

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 750 West 5th North  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Green River State WY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 82935-4043

County Sweetwater

Telephone (307) 872-2000 Fax (307) 313-2099

Web site/URL https://waes.swcsd2.org/ E-mail annemarie.covey@swcsd2.org

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Craig Barringer E-mail craig.barringer@swcsd2.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Sweetwater County School District #2 Tel. (307) 872-5500

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

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Steve Core  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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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

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 2 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	30	21	51
1	17	16	33
2	12	16	28
3	15	20	35
4	10	18	28
5	13	17	30
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	97	108	205

\*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):
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 17 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 75 % White
  - 4 % 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: 9%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	177
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %

3 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %

Total number students who qualify: 80

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 23 %  
47 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>8</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>22</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	14
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	16
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 15:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	92%	95%	93%	93%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

The mission at Washington Elementary is Every Student, Every Day. Our vision is building respect, responsibility, and safety for successful lifelong learning.

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

[https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded\\_file/1898573/AnnualCTEPublicNotificationofNonDiscrimination.pdf](https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1898573/AnnualCTEPublicNotificationofNonDiscrimination.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**

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Washington Elementary is a K-5 school located in Southwest Wyoming. The demographics of our community are industrial and agricultural in nature. This creates challenges for families who put in long hours, shift work, and commute long distances. Families look to our staff as partners in providing the best educational experience for their children. Our school has the highest percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches in the school district (39%). We also have a high percentage of students on Individual Education Plans and Section 504 Plans (23%). Teachers take pride in communicating and building strong lasting relationships with families. Our mission of “Every Student, Every Day” is evident in the relationship between our families, students, and staff.

Within our Washington community, students, as learners, are held to a high standard. This comes from the leadership of our principal, who strives for each educator, including paraprofessionals, to teach at a higher standard and help students reach their full potential. We believe that when a student has all of their basic needs met, they can be successful. To meet these needs, we take on the responsibility of learning about each student and their families, to build a strong relationship. To grow this relationship, we focus on positive behaviors to encourage a strong learning environment through different curriculums and programs that include, but are not limited to, Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (PBIS), Second Step, caught being good, positive office referrals, student mentors, growth mindset, and encouraging students to set attainable goals. Our school houses the Behavior Expectations Support Training (BEST) program for the district, a Wyoming Department of Education recognized model program that supports students who have additional social-emotional challenges. Educators at Washington use a number of strategies to help students meet their full potential in all areas of development in order to become contributing members of society.

We have implemented several programs to help our students be successful. Our mission and vision are the foundation for everything we thrive to accomplish. Our school principal starts every day with announcements, birthdays, and what it looks like to be kind, respectful, responsible, and safe. We want every student to feel loved, cared for, and supported. We have a silent mentoring program in place where teachers can recommend students who could benefit from other staff members noticing them, and going out of their way to acknowledge them. Our physical education teacher has created a “Climbing Club” where students can come in before school to use the climbing wall. We also provide Extended Day, Chess Club, and Geography Bee for students to have the opportunity to participate in outside of the normal school day activities. Our school counselor has created a “Zen Den” and works with individual students, as well as whole classes, on a regular basis. She talks with them about zones of regulation, being mindful, and helps them understand how their brain works. We have quarterly assemblies where students are recognized for both academic and behavioral successes from both classroom and specials (music, art, P.E., etc.) teachers. At the end of each quarter, every classroom teacher selects one girl and one boy as the “Citizen of the Quarter” who have been model students and are consistently kind, respectful, responsible, and safe. These students are recognized at an assembly and get to participate in a special lunch with their teacher, principal, and other school personnel.

When COVID-19 first reached our community, in March of 2020, the district was forced to transition to remote learning for the fourth quarter. All students were provided with Chromebooks and technological support. As students returned, in the fall of 2020, families had the choice to have their children receive instruction through in-class learning, remotely, or through our homeschool option. Across the district, along with teaching their in-person class, one teacher from each grade level was assigned as the district virtual teacher. At the start of the school year, teachers conducted parent meetings to discuss the possibility of future closures and/or what to do if quarantined or in need of isolation. Holiday parties, assemblies, parent teacher conferences were conducted virtually allowing all students, staff and families to attend.

With the awareness of the loss of instructional time throughout the pandemic, teachers collaborated with other grade levels and used vertical alignment to address individual student needs during the 2020-2021 school year. Their goal was not only to make up for the loss of instruction, but also to address various skill deficiencies that may have resulted. Reflecting on how well vertical alignment instruction has benefited our students, teachers have continued to use this instructional practice. As the new school year began in 2021,

teachers joined together and reached consensus that, although our district no longer required online/virtual learning for absent students, those attending Washington Elementary would still be able to access instruction remotely to help address their academic and social emotional needs during this time.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

Our philosophy at Washington Elementary is “Every Student, Every Day.” We set high expectations for each student and staff member. Our principal’s core value is centered on distributed leadership within our school. Every staff member has a responsibility in the academic and social-emotional growth of our students, with a strong emphasis on educating the "whole child." Our climate and culture greatly influences how we work with one another, and the growth both the students and staff are able to achieve. In order to support this philosophy, we use a variety of approaches, which include but are not limited to: targeting priority state standards; tiered instructional approaches that target both academic and social/emotional needs; and weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC).

Our district has mapped out the Wyoming priority standards. Every member of our instructional staff, which includes certified and non-certified staff members, understands and has developed a road map to meet these standards. Through a collaborative approach, every team member, including students, are essential to achieving student success.

As a team, we provide differentiated, tiered instruction, which includes push-in special education support. Each classroom meets the needs of their students using a variety of instructional approaches, which includes, co-teaching, parallel teaching, stations, and the strategy of "one teach and one observe." This allows us to target specific student needs and differentiate learning accordingly to each student's individual skills and abilities. Special education and general education staff work closely together to provide small group instruction and create fluid intervention groups within the classroom.

In order to achieve these high expectations, our leadership team has implemented Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings as a vehicle to attaining success. Teams are expected to meet daily, weekly, and/or monthly depending on the needs of their students. This team approach allows for responsive teaching and affords the staff of Washington Elementary to work as a team, rather than as separate entities.

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

Washington uses a high quality literature-reading program as a curriculum tool to teach the English Language Arts (ELA) Standards. Students receive daily reading instruction through Interactive Read Aloud (IRA), guided reading, grammar instruction, and Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), which all focus on a specific grade level ELA standards.

IRAs provide our students with rich, cross-curricular studies of social studies and science. Students are exposed to a variety of cultures, countries, social economic statuses, genres, historical events, and life experiences. More specifically, these texts include topics on coping with loss, author/illustrator studies, biographies, global perspective, diversity of characters, empathy, exploring identity, figuring out who you are, fairy tales, fantasy, telling a story with photos, historical fiction, memoirs, poetry, craft, innovative thinking and problem solving, and perseverance. Daily "read alouds" provide highly engaging texts that are beyond students' instructional level. There are opportunities for rich discussion among students, predicting and inferring, as well as vocabulary development. Students are engaged in listening, thinking, and speaking with others to hear and learn from their perspectives.

During guided reading, students individually read a text at their instructional level in a small group setting. Before students read, teachers engage in conversations about the text and activate background knowledge, build expectations, notice information in the text, and identify the genre and text features. While students read, teachers observe reading behaviors looking for evidence of strategic reactions, listen to oral reading, confirm problem solving attempts and successes, and make notes about reading behaviors. After reading,

teachers and students talk about the text, return to the text to go over problem-solving practice, and assess students' understanding of the text.

Students receive daily grammar instruction and practice to reinforce and reflect on concepts. Teachers provide direct instruction on structure, syntax, and usage. Daily practice on Google Classroom assignments reinforce concepts. Grammar is also addressed during IRA and guided reading. As students read literature, teachers look at word order, clauses and phrases, and connecting words. By providing rich and meaningful context, students can better understand and apply grammar rules.

LLI is an intensive, small group, supplementary literacy intervention for students not performing at grade level. Students are placed in an LLI group based on their instructional reading level. Weekly reading records determine movement between levels. Our LLI team meets weekly to discuss student progress and growth in order to ensure students continue to be challenged. Students reading at grade level are placed in a benchmark group where they have the opportunity to participate in guided reading groups, or book studies, to increase vocabulary, comprehension, and enhance critical thinking skills. Writing is also incorporated into LLI, where students develop vocabulary, increase their ability to think, write, and talk about text.

Technology has increased our ability to reach students who are unable to be at school. Students who are absent, are able to access IRA, guided reading, and LLI groups via google meets or by posting videos of the lessons to google classrooms. Online discussions or quizzes allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of texts. This means that students have access to rich learning opportunities, even when they cannot be at school.

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

Many students see math as a point of frustration; therefore, to effectively teach math, we had to develop a growth mindset within our students. Our focus is to look at math from a problem-solving perspective, rather than only arriving at the right answer. Focusing on problem solving and understanding mistakes are how we learn to help students develop a growth mindset. Through the emphasis of learning and embracing mistakes, Washington students become excited about math.

While providing differentiated opportunities to meet the needs of every student, every day, math instruction is based on grade level standards. Differentiated instruction occurs in whole groups, small groups, through homework, and in Google Classroom assignments. During whole group instruction, targeted students receive additional examples, pre-teach lessons, support, or visuals to allow them the opportunity to participate and learn from their peers. Students performing at more advanced levels receive differentiated lessons while practicing the same skill. Google Classroom has opened the door for additional differentiation opportunities. Students in a classroom can be assigned a math task addressing the same skills, but with varying levels of difficulty.

Daily math instruction focuses on foundational skill mastery, number sense, and mathematical vocabulary. Teachers teach math to mastery to ensure students understand the basic skills before adding skills that are more complicated. Having manipulatives as part of daily instruction is vital in helping our students move from concrete to more abstract reasoning.

As a school, we understand the importance of developing strong math skills, early in our student's educational careers. More advanced mathematical abilities are based on early foundational skills and build on one another. If a student does not master place value, they will be unable to multiply or divide. Determining individual mathematical gaps through formative and summative assessments throughout the year, allows teachers to provide more targeted instruction and/or re-teaching opportunities. Our grade level teams use the PLC process to ensure they are using common math vocabulary and have an understanding of the math standards and how they are linked from one grade to another. Teachers often co-teach across grade levels to reinforce previous learned skills or pre-teach upcoming skills.

Daily informal assessments are key to identifying problem areas and pulling groups for remediation. Vertical level PLC meetings have opened communication between grade levels to ensure instruction is

cohesive. In addition, Washington provides schoolwide math interventions four days a week. Staff utilizes the PLC process to monitor students' math skills and to target intervention groups focused on foundational skill development and enrichment opportunities. Informal and formal assessments, such as daily work, exit tickets, quick checks, or standardized assessment data are all used to determine movement between fluid math intervention groups.

Teachers have created Google Classrooms to enhance students' learning opportunities. Students are able to access daily math assignments from any environment. Teachers make themselves available through Google Meets or individual instructional meetings to provide additional support, instruction, or tools to understand assignments and instructional content. Since students use these tools daily, it is easy for them to continue their learning when they are out of the classroom.

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

Science is a valuable learning experience that incorporates reading and math. Washington understands the value of science and therefore teachers are mindful of making time for science every week. At Washington, teachers address the science standards in the classroom and collaborate with the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) teacher to create additional learning opportunities.

In the classroom, teachers use technology and hands-on projects to target grade level science standards. Mystery Science is a science resource that provides videos for multiple grade levels. Teachers utilize the science videos as an introduction to a scientific phenomenon. Students then begin asking questions, which open up discussions about what they see or hear. Additional hands-on exploration naturally occurs from those discussions. The more comfortable students feel asking questions, the more confident they become as scientists. Science videos are able to be added to Google Classrooms which allows students to access the content when at home.

Teachers work collaboratively with the STEM teacher to expand on science standards during specials time. The STEM teacher develops project based learning experiences while working through the Design Process (Ask, Explore, Model, Evaluate, Explain). Students at all grade levels are expected to navigate through the Design Process in order to answer a scientific question. For example, they research how animals adapt to their environment by investigating how fur and feathers create camouflage, locomotion, and protection. Groups discuss how particular traits help animals survive and then apply these concepts of adaptation to human scenarios. Students then create shoes to use in the desert based on their research. In addition to project learning, STEM class exposes students to computer science, which requires them to build a game independently. At the end of every project, students are asked to use scientific terminology to evaluate their project and determine what could have been improved.

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

The goal for social studies instruction is to expose students to a wide range of experiences to understand communities and how students, even as a child, can make a difference. In order to accomplish this, we use diverse reading material, interactive activities, and purposeful field trips.

Through daily literary content, students are exposed to complex social, economic, ethical, and historical concepts. Understanding these concepts provides students' skills for productive problem solving and decision-making. Rich texts open dialogue about other cultures, historical events, natural resources, geography, and non-traditional ways of living. During these readings, students evaluate fairness, sequence of events, distinguish different points of view, and construct arguments. Books provide opportunities to explain challenges people have faced and address local, regional, and world problems. Many times, we have to build background knowledge; therefore, we bring in technology, maps, and research to understand the depths of the geographic differences around the world.

Our 5th grade classes put on a yearly Wax Museum to address the social studies standards. This cross-curricular activity has students researching historical figures, writing an essay on the person's life, and presenting to their peers. For the presentation, students develop a backdrop with a timeline of the person's

life and tell peers what they are remembered for in history. All Washington students have an opportunity to visit the Wax Museum and learn about a variety of people from various times in our history.

Several grade levels focus on the local, county, and statewide history of Wyoming. We provide opportunities that students would otherwise not have the chance to experience. Providing hands-on experiences gives a better understanding of historical events and how it relates to their life. In addition, we visit local government offices, police department, library, and other community helpers. When field trips are not possible, we bring in various guest speakers to talk about their roles and how they make an impact throughout our community.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

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

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Other curricular areas at Washington include music, art, STEM, Zen Den, library, physical education (P.E.), and health. Students in junior kindergarten through fifth grade receive 30 minutes of Health, Zen Den, and Library. Students are also exposed to 60 minutes of Music, Art, STEM, and P.E. weekly. The essential skills outside of reading, math, social studies, and science that are highlighted in these areas are self-regulation, social skills, conflict resolution, and self-expression.

Zen Den, the heart of our comprehensive school counseling program, allows all students to access social emotional support through direct instruction. The Zones of Regulation, brain function, and mindfulness are a few of the core topics that are taught by our school counselor to ensure that common social emotional language is utilized schoolwide. All students at Washington understand what it means when they “flip their lid.” This is one example of the common language our students learn and use. Supplemental materials such as visuals, social stories, and sensory tools are provided for teachers to use within their classrooms to improve self-regulation and students’ abilities to communicate their feelings, wants, and needs in a safe and appropriate manner.

During P.E. and health, the whole child is the emphasis. The whole child is supported in a variety of ways, including meditation or yoga practice within every lesson. In P.E. and health, students tap in and out to communicate which emotional zone they are in before and after each lesson. Students are taught the benefits and the value of physical activity and healthy practices for a lifetime. Essential skills are supported through standard based units involving reading, science, and math in both P.E. and health.

STEM is another curricular area offered to our students. Students across all grade levels are taught standards through collaborative projects using the engineering design process as depicted by the Project Lead the Way curriculum. These are taught using a five step process of ask, explore, model, evaluate, and explain. In these processes, students are asked to define the problem, explore and research the problem, and create and test a model. Lastly they explain what their project does and improvements that can be made. Some projects include robotics, 3-D printing, and a marble run.

Students in art explore many different mediums that include both two-dimensional and three-dimensional projects. Students have opportunities to create using various types of paint, pottery and sculpture with the opportunity to glaze, as well as learning how to draw and shade using a variety of pencils, both color and plain graphite, along with oil and chalk pastels. All learning activities are hands-on and essential in the development of self-expression, fine-motor, and cognitive skills that carry over into their classrooms. Students gain confidence through expressing themselves using the principles of design, color, shape, and form. They also receive a brief introduction to art history and its impact on cultures around the world.

The other curricular areas at Washington Elementary give students the opportunity to shine and highlight their gifts outside of the general education classroom.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

At Washington Elementary, we strongly believe that focused interventions benefit all students. Tailoring instruction, interventions, and assessments begins in our PLC process. Our teams meet weekly to discuss student progress and needs. Students that are determined to be at risk (academically or behaviorally) are referred to the Building Intervention Team (BIT). The BIT team consists of a collaborative group of professionals that meet weekly to discuss student concerns and determine additional supports or services necessary for academic and emotional success. The team follows up on students weekly, monthly, or yearly based on concerns and identified needs.

Reading interventions are designed to meet the needs of all students at all levels. Students may experience small group instruction two or three times during their day. Title I funding provides two certified teachers and five paraprofessionals to help deliver daily differentiated instruction ranging from one to four students per group. Intervention groups meet for 30 to 45 minutes per day, depending on grade level. Weekly meetings track student progress and encourage collaboration for flexible student grouping to keep student groups at their instructional levels. Increasing reading skills directly contributes to their success in math and other subjects.

Math intervention occurs four days a week across all grade levels. The intent is to provide quality responsive teaching to close foundational gaps. We identify gaps and provide direct instruction at a foundational level in small groups by utilizing general and special education staff. Daily instruction and interventions include clear learning targets and work on concrete and foundational skills by incorporating manipulatives, visuals, and number sense.

Extended day is an after-school program offered three days a week for 60 minutes. Students selected to attend are at-risk or are considered to be at a strategic level of instruction in reading and/or math. Instruction during this time works to address learning gaps through individual tutoring, kinesthetic learning, and the pre-teaching of skills.

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

Students performing above grade level have the opportunity to participate in the same daily interventions afforded to all students at Washington. Above grade level enrichment groups focus on reading fluency, rate, inferential skills, critical thinking, and writing skills to match their individual learning level. In addition, we implement enrichment opportunities increasing their ability to apply, analyze, evaluate, and create on a daily basis. Open communication with our vertical teams provides opportunities for enrichment by connecting the spiraled skills between grade levels. Staff work collaboratively within PLCs to intentionally plan exposure for students to advance vocabulary, increase background knowledge, and enhance higher order thinking.

Certified and classified staff push into classrooms to assist in working with all students. With this support, classroom teachers are able to ensure that every student is able to participate in a guided reading group on a regular basis. Benchmark students participate in book clubs during reading intervention times. Book clubs have a broader focus on reading stamina, reading to learn, and provide opportunities for text-to-text comparisons. Moreover, these book clubs are designed as author studies and focusing on author's purpose. Reading experiences for above grade level students are designed to strengthen cross-curricular understanding and build on their knowledge of science, social studies, and math. Exposing students to a variety of topics stimulates their curiosity about the world and builds the motivation to engage with text that is more complex.

Washington staff utilize math intervention groups to solidify grade level standards while introducing advanced skills to broaden mathematical reasoning skills to keep students engaged and challenged.

Facilitated vertical alignment discussions intentionally bridge students' academic vocabulary and understanding. Teachers build on their grade level standards by incorporating the next grade level skills. Vertical teams provide resources, manipulatives, and visuals, to support upcoming students who are at an above grade level. We are stretching all staff as much as possible to allow a ratio of one-to-two instructional groups.

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

Special education staff is utilized within the general education environment through a 'push in model' to support students on Individualized Education Plans (IEP). As a district, we have shifted from the traditional 'pull-out' special education support to an inclusive model. Students on an IEP are exposed to grade level standards within the general education classrooms. Special education staff collaborate with general education staff to provide differentiated instruction, enrichment, remediation, and pre-teach opportunities for all students.

As a school, we have focused on removing the stigma from educational labels (ie Title, SPED, BEST, Section 504). Teachers around the school have developed classroom themes or names rather than "resource room" or "first grade." In addition to themes, special education staff are in classrooms everyday allowing relationships to be built without the label of special education and/or behavior teacher.

General education and special education staff have come together as a team to determine how to use the resource setting for direct instruction, remediation, or provide a quiet environment to develop skills. This allows students on an IEP to receive the support they need while remaining in their least restrictive environment. Support staff work with classroom teachers to provide accommodations for all students, such as flexible seating, visuals, multisensory techniques, manipulatives, visual cues, and incidental support. When necessary, we can provide core academic instruction within a resource setting, while also providing opportunities for students to access their peers in the general education classroom. We collaborate to include every teachers' experiences and knowledge to provide the most effective and appropriate instruction.

Our inclusive model and teamwork sets high expectations for students on IEPs and fosters academic excellence. Washington's team approach benefits general and special education students. The process of building resiliency and foundational skills enables us to strengthen skill deficiencies while streamlining student growth more effectively.

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

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

At Washington, we understand the importance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is vital, as approximately 39% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Socio-economic status does not drive services; rather, instruction, enrichment, and remediation opportunities are based on student academic, social, and emotional needs. All students have the right to receive a high quality education. Washington partners with a local credit union to provide weekly backpacks of food for families in need. During Christmas, the staff supports five to six families providing gifts, clothing, and a tree. Food and water are freely available for students in every classroom. There are resources in the community to help provide glasses and rent assistance. Washington staff acts as a liaison to connect families to these community supports. Additionally, students are exposed weekly to extracurricular classes like art, music, PE and STEM.

Washington houses the district's Behavior Expectations and Skills Training (BEST) program, which adds an exceptional population of students to our school. The BEST program serves students with mild to severe behavioral and emotional disabilities. It adds additional staff to the building whose focus is to support academic and emotional growth within the general education classroom. Daily social skills instruction is available to any student at Washington. Family-based activities are created to foster relationships and social skill development. A yearly Christmas lunch is hosted at the school where students invite their families and

teachers. This formal family Christmas lunch creates an opportunity that most of these children would otherwise not be able to experience.

Understanding family commitments outside of school and supporting them by extending flexibility and grace allows them to be active participants in their child's education. Relationships are recognized as a critical aspect to the physical, emotional, and academic success of our Washington families. We strive to focus on every student, every day!

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

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

Washington Elementary uses a variety of different strategies to support student engagement in the areas of academics, social, and emotional growth. Our school’s mission statement is “Every Student, Every Day.” At Washington, we truly uphold this mission with all stakeholders. Every day begins with morning announcements, which greets students and provides them with reminders promoting the success of their academic and social emotional growth. The school expectations of being kind, respectful, responsible and safe are briefly reviewed each day. With a student-led Pledge of Allegiance, celebrating staff and student birthdays, and fun jokes, as well as any other positive announcements for our school, morning announcements give us the opportunity to start our day off positively.

In classrooms, Washington supports a Positive Behavior Support Model (PBIS) to encourage and recognize students’ demonstrating school expectations. Students who have been recognized are celebrated weekly through a random drawing, where they come to the office to select a prize. Their picture is taken and displayed on a monitor for others to see as they enter the building. Students can be “caught being good” by any staff member. Focusing on positive behaviors is a core value of Washington Elementary that all staff members support. We believe that by encouraging and recognizing positive behaviors that our school will be a place that students want to come to each and every day.

Instructionally, Washington uses a variety of strategies to engage students in their academic growth and development. When entering any classroom you would see different cooperative learning strategies to increase student engagement and communication of learning. In our classrooms, you would observe pair share, quiz-quiz trade, talking chips, and many more strategies that keep a high level of engagement and learning for students. Every student has the opportunity to participate in small group instruction in both reading and math, tailoring instruction to meet their individual needs, through an intervention and/or enrichment.

As our mission says, “Every Student, Every Day,” we at Washington firmly believe in the creation of a healthy culture and climate, with strong positive relationships that support student growth. When students and families feel safe and supported, students grow. It opens communication to problem solve and build solid relationships, where we can celebrate together, as well as feel comfortable to tackle the more challenging situations that may arise. Our academic success with students is highly dependent on our relationships and the social/emotional engagement with our students and their families.

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

Washington Elementary works extremely hard to keep families and the community involved in happenings at our building. We have adapted well to previous restrictions put forth by the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to make adjustments as orders are relieved or modified. It is a belief at Washington that families are an essential part of our school and a primary contributor to our student’s success. Because of this belief, we offer a variety of ways to keep families and the community involved.

Our school has an active Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) that offers a variety of opportunities for parental involvement. Opportunities range from monthly PTO meetings to organized family movie and craft nights. Our PTO also supports summer and holiday reading programs to foster a love of reading at home. Through fundraisers, they are able to support classrooms monetarily by providing them with needed supplies. Through the course of every year, they purchase a brand new book for every student.

Washington Elementary is also a Title I school. Through Title I, we not only are able to offer targeted instruction to students, but we also host a variety of family engagement activities. Students have been able to purchase books from our school book fairs, have been provided fun take-home activities such as reading bingo and hot cocoa packets and have been provided bookmarks with questions to support comprehension growth at home.

Washington collaborates with several outside agencies including our district's alternative high school, Expedition Academy (EA), Trona Valley Credit Union (TVCU), and the Green River Police Department (GRPD). These agencies help support our students and families. EA brings their students to our school to volunteer in a variety of capacities, from reading and math work, to offering general classroom support. TVCU is our partner agency for the weekend backpack program that provides food to families in need throughout the school year. GRPD serves our school in a variety of ways from celebrating our students' growth to speaking to our students about their overall safety.

Our community partners are an integral part of our student's success, whether it be academically, socially, emotionally, or to address their safety and overall well-being. These collaborations provide practice and experience to grow our students' knowledge and backgrounds, as well as enhancing academic skills learned in the classroom. Community partners are also essential in helping us meet the basic needs of our students in an effort to remove barriers, which could impact their ability to access instructional opportunities. We value, appreciate, and recognize the impact these organizations have provided.

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

The creation of an environment where all school staff feel appreciated and supported is at the forefront of the work we do. Washington staff works to create a balance between the focus on academic rigor and social/emotional well-being.

Professional development offers numerous opportunities to support our teachers in feeling successful with the task of educating students in their classrooms or through a remote setting. As we have embarked upon continued instruction in response to a student's extended absence, we have been proactive in offering Google training and technological/instructional support to staff members. Staff have worked to integrate the online instructional practices into their daily teaching in and outside of the classroom. In addition to Google training, we were able to bring parents in during fall conferences, with their child, and train them on the technology. This approach ensured that everyone felt confident and comfortable in his or her respective format of instruction. At Washington we recognize how difficult it can be to instruct students concurrently in person and online, but decided as a staff to fully commit to provide this option for our students and their families during extended absences. As we know, you cannot replicate instruction that is happening live in the classroom. Doing this has taken a lot of pressure off families and teachers, so they are not always trying to catch up.

Social/emotional well-being has never been more important. Washington recognizes that each individual has been impacted by the pandemic in a variety of ways. To support culture and morale, as well as maintain an environment where everyone feels valued, the Washington staff has made a conscious effort to reflect this in their daily interactions with others. Every staff meeting starts with staff members being able to give "shout-outs" and thanks" to other staff members. We also take time to have fun through staff activities such as cornhole tournaments, barbecues, dodgeball, and tag among others. Administration makes it a priority to personally visit each class monthly to give thanks, and offer a treat or a small token of their appreciation.

Washington knows that for teachers to be able to provide the best instruction for their students, they need to be in a place that they enjoy going to, are supported, and feel valued. When teachers have the resources they need to reach students, and know how much they are valued, great things can and do happen.

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

Our principal's core beliefs support distributed leadership and having a shared vision and values. These are frequently communicated and modeled in all school settings. She believes everyone has the ability to be a leader, and works diligently to help others recognize and foster their potential as leaders. As a leader, she works to create a school that honors uniqueness, and supports the social, emotional, and physical needs of all stakeholders.

Evidenced through the limited time she spends in her office, our principal is regularly visible doing

classroom walk-throughs, visiting professional learning communities (PLC) meetings, engaging with students, and creating supportive relationships with all stakeholders. Not only does she foster relationships by being visible, she takes necessary steps to also be a strong communicator. As a result, staff feel supported and find her accessible when they need her. She has created an environment where teachers feel comfortable coming to her for support, guidance, and advice. Teachers are allowed to be vulnerable and in return, be treated with kindness and dignity allowing for quality instruction and learning to take place.

Everyone at Washington expects high rigor instruction to take place each and every day. The leadership team, which consists of representation from all grades and departments, along with the principal and instructional facilitator meet regularly. During this time, we discuss policies, programs, and instructional practices. Team members offer valuable input from the classroom perspective, as well as communicate any discussions and/or decisions centered on best practices with their PLCs. With our mission of “Every Student, Every Day” at the forefront of her decision-making process, our principal guides our school policies, programs, and instructional decisions to keep students as our top priority.

Washington has an instructional facilitator (IF) who works closely with the principal around instruction, data, and professional development. She is frequently in classrooms offering coaching sessions to teachers and instructional paraprofessionals in a non-evaluative approach. Her specific feedback is essential to staff member’s growth and our students’ achievement. She has created strong, trusting relationships, where teachers feel comfortable with her in their classrooms and often seek out her guidance and advice.

Similar to how teachers differentiate their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students, our principal has modeled an approach where each teacher receives personal feedback recognizing one’s efforts and successes along with, their areas of potential growth. With a developed culture of support, staff members feel valued and are open to seeking specific feedback for continuous improvement.

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

Washington Elementary takes great pride in implementing a responsive teaching model. We believe if we want to make the greatest impact, we have to meet students where they are. We also know in order to do so, we have to have a deep understanding of their diverse needs and backgrounds. In our school, diversity comes in all forms, but what we experience our greatest diversity in is centered around socioeconomic.

Unfortunately, many of our students come to school lacking their basic needs; nevertheless, because of our emphasis on developing strong relationships with our students and their families, we are able to individualize our support to each student and their particular needs. This includes sending meals home through our backpack program (partnered with our TVCU), creating a safe and private space where students can address their basic hygiene needs, providing an extended day program that supports academic deficiencies, and a schoolwide counseling program that focuses on providing students with strategies to regulate their emotions and build positive relationships with peers.

Washington has created and utilized a set of schoolwide behavioral expectations. These expectations are explicitly taught and modeled throughout all environments of our school. When students fail to meet these expectations, it is seen as an opportunity to learn, versus a chance to seek out punishment. When students repeatedly demonstrate that they do not have a solid understanding of what is expected, we respond by offering an opportunity for formal social skills lessons and experiences to help foster their growth and development in those areas. We believe social skills are just as important to their overall development as their academic skills.

Our counselor has led the Washington staff in several book studies. Through gaining a better understanding of how social/emotional learning influences our student’s mental health to the impact of cultural and socioeconomic diversity, our staff has become better equipped to not only understand, but also respond to our student’s diverse needs and provide a more equitable environment. These book studies have taught staff about the impacts of trauma, poverty, and how our sensory system allows us to feel emotions within our own bodies. The Washington staff sees behaviors as a form of communication, and knows that when we seek to understand what is being communicated, it can lead to further success for the student and help them

begin to recognize and verbalize their behavior, instead of acting out. Ultimately, studying about our students' diversity has helped us connect with them in an authentic manner.

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

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Like many schools across the country, as we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, through communication and collaboration, our teachers quickly identified key skills that their students had previously missed and developed vertical professional learning communities (PLC) to blend past instruction with grade level content. In holding daily and weekly meetings to discuss instructional pedagogy, how students worked and behaved during online instruction, and what social emotional supports would be needed, staff members began to lean on one another to offer teaching strategies and, co-teaching approaches, discuss priority standards, and determine what students truly needed to be successful in their current and future grade levels.

While most of our students were able to recoup the skills necessary to find success, the process left our teachers realizing the continued need for collaboration across grade levels to enhance their ability to differentiate instruction and appropriately meet the needs of all students. PLC meetings continue to be held daily and weekly, which include various departments such as special education and Title I. These meetings offer teams the opportunity to review data, discuss lesson plans and learning targets, academic and social emotional needs, behavioral concerns, adjust intervention groups, and align a plan for all to follow.

Through our renewed focus in utilizing the PLC process, you will now find our special education teams holding PLC meetings once a month to discuss students' successes and progress, staffing, and student concerns. Similarly, Title I staff hold weekly and quarterly PLC meetings with classroom teachers. These meetings bridge the gap between the classroom and reading intervention specialists. The PLC process continues to provide the staff at Washington with a framework to address student needs as a team, rather than, separate entities.

In summary, for instruction to truly be individualized, we all needed to be on the same page. As we saw an increase in communication and collaboration among our staff, our quality of instruction rose to new levels. Understanding that we all played a part in the overall success of our school, staff members accepted their areas of growth and offered support to those who could benefit from their experiences and expertise. With a genuine focus and a clear expectation to our mission of “Every Student, Every Day”, our staff has come together to strengthen our instruction, improve our academic rigor, offer differentiation, and support the overall emotional health of our students and staff. Washington Elementary is an exceptional place, a place where students and staff alike are accepted and celebrated for the individuality that they bring to the Washington family!