

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

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

School Mailing Address 1236 Kennedy Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Rib Lake State WI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 54470-9457

County Taylor

Telephone (715) 427-5818 Fax (715) 427-3221

Web site/URL https://www.riblake.k12.wi.us/schools/elementary/ E-mail jdallmann@riblake.k12.wi.us

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* Mr. Travis Grubbs E-mail tgrubbs@riblake.k12.wi.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Rib Lake School District Tel. (715) 427-3222

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 Mrs. Stacy Tlusty
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

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

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

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	20	13	33
K	25	9	34
1	21	21	42
2	14	23	37
3	14	15	29
4	18	21	39
5	12	21	33
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	124	123	247

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0.8 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87 % White
 - 3.2 % 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: 11%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	26
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	247
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
10 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 43 %

Total number students who qualify: 107

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 19 %
46 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>7</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>25</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
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.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	95%	97%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

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

It is the mission of the Rib Lake Elementary to provide the highest quality education for every student in a responsive and enriching environment. Together for Children!

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

https://www.riblake.k12.wi.us/cms_files/resources/411%20Equal%20Educational%20Opportunities.pdf

https://www.riblake.k12.wi.us/cms_files/resources/511%20Equal%20Opportunity%20Employment.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

Rib Lake Elementary (RLES) is truly a special place to work and learn. RLES is the only elementary school in the village of Rib Lake and is located in north central Wisconsin. Rib Lake has a population of 935 people, and is nestled in an area surrounded by lakes and woodlands. The largest woodland region in our district is the Chequamegon National Forest. Not only is Rib Lake surrounded by the beauty of nature, but also the beauty of the community, displayed through the support offered to those who live there. When someone in the community is in need, the community rallies around them to support them through their trials. The community has been a partner in the success of the elementary school. The shared belief between the school and the community is “Together for Children.” This is truly seen in the parents’ support of the teachers and administrators when working with students. Teachers and parents work together as a united front to help show the students the importance of education.

RLES has implemented research-based strategies to assist the students. It has been a priority to continue to improve the Response to Intervention process. The elementary school first implemented aligned specialist schedules so that grade-level teams have the opportunity for collaboration during a shared prep time. For Tier I instruction, an increased focus on the grade-level standards and “I Can” statements were implemented along with the use of small groups and differentiated instruction. A common “What I Need” (WIN) time was also established so each grade level would have set times for students to have Tier 2 interventions in the classroom or more intensive pullout support. Creating a common intervention time with no new classroom instruction ensures students would not miss core instruction. RLES thrives on the implementation of differentiation and individualization into the classrooms. Staff are able to have the important balance between building relationships with students and striving for academic excellence through the use of data. Benchmark data helps teachers assist the students to create and monitor goals for their own learning. Teachers then help facilitate this learning by creating individualized opportunities for each child.

Rib Lake Elementary has a deep belief in the importance of building relationships, the development of positive character, and having high expectations. RLES has implemented many innovative techniques and programs to help student growth. The staff has worked together to implement the Rib Lake ABCs: Attitude is Everything, Building Champions, and Commitment to Excellence. This starts as soon as the students walk in the door, by teaching perseverance and putting it into action. Students and staff are able to learn common language to help them solve problems, whether in the classroom or on the playground. Students are empowered to understand that they can control only how they react or respond, helping them to be strategic problem solvers in the classroom and in life.

The staff at Rib Lake Elementary uses a team mindset on determining the needs of the students. Building leadership meetings, staff meetings, and data meetings help to determine the next steps of the school. Continued professional development and observation of other successful schools have helped to shape our ever-changing learning environment. It is important, as a staff member, to model the behavior of a learner. The students are encouraged to take risks and learn from mistakes and the only way for students to learn this is to see it in action.

The 2021-22 school year in some ways looked different than the previous school year with COVID-19. RLES and the Rib Lake School District believed in the importance of keeping students safe physically but also understood that being in school with their friends was important for their mental and academic wellbeing. RLES worked hard to mitigate the possibility of a large number of students being quarantined by strategically grouping the students and allowing them to work together through the day. Staff stressed the importance of good hand washing and healthy habits to respect the students around them. RLES was able to sustain in-person instruction throughout the year. RLES supported the students that were quarantined with iPads or Chromebooks, hotspots if students did not have internet access, or worksheet and paper copies for students where internet was not even an option with a hotspot. Students with good internet connections were able to participate with Seesaw, Google Classroom, Google Meets or Zoom. The goal was to provide support to the students so they would be able to return in stride with the rest of the class or as close as possible.

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:

RLES utilizes a backward-design, standards-based approach to instructional planning. Using a “Build Your Own Curriculum model,” our teachers begin by unpacking the state standards that their students are expected to learn, determine how they will ultimately assess those content and knowledge standards, then design lessons to help students meet the goals that have been laid before them. During these lessons, teachers utilize the gradual release of responsibility model, typically following an “I do, we do, you do” approach. Lessons in reading and math typically follow a workshop model that offers the combination of a whole group mini-lesson, small group instruction, and individual work rounds. By utilizing this model, teachers are able to know the teaching standards in-depth, allow students’ voice and choice in how they meet some of those standards, and differentiate instruction accordingly to help all students achieve.

Several years ago, the staff at RLES looked into John Hattie’s work in “Visible Learning.” After looking at the data, teachers schoolwide began implementing “I Can” statements that help provide clarity for students around their expected learning for a given lesson. Additionally, teachers in grades three through five have helped students take ownership of their learning by using goal-setting conferences based on their Fall benchmark data, reviewing these goals after Winter benchmarks, and adjusting as necessary. This, along with a personalized learning approach that allows students to have voice and choice in their learning has helped our students take ownership of their learning. Progress is shared with parents via standards-based report cards and during student-led parent teacher conferences in the Spring.

Since March 2020, our elementary school has gone one-to-one with technology in all grade levels. Students in grades PreK-2 have iPads, while students in grades 3-5 have Chromebooks. While we continue to struggle with infrastructure that will connect all families and our buildings with appropriate connectivity in our rural area, having this technology in place allows teachers to differentiate instruction and intervention time, providing work at the exact level to help students grow.

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

The core English Language Arts curriculum delivered at RLES is based on the Build Your Own Curriculum model as opposed to a purchased curriculum. Each grade level has a reading lead teacher who works together with our Reading Specialist to dissect standards and develop a scope and sequence for the school year. Teachers utilize the standards-based approach to the curriculum process, develop the assessments for their standards, find instructional materials, and implement and adjust based on the student outcomes. The curriculum is constantly being refined to meet the needs of our students based on assessment data.

All grade levels devote 90 minutes to their core ELA curriculum. After analyzing our Forward statewide assessment results, an additional 30-minute dedicated writing block was added to our schedule. During the 90-minute block, teachers across all grade levels implement a Daily 5/Daily 3 model of instruction, where students get a whole group seminar, then break apart for choice rounds and CAFE groups (teacher small group instruction), before coming back together for another seminar. In grades K-2, students receive instruction on phonemic awareness, handwriting, phonics, spelling, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing. Students in grades 3-5 receive instruction on phonics and/or morpheme structures, spelling, language, comprehension, and writing.

While we do build our own curriculum, there are several programs that help our students find success. For handwriting, teachers utilize the Handwriting Without Tears program. Our phonics framework revolves around the Vowel/Syllable Pattern chart, which is a tool that anchors students’ learning across the years. Many other curricular aspects, such as spiraled daily language reviews and Word Walls to strengthen vocabulary also are a part of our literacy instruction.

Building our own curriculum enables teachers to know our standards at a much deeper level than following a curriculum would have allowed us to do. Although we had success with the curriculum we built, we are understanding the value that a high-quality, researched-based curricular tool can provide for our staff and students, especially with coordinated scope and sequence across grade levels. We are excited about the professional learning that we gained through the Language Essentials for the Teacher of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training, especially focusing on the implementation of Sound Walls, understanding phonics and spelling rules in a deeper way, and implementing the heart word method for irregular high-frequency words. We are currently looking to adopt a program that aligns with the Science of Reading research and the learning our staff has gained in the past year.

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

Rib Lake Elementary School has always provided a wide variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. This is evident in the math curriculum that is structured around the common core standards. Teachers provide instruction in whole groups, small groups and individually. Students who need more intense instruction are also afforded the opportunity to receive extra help from our math interventionist. The interventionist works closely with the regular teacher and sits in on our meetings where we discuss the strengths and concerns of our students. Another way students get extra help in math is through our classroom “what I need” time. This allows teachers to work with students who may not be understanding a standard or are behind in a skill without them needing formal interventions.

One of the best things about Rib Lake Elementary School is that although we use the standards to drive our instruction, teachers are given the opportunity to add their own flair to their instruction. This can be seen through the different projects that individual classes do to make the instruction come to life. One can see projects displayed on the bulletin boards and hallways and know exactly what standard the class is working on. Our younger students are always creating posters that show their understanding of the standards. The kindergartners tie their Let’s Find Out activities to math as well as science. As students get older, more technology tools are added to their repertoire to prove their understanding. Flipgrid, Minecraft, Dash Robots, and Green Screen activities are just a few ways technology tools enhance the learning and allow for a different proving option instead of paper and pencil tests. Extension activities are also provided to students who finish early or demonstrate a good understanding of the standard. These extension activities are usually a real-world project.

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

When one enters a classroom at Rib Lake Elementary School they can see that Science standards are infused into our math and reading/ELA curriculums. Students are introduced to science standards through mentor texts, direct instruction, videos, projects and experiments. They also read informational texts that provide opportunities for students to integrate information, perform experiments, think critically, and problem solve.

Examples of how our school infuses science into curriculum includes: Our kindergarten class has a subscription to a Scholastic resource titled Let’s Find Out. On Friday’s students investigate why things work the way they do or what they are made up of. These activities incorporate hearing nonfiction text presented through video. These videos also give an opportunity for students to practice their sight words. Third graders can be seen working on their I Wonder projects. These are often related to science and social studies. It incorporates reading, researching, creating and presenting. Fifth grade incorporates STEAM activities into their reading of informational text, researching, and then presenting to an authentic audience. Cardboard Arcade is another example of how fifth grade infuses science standards into the regular curriculum. Students create cardboard games and the whole school will participate in playing these games. This excitement carries through the grades because kids go home and create cardboard games on their own. Other classes find short videos that are tied into science and fill a small moment with a science standard.

Finally, standards are assessed through rubrics which tell the students and teachers if the skills have been mastered. The rubrics are a great tool because they tell the students exactly what needs to be done, and they are an easy way to assess learning.

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

At the Rib Lake Elementary School, we infuse our Social Studies standards and content into our reading/ELA and math curriculums. We learn about content through nonfiction and fiction text in our whole class and small group settings. We use nonfiction and fiction decodable and leveled text while in small reading groups. This text provides readers a chance to work on building their foundational skills as a reader while learning content related to the field of Social Studies. The fifth-grade classes become researchers while learning about notable Native American tribes of the United States. They write an informative essay, create a presentation, and give oral speeches to present their work. An example of how it is used in our math curriculum is through our Kindergarten students. They subscribe to the Scholastic resource called Let's Find Out. Through the use of this resource, they have learned about famous people in history like Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. They use this information to then practice their math standards of graphing and coin recognition.

Another way students at our school learn about Social Studies is through first-hand experiences on field trips. Our second-grade students go on an annual excursion called Mini Medic, where they learn about nurses, EMTs, doctors and other medical personnel in a community. Our first-grade classes take a trip every year to an old schoolhouse and practice comparing and contrasting the past with the present. The 4th grade classes visit a local cranberry marsh, the Ice Age Trail, and the state capitol building to learn about our state's history and current industries.

Through reading text and experiencing these first-hand experiences, teachers are able to instruct the students on their grade level standards as well as use this content to assess. Teachers are able to use this engaging content while instructing the students on their grade level standards. After instruction teachers are able to assess their standards taught as well as checking comprehension of the content.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

In our preschool program, there is an emphasis on social-emotional development. The children spend time learning how to be a student and a friend. They learn how to share, follow rules and routines, and take part in school activities. We spend a significant amount of time on fine motor development, beginning with non-writing activities and ending with writing names.

We cover topics in reading/language development in depth. As is developmentally appropriate, we work extensively with letter identification, formation, and sound production. We work to achieve this through large and small group instruction. The goal is to reach each student, helping them to learn all 52 letters (both upper- and lower-case letters), along with letter sounds by the time the students reach Kindergarten. We also provide instruction in numeracy development. A large portion of our mathematics training is done in small groups, but we also provide large group learning opportunities. Three-year-old students with exceptional needs are invited to attend our Early Childhood classroom and are given early interventions to help them succeed.

Our preschool standards have been put together by researching Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) and the Kindergarten standards. Because we know what the kindergarten standards entail, and we know how typically developing 4- and 5-year-olds function (through WMELS information), we have compiled a list of developmentally appropriate standards for our preschool program.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Rib Lake Elementary School prides itself in teaching students not only the core subjects, but also provides them a broad range of opportunities and experiences in the arts, physical education and other non-core areas. Through these opportunities, children learn to have an appreciation for the world around them, have a

greater sense of self-worth and confidence, and develop a sense of curiosity that leads to the love of life-long learning.

Our standards-based Art curriculum encourages creativity, self-expression, developing personal pride and ownership in their own creations. Students explore drawing, painting, clay, sculpture infused with lessons about art history while continuously scaffolding off of knowledge learned. Creative problem-solving skills that children learn translate across all subject areas. PreK students meet for 30 minutes once a week for a semester, while K-5 grade students attend class for 50 minutes weekly throughout the school year.

Library classes at RLES foster a love of reading and a culture of curiosity. PreK meets for 25 minutes per week for one semester, and grades K-5 meet 25 minutes a week for the entire school year. Students listen, read, check out books, operate the online catalog, learn how to navigate online databases and how to evaluate websites for credibility. A variety of authors, illustrators and genres are introduced with the goal of having students broaden their minds and discover the books that inspire them to keep reading and learning.

All students in grades Pre-K through five receive weekly instruction for 25 minutes dedicated to social and emotional learning. Monthly character traits are the central focus of these lessons. Over the course of this year, these traits have included responsibility, growth mindset, teamwork, and perseverance. By placing a focus on these positive character traits, students are learning about the importance of building a strong understanding of themselves as learners through goal setting, strong communication skills, and working cooperatively with others in the classroom and later in their communities. Students learn the importance of understanding their emotions and learn coping strategies that can be used to handle those emotions during times of conflict and anxiety to create healthy interpersonal skills.

Students K-5 participate in physical education for 25 minutes four times a week. We also offer Pre-K physical education one day a week for 25 minutes. The program offers a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities including units of snowshoeing, Nordic skiing, traverse rock climbing, and archery. Rib Lake Elementary uses heart rate sensors with students in grades 3-5 to promote the positive effect physical activity has on each student's physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being. The goals of the program are to increase student performance in the classroom, promote an active lifestyle for individual health, personal enjoyment during physical activities, and positive social interactions through sport and team games.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

RLES tailors instruction to individual student needs. This process begins with our big ABC meetings at the end of September and January. During these two-hour meetings, each group of grade-level teachers, interventionists, special education teachers, counselor, and principal meet to review benchmark data and determine which students are in most need of additional intensive support with an interventionist and which students need additional support from the classroom teacher. This support is provided daily during a thirty-minute scheduled WIN (What I Need) Time. During WIN, no new instruction is provided in the classroom, and every effort is made to pull students for reading, math, English Language support, speech, and special education services so that no core instructional time is missed. Students who are pulled out by interventionists during this time are provided research-based interventions in their area of greatest need and progress monitored. Some interventions we use include the Wilson Reading System, a modified Leveled Literacy Intervention, and an Orton-Gillingham approach using the Recipe for Reading and IMSE decodables. Classroom teachers also provide targeted instruction at this time, pulling compiled resources from the “WIN Bin” (many pulled from the Florida Center for Reading Research) that target the students’ areas of need. Our goal is to close the gap for every student so that they are successful at grade-level learning.

Collaboration is essential throughout the process to make sure students are getting support in all areas. For example, if a child in fourth grade struggles with both decoding and comprehension, the interventionist may target decoding strategies during WIN time while the classroom teacher targets comprehension skills during their daily CAFE group.

In addition to discussing reading and math concerns, ABC meetings are a time to discuss social-emotional and behavior concerns. Teachers are able to refer students for the CARES model, which provides mental health and counseling services on-site at the school. By providing for the needs of the whole child, we are able to help all of our students succeed.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The Rib Lake Elementary School prioritizes individualizing instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. This approach is a key component in providing high-interest, rigorous, and multi-faceted instruction that builds confidence while challenging students to reach their full potential.

This process begins with utilizing purposeful assessment tools. These tools provide data for teachers and students to work together to develop individualized plans which engage students in their learning endeavors. Students take ownership in their educational path and mentor opportunities are provided.

Meaningful assessments are used to determine the strengths and focus areas in reading and math. Through Fountas and Pinnell, Maps and AIMS Web, students receive specific and skills-based results. Students and teachers work together to interpret these results and develop high-interest, real-world and project-based learning plans to go beyond grade-level standards. This is achieved through rigorous goal setting, reflection and adaptation to achieve and move beyond determined goals. A few examples include the use of mechanics and small engine repair to study electrical systems and mathematical processes and the creation of a cardboard arcade which focuses on critical thinking, ingenuity, and physics. Activities such as these give purpose to learning and provide authentic opportunities to bring learning beyond the textbook.

Peer mentoring is an instrumental factor leading to deeper understanding and higher-level thinking skills. This is accomplished through structured dialogue and peer-to-peer feedback. Throughout the day students discuss ideas and use prompts to agree, disagree, question, and explain reasoning in their thinking. It is encouraging to observe students providing meaningful feedback, humbly receiving suggestions, and implementing changes. This skill elevates learning and encourages individuality to celebrate the process, without a fixation on the outcome alone, creating lifelong learners.

Students and teachers at Rib Lake Elementary School have developed instrumental practices leading to a rigorous educational program. Through self-reflection, teacher and peer feedback, individualized instruction and mentor opportunities students are engaged in the learning process and committed to excellence.

3c. Special education:

Students that receive special education services are given instruction based on research-based interventions tailored to individual students' needs. In reading, we have several research-based programs that follow the science of reading philosophies which complement the regular education curriculum. For example, one intervention tool that is used is the Wilson Reading System. It directly and systematically teaches students how to fluently and accurately decode. It is interactive and multisensory and teaches total word construction. Students learn to encode as they learn to decode.

In math, we have intervention tools strongly rooted in best practices that are multisensory and follow the concrete, representational, abstract model. For example, one math intervention used at Rib Lake Elementary School is the Bridges Math Intervention by The Math Learning Center. This comprehensive program promotes student thinking and engagement through explicit, small-group or one-on-one instruction.

RLES has a firm curriculum for social emotional skills, that teaches expected social norms and appropriate tools to assist students in regulating emotions. This curriculum starts at the kindergarten level and can take them through their elementary experience. Currently one of the programs we use is part of the "We Thinkers! Series." The curriculum is built to help young learners develop the skills they need to be flexible social thinkers and social problem solvers.

In addition to research-based interventions, we also use the push in model to support students in general instruction. We believe it is best practice for students to be exposed and familiar with grade level standards and language.

All interventions used at RLES contain a form of progress monitoring that allow special education teachers to see student progress and to continue to adjust instruction to meet student needs. Additionally, data from district-wide assessments, classroom assessments and collaboration with regulation education teachers is used to assess students' abilities.

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

English Language Learners are identified as those whose first language is not English. We currently have ten ELL students at RLES ranging from Kindergarten to 5th grade. For all of these students, their first language is Spanish. At school, they participate in their mainstream classes with a classroom teacher that speaks only English with them. Full immersion helps them to quickly learn the routines of their classrooms as well as the sounds as styles of academic language. Two staff members provide English learning support with these students. They are pulled out for individual short sessions with a focus on listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing, based on the student's language goals. An aide provides in-classroom support to the students with higher needs. Their language goals are established through collaboration with classroom teachers as well as their comprehensive scores from the annual ACCESS Exam for ELLs. This exam was administered in January and results are given in the Spring. At that time, we will be reviewing scores and updating language acquisition goals for each individual student. We have seen ELL students grow in great ways during this school year, from learning to read in English, to gaining enough confidence to speak orally in class, to wanting to participate in extracurricular activities, all in another language. We are very proud of them.

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

Rib Lake Elementary works diligently to remove any barriers for homeless students. RLES works directly with the family to provide support and maintain confidentiality. We work with other local agencies to provide support. Information is given to the family about different county support services and connect them with the local food shelter. We also help to provide for the students. For example, working with local organizations for donations of backpacks and school supplies for students in need.

Weather in Northern Wisconsin brings its own set of challenges and RLES is able to discreetly provide all of the winter weather clothing needed for the students. We want to ensure a positive learning environment by removing as many barriers as possible so the student can focus on their education when they are at school.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

In order to provide the best environment for our students at Rib Lake Elementary School, we feel relationships and a growth mindset are at the heart of our school. The positive connections between teachers and students give students confidence, assurance of their value, and the motivation to be hardworking individuals.

Our school has adopted a culture of champions giving the school a blueprint of our values and expected outcomes. The ABCs of our culture stand for Attitude is Everything, Building Champions, and Commitment to Excellence. Students learn the value of having a growth mindset and how perseverance can improve all areas of their lives. With the entire staff using consistent vocabulary, students know and understand the expectations at school, resulting in low behavioral concerns. Students have ownership of our school announcements. They create videos using programs like Voki, Flip Grid, Chatter Pix, green screen, and GoAnimate to introduce a Character Thought of the Day. Their video creates school-wide dialogue on positive character traits and how to respond in certain social situations. As we encourage a growth mindset, students are challenged with activities that require rigor. They are taught to take risks. Making mistakes and learning from them is celebrated.

We believe in the importance of collaboration and problem-solving. Students have many opportunities to work together throughout the school day but also on more intensive projects. Student-driven learning allows students to have voice and choice in the classroom as they aspire to master grade level standards and beyond. Marrying these beliefs, students have completed projects in Poetry Cafe, Wonder Projects, Wax Museum, green screen activities and Cardboard Arcade. Projects such as these are motivating, engaging, student-driven, and standards-based. They also provide opportunities for all learners to continue to challenge themselves and grow as learners.

Students are also given many experiences in goal setting. When evaluating, we use the numbers 1-4 to gauge where students are on the standards. A score of four is exemplary, a three is proficient, a two is developing, and a one is beginning. These numbers are used for students to self-assess where their skills are on any given standard. With positive culture and growth mindset as a focus, students can continue to strive for the next level. With our strong relationships and high expectations of our students, student achievement and engagement continue to increase at Rib Lake Elementary School.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We are a very small community, blessed with many people who want to be involved in and support our school. There are many activities we provide where parents, families, and community members are invited to participate. Over the years, we have developed positive relationships with the community and families. These relationships are full of give and take. There are instances where the community provides for the school, and other times when the school gives back to the community.

We start the year with individual orientation (for preschool families) or Meet and Greet/Read (for higher grades). Families are invited to participate and meet the teacher. We also kick off the year with an extravaganza to celebrate the end of the summer reading program. For this, we contact local businesses, who are quick to donate to our students. Throughout the year, we offer Family Reading Nights, a Grandparents Day program, Homecoming and Fire Prevention Parades, all of which are held with an open invitation to the community. Our volunteer firemen are instrumental in the fire prevention activities. In the last few years, we have started Christmas Caroling around town in December. The community so appreciates seeing and hearing the students. Also, in December, we offer the Reindeer Shop. Volunteers from the community come in to set up a store, where students can get gifts for their families, all free of charge. All items are donated, so every student can take home gifts.

Another example of a community partnership comes from our local gas station, which has recently installed

a “Pride Pump.” It offers a portion of sales from that specific pump to the school district. Specific grade levels also invite community and family members to attend activities to celebrate the hard work that has been done in the classroom. The fifth grade hosts a cardboard arcade, inviting people to play the games that they have created. Students in the fourth-grade research famous people and portray their likenesses in a wax museum. The second-grade class holds a poetry café, in which the students perform different types of poetry. Our community is an amazing support to our students. If there is a need to be filled, our community often steps in to fill the need.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

A strong benefit of working in our rural setting is the ability to build close working relationships among staff. In our day-to-day interactions, staff members support each other and value one another’s individual talents. In addition, our administration personally checks in with teachers on a frequent basis to build rapport. Upon these close relationships, we build a professional atmosphere of respect and growth toward excellence. In working toward this excellence, our school provides numerous opportunities for professional development each school year.

First, each staff member is allowed the opportunity to choose development for personal growth during contracted hours each school year. For example, a few teachers teamed up to attend math workshops led by our local Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) and then they were provided time to share their learning with other teachers. Furthermore, a school-wide focus is often collaboratively chosen as a year-long topic during staff meetings and staff development days (held one or two times per month). This year, our school purchased the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) Suite for all staff interested in learning the science of reading. At least one teacher from each grade level (although most grade levels include both teachers) is participating in the training. To involve the teachers that are not directly participating in LETRS, each staff meeting devotes time to summarize our learning from LETRS, which promotes continuity in our teaching practices across the school.

Our school has created and maintained a building leadership team. This team is open to all interested staff members and works to increase the achievement and engagement of students through improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and culture. Our school provides time to collaboratively review student data and review our RTI process, selects committees to host special school-wide events, and we have a team to coach staff in the Educator Effectiveness process. Our administration also hosts training days and facilitates mentorships for new teachers.

During a brief school-wide transition to virtual learning and a period of hybrid teaching, our school made the necessary adjustments to continue to lead our students toward success. Teachers were given explicit expectations from administration and were supported through staff development with outside experts in distance-learning. Overall, our school community steps up to any obstacle and does what is best for our students.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of our principal is “shared leadership.” The RLES staff have many opportunities to take part in the decision-making process through meetings for building leadership, Culture of Champions, and data review. Even our staff meetings give staff the opportunity to voice their concerns, identify areas for improvement, and advocate for our students. When staff members bring new ideas, they are passionate about forward to the principal or at a building leadership meeting, they will often have an opportunity to present to the staff on a professional development day or staff meeting. Some of the examples of this are the breaking down of data on MAPS, working through the Gallup StrengthsFinder, word walls, and sound walls with LETRS training. Each idea was brought up by a staff member who saw a need in the school and then helped to find a solution.

Staff members in small rural schools need to wear many hats, and Rib Lake is no exception. The elementary principal’s duties include safety, instructional leadership, curriculum for the building, discipline, budgets, staff evaluations, policy and handbook development, and attendance. The elementary principal is also the

special education director and school forest administrator and is responsible for everything both programs entail.

The role of the principal started as the instructional leader. Several areas were identified and changes were implemented to increase student achievement. Some of this was done through visits to other schools that had the results that were desired and other times professional development was done at staff meetings to provide consistency throughout the grade levels. The role now has changed to an instructional facilitator. Teachers have the freedom to try new things in their classrooms and the principal gives encouragement and attempts to remove the obstacles.

The one constant in all of our meetings is the focus on what is best for the students. Everything that we do is with the students' interests in mind. At the beginning of the year, the teachers and principal get together to look at the data and establish a school goal on what is best for the students. A goal is set and then objectives are made to help us reach the goal through strategic planning. Our staff meetings are designed to implement the objectives needed to help us achieve the goal. Everything that we do is centered on our students and their benefit.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Rib Lake Elementary School staff works extremely hard to meet the needs of our culturally diverse students. The most important way we meet the needs of our students is by getting to know them and their families. Teachers often meet with students and parents before school. This allows us time to ask questions and find out some of the needs of our students. If a student comes after the school year begins, we will often try to get the parent to come in and have a conversation to inform the staff of the needs of their student.

It is important to have culturally diverse students immersed with their peers, but it is also important for them to spend time with their same culturally diverse peers. In our small school we don't always have more than one student group in each classroom. This can be hard for small groups of the same diversity. To help with this challenge, we have aides in the classroom to keep the students organized, on task, and learning with their peers.

Differentiation is the key when teaching culturally diverse students. It is important that students feel comfortable sharing, and it is easier when they are sharing about their culture. Meeting students at their level and then differentiating materials to meet their needs helps students with their diverse needs. Technology also plays an important role in providing differentiated materials to our culturally diverse students. It allows for change in language, different levels of material being worked on, and encourages independence.

Our librarian works hard for our upper-level students who are just learning English but would also like to read in their native language. She will find books in their native language which allows them to continue to love reading. Not only does our librarian find appropriate books for our learners, but she also makes sure we have culturally diverse books available for others to read and appreciate the differences of our culturally diverse friends. With regards to respecting others in the classroom, this is accomplished through our school culture. Our elementary school students are taught to treat everyone with respect and kindness and this has worked extremely well for our staff and students.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Every school strives to succeed. Whatever their philosophies or practices, educators look for ways to help their students make measurable progress not only academically, but socially and emotionally, as well. Seeing the abilities and needs of the whole student has become an important focus in our ever-changing world. Successful schools recognize this and employ practices that will assist student growth and achievement with detailed attention to these areas.

At Rib Lake Elementary, one of the most instrumental practices, assisting in our success, is the investment in relationships. Our school and community are very people-focused. From the parents and the families to the staff and the students, every person contributes in a meaningful way to the pursuit of student excellence. Remove any of these entities and the success of the school will diminish.

Healthy relationships rely on communication. It is no different in a school setting. This is a bedrock to forming a reliable, consistent, and ongoing partnership between home and the classroom. It builds the trust necessary to ensure student success. We have been blessed with an arsenal of volunteers and involved parents for many years. We, as a staff, could not do what we do without this type of support.

Our staff has also seen the value of communication. We rely heavily on our ability to collaborate with coworkers, recognizing strengths and accepting the challenges we each face. We realize that it is beneficial to spend the majority of our time and effort doing what we naturally do well. This means we have learned to ask for help from each other when challenges arise. Through these efforts, we have invested in our relationships, which has consistently helped us maximize our students' achievement and progress toward their goals, even through the recent pandemic years.

Lastly, every member of our teaching staff makes it a priority to connect and establish rapport with each student. This may very well be the most challenging and important aspect of our focus on relationships at Rib Lake Elementary. When students feel a connection with their teacher, when a mutual trust exists, and when they know their needs are being met, successful education naturally follows.

Can one educational practice ensure student success on its own? It is doubtful. However, we believe that with an emphasis on people and a prioritization of relationships, schools like ours have markedly placed themselves ahead of the status quo and one step closer to the gainful advancement of our students with empowerment for their collective futures, which have been entrusted to us.