

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 272 North 600 West
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Valparaiso State IN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 46385-9211

County Porter County

Telephone (219) 759-2544 Fax (219) 759-6360

Web site/URL <https://unioncenter.union.k12.in.us/> E-mail cgabriel@union.k12.in.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. John Hunter E-mail jhunter@union.k12.in.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Union Township School Corp Tel. (219) 759-2531

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. Bob Tichy
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 4 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	69
1	70
2	61
3	67
4	76
5	70
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	413

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1.1 % Black or African American
 - 15.1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 81.4 % White
 - 2.4 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: ≤1%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	413
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish, Mandarin, & Arabic

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15 %

Total number students who qualify: 60

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 10 %
Total number of students served 42

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>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>1</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>1</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>7</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>2</u> Developmental Delay	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 2

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.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 21:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
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.

Providing a nurturing learning environment focused on teaching the whole child. Our goal is to prepare all children for life-long learning success by engaging, supporting, and challenging each child.

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

<https://go.boarddocs.com/in/utsc/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

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

Union Center Elementary School is part of the Union Township School Corporation, which is a thirty square mile school district comprising Union Center Elementary, John Simatovich Elementary School, Union Township Middle School, and Wheeler High School, with a total enrollment of approximately 1700 students. The district is composed of rural and suburban areas with a total population of about 7,000. The township's largest employer is the school corporation. Many of our residents commute daily to work in communities such as Merrillville, Michigan City, Portage, Hobart, Valparaiso, and Chicago.

Engagement and a sense of connection are the key strategies that we are trying to focus on post-COVID. We understand the impact the pandemic had on disconnecting the community from teachers. Strategically working together to spark engagement, involvement and connection has been the main focus of Union Center Elementary School. Once this properly takes place, we feel students will have the best chance to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally.

We are putting a great effort towards getting involved with Union Center Elementary School. Whether it is volunteering at the school, coming in for our after school connection programs (Bullying, Reading, Special Education, Construction Updates, etc), getting a positive phone call home, or visiting during a community event, our school corporation is really trying to provide opportunities for families to be connected with the school and community as well.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Union Center is a one-to-one school, and we use McGraw Hill Wonders curriculum to teach Reading and English Language Arts. While McGraw Hill might be the content, or the tool, we rely heavily on our relationships with our students to teach any subject. For Reading, Writing, and all other ELA related contents, we are very fortunate to have hired a learning-loss specialist. This learning-loss specialist works with our students to challenge students where they currently are based on several formative and summative assessments. We use NWEA in grades K-5 (three times a school year), and with great intent, we work to inform the student and the family of what this NWEA data means. We also provide strategies and resources for families (the same that we use at the school), to partner with our students and families to all work together for continuous improvement and growth. At Union Center, you will often find quotes to inspire reading. As Frederick Douglas stated, "Once you learn to read, you will be forever free."

As far as how reading is taught, we trust in our teachers to love the grind reaching all students in the classroom. This entails differentiating instruction and making sound decisions based on informed instructional practices. Professional development is provided monthly and teachers work collaboratively during plan time to achieve alignment. Our corporation makes it known that we want our teachers to stay sharp and continue to improve as educators and humans. At Union Center, teachers, students and families have resources like Book Taco, RAZ Kids, AR, Reading Eggs, EPIC, and other reading programs to supplement our curriculum. We have a great understanding and passion for developing the love of Reading and English Language Arts.

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

At Union Center Elementary School, we use McGraw Hill My Math curriculum to teach our math standards. We provide various methods to capture and instill math concepts for all students. Partnering with our middle school and high school, we offer opportunities for our older students to come into tutor our elementary students. As in Reading and ELA, we rely heavily on local formative assessments in the classroom along with our NWEA assessments for Math.

Our professional development for math focuses on finding math in project-based learning, STEM or STEAM activities, and different approaches to teach elementary math. After students demonstrate understanding and mastery of basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, we challenge them to apply math knowledge to real-life concepts. Students will have to explain how they apply math knowledge, and this process often leads to a deeper understanding and appreciation of math in general. This does not work for all students, but we have found that this captures many students that do not have the greatest mindset on math in general. Getting parents/guardians involved in the growth process in math has certainly been embedded into our strategic approach at Union Center.

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

Discovery Education is the current curriculum we are using for our K-5 science instruction. We also use other platforms (mystery science) to teach science concepts and standards at Union Center Elementary School. On top of basic standards, we intentionally take a fieldtrip for each grade level to address the science curriculum. We strongly feel that this will spark the interest of many students outside of the school environment. Furthermore, we incorporate science labs into our classrooms where students get to showcase their efforts to the school and fellow students. Finally, we have community members come into our school to speak about science and how it applies to their career. We are constantly looking to improve in areas such as computer science and engineering concepts as well.

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

Our Social studies and history curriculum addresses the standards at all grades K-5. At our primary grades, K-2, we have the teacher reading many of our social studies concepts to our students. In grades 3-5, students at Union Center get a well-rounded approach to social studies. We encourage our teachers to create lessons where students can lead discussions, communicate, and demonstrate knowledge gained from the social studies lesson. Often, the older students (grades 3-5) write reports on historical figures, and in the process, they have to recreate many of the concepts covered during the unit.

In addition, our school takes great pride in our Veterans day program. We use this community event to reference many historic events that have affected many people in our community and our school. Again, this is another example of our community involvement movement at Union Center.

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)

Our art teacher has a passion for art. Check out "ArtLand" on youtube and you can see for yourself. Our specials teachers will see all the students in grades K-5. We have established a team of educators that are truly talented and passionate about spreading their love through teaching. In K-5 art class at Union Center, the students will learn a little history of art while learning a plethora of various art techniques and mediums. The students have art class once a week for 45 minutes. They also have other opportunities to be exposed to art during recess times, before or after school.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

The physical education (PE) teacher at Union Center has a great passion for connecting students with their own health, both physical and mental. The PE teacher oversees our annual Field Day event where the community is very involved. This historic day connects the adults to the students through play and exercise. You will always see students smiling and laughing during their physical education experience here at Union Center. You will often find the principal jumping into the classroom activities and joining in the fun as well!.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Our Media Center specialist truly loves reading and students. We are blessed to have a new space where students can get lost in reading and so much more. Last year we were able to complete a construction project that included a whole new learning space for the students. Our Media Center specialist has used this space for more than just a quiet space to read and check out books. She continues to instill the love of reading at our school with programs like guest readers, incentives to read for joy, reader leader helpers, and much more.

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

At Union Center, we currently offer extra-curricular activities such as student council, art club, choir, robotics, and spell bowl team. Below you will see the grades offered and how often they meet.

Spelling, an eight week program, is offered to students in grades 4 - 5. Students meet twice a week for the eight weeks with one competition at the end of the program. Robotics is also an eight-week program offered to students in grades 4 - 5. Students meet once a week for eight weeks with a couple of local competitions. Choir is a yearly group for grades 4 - 5 that meets every week and has several performances throughout the year. Art Club is a seven-week program for grades 2 - 5 that meets twice a week for the duration of the club. Student Council is a yearly group for grades 3 - 5 that meets every month (sometimes more than once a month, if needed). There are several other clubs that will meet based on adult availability. These include Library Club, Harry Potter Club, Chess Club, and Games Club.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Union Center tailors instruction, interventions and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of students by collecting and analyzing data, and then implementing interventions with a consistent and concrete plan. That plan consists of gathering data through formative and summative assessments, creating a goal, and then working until that goal is accomplished. We use NWEA, ILEARN, CogAT, grades, and other data points to get an accurate assessment of the students and their abilities. Every week, our teachers (by grade levels) will meet with our established RtI team and discuss these goals for each student. We check for progress and share strategies to continue growth or to change the intervention. Every step of the way, we include parents and discuss what we are seeing during our six week tracking time.

In Tier I interventions, Union Center includes all students in the core classrooms for instruction.

In Tier II interventions, we include a small, targeted group of students with specific goals that will meet 2-3 times per week.

Tier III - In Tier III interventions, Union Center includes a learning loss specialist to work with students one-on-one, up to five days a week. When Tier II interventions do not meet the needs of the students, a learning loss specialist works with students one-on-one, up to five days a week in Tier III.

Progression through the tiered system is tracked and the information is shared amongst all the educators helping the child close the achievement gap.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Part of getting to know the students, through all the assessments, includes the students performing above grade level. Once we know these data, we make informed decisions to drive our instruction through small group methods or by assigning our high performing students to our high ability program. There are additional steps to be a part of the high ability program such as community involvement and volunteering hours. Most of the time, the students and families are happy to participate in this initiative. In our high ability program, we teach students the power of failure and how to learn from mistakes. Our high ability teacher has a strong background in STEM concepts and frequently attends professional development on how to teach and challenge our smartest and brightest children.

3c. Students with disabilities:

At Union Center our students with disabilities have access to a resource room, a paraprofessional, a full-time special education teacher, and the help of a teacher's aide. We have a growing group of students with educational needs, so we are looking to expand our special education department in the near future. With that being said, we do a phenomenal job of providing our students with disabilities the proper support to succeed. This goes back to our motto of every student, every day. We work tirelessly to collaborate with

our general education teacher, our support staff, and our special education department to make sure all our students are held accountable and are supported.

3d. English Language Learners:

This is a area we can certainly improve. Because we are not very diverse, we only have a few needs when it comes to English Language Learners. Our resources are strengthening, but because there was not a great need, this was not addressed for many years. Now, we are informing our families and students of local resources that can be found in the area and tools that can be used a the school to help our ELL population. We are proud of our small community always being willing to help our schools, but this is an area where improvement is needed. Now that we have a need, we are providing resources to the students and the guardians of the students as well.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

It starts with the principal, who casts the vision of a school where students want to learn, teachers want to teach, custodians want to clean, kitchen staff wants to feed all the students and staff, and the community wants to send our future to this school. In order to do this, continuous discussions with the Union Center staff must take place frequently. The goal is to have the school feel like Disneyland. The principal wants to lead by example and model to everyone that Union Center is the happiest place on earth. As the principal, this is not always going to be the case, but Union Center has a strong history of being a high-performing school. Our staff is incredible, and our generous community contributes greatly to this vision. If the staff is here to serve students and the community, fantastic! However, if your viewpoint varies from the vision of the school, then the purpose will be difficult to achieve.

With that being said, the administration staff wants to see the teachers and all staff members welcome students with childlike enthusiasm. Moreover, administration wants the students to be able to feel completely safe and forever curious. Additionally, Union Center works to embrace the differences and teach the skill of encouraging others. With this "raising the future" objective in front of the staff, Union Center can always work on academics. Let's do it with kindness and happiness, always. Find the joy and spread the love at Union Center! Instilling these core values at an elementary (along with high academic standards), is the Union Center approach to college and career readiness development.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our PTO has had a tremendous impact on our engagement movement with families and community members. A little background story, the pandemic dismantled the Union Center PTO. The principal saw this as an opportunity to start fresh and explore this opportunity to reconnect the Parents and the Teachers with the community. Blessed with an unstoppable force of PTO mothers (4 of them), Union Center had a great plan to be patient and reconnect. Union Center and the PTO started with the basics on getting the word out there about the new beginnings. With this new found team and fresh start, brand new members came in and new ideas came with them. Union Center and the PTO organized our finances, aligned the objectives, and got to work.

Now the community has a platform, or a system where any community member can easily find information or someone who is more than willing to answer questions. Our PTO has provided opportunities for family nights not only at the elementary school, but the high school. In addition, Union Center has also started our annual sensory night for our entire county for students with disabilities. Our PTO has been our voice at the school that the community has certainly listened too. We have partnered with our parents and have reestablished the strong connection between the community and the school.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

With the help of our central office, we intentionally provide professional development opportunities for our entire teaching staff. This falls under our ideology of constantly evolving and improving as humans and educators. Because this is our standard and our expectation, we can have great conversations with our teacher leaders that want to share all the great news they learned from the professional development.

Also, to cultivate a professional culture, we try our best to hold each other accountable. We have our Teachers' Union, leadership teams, monthly discussions, and small department meetings to address any issues. With the grand vision of every student, every single day, we all understand that we cannot do this task alone. We need one another and rely on one another. In the administration's best efforts to lead the way, the principal will leave positive notes, messages, cards, etc. around the school and encourage others to do the same. This has sparked so many random kind words and feelings from so many people. Small gestures like this truly go a long way in feeling valued and supported.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy and structure of the school is a simple one: we are all here to serve students and all the positions are valuable to this process. The principal is responsible for setting the example and leading with joy, empathy, and an egoless approach. This often means the principal will be wiping cafeteria tables, taking out full garages, driving a mini bus, supervising recess, substitute teaching, answering phones, and doing whatever needs to get done at the school for the kids. The principal routinely reminds all people who enter the building to know that all staff signed up to do this job for the kids in the building. That means whatever it takes to provide a safe, healthy environment for students to grow in will get accomplished with the combined efforts of every single adult in the building.

The school's leadership ensures that policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on student achievement by being involved and trusting in the team that is in place. Providing crystal clear clarity on expectations to not only the students, but the staff as well, is the best way the principal can describe how leadership ensures student achievement. Administrative roles have needed to adapt to best suit the needs of the school. Whatever it takes, for the betterment of all students!

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Parent nights are offered to our community to discuss any open topics including bullying, diversity, inclusion, and equity. Our home school advisor, also known as our school counselor, has taken a huge role in leading the way in promoting diversity awareness. She visits each classroom and teaches lessons to the students throughout the school year. This is on top of our social emotional learning (SEL) program that all K-5 student participate in at Union Center. Our social emotional learning (SEL) teacher and our home school advisor will often shift topics and collaborate with each other to address the needs of the school. There are many resources available for the families on our SEL teacher website. Our home school advisor also has other resources for families. In addition, our office will do restorative check-ins on students routinely.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that has been the most instrumental to the school's success is the unwavering belief that we are the best thing for all students since sliced bread. No matter what the circumstance, we pride ourselves on being able to touch the heart of any child through love, perseverance, and sound instructional practices.

At Union Center, there is a rich history, a deep rooted community connection, wonderful parents, talented teachers, a dedicated support staff, and 414 wonderful students. Every day, everyone in the school works hard to bring laughter, comfort, knowledge, understanding, trust, grit, determination, joy, and love to our students. From the bus drivers, to the custodians, to the secretaries, to the teachers, the paraprofessionals, the kitchen staff, the school resource officers, parents/guardians, and of course the students, we are all in this together. "It takes a village to raise a child," and this "villagelike" mindset is the most instrumental practice to our school's success.