

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 126 West Main Street Box 267
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Teton State ID Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 83415-0000

County Fremont County

Telephone (208) 458-4931 Fax (208) 458-0154

Web site/URL <https://www.tetonelementary.net/o/tet> E-mail frankt@sd215.net

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. David Marotz E-mail davidm@sd215.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fremont County Joint District # 215 Tel. (208) 624-7542

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

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

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

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

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) 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)
2 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 8 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	0
K	18
1	21
2	20
3	19
4	21
5	23
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	122

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.7 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 7.7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 91.6 % White
 - 0 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 7%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	9
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	122
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %

6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 49 %

Total number students who qualify: 60

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 7 %
Total number of students served 8

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</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. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 1 %
Total number of students served: 1

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	6
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

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

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	94%	93%	92%	94%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

15. 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.

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

Ensure that all students acquire the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to be contributing members of society by creating a system of real-life assessment, curriculum, and instruction; a safe and caring environment; and an active partnership that embraces the home, community, and school.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3279/SD215/2401373/3085.pdf

18. **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

Our school serves several small communities in a rural part of the state. Most of our students come from blue-collar families with a lot of influence from our farming community. About 50 percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunches, reflecting the humble background most of the families we serve. We do, however, have a rich supply of volunteers and support for our little school that is worth

more than any monetary contribution. Because we are such a small school with only 1 class for each grade k-5, our staff gets to know the students and families extremely well. We are able to maintain close contact with parents for both

positive feedback and behavior concerns and have an open line of communication. We generally have over 90% attendance at parent-teacher conferences, which are held twice each year. Families are welcomed anytime to come have lunch with their students, help with reading groups, or sit in for a classroom party. Younger siblings often come with their parents which makes them excited to come to school when it is finally their time to start kindergarten. We value the relationships we have with the families of the children we work with.

Each of our classes puts on their own play or program during the year. We also have a special Veteran's Day Program and make sure the local veterans are invited. The children learn songs honoring our country and there is a slideshow that highlight family members of our students. These programs help our children understand what it means to be an American. We also put on a play for Christmas with a lot

of singing that is always very popular. Our programs are well attended, with standing room only at most of them.

Our school has some great ways to help encourage our students to become even better students and citizens in our community. Each month we have a Student of the Month assembly and recognize students for special characteristics we see. At the beginning of the year, we set a list of traits such as hard-working, kind, thankful, helpful, etc..., and choose a student from each class who best meets it

from each class. At this assembly, we recognize our "Junior Heroes" who have completed service hours and they receive a special t-shirt. We also present an award to a student from each class who has made improvements in their reading or math. We work hard to spread out the recognition so that each student is chosen at least once every 2 years.

Each year we do a giving tree and help several families of our students with Christmas. We put up tags of items needed and families are invited to help fill them. This has been extremely successful each year.

Our PTO sponsors a huge Halloween Carnival and families are invited to come have dinner and play games at the school. Proceeds help fund field trips and extra classroom needs. In the Spring, our kindergarten celebrates the hundredth day of school by dressing up and "candy bomb" each of the other classrooms with 100 pieces of candy. Their enthusiasm is contagious! We also celebrate Reading

Week by having a school-wide party. Each teacher reads a story and does an activity with each class as they rotate around the classrooms. Everyone is encouraged to dress up and be creative.

We encourage our students to be active. Many of our students are part of the junior cross-country team and compete against other elementary schools in our area. They also participate in the district's youth basketball, soccer, and baseball programs. Our most popular program, though, is Cougar Cub Wrestling.

Our principal and a teacher work together to coach our students and have a tournament against the other elementary schools in the district. Close to half of the students at our school participate and have more wrestlers than the schools 3 times our size. This year we had enough girls compete to have their own tournament. Our school has proudly displayed the winning bust for many years.

We love to take our students out of our small community and see things that they may not have the opportunity to experience otherwise. We have been able to secure grants for the past several years that help pay for us to go on some fun field trips to the zoo and museums. We are able to take our kids into the neighboring town where our Junior High and High schools are located and watch their annual plays

and banner raising ceremonies. The kids love to see the big performances and watch the band play. We have also been able to have people come into our schools for activities and demonstrations that are exciting to learn about. We have a star lab that teaches about constellations, a 4-H program that does activities and experiments, and have even had construction companies come show how things are built.

Our School Resource Officer goes above and beyond and does demonstrations with our students about law enforcement and safety. We may be small, but have a lot of support around us. Our school has a lower social economic base than many other schools in Idaho. Forty-nine percent of our students qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. As a school we recognize the challenges this brings. We have very high expectations for our students and despite their economic status they perform well because of a high commitment our school has for our students' education.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Teton Elementary we strive to serve the needs of our diverse students through individualized instruction. Our students each are assessed at the beginning of each school year along with a monthly assessment of their language arts skills. This assessment is done through the Idaho Reading Indicator. The IRI gives our teachers valuable information that enables us to see all areas of language proficiency. The monthly report generated from the Idaho Reading Indicator test breaks down language into different skills in Letter Knowledge, Phonemic Awareness, Spelling, Alphabetic Decoding, Comprehension, and Text Fluency. This summative assessment allows for individualized instruction for our students. Teachers are able to use the information to assign special activities on the computer but more importantly focus on areas of needed learning. As the students are reassessed each month we are able to determine the level of progress that is being made by our students.

Reading is a primary focus in our school. There has been a shift in our quest to help our students become proficient readers. We have learned that the earlier we can help our struggling students the better success they will have. Our Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade teachers have all been involved with the Smart Reading program. This has been a two year commitment of extensive monthly training and mentoring by a reading specialist to help us improve our students abilities. Our teachers have attended classes and have had monthly observations to improve their skills which has helped to improve our students' skills.

This year in our school we have initiated a million words achievement award. Older students in our school have worked hard to attain these goals. Our school consists of 129 students. Since December, 21 of our students have achieved one million words read. To help motivate our other students, the million word award readers are given a certificate and candy bar at our monthly awards assembly. We even have one student who has read three million words in the first three quarters of the current school year.

We just completed our school reading day a few weeks ago. Each teacher selected a nursery rhyme to share with our students and corresponding activities. We have found that there is a high level of interest among our students as we present this yearly to our students. As a faculty we strive each year as we select our area of focus for reading day to help our students develop a love of reading and a greater desire to learn.

As a school, we use a humanistic approach to help our students grow and learn. We believe that our students should have choices in their education as they work hard to improve their reading skills which helps them perform better in every academic area. Our small school environment has a huge impact on our students' learning as all teachers and staff work together to help all our students grow, learn, and progress throughout their years spent at Teton Elementary.

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

Teton Elementary effectively instructs mathematics using the Humanistic Approach. As our teachers navigate the curriculum and teach the learning standards for their prospective grade level, teachers have the opportunity to focus on the development of the math skills in their class to determine what learning concept needs to be taught next or what concepts need to be re-evaluated. In addition to whole-group instruction, students are at the center of their learning by being taught explicit instruction tailored specifically to their own needs. As a school, we believe that this approach works best for our small school because the teachers know each child individually and know their mathematical talents and abilities.

In each of our classrooms, teachers are using the i-Ready Curriculum to assess and teach. The lessons stem from a problem solving methodology that progresses throughout the week in the types of lesson formats that include the following components: Explore, Develop, and Refine. Students are first exploring ways to try to

solve the problem using their background knowledge and skills that they have been exposed to previously. Then, students are taught to develop various strategies to enhance their understanding of solving the types of problems in that particular unit. Finally, students refine those skills and prove their knowledge on the formal written assessment given by their teacher. To enhance student mathematical knowledge and skill practice, once a week, each grade level participates in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) class. Students use their mathematical skills to complete various tasks including participating in robotics, coding, and other real-world skills. Providing our students with the opportunity to participate in this activity creates an atmosphere to thrive and succeed outside of the typical classroom.

In addition to whole-group math instruction, students are assessed monthly using an online platform within the i-Ready curricula where the students are assessed on grade level mathematical concepts. After the assessment, a report is produced that shows in detail the areas of student success and areas where students can improve. Each report gives feedback of skill knowledge in Numbers and Operations, Algebraic Thinking, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. Teachers use this data to plan small-group instruction and tailor lessons to meet the needs of their students and their mathematical abilities. This assessment has three major diagnostics three times within the school year. The first diagnostic is given in September, the second diagnostic in January, and the final diagnostic is completed in May. Between these diagnostic tests, shorter assessments are given with the purpose of a Growth Check each month between the Diagnostic Assessments. These Growth Checks and Diagnostic Assessments are vital for classroom teachers to see common areas where extra practice may be needed for classroom success. These checks are also used to ensure that students are meeting their individualized goals. Students are praised for their exceptional work throughout the year in our monthly Student of the Month Assembly. Students who have made significant growth on their i-Ready testing are presented with an award, certificate, and school-wide recognition.

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

Teton Elementary uses state standard aligned Mystery Science as our science curriculum. It allows teachers the freedom to not only teach to the standards, but the flexibility to differentiate instruction and adjust to students' needs and various interests whether it be hatching chickens or studying volcanoes. The program uses engaging instructional videos and hands on activities and experiments which are easily adaptable. If time is short, there are 5-10 minute mini lessons, or if time permits, they have lessons that can last up to one hour.

The strength of our science curriculum is not only flexibility, but the rural area in which we live. We are able to take advantage of local landforms and features like the Menan Buttes, Mesa Falls, and Johnny Sack cabin where students can view where a river actually begins. Other things that are great assets to our school include the Museum of Idaho and BYUI planetarium.

Community support also helps to invigorate our science programs. We have volunteers that range from 4 H leaders to beekeepers. They help to fortify our program by connecting our students to the community, and providing hands-on exploration of topics that are valuable to our community and incorporating life skills. Volunteers help teach about rocks, robotics, leather making, gardening, art, space, and more. Our local police officers have a positive involvement with our students and teach about fingerprinting, how to stay safe on the internet, bullying, and being a good citizen.

Assessments are usually formative. Teachers help students identify their strengths and weaknesses. They help improve those areas by observations during class activities, discussions, and lots of hands-on experiments. Students are encouraged to share their knowledge with each other. The ultimate goal is to get students excited about science. Teachers use every resource available to accomplish this goal.

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

Holidays are a Social Studies standard across all grade levels. We plan art projects and discuss the history and significance of the holidays. The upper grades participate in Literature Circles where we study specific historical eras such as the Civil Rights Movement, World War II, and other significant historical events.

Teton Elementary has created a project called Race to the Moon where we obtain miles through physical exercise to figuratively reach the moon. We receive mile donations from around the world to help us achieve our goal and track the states and countries on maps. The kids anxiously watch for new pins! Our second grade also participates in a postcard exchange where they track the postcards they have received from the 50 states.

A former university professor comes often to teach the older students about various wars (the American Revolution, the Civil War, the World Wars, etc.). His presentations have helped our students to gain a global perspective. Our fourth graders also study the Lewis and Clark expedition and how their journey impacted the nation as well as the formation of our state. They perform a play about their expedition for the school and their parents.

We do not have standardized history assessments at the elementary level in Idaho. Our fourth and fifth grades have curricula assessments, but we find that our best data comes from our students' love and understanding of history: a third grader kneeling on her chair calling out, "Lord, help America!" during a discussion about Washington and his men escaping across the Delaware River; a fifth grader excited to tell Mr. Davis that the book he's reading talks about Kristallnacht; the fourth graders singing their Lewis and Clark songs on the playground, and the fifth graders joining in. That is the data we truly cherish!

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Arts and performing arts at Teton, are represented in a variety of ways. Each class goes to Music three times a week for a half hour each day. In their music class they not only learn to sing but they are also taught about different instruments, how to read music, and are 4th and 5th grade classes in particular learn how to play recorders and some even learn the basics of the ukulele. Every grade in our school performs at least one program on their own throughout the year. On top of that there are many programs that the classes do together. We have a veterans program in which we have veterans come and speak about veterans day and we do a flag raising then the school has a special musical performance which we do for our community and our veterans. Every year our school puts on a Christmas program, and a talent show at the end of the year.

As for art, each class dedicates on the average about an hour a week for different forms of art. We also have a program in which art students from the local college come into our classes and teach each class about different styles of art. Then each class is asked to select the form in which they would like to try throughout that week. We see many forms of art from our students by the guidance of our college students.

We try to the best of our ability to help each of our students be well rounded in their education.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students at Teton Elementary attend PE one day a week. K-4 have 30 minutes and 5 th graders have 45 minutes. We do the Mile Run every Fall and Spring to see how much their endurance has improved from the start to the end of the school year. We also work on Locomotor skills, jump roping, hula hooping, ball throwing skills, planks, mountain climbers, push ups, having fun on the scooters, playing different tag games, etc... The biggest thing is we do a variety of moving in a FUN way that the kids are having so much fun they don't even realize they got a workout until they're done and out of breath! We also try and talk

about the importance of making healthy eating choices and trying our best to get movement that gets our heart rates up, every single day. For most kids, these 30 minutes of the week is their favorite day of the week! We also have a variety of different competitions that are really fun for the kids to keep pushing themselves and improving and we incorporate 2-3 minutes of meditation each class as a “cool-down,” for kids to practice controlling themselves and sitting still!

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

2d. Technology/library/media

Our school’s other curriculum areas include classes in STEM, keyboarding and computer skills, and an integrated library program. All students participate in weekly STEM classes where they engage in a variety of hands-on activities. This year, the STEM curriculum focused on programming and moon exploration. K-5 students have learned to code and use robots. By year's end, the Kindergarteners will have learned how to operate and code five robots while the 2nd-5th graders will have worked with eight robots and built their own hobby rockets. Each week students in 2nd grade learn keyboarding and mouse skills. With that basic knowledge, students in grades 3-5 continue to hone their keyboarding skills as they learn how to use programs from the Google Education Suite such as Google docs, slides, sheets, and drawings. Their ability to utilize and manipulate these programs prepares them for increased success in secondary education. Our students also love to read and utilize libraries both physically and digitally. Our school librarian stays busy as the students have daily access to exchange books. Several teachers also utilize an online library curriculum that allows students to read books not found in our library and to interact with the books digitally.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

There are many ways in which we try to help those students who are performing below grade. Amongst those we do differentiated instruction, in which we try to explain the material in a various amount of ways and we break the students down into small groups or even 1 on 1 instruction with the class room teacher when needed. In some cases we might shorten their spelling lists and break them apart so that they work with fewer words at a time before moving them on to the rest of the spelling list. For some of our IEP students sometimes we provide them with entirely new spelling lists. We also do small group Literature circles where the students get the opportunity to discuss more at a reading level that suits the students.

For those students who are performing low in math we still do small group instruction with the class room teacher and we we also provide an after school program for part of the year in which we focus on just a select few students from each grade and work at their level and help them progress and com to an understanding of their curriculum.

Each teacher in our school takes each child’s education quite personally for it is our belief that they are not just some strangers' students but we as a whole are a great big family. As such we want them all to succeed long into adulthood.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

In reading we take those students who perform above grade level and assign them books that will continue to challenge them in their literature circles. Our goal is not to slow them down but help them continue to progress at a rapid pace if possible. For example, in 3rd grade our high level reading group must not only analyze the text which they are reading but also write papers in which they write how the text may correlate

with their own life or a paper on what message they believe the author was trying to get across to the reader . They also do those things that are done in normal lit circles as in finding the climax of the story, identifying characters, etc... but we challenge them with things above their grade level.

There is also a Gifted and Talented Program that we run in our school. Those students who are in the 90th percentile in one or more areas have the opportunity to attend our GT class once a week for 90 minutes. In this class the students are tasked with a curriculum that is at a higher level than those things which they would find in class. For example, multiplication is taught in 3rd grade, yet we have 2nd graders and sometimes even 1st graders begin on things dealing with multiplication and are learning that the concept of multiplication is actually repeated addition. In the gifted and talented class they are also introduced to many things in technology which would be introduced at a higher grade level. I have seen students as young as 1st graders program Legos and other robots to do an amazing array of things.

That leads me into our STEM class which we also have at our school in which students learn various things which deal with technology and science. Those students performing at a higher grade level are usually tasked to complete more complicated projects and even are asked sometimes to take what they know and to help other students come to an understanding of it.

The teachers in our school also have what we call fast finisher activities. These are activities for those students who have completed the asked assignment and they may then attempt to do things at a more challenging level.

3c. Students with disabilities:

At Teton Elementary School, all of our student's learning is the most important to us. This includes students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have the opportunity to learn alongside their general education peers, in the least restrictive environment, with a free and appropriate education, while still meeting their service minutes and criteria for their IEP.

Students with disabilities receive core instruction in the general education classroom, or special education classroom, depending on the student's individual needs. They receive as much support as possible from our special education teacher and paraprofessionals to access their core instruction. We tailor our instruction to each student's needs with core instruction with an adapted core curriculum, as needed individually for each student, as well as adapted grades. This allows the students to receive the academic education they need at their instructional level.

Students are able to receive small group or 1:1 instruction, depending on the student's needs, every day, multiple times a day. For students who have disabilities and are on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), they will receive targeted interventions to meet their goals. They also will work on interventions to help them succeed in the general education classroom.

When a student is struggling to meet the standardized test scores that they need to meet, as a team, the teachers will focus on certain areas that are lower to help the student feel successful during testing. Students who have disabilities receive added accommodations, such as reading the questions out loud or restating the questions. Having a separate place to take a test where it is quiet and less distracting is very often done at Teton Elementary as well.

At Teton Elementary, we try our hardest to meet the standards of the state in a way that each and every student, including students with disabilities, is able to learn from in every learning style that we can offer. We have a beautiful school environment and culture at Teton that I wish every student had the opportunity to experience.

3d. English Language Learners:

In our district we have a program called imagine learning. In which our ELL students get on their computers for 20 minutes a day and learn English. Although we do this program in our school we have found it to not

be enough. So we have also implemented a program called language for learning. In this program the students have been learning the basic body part, basic commands and vocabulary. Since all of ELL students happen to be Spanish speakers at our school the school Principal has also taken on a few reading groups in which our ELL students are reading text which is in their own language as well. Though English is our priority, we do not want our students to lose the ability which they have to read and speak in their native language, especially since we know that knowing both languages will be advantageous to them in the future.

We also know that the first steps to learning English for students is what we call playground English. That is that before they learn educational English they learn to speak those words which they use at recess around their peers. Because of this, for at least one recess a day, either a teacher or the principal go out and play games with the students in which they attempt to incorporate academic language in the games to help further progress the rate at which they are learning English.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The notion of family is strongly pushed. We have made it our life's work to make the students and the staff feel that this is not just a school, but a place where we gather as one giant family. We make it our goal to celebrate success as much as possible. Once a month we hold an assembly where there are many awards given. There is the student of the month award. This category is changed every month for a different subject. Examples are hard working, polite, etc.. There is one student elected per class.

We also do a junior heroes award. Each student in the school is given a sheet to fill at the beginning of the year and they earn this award by fulfilling a certain amount of service hours on their own. They write what their service was and how long it took them. There is also our million words award that is earned by reading a 1/2 million words if you are in grades k through 2, or a million words grades 3 through 5. When the students have completed reading a book they put in the title of the book which they have read and then the program already knows how many words were in the book and adds it to their total words read. We then have an I-Station Award each month the students in our school take a test for ELA. Those students who have shown the most growth in their class earn this award not the student with the highest score. This makes it so that every student is pushing themselves for improvement. We have a similar award for math it is called our I-Ready Award, and each month the students in our school take a test for Math. This award is also done by growth.

At our school we also really only push 4 rules: We don't hurt ourselves. We don't hurt others. We don't hurt our school. We don't make the Principal mad; (Only by breaking the first three rules can you make him upset.)

We ask the students how do we keep these rules and also in what ways can these rules be broken. (physically, emotional, and educationally).

It is our goal to instead focus on our desired behaviors rather than on the negative ones, so we try to praise and award those behaviors which we truly desire. The principal in our school also makes a conscious effort to speak to the students to see how they are doing, and how we as a family can help them.

We have also made a conscious effort to make the principal's office a place in which the students are not afraid to go, but a safe haven for when the students are troubled. I have seen many students in the school walk to the principal's office of their own accord just because they need an ear to listen to them or they need a space to regroup their thoughts.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Because our school is such a tight knit community we are able to provide many things which in others schools would be nearly impossible. We have a huge group of parents who volunteer daily throughout our school to help in any way whether it's reading, writing or math.

We also put on many community programs like our veterans day program and Christmas program where we not only invite the families of the students to come and watch but the entirety of the community.

We have many guest speakers who come into our classes and teach about various jobs or hobbies which they do. We have had police officers with police dogs, archeologists from the local college, photographers, farmers, firemen, and even an ex professional football player.

We have also associated ourselves with the local college to provide college students an opportunity to have an early experience as teachers in the classroom and to see the various styles of our teachers. We also provide an opportunity for some of the college students to have their student teaching experience in our school.

We have art students from the local college come into our school and teach about art for 30 minutes a day for one week. The local 4H office also comes into our school, and teaches a variety of activities, from finding and opening geodes, to rockets, and cake decorating.

Our local Farm Bureau office also does an agriculture day with our students in which our students from 3rd, 4th and 5th grades write an essay about farming and where our K, 1st, and 2nd have a coloring contest associated with farm work. Farm Bureau then provides awards to the top writers or artists from each class.

Every Christmas season we also do what we call our Giving tree program. In this program we select a few families that we know of that are needy and we put up different tags from which people in the community select and bring gifts to those families of things they need. We keep the families anonymous, of course.

Many of our teachers and our principal will also attend many of the students' extracurricular activities such as baseball games, softball games, soccer games, etc. and will take pictures of the students doing their various activities and put them up in our school gymnasium.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

To be honest this subject is a little difficult just because I don't feel that we ever do enough to make our teachers feel valued in any school system. The teachers at Teton are the backbone of our family, and we sincerely try to help them in any way shape or form possible. As stated in many parts of this application, we believe our school to be a family. In doing so we do everything we can to help one another. We have implemented monthly peer observations, a goal guidance system, and we have curriculum specialists that help with guiding those teachers who need or ask for guidance in the different areas of education.

Our monthly peer observations are just that. Each teacher in my school sets up a time once a month to observe a peer in a subject matter of their choosing. In these peer observations nothing negative is allowed. The point of the peer observations is to see or learn things from that teacher which you could find as a benefit in your own classrooms. For we have learned that the best teachers don't create everything from scratch, but instead gather information from those teachers that perform a task wonderfully.

In our goal guidance system, each teacher is asked after doing a self evaluation, what target area they believe they would like some guidance in. Then the school principal, sits in their classroom and take notes of ideas that may come to mind, and also notes the things that the teacher is already doing for that goal. We have found that sometimes teachers judge themselves harshly on something that they already are terrific at. When this is the case we help them see how good they are by showing them written proof of what they are doing. We then help them come up with a new goal. It is the principal's job to find those individuals or training that may help these teachers with their goals. We have had our teachers attend professional developments that help for the target area which they chose.

We also provide professional development for many of our paras when they are interested in learning how to do a specific task better. In Teton we are constantly trying to improve ourselves, because we know that if we want the best out of our students we must give them the best that we have.

4. School Leadership:

It has long been our principal's philosophy that our school is one giant family. The principal at Teton wears many hats, he works in small groups with our ESL students, He helps with reading groups in the school and is constantly in different classes helping students in various subjects to help ease the stress of the teachers. He has also made the focus of his evaluations to help teachers in areas of their choosing and to help document the positive things that the teacher is doing. When hiring new employees and even with current employees he makes it a point to help them understand that our school works in a family dynamic. In so doing he emphasizes that we have to love our students and in so doing they will perform to the best of their ability.

We have 2 Co interim Superintendents. One of our Superintendents is a principal coach and has made it his mission to have unity in our school as one of the top priorities. He not only guides our principals' in learning the correct procedures which they must do for their job He also keeps himself accessible to them for things that they might be in need of. The other Superintendent is in charge of evaluations and special services needed in the district and he makes sure that anything which the school might be in need of, they are able to attain it.

Within our school we also have many leadership roles. We have a teacher who represents the school in team leadership meetings, a teacher who is on the school board calendar committee, a teacher who is a reading specialist within our school who helps not only students, but teachers as well to find materials or workshops that may help the teachers. We have 2 teachers that spearhead our science program and find fun and exciting ways to help us incorporate more science in our classes.

Our PTO is also a big part of our Teton Elementary family. They help organize ways in which the school and the community can come together to help our students become successful people in our community. They also help attain items that without their help would be practically impossible for our school to attain. We have many people who have leadership roles but we all work towards the same goal and that is to help "Our Children" become successful members in our community.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

We at Teton elementary try to provide opportunities for students of different backgrounds to have an opportunity to discuss and explain things about their culture or traditions which their families do in general. For example in December many teachers give students the opportunity to give presentations on the traditions of their families. We have also had the students of the school listen to and even learn some of the dances of other cultures. We have had different cultural groups from the local college come and talk to our students and teach them of their culture. One of the local college teachers also comes and even shows how English in various places may sound completely different in different parts of the world. We have had parents of differing religions come and help us understand certain guidelines which they may have for their children and we do try to the best of our ability to accommodate those needs. Again our goal is to make our students become successful members of society by showing them that we love and care for them.. In Teton we take the essence of family seriously and we do everything we possibly can to have our students feel comfortable in their environment.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

If we were to pinpoint the one practice that has truly made us successful is the fact that we emphasize that we are a family. We strive for the achievement of all our students. We have found that by showing the students that we care not only do they try their hardest just for the fact that they do not want to let you down, but also our behavioral issues are very minimalistic because the students don't want to feel that they have failed you in anyway. A great example of this is an experience we had once with our 3rd grade teacher. She had a student in her class who had gotten into trouble for hitting another student. When the teacher pulled the student aside he looked the 3rd grade teacher in the eye and asked her with the most sincere look in his eyes to please not tell the Kindergarten teacher, the teacher was puzzled as to why the kindergarten teacher to which he replied to her "because he taught me better, and I really don't want to let him down. He will be so disappointed."

Our students know we care and we tell them that on a daily basis. We also remind them constantly that because they are our kids they know better than any other child out there what is right and what is wrong, because they are part of the Teton Elementary family. Because of this we not only keep our eyes on them here in elementary school, but our teachers continue to check up on them in junior high and in high school. Just because they graduate and leave our school they do not stop being part of our family. I believe that every teacher in our school does not believe their job is finished with their students when they leave this school, but only when we see our goal reached. That is to say when we see our students being active and helpful member of society. That is truly what sets us apart we are a family first and foremost.