uses Google meet to lead students in mindful exercises which may include: breathing techniques, reflective questions, or yoga. Our Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports program (PBIS) promotes school safety and good behavior. Along with teaching and re-teaching behavior expectations throughout the school year, each morning during announcements the whole school recites the “Hands Pledge” to remind students to be kind to themselves and each other by refraining from using words and/or hands to hurt others. Implementing the “Hands Pledge” has decreased student use of physical aggression at school.

We have math interventions before school for the students with the greatest math deficiencies at each grade-level. These targeted supports have enabled struggling students to learn concepts in a quieter, less intimidating environment. Our school has classroom buddies in which a primary classroom (K-2) is paired with an upper-level classroom (3-5). These buddy classrooms participate in various activities such as reading partners, seasonal art projects, practicing math facts, revising written assignments, playing games, etc. In an effort to help students understand the importance of an education for their future, we utilize community-classroom partnerships. Each classroom has a community business partner who visits school to talk to students about their job, the skills needed for the job, and the joys and challenges of their job. One day each spring, there is an all-school 30-minute Fun Run/Walk to raise awareness about the importance of physical activity for a healthy life. Parents are invited to join their child for the event. In partnership with the Ho-Chunk Nation, tutoring is offered after school one day a week for students. We have hosted Opera for the Young and traditional Norwegian dancers to give students the opportunity to learn about different cultures through music classes.

G.L.W. also has many co-curricular activities for our students. Fifth grade students can participate in Student Council. Student Council designates school spirit weeks throughout the year and creates activities all students can participate in each day of spirit week. Student Council also creates fundraisers to benefit local community organizations. Students have the chance to participate in a before school Breakfast Book Club in which students meet monthly to discuss a selected book over a healthy breakfast provided by teachers and parent volunteers. Many students are able to capitalize on their love for reading, while some reluctant readers, who come only for breakfast, find themselves discovering books “made” for them. Students also have the chance to participate in an after-school Creativity Club which focuses on science, technology, engineering, art, and math challenges (STEAM). A school book fair, reading night, technology night, math night, and family night are just a few of the after-school activities which our families can attend throughout the school year.

We are incredibly fortunate to have supportive families alongside a supportive community. G.L.W. launched a multi-year fundraising campaign encompassing various activities and raised more than \$30,000 to replace our playground equipment so students have safe equipment which provides an array of opportunities for physical, social, and emotional growth. The playground is also a place neighborhood families like to spend time on the weekends.

To increase opportunities for our students, we applied for, and received, a grant from a local construction

company to have an outdoor learning space built adjacent to our school. In addition, several local businesses heard about the learning space and donated materials to complete the construction. The local high school science department, along with the buildings and trades department, installed vegetable and garden beds, and built a storage shed in that same area. Students are able to partake in academic activities outside and have the opportunity to maintain a garden during the warmer school months.

Our school motto is, “At G.L.W. we are growing, learning, and welcoming.” Everything we do centers around this motto.

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 2020-2021 School Year, GLW focused on social-emotional learning as we worked to support students and families with the impact of the pandemic. The GLW Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) for the 2021-2022 school year has two main areas of focus. First, GLW will focus on the implementation of new literacy resources and literacy growth for all students. Second, GLW will also continue to focus on creating a sense of belonging for all students in our school culture.

Staff will focus on the implementation of social emotional teaching and learning strategies, our morning mindful minute, and activities throughout the year to create belonging. The GLW School staff believe that it is vital that we help and support students and families to have the opportunity to access our learning resources, activities, and communication. GLW School has strong community partnerships, displays an ongoing commitment to social emotional teaching and learning as well as creating windows and doors into diverse cultures, fosters relationships between grade levels and consistently works collaboratively with staff and families.

District Goal (Student Learning Objective or SLO): By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, all students will be supported in their social emotional growth and will have made individually appropriate growth and/or progress toward essential grade-level standards and be on track to graduate.

District Goal (Professional Practice Goal or PPG): Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, all staff will work collaboratively to provide high quality, engaging and accessible learning opportunities. All collaborative work will be grounded in (equity/inclusivity) relationships, developing a sense of belonging, learning partnerships, and an awareness that self-care is the priority for all.

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

During the 2021-2022 school year, GLW adopted a science of reading mindset and began implementing curricular tools like Wit and Wisdom, as well as Sonday Phonics and Heggerty for Phonemic Awareness. We are working toward ensuring that in our classrooms, we build readers, writers, speakers, and thinkers. We prepare and inspire all students to grow to their full potential and engage in an ever-changing world.

In our classrooms we believe:

ALL students read engaging, high-quality texts. By reading rich, culturally varied and responsive, grade-level texts that build our students' understanding of the world, we empower them with the understanding that reading is their pathway to knowledge. We engage in collaborative conversations with members of our community to make decisions reflective of the lived experiences our unique and diverse student population bring to us.

ALL students engage in daily writing and discussion grounded in text evidence. Our students need daily practice discussing and writing about informational and literary text and other media in order to be successful in college and their careers. We give our students the support they need to read texts closely, then challenge them to speak and write about what they have read or viewed using evidence to back up their positions.

ALL students do the thinking and listening. We know how to read, write, speak, and think about our content, and we also know that our students won't gain these skills if we do the work for them. Through a gradual release of responsibility mindset, we support students through productive struggle and provide opportunities to move students from being dependent learners to independent thinkers.

ALL students learn and apply foundational skills. We know that foundational skills include print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, and fluency must be taught through explicit, systematic, and ongoing instruction. We use data to drive instructional decisions and engage in conversations focused on accelerating learning.

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

The Baraboo School District adopted the Bridges math curriculum at the elementary level following a thorough vetting process in which two Gordon L. Willson math coaches participated. EdReports research, multiple site visits, and collaborative grade-level meetings were completed in 2018-19, the new curriculum was endorsed by one hundred percent of elementary teaching staff and was implemented in 2019.

The Bridges curriculum addresses the Wisconsin Academic Standards. GLW Teachers utilize a blend of calendar activities, hands-on learning center “workplaces,” and mini-lessons - all differentiated based on student data and strengths. Examples includes mini-lessons on addition, number sense, etc. Key components of the curriculum that teachers have found particularly impactful include the emphasis on children using manipulatives as well as the focus on higher order thinking and problem-solving skills; giving students the opportunity to solve problems using a variety of strategies. Both of these methods align with our collective teaching philosophy.

We strive to ensure our Tier 1 instruction is dynamic, engaging, and is accommodating to the majority of our student population. However, using both Fast Bridge and iReady benchmark assessments three times throughout the year, along with teacher observations and curriculum assessments, our principal and coaching team collaborate to identify students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 mathematics instruction supports.

In 2017, the GLW math coaching team designed and advocated for morning math interventions. Prior to the implementation of this new program, there was not time, staff, nor materials to provide mathematics interventions to students needing Tier 2 and Tier 3 services. The team problem-solved each of these components. This collaboration resulted in the ability for six certified teachers to provide mathematics interventions four days per week. We were able to service twelve to fifteen students in grades one through five who were identified as having deficits in mathematics. Vertical team discussions led to the discovery that Bridges intervention kits (aligning with Tier 1 instruction) and Do the Math intervention materials (the elementary version of our district Middle School intervention) would best serve our needs. The district agreed to purchase these items upon being presented with our detailed plan to better serve our students.

The Covid-19 pandemic led to new challenges as we prepared for long-term virtual instruction for our students. Our teachers worked to bring Bridges learning activities to students in their homes via iPads, Chromebooks, and teacher-made manipulatives. Teachers also conducted daily calendar activities and math mini lessons virtually using Google Meets.

Further math successes at our school come in the form of annual Family Math Nights. Some of the themes have included: Math Around the World, Technology and Math, Family Game Night, and STEAM where families completed math challenges together. Additional highlights from these nights included collaboration with other elementary schools around the district, support from our school’s parent support group, and partnerships with local businesses to provide a pizza dinner and raffle prizes correlating to the evening’s theme. These annual events were vastly popular, reaching up to two hundred individuals in attendance having fun with math together!

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

Our K-5 Science curriculum is based upon the Next Generation Science Standards. We adopted this curriculum as we saw the need for inquiry-based learning in which student discussion, observation, and experimentation foster greater understanding of real-world phenomena. Our students focus on the realms of Earth Science, Life Science, Chemistry, and Engineering. In the spiraling curriculum, each grade level studies: the impact of plants and animals on the environment, the impacts of the sun and moon phases,

weather, energy, and chemistry. Each grade level expands the content knowledge within each scientific concept through observation, experimentation, and discussion.

Students partake in many outdoor activities to observe the natural world and record findings alongside data. In the upper grades (4th/5th), students incorporate experiments and engineering activities as well. For example, students in 4th grade meet with local engineers to design and build catapults from a variety of materials and then have a competition to see which design is most successful. Then, students discuss reasons for the success or lack of success. In 5th grade, students study the changes in animal populations and engage in a variety of computer programs to simulate the impact of different variables on a specific population.

As we have also instituted a brand-new ELA curriculum which strengthens writing, we have greater latitude to work explicitly on scientific writing/scientific explanations. Furthermore, we use some ELA time to delve into a deeper understanding of scientific readings through the introduction of the cause-effect and problem-solution text structure.

A variety of assessment data is collected during the year. Students work on group activities designed to assess the use of academic vocabulary and writing skills to explain scientific phenomena. Students also complete individual tasks to gauge their understanding as opposed to the repetition of facts. We have great student engagement and growth.

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

Our Social Studies curriculum is based on the Wisconsin Academic Standards for Social Studies. Throughout our grade levels, our students focus on inquiry-based learning, gathering and sorting sources of information, as well as creating claims to support their reasoning. Our students have social studies time built into their weekly schedule, however, our ELA curriculum contains many social studies based models.

Highlights of our social studies work includes: students in Kindergarten and First Grade learning about early American history as well as the continents of the world. Students in Second Grade learn about the American West and Indigenous People and the Civil Rights Movement with a deep dive into the important people involved. Students in Third Grade learn about Immigration from multiple perspectives and our local Baraboo History, culminating in a visit to Circus World Museum that highlights Baraboo and Wisconsin's unique part in circus history as the home of the Ringling Family. In Fourth Grade, students learn about the American Revolution and Wisconsin history while students in Fifth Grade learn more about the Revolutionary War from the native perspective and the American Civil War.

These units bring multiple perspectives to light and give students the opportunity to ask questions and dig deeper.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Classroom Guidance Lessons and Mindful Minute: All K-5 students receive a 30-minute classroom guidance lesson every other week by the school counselor. These lessons cover topics such as personal safety, bullying awareness and prevention, empathy, Zones of Regulation, emotion management, problem-solving, careers, and diversity. Lessons incorporate research-based curriculum and instruction in fun and engaging ways. The school counselor also facilitates a mindfulness exercise over the morning announcements each and every day to provide all students and staff with an opportunity to calm their bodies and minds when they first arrive at school.

Art: All K-5 students are taught a variety of different skills, scaffolded at appropriate levels while advancing challenge and increasing independence, problem solving, and creativity. We start class with a brain break and 5 minutes of quiet, independent sketchbook warm-up to allow students to express what they need to and reset. We allow for (and encourage) student choice, advocacy, expression, and input. Students are constantly learning about new and diverse artists to broaden the range of students' exposure. Educators have spent years here building a large (Art) classroom library filled with children's books displaying more various artists, representation, and encouraging students to read during class. Students are constantly reading, writing, and using math in their artwork planning, creating, and reflecting.

Physical Education: At GLW, in all K-5 Phy-Ed classes, students are not only taught physical skill development (psychomotor component,) but they also are taught essential life skills like honesty and sportsmanship, respect and appreciation for other's ability, body control and impulse control, personal goal setting and working towards that goal, and the importance of regular physical activity. From Day 1, students start to learn that the activity is more fun if everyone plays fair. It is natural for a new Kindergartener to focus only on what benefits themselves, but after a few interactive games with their classmates, they develop the ability to "put themselves in other's shoes." This concept of sportsmanship continues throughout their elementary years. As they get older, many activities become more complex, incorporating offensive and defensive strategies.

Throughout the various units, students find that they may be highly skilled at one particular unit because they have past experience in that activity outside of school, maybe even from the time they were very young, while other units, which are new to them, seem more difficult. This variation in ability from unit to unit helps them build empathy for others. As students continue with their elementary years, they build on their sportsmanship foundation and, not only are taught to respect other's varying skill ability, but also appreciate each person for what they contribute to the game. The focus of each unit is to look at where you are at as far as skill and knowledge and just try to improve on your current level. This goal-setting is used throughout every unit and every grade level. The hope is that this strategy can be applied to other areas of their life.

Music: K-5 students at GLW participate in two 30 minute music classes per week. These classes focus on using music as a tool for brain development and cross-curricular content. Music instruction centers on a routine for organization as well as an area for creativity and skill expansion. Classes are varied from music exploration through songs, dancing, vocal games, as well as using 21st century technology skills. There is also an extensive classroom library based on music and various artists across a wide-cultural spectrum that students are encouraged to explore not only through reading but also creating different sounds and instrumentations. Through a variety of studies, music has been shown to engage all areas of a developing brain, improving both reading and writing skills. Playing an instrument and vocal counting exercises have also been proven to improve math skills. GLW music classes work to expound on these areas to help students grow while still enjoying and learning music content.

Library: All K-5 students have a 30-minute scheduled library time each week where they come into the library to listen to a story or have a lesson on a library skill such as searching for books based on their genre. They are able to browse for books to check out and then have time for self-selected reading. Students in grades 3-5 have access 24/7 to eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines using Sora on their devices. Students in grades 2-5 participate in Hour of Code in December with a pre-session lesson taught by Ms. Nelson.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Through formal and informal assessments, teachers and our student services team continually monitor students' academic progress. Students that are identified as below grade level may receive several forms of intervention or support to help their learning.

to a number of Tier III services designed to provide wrap-around support for both individuals and/or families. Students have access to academic support, targeted literacy and math interventions, using research-based programs administered by trained interventionists in addition to community-based supports. Examples of these supports include Kids Ranch for literacy support, and individualized school-based programming such as the School Within A School model.

Students that need minor support will work with their classroom teacher through scaffolded activities or small group check-ins as appropriate. Teachers have the ability to request a student support team meeting consisting of the school psychologist, principal, math coaches, and instructional coaches for students that have significant academic concerns. Through this team meeting, a plan will be developed to best serve the student's needs and provide the necessary support. Specifically, our math coaches have set up morning math interventions for selected students in all grades to receive additional math specific support. Due to the COVID pandemic, these additional interventions have been on hold but we look to bringing these back in the future.

GLW has two Instructional Coaches within our building. Both positions work with teachers to coach them on instructional practices and provide support around scaffolding for students who may be struggling. One of these positions is fifty percent Interventionist and works with a caseload of students that are well below grade level in literacy.

Our staff works closely and collaboratively with each other to ensure that our students are receiving the best possible support. This targeted work has shown great progress in our closing the gap and helping all students learn to their full potential.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The advanced learner program at GLW aims to provide support and appropriate learning opportunities to our school's higher-level learners. All of our grade-level teachers work hard to differentiate instruction for these students. They are supported by our school's advanced learner coach. This role provides resources to teachers for these learners, monitors the advanced learners' growth and development during the school year, and organizes engagement opportunities for the students.

These engagement opportunities are available for all students (primarily in grades 3-5) and include things such as math competitions, spelling bees, writing opportunities, and after school clubs. These clubs include a school student council for 5th graders to promote leadership skills and a club that promotes creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills called CREATE club.

3c. Special education:

At Gordon L. Willson Elementary School (GLW) we follow a comprehensive, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) approach to addressing academic and social, emotional, behavioral achievement gaps for all students, including those students who are identified as benefitting from special education supports and services. GLW has adopted a "push-in" model for Individualized Education Plan (IEP) service provisions for the majority of our older students who are receiving special education support due to an academic, behavioral, or social-emotional need. Our highly trained and educated special education teachers are able to co-teach right beside our general education teachers, giving them the flexibility to work in whole groups, small groups, or individually with students to meet students' specific needs. Our "push-in" model also allows all students to continue to have access to the core curriculum, within the general education environment.

Many of our younger students benefit from receiving structured, research-based, math and literacy interventions in a small group "pull out" setting. These groups of younger students are sometimes made of a combination of learners who have IEPs along with students who don't, but have been identified to need additional intervention support beyond those provided in the general education classroom. The writing needs of our youngest learners with IEPs are met within the general education classroom alongside their general education peers.

Our students with speech and language needs are able to work with our skilled and long-tenured speech and language pathologist. Our language pathologist understands that speech articulation, sound production, and expressive and receptive language skills are the building blocks necessary for the development of phonemic awareness, reading fluency and comprehension, and writing development. Through speech and language therapy, GLW students' learning is scaffolded to support each student's individual speech and language development as well as their literacy acquisition.

The social, emotional, and behavioral needs of our students with IEPs are met both within the general education classroom and out of the classroom to allow for small-group or individualized instruction. Special education teachers and student services members like the school counselor, school psychologist, and behavioral interventionist are heavily invested in the social, emotional, behavioral well-being of every student at GLW, including those with IEPs. All students have access to guidance lessons within the general education classroom setting, and are able to receive additional support through highly structured and research-based Social Academic Instructional Groups (SAIG), and less structured lunch bunches and friendship groups.

Learners' IEP goals, services, and supports are then reviewed frequently in order to ensure that each student is closing the gap with their same-aged, non-disabled peers. Parent and student involvement in goal setting and service plan creation is a top priority at GLW where we embrace the fact that parents are the true experts of their child. At GLW we understand that sustainable growth cannot be achieved without this positive and active, working partnership.

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

English Language Learners (ELs) are supported in multiple ways at GLW. Students and families are provided first language support for district communications and building communications as needed. Spanish curriculum materials are provided to EL students in the school when appropriate.

Support of a student's first language is an important part of the EL program. Educators are encouraged to utilize materials in students' first language if necessary and available. English Language Learners are also supported within the classroom by teachers who have gone through additional certification training in English as a Second Language (ESL) through the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Multiple teachers at multiple grade levels have completed this ESL certificate program.

Our EL families also benefit from a team of EL teachers that spend time in each of our elementary schools on a regular scheduled basis. These families are connected to the school through community events but also take part in special EL nights to provide additional support and resources for our EL families.

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

Due to our proximity to most of the local motels willing to accommodate families experiencing homelessness, GLW does see families that are impacted each year. Baraboo is also home to Pathway Home, a local homeless shelter that was created in the past couple of years.

To serve these families district-wide, Baraboo employs an elementary-specific school social worker who works with all of our families experiencing homelessness, regularly assessing for and helping eliminate barriers to school access, student engagement, and family functioning.

In addition to eliminating financial barriers for curricular and extracurricular activities, grant funding allows us the ability to cover expenses for mental health services and after school organizations for students experiencing homelessness, to promote physical and mental wellness. Grant funding further affords students experiencing homelessness the opportunity to receive free individual tutoring and mentorship once a week during their time at the Boys and Girls Club.

As educators, we understand that a student cannot learn without their basic needs being met. Several years ago, GLW established our "Community Cupboard" for teachers to access. This cupboard is supported

through community financial donations and the money is used to purchase snacks that we are able to provide for students.

The Baraboo School District and GLW Elementary work tirelessly to serve all students but especially those students in underserved communities and unstable living situations. We strive to provide a safe place for all students and a helping hand to all families.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Gordon L. Willson Elementary School (GLW) we follow a comprehensive, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) approach to addressing academic and social, emotional, behavioral achievement gaps for all students.

Tier I (Whole School): Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Tier 1 Team: Certified staff volunteer to take part in meetings once a month to create school-wide programs to reinforce universal expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe in fun and engaging ways.

Tier II (Fifteen Percent of Students Needing Targeted Support):

Tier II PBIS: All K-5 students benefit from having the ability to receive additional academic, social, emotional, and behavioral support, as needed, through highly structured and research-based Social Academic Instructional Groups (SAIG), positive behavioral interventions, targeted supplemental literacy and math small group opportunities, and less structured lunch bunches and friendship groups. The Tier II Team at GLW is made up of a group of staff who hold many diverse roles combining general education and special education backgrounds. This team meets once per week to collaborate with general education and special education teachers and review behavioral and academic benchmarking data in order to identify student needs and implement programming to respond to those individual needs. Functional behavioral assessments are completed, when needed, in order to determine the function of severe or ongoing behavioral needs and, in turn, develop behavioral intervention plans. Student progress is monitored regularly to determine that appropriate services and supports continue to be in place to ensure academic and behavioral growth.

Tier III (Five percent of students needing intensive targeted supports): GLW students identified to be in need of additional services, both academic and/or behavioral, have access to a number of Tier III services designed to provide wrap-around support for both individuals and/or families. Students have access to academic supports, targeted literacy and math interventions, using research-based programs administered by trained interventionists in addition to community based supports. Examples of these supports includes Kids Ranch for literacy support, and individualized school-based programming such as the School Within A School model.

Tier III social-emotional/behavioral supports include community-based programs such as Therapy Without Walls, Comprehensive Community Services, and outside counseling services provided through Innervisions Counseling and the Ho Chunk House of Wellness.

Title VI: Since the 2020 school year, tutoring has been offered at GLW for Native American students. Funding for this activity is provided by the Title 6 Indian Education Federal grant. Snacks, bussing, and activities are provided for students one day per week after school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Prior to the COVID pandemic, GLW and the Baraboo School District had a strong and robust community partnership program. These community mentors were made up of local business owners and volunteers from the community. The mentors also included representation from the public library, police department, sheriff department, fire department, and other civil personnel. The mentor program had each classroom assigned a community partner that came and visited on a monthly basis. These volunteers assisted in the classroom as well as provided enrichment activities related to their careers. This program was put on pause during the 2020-2021 school year due to the pandemic. We are very excited that we have been able to reintroduce this program to our school community for the 2021-2022 school year and look forward to growing the program even further.

As a building and district, we have a strong partnership with Pathway Home, a local shelter for families experiencing homelessness. We also have a strong partnership with Hope House, a local shelter for women and children facing abusive situations. These partnerships have allowed us to share resources and assist families that are impacted in our community.

As a school, we communicate regularly with our families through a monthly newsletter. Prior to the COVID pandemic, GLW had many great events to connect our school to our families. These events ranged from academic based math and literacy nights to school culture events such as PBIS nights and our family fun run in the Spring. These events provided an opportunity for our families and students to connect and interact with the school staff in a fun and relaxed environment. As we move forward, we are bringing these events back as safety protocols allow. We are currently working on a family literacy night in May to highlight the amazing work we have been doing around our new curriculum.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The Baraboo School District has a robust Strategic Plan that incorporates teacher efficacy as a key component of that plan. Building positive, professional cultures around our schools has been and continues to be a priority for our district. It is critical that our teachers and support staff feel valued in the work that they do. The ability to provide staff members with ways to share their concerns and solutions around decisions that impact their day-to-day duties is an important part of creating a positive school climate.

As a district, we have utilized weekly early releases to provide staff with building level professional development and time with the Professional Learning Communities (PLC). A yearly plan plots out the year to provide a road map for our staff around their professional development and our PLC structure. These Wednesday times are invaluable opportunities for our staff to discuss student learning and work collaboratively to plan for providing individualized instruction. Several Wednesday times are also utilized throughout the school year to provide district level opportunities for professional development or grade level collaboration across elementary buildings throughout the district. These grade level collaborations grew out of the school shutdown in the Spring of 2020 and became an integral part of our PLC plans.

At GLW, staff members regularly have one-on-one conversations with the principal around school climate and culture. In addition to these individual meetings, each grade level meets once per month with the principal and instructional coaches to discuss school operations and student learning. Weekly early release times are utilized at the building level to provide Professional Learning Community time as well as building level Professional Development around curricular areas, social emotional learning areas, and other relevant topics.

During our short shifts to virtual instruction during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year, we worked to provide staff with the tools that they needed to succeed. Prior to 2020-2021, all students K-12 were shifted to 1:1 devices (previously 5-12). This allowed our virtual shift to be a seamless transition from the classroom to virtual instruction. Our instructional coaches and grade level teams worked to create virtual hubs for families to access information and classroom homepages in an easy to navigate way. At each shift, our staff were afforded some planning time and transition time to adjust to the virtual instructional model. These ranged from Wednesday afternoon time to prep and plan to a day of asynchronous learning for students to allow staff to prepare for their live virtual instruction.

4. School Leadership:

Throughout the past several years and across different administrators in the building, collaborative leadership has been key to the success of GLW. Currently, the principal is in his second year at the helm after transitioning from being a high school teacher in the district. The school principal connects on a weekly basis with the student services team and PBIS Tier II team around student success. The principal meets monthly with the PBIS Tier I team to look at whole school needs and activities to reinforce positive behavior around GLW.

Monthly meetings are scheduled with all of the teaching grade levels and departments to ensure that the

needs of staff and students are being met. Through these meetings, the administration uses data (when available) and curriculum supports/guidance to ensure that students have equitable and rigorous academics.

The principal holds a monthly staff meeting for certified staff and seeks to meet on a regular basis with support/non-certified staff as well. The principal sends out a weekly memo to all staff to cover upcoming needs and communicate important information in an efficient and timely manner.

The principal engages staff regularly in one-on-one conversations around school climate and culture. The principal sends out several surveys and also gathers rounding feedback to help better understand how the building is operating.

He also meets monthly with the parent support group to share the school's successes and collaborate on ways to support the school. He sends out a monthly newsletter to all families as well to keep families up-to-date on the happenings at GLW. Pre-COVID, the school hosted regular family engagement nights. The first of these events since COVID, a Literacy Celebration, is being planned for May, 2022.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the principal served in a dual role of Building Administrator as well as Administrator for Students learning virtually. Approximately 20% of all Baraboo elementary students were being served virtually in 2020. This was done in-house by Baraboo classroom teachers. The shift in learning modes from in-person to virtual was overseen by building principals in direct collaboration with the virtual teachers. The 2021-2022 school year has brought a more normal learning environment with very few students learning virtually through a cooperative program.

The building leader seeks continually and timely feedback from staff to better guide decision making. A cooperative learning environment amongst staff helps to foster a positive learning environment for students.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

GLW and the School District take equitable and culturally responsive instruction very seriously. During the 2020-2021 school year, all district staff participated in a book study on Zaretta Hammond's work, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*. This is reflected in our mission statement: The School District of Baraboo will prepare and inspire all students to grow to their full potential and engage in an ever-changing world. It is also reflected in our strategic plan of which equity and student-centered learning makes up two of the six components.

We feel that a great community deserves great schools, and the Baraboo School District is a recognized source of local pride. We offer an inclusive school community and are dedicated to providing a continuum of opportunities to all students. We focus on delivering personalized instruction through robust curriculum and technology infrastructure, equitable decision making, investing in teacher quality, and developing community partnership that Engage. Challenge. Inspire. Every Student. Every Day. Every Way.

In particular, we have a strong relationship with the Ho-Chunk Nation on whose land our school district resides. Our schools have Native American speakers that engage with staff and students and each school flies the Ho-Chunk Nation flag as a remembrance of the land that we live on.

Through our curriculum review, the area of Elementary Language Arts was identified as an area in need of improvement. In taking on this shift from balanced literacy to science of reading, improving the culturally responsive texts being used was a top priority.

Through this shift we put meaningful, complex texts at the heart of nearly every lesson and set students up to do lots of reading on their own so that all of our students, regardless of their reading level, build their knowledge of the world, gain confidence with challenging texts, and develop the critical thinking skills and vocabulary necessary for long-term success. These texts support our students' ability to read critically, build arguments, cite evidence, and communicate ideas today and prepares them to be better citizens tomorrow. We ensure that our students get many opportunities to be critical thinkers, readers, writers and speakers, offering our support and feedback to help them find success. We focus on developing these skills in the

early grades and know that developing these skills can be an essential part of intervention for our students in upper elementary and middle school who are below grade level.

As we chose a new curriculum, it was critically important that all students see themselves reflected in the texts and that multiple perspectives are included and highlighted throughout the modules.

Outside of our academic structure, we strive to make long term and meaningful relationships with our families. We offer various ways for families to connect with the school and join our school community. These events work to form supportive relationships that take into account our families cultural differences and interests.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The practice that has led Gordon L Wilson Elementary School to be successful is the collaboration of staff. We have formed a community of educators and we come together to best meet the needs of our students. We analyze data and problem solve solutions to promote student growth. Together as a staff we have come together to make GLW a safe and welcoming environment for students to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Students take a number of assessments during the year to chart the improvement of their academic skills. Benchmark data is interpreted by teams of teachers, specialists, coaches, and administrators. Student growth and successes are celebrated as the teams identify what made them happen. Then, students who are not making the projected progress are identified. The teams discuss what instructional practices are currently being used and what can be modified to better help these students.

We utilize all staff members to understand and then address issues discovered by analyzing data. For example, during response to intervention (RtI) time, grade level teachers, instructional coaches, special education staff, and paraprofessionals work together to meet the varied needs of our students. Teachers lead groups to improve literacy skills amongst students below grade level, as well as leading other groups to challenge higher level students to grow and improve. In addition, special education and instructional coaches are meeting with small groups of students with the highest needs. Paraprofessionals assist teachers by participating in such activities such as book clubs, phonics practice, letter identification, and practicing reading strategies.

Our staff comes together in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Grade-level teams work closely with each other on a daily basis to ensure consistency with instructional practices amongst classrooms. Adjacent grade-level teams also meet periodically to discuss the year-to-year growth and development of students. Our whole staff comes together to discuss, reflect and compromise on whole school policies and practices.

The collaboration of our staff at GLW has been the most instrumental practice to the school's success. Without individuals working as a whole, we would not have been able to make the academic gains to close the gap amongst our diverse population.