U.S. Department of Education
2017 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 Ms. Kari Page
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 3600 Highcrest Road N.E.
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City St. Anthony   State MN   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 55418-9971

County Hennepin

Telephone (612) 706-1200   Fax (612) 706-1240

Web site/URL http://schools.isd282.org/wp   E-mail   kpage@stanthony.k12.mn.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.

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Robert Laney   E-mail blaney@stanthony.k12.mn.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name St. Anthony-New Brighton School District Tel.   (612) 706-1000
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. Barry Kinsey
(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, write N/A in the space.

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. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

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

   3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [X] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	62	54	116
1	58	53	111
2	56	57	113
3	59	62	121
4	55	63	118
5	64	59	123
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	354	348	702

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
10 % Asian
9 % Black or African American
7 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
66 % White
7 % Two or more races
100 % Total

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 6%

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 *to* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	24
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	20
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	44
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	696
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.063
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 14 %
   98 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Bosnian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Amharic, Bulgarian, Somali, Tigrinya, Oromo, Yoruba, Malagasy, Marathi, Punjabi, Telugu, Tagalog, Krio, Ewe, French (Creolized), Mandingo

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %
   Total number students who qualify: 154

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
   56 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. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

15	Autism	1	Orthopedic Impairment
1	Deafness	6	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	8	Specific Learning Disability
5	Emotional Disturbance	14	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	1	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
1	Multiple Disabilities	4	Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>11</u>

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	16
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	17
Student support personnel e.g., guidance 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   <u>24:1</u>

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

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	98%	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 2016.

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 <u> </u>   No <u>X</u>

    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.

Wilshire Park students will be VALUED and provided with INDIVIDUALIZED educational experiences. We will form strong PARTNERSHIPS with students, parents and families.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Wilshire Park Elementary is located in the city of St. Anthony, Minnesota and is a part of the St. Anthony-New Brighton school district. What makes our community unique is that St. Anthony is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis and is the smallest school district, geographically, in Minnesota. People often say that St. Anthony is a small town in the big city. The community offers a small town feel but offers a convenient location to both Minneapolis and St. Paul. Wilshire Park families are offered many extra-curricular benefits such as beautiful parks, museums, and diversity of cultures due to our location.

Wilshire Park students have Panda Pride (the panda is our school mascot!) Students follow the school wide expectations of: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Ready. Students show pride in wanting to form a community where all can be successful. Wilshire Park has a diverse student body that is made up of a student population speaking 27 different languages.

Wilshire Park opened in 1967. Prior to opening this school, the district had three elementary schools and had seen a decrease in enrollment. Wilshire Park became the one remaining elementary school to serve all students in the district. Currently, Wilshire Park is projected to see an increase of over 150 students in the next 10 years with an anticipated enrollment to 850 students. This increase is due to a thriving school system and an excellent location for working families.

Students are celebrated in many ways in accordance with school initiatives. Wilshire Park is a Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) focused school and honors students' work through a variety of ways including presentations at a Creativity Fair, Art Fair and within a school-wide Coding Club. In addition, grade-level concerts are held school-wide for parents and community members. Students may also participate in a school-wide music club. The school provides academic growth for every student and the staff is dedicated to developing students who have a growth mindset and who will persevere when solving critical thinking problems.

The school-wide mission statement is:
Wilshire Park students will be valued and provided an individualized educational experience. We will form strong partnerships with students, parents and families.

This mission statement encourages staff to challenge students to ensure that each student, regardless of their background or ability, has the opportunity to access equitable curriculum and grow as learners.

At Wilshire Park, teachers follow the Minnesota State Standards when designing the scope and sequence for student learning. Curriculum has been purchased for reading and math and is used as a tool to meet these standards. Teachers are encouraged to bring in other resources based on the needs of their students in order to meet the state standards and to provide higher level learning opportunities for their students.

Staff is committed to forming partnerships with students and families. These partnerships can also be seen as relationships which promote the emotional growth of students. Understanding students and their needs helps students to achieve academically. For students who need extra support, counseling services are offered and in-house mental health therapy is offered through a partnership that the district has formed with a reputable outpatient clinic.

The state of Minnesota offered training several years ago in the area of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) which was established by the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. Wilshire Park was a willing participant in this training and instituted a school-wide behavior and expectation program called, "Panda Pride." Students are encouraged to develop social and emotional control while following the components of the program. One initiative that students seem to enjoy the most is becoming a "Panda of the Week" and seeing their name in lights on our large outdoor electronic sign.

A school-wide goal is for all students to see themselves represented in a positive way racially and culturally in their classrooms and school. The staff has had training through the West Metro Education Program

(WMEP). WMEP is an educational equity collaborative with eight school districts including Minneapolis. A class titled, "Beyond Diversity", helped staff to identify their own cultural bias and how to disrupt systematic racism in the school. Staff have also received training through the Science Museum of Minnesota through a program called Nexus which seeks to increase and deepen the distribution of relevant expertise and resources within schools and districts to improve instruction across all classrooms.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum:**

In the area of Language Arts, teachers differentiate the curriculum by implementing the methodology of Guided Reading. In addition, teachers utilize the strategy of Daily 5. In Daily 5, students make independent choices to further their reading ability. This choice gives students civic responsibility in contributing to the learning environment and teaches life-long learning skills.

The essential standards for students in grades K-2 are focused on reading text fluently. Kindergarten students recognize phonemes, apply phonetic skills, and read high-frequency words. Students in grade 1 learn about digraph and consonant blends, long vowels and consonant-vowel-consonant words. Students in grade 2 learn short and long vowels along with prefixes and suffixes.

The essential standard for students in grades 3-5 is working toward comprehending text. In grade 3 students study characterization, theme, and identifying main idea. Students in grades 4 and 5 summarize stories, make inferences and identify characterization, theme, main idea, and details.

In the area of Math, teachers worked to align essential math standards for grades K-5. Students at Wilshire Park are taught many skills in the area of math. The following items are the essential standards that students must show proficiency at the end of each grade level. Kindergarten students compose and decompose numbers to 10. In grade 1 students compose and decompose numbers to 12. In grade 2 students compare and represent whole numbers up to 1000 with an emphasis on place value and equality. In grade 3 students add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers. In grade 4 students demonstrate fluency with multiplication and division facts 1-12 and solve word problems. In grade 5 students compare and generate fractions and decimals.

Students who have not mastered essential skills receive intervention services. Some teachers in the primary grades have also been experimenting with Guided Math. In utilizing Guided Math, teachers can differentiate at a higher rate for students.

As a STEM focused school, our teachers have worked together to design curriculum to meet and enhance the Minnesota State standards in the area of science. The EiE kits, one of the science curriculums offered to Wilshire Park students, offer design challenges that incorporate diverse characters that involve 21st century learning.

Students in the primary grades study living/non-living, life cycles, simple machines, and engineering structures. Students in the intermediate grades study magnetism, circuits, simple machines, and matter and energy. All grade levels learn coding and keyboarding skills. Students in the intermediate grades also learn to access Gmail and use Google Drive and Google Classroom to submit online assignments.

Students at Wilshire Park can see themselves in their science projects and as a result, Wilshire Park is inspiring learners, especially under-represented female and diverse groups, to discover science and build interest in further engineering opportunities.

The area of Social Studies also follows the Minnesota State Standards. Primary learners focus on community and people/cultures. Students are asked to recognize the importance of civic skills, values, and identity through symbols, people, constitutions and rules. Students relate civic understanding to their own lives and community. Intermediate learners broaden their understanding of civics to a more detailed, global understanding. In third grade, learners gain an understanding of local, state, and federal governments, the branches within, and the importance of citizenship within our democracy. Students also are introduced to ancient civilizations and the environment, methods of communication, and impact of these civilizations. In fourth grade, the focus is shifted to geographical regions of the United States and the contributions by each region to the rest our country. Various groups of people and their impact on these regions are also introduced. By fifth grade, students are focusing on U.S. history with a strong emphasis on government and

citizenship. Students gain an understanding of our nation's creation and the basic principles of democracy with the institution of our nation's founding documents. Citizenship is a common thread throughout each grade level. To make the idea of citizenship tangible at all grade levels, students participate in the PBIS program and show their Panda Pride (Be respectful, responsible and ready) in all areas of our school community. All students are taught expectations and responsibilities of good citizenship through these guidelines and model their civic learning throughout their school day.

Students at Wilshire Park have also had the special opportunity to demonstrate citizenship in an annual Veteran's Day celebration. This year three staff members who served, or are currently serving, in the armed forces were honored. Three of our fifth grade students had the opportunity to present these staff members to our community. One of the fifth graders was awarded a medal earned by a staff member due to his time in service. This was a special moment in the Wilshire Park school community.

2.   Other Curriculum Areas:

Wilshire Park offers five specialist areas for students to expand and integrate their learning with classroom connections. These areas include: Visual Arts, Physical Education integrated with Health education, STEM which integrates all science areas with technology, engineering and math, Media which includes media literacy, and Music which includes vocal and general music integration. The Music program offers students experiences in vocal music along with introductions to playing instruments such as Orff, recorder, and ukulele. A band experience is offered to fifth grade students. A Spanish language program can also be accessed by students in our after-school programming sessions through our Community Education program.

Wilshire Park's Elementary Art program is designed to serve all enrolled kindergarten through 5th grade students. Student artists learn multiple art mediums, design elements, collage techniques, art history, design focus using text, stylized images, symbolism, and contemporary practices. Students explore art styles, periods, history, mediums and techniques while using advanced levels of skill, exploration, understanding, knowledge, and reflection. Wilshire Park students are offered a unique cross-curricular collaboration with Media and STEM allowing students to create stop-motion-animation clips of their multi-media thematic art/environments. An annual all school Art Exhibit is held in the spring providing an opportunity for students to participate in presenting their creations, educating, and connecting with the community at large. Wilshire Park students who are creative and artistic are given the opportunity to integrate visual art with environmental art at Silverwood Three Rivers Park. This after-school program was developed as a creative/nature/dramatic enrichment to an identified group of 24 4th Grade students. These students meet after-school to learn about nature, write scripts, create props, and hone their performance skills.

In the area of Physical Education, the belief of teachers is that students should be exposed to a wide variety of activity in order to promote lifelong physical fitness. Offering a wide variety of activities encourages students to incorporate exercise throughout their lives by developing an interest in different types of physical activity. Physical education also helps students build social skills and teamwork as students work together to participate in activities and follow the rules of how games are played.

The STEM curriculum leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge that students will need in college and the workforce. Solving higher level thinking problems, persisting through difficult issues, working with people from diverse backgrounds and enjoying the disciplines of STEM will provide strong connections to classroom work. The Wilshire Park STEM program teaches students to use technology with a variety of digital platforms. Students work collaboratively, with a Growth mindset while learning 21st Century skills.

The main goal of the Wilshire Park Elementary Music program is to help produce students who are artful, collaborative, creative, and mindful. Instruction is influenced by a variety of music methodologies, including, but not limited to the Orff Schulwerk Approach, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and the Kodaly Method. In the music room, students sing, play, dance, create, and discover together. Understanding of essential skills is measured through frequent informal assessment, formal assessment, as well as student-created compositions and performance. Emphasis is placed on student-created compositions because exploring and creating new music provides important opportunities for self-expression and discovering the way music works and why it works that way.

The Media experience focuses on three main areas: Literacy, Integrated Technology, and Digital Citizenship. The Literacy experience exposes students to all genres of literature and how to locate books in the school media center or public library. Integrated Technology assists students in using technology in their work; applying electronic sources for research, learning to cite sources, and using a variety of presentation tools. K-5 students also learn keyboarding skills. Finally the Digital Citizenship component enhances student knowledge of internet safety, security, communication, information literacy and copyright laws.

Wilshire Park does not offer a language program during the school day but throughout the year, students may enroll in an after-school program to acquire Spanish language speaking skills. Students learn Spanish in a fun and authentic way through a knowledgeable teacher. This after-school program offers a feeder program into the Middle School which offers the Spanish language to all students within the school day. Approximately 25 students sign up for Spanish each year.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Wilshire Park utilizes the Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) which is a data supported decision making process to provide interventions for students. A Grade Level Facilitator leads teams in suggesting interventions for struggling students. Teachers are trained to use a progress monitoring system collecting six data points (typically 6 weeks) to demonstrate whether a student is being successful or in need of further intervention. Six data points below a goal line would activate teachers to bring the selected student to the next tier of support which is titled, Level 3. At a Level 3 meeting, team members including special education staff, interventionists and administration suggest more formal intervention programs or in some cases a referral to special education.

The St. Anthony-New Brighton school district actively writes applications to the Minnesota Department of Education for a program called Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS). Funding has been received for this program which has a goal of preventing students from needing special education through the active process of intervention. This intervention program provides student access to small group reading and math programs. The programs utilize researched-based curriculum in an attempt to help students make over one year's growth and reach grade level standards.

Wilshire Park is able to utilize Federal Title I funding to provide another layer of support for students in the area of reading. Title services are less intense than ADSIS services students receive but provide the extra assurance that students are reaching grade level skills. The Title teacher uses a variety of reading strategies and research based interventions such as repeated readings, incremental rehearsal, and partner reading with students.

The program AIMSWeb is utilized to actively benchmark the entire school population three times each year in the areas of reading and math. This bench-marking process provides the data that teachers need to be objective about the level of student achievement. All students in grades 2-5 take the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in the fall and the spring each year. This adaptable test gives the important information that our teachers need to ensure that all students are making adequate growth according to their Percent of Expected Growth (PEG).

Students who are acquiring English as their second language receive interventions through an English Language (EL) program. Wilshire Park's EL program has been developed with the goal of guiding students to meet the challenges of their mainstream classroom. Students come from a variety of cultural and educational backgrounds. Teachers provide an inviting environment that is conducive to learning, and a rigorous curriculum that is tailored to the individual needs of the students. In addition, the EL team works together with mainstream teachers through co-teaching to provide instruction that is appropriate and beneficial to all students.

The results of several assessments help our staff determine whether students are in need of individualized learning from our Gifted and Talented (GT) program. The academic needs of gifted learners in grades 3-5 are addressed within the regular classroom through differentiation as well as through a pullout program

called ACHIEVE (Appropriate Challenge and Enrichment in a Variety of Experiences). The goal of ACHIEVE is to provide gifted students with a more complex instructional approach (through scope and depth) within specific units of study. The ACHIEVE Program provides gifted students with an academically rich learning environment to engage with like-minded students and offers a challenge focusing on student interests.

Our data is currently showing an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points in the following subgroups: English Language learners, students who qualify for Free/Reduced lunch and students of color specifically Black and Hispanic. A recent visit by educators associated with WMEP provided information and advice on closing this achievement gap. Wilshire Park will be focused on making sure students are represented in accordance with their racial and cultural identity within the classrooms. Wilshire Park staff will also develop clear and specific objectives that clearly align to student activities and assessment. Finally, goals include increasing our higher level questioning and rigor for all students. If Wilshire Park can increase the rigor for students, we can continue to improve all of our students' achievement.

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

Student engagement and the motivation of students is a high priority at Wilshire Park. In grades 3, 4 and 5, students are surveyed to determine whether Wilshire Park provides an engaging environment. The data shows that students rated classroom effort the highest. In the area of motivation, the staff has actively read books by author Carol Dweck regarding the Growth Mindset. The belief is that if students are intrinsically motivated and can persist at difficult problems, they will be successful when facing life's challenges. Teachers believe in positively reinforcing students in their classrooms. This positive reinforcement comes in the form of verbal acknowledgement of academic skills, individual and whole class incentives. Throughout the school year, events occur to support academic, social and emotional growth. Some of the large events include student assemblies, author visits, and school-wide celebrations such as Fall Fest, Fun Fest and an Ice-Cream Social/Art Fair.

Teachers at WP believe in a collective commitment to excellence. This commitment to excellence is evidenced by the conversations that teacher have about improving their craft. The Community Of Reflective Educators (CORE) program includes having teacher leaders coach fellow teachers in developing individualized goals. Teachers are often seen planning with colleagues or seeking out colleagues who have a special expertise. Often after staff meetings, teachers will seek out each other or the principal to continue the conversations. An open commitment to cooperation and not competition is embraced by the teaching staff.

It is important to the PBIS team and administration that teachers feel valued and supported. Each month, teachers are nominated by their peers to receive a Very Important Person (VIP) award. The principal also believes in writing positive notes to staff and reflections after observations, walk-throughs, and classroom visits. Teachers are supported by being given leadership opportunities in their areas of expertise. Teachers are also encouraged to share research and best practices and challenge the status quo. An example of this was eliminating the traditional spelling test from past curriculum in lieu of more meaningful word study and vocabulary. The PBIS team also finds ways to create a culture of fun which includes special incentives such as wearing jeans to school, special treats, and fun games.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

Engaging families and the community is an essential part of the school's mission. Wilshire Park is fortunate that many parents, grandparents, and community members volunteer at school daily. The current number of registered volunteers is over 200 people. At any given moment during the school day, a visitor would see volunteers working in the classrooms, in the dedicated volunteer space, and the hallways. Community groups such as Kiwanis, Lion's Club, and high school service groups such as National Honor Society and Dare to be Real (high school diversity group) actively volunteer. The Wilshire Park Parent Association (WPPA) hosts meetings, school events, and a parent social to encourage engagement. Despite the high levels of volunteerism and parent engagement, our Equity Team has found that greater outreach to all parents should be encouraged. One idea gaining momentum is to begin hosting pop-up meetings in the community in an effort to meet and greet parents who may not normally choose to come to the school building.

Parents are informed of student academic achievements and challenges in a variety of ways. Wilshire Park hosts a Meet and Greet day with 99% attendance of families visiting their child's classroom on this first day of school. This is the first informal way for a parent to positively meet their child's teacher. Conferences are hosted twice each year to inform parents of successes and challenges. Our practice is that all teachers are responsive to parent communications through email, phone or to schedule a meeting within 24 hours.

Community members are informed of our student academic achievement and challenges through our district newsletter and information posted on the district website. Recently, a community engagement

position was created and one aspect of this position is to reach out to community members who no longer have students in our schools to keep them actively informed about happenings in the district. The principal also has a Twitter handle to post positive pictures and updates from school.

3. Professional Development:

The professional development approach at Wilshire Park is based on identifying a goal and providing staff with scaffolded activities to achieve this goal. Wilshire Park has a goal of eliminating the achievement gap by specifically addressing the needs of English Language (EL) learners. The staff focuses on five key areas to improve achievement for this group of students: equity education, developing essential standards, coaching for teaching staff, intervention strategies for students, and technology integration. Our district has identified EL students as the focus subgroup because it is our belief that strategies that help EL learners will benefit all learners, especially students having difficulty accessing grade level curriculum.

The first area is professional development and training through practices and models from WMEP and Nexus. An Equity committee was formed with the goals of engaging parents and providing training to staff about how to have courageous conversations about race and how to dismantle institutional racism within our school.

Teachers work actively to develop essential standards and ensure that all learners are successful in these specific standards. The Wilshire Park staff strongly identifies the objective for each lesson. Teachers are now working on making sure that the objective is clearly tied to what the students are learning. Hess's Depth of Knowledge Chart is used to train teachers on how to ask higher order thinking questions to encourage growth for all students.

Coaching for teachers is utilized through our Community of Reflective Educators (CORE) program. Each teacher is assigned one of eight teacher leaders who have been trained in the Coaching model. These teachers develop personal goals and realize these goals with their coach.

Training on designing interventions and monitoring the progress of students is used within the MTSS model. Teachers have created a bank of interventions and work together to discover the correct intervention(s) to implement for a student that will yield the greatest academic result.

Finally, teachers focus on technology integration to increase student engagement and achievement. Two technology programs: Gynzy and RAZ kids have been used to increase student engagement in the classroom and allow students to improve their individual reading levels.

Site Student Achievement Goals include improving reading proficiency for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 from 74% to 76% according to the MCA 2016-2017 test. Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 aim to improve math proficiency from 86% to 88% according to the MCA 2016-2017 test.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Wilshire Park is to make decisions collaboratively always keeping in mind what is best for students and not what is best for the adults who work with those students. The principal enlists a group of teacher leaders to form a Staff Advisory Committee each year. This group is encouraged to discuss any aspect in the building that positively or negatively impacts social, emotional, or academic achievement of students. Because the district is small, teachers are given leadership role opportunities such as curriculum, equity, technology, mentoring, etc. These leaders help provide the structure needed to make sure all staff in the building are working toward a common goal.

The principal has a lean office staff that includes a full time Intervention Specialist and a part time counselor. A team approach is utilized to efficiently meet student needs as they arise. Administration actively encourages all staff to solve problems and work collaboratively to support one another. The principal has a deep amount of trust in the staff and in turn the staff are empowered to make decisions for the good of all students.

The Principal, Intervention Specialist, and two Teacher Leaders have recently been trained in a model called, Restorative Justice. This model allows for adults and students to work collaboratively to solve behavior problems. Students are asked how their choices impact others and what they will do to solve problems and fix mistakes. It is the philosophy of the school that if students do the cognitive work, behaviorally and academically, they will develop greater experiences in problem solving skills that will help them grow in all areas. The overall goal would be for the building to decrease in school behavioral referrals thus increasing the time students spend in classrooms. Currently, with the implementation of PBIS, Wilshire Park has seen a dramatic decrease in referrals. Further work with Restorative Justice will hopefully also lead to further decreases in referrals.

Currently, the principal is working with WMEP staff. Through the data analysis it has been learned that many of our students show proficiency but sometimes are not making a year's growth academically. The decision has been made to create learning targets and progressions for teachers that will help them utilize Karin Hess's Cognitive Rigor Matrix. This decision, that will impact professional development, includes providing teachers with more resources about how to increase rigor and provide equitable experiences for all students.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Collaboration among students is essential for developing 21st Century learning and skill development. Teachers give students experiences in collaboration in a variety of ways. Teachers may use cooperative learning groups or partner learning to enhance the learning environment. Allowing students to collaborate with each other teaches students how to advocate for themselves and others through self-discipline, student learning, and responsible behavior.

Teaching staff is committed to collaboration in understanding that we are better when we work together. Often staff new to our building are encouraged to share their experiences as a fresh look at current practices. Teachers often use their planning times to meet with others on their team or vertically with other grade levels and specialists throughout the building. Teacher leaders keep their doors open and are willing to help whenever questions are asked. The Community Of Reflective Educators (CORE) program is built on the foundation that teachers must come together to share their expertise and improve their craft through coaching conversations. The collaborative efforts also include analyzing data and developing interventions for students who are not progressing at grade level expectations or who are scoring well above grade level. Collaborative efforts are essential to encouraging student growth.

Collaboration between staff and parents is an essential ingredient in providing a successful school environment. The practice is to communicate widely and openly with parent stakeholders in a variety of ways to meet their needs. The response has been that staff are very timely, receptive and available when working together to meet student needs.

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much," Helen Keller.