

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

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

School Mailing Address 450 South 700 West
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Milford State UT Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 84751-0309

County Beaver County

Telephone (435) 387-2841 Fax (435) 387-5050

Web site/URL <https://mes.beaver.k12.ut.us/> E-mail brian.hollingshead@beaver.k12.ut.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. David Long E-mail david.long@beaver.k12.ut.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Beaver District Tel. (435) 438-2291

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 Mrs. Lisa Carter
(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
0 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 5 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	25
1	37
2	35
3	23
4	29
5	37
6	35
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	221

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 28 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 64 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 12%

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

Our Mobility rate is inflated more than in years past due to the largest employee in the area downsizing the company.

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	17
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	224
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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

Spanish,

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 54 %

Total number students who qualify: 120

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 19 %
Total number of students served 41

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>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>26</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>10</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: 0 %
Total number of students served: 1

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 6

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.	13
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.	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 15:1

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	89%	88%	93%	94%	94%
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 X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2011

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

Preparing educated leaders who will make a positive impact in the world. We shall provide relevant and meaningful educational opportunities that develop responsible leaders prepared for high school, college, career, and life. Our values include: Learning, Leading, Integrity, Honesty, Growth, Creativity, and Excellence.

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

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i31Mb2A0ky10Cg3F0PCLF13r8-pxXHUp0ICc9q25r4/edit#gid=1790579447&range=C37:J37>

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

Let me introduce you to Milford Elementary home of the Tiger Cubs! Milford Elementary sits in beautiful southern Utah and is part of Beaver County. Milford Elementary is a community that has the railroad, hog production farms, ranchers, alfalfa farmers, educators, and a small hospital. Most of our students are familiar with agriculture and their parents work in agriculture. With a population of just over 1500 we are a tight knit community. That is what makes the school and students unique. Everyone knows everyone and we all care deeply about our students.

Seven to eight years ago Milford Elementary was a low achieving school and part of the turnaround program in the state of Utah. Our academic scores were low and we were having many behavior problems. The faculty and staff knew that a change must be made in all areas and so they went to work. The entire staff was part of extensive professional development that helped them raise the bar in the academic areas of reading and math. "They learned how to unwrap the Utah core standards with great detail and provide highly engaging instruction. The results were nothing short of phenomenal. End of year summative scores that had been well below state average, now in a few short years are well above state average!!

Another huge factor that helped improve the overall culture and climate of our school was the "Leader in Me" process. We brought this character education curriculum into our school to help with student behavior and our student's social and emotional learning. We fully embraced the leadership driven character education program and we saw and continue to see tremendous results. The number of behavior incidents went down from 42 occurrences in one year to 13. The Leader in Me program was impactful for our community as well as it helped us engage parents and the community and get more "buy in" and support from all stakeholders.

Another key element that we implement as a school very well is we have teachers that look at data and can understand the interventions that are needed for every student to progress. We always administer our benchmark data in Reading and Math and then progress monitor regularly throughout the year according to the Acadience guidelines. This means students well below benchmark in reading and/or math get progressed monitored at least every two weeks. Students below benchmark get progress monitored at least every 4 weeks. Our entire staff has access to the data of the students they are working with and so we collectively know where every student is on their Math and Reading abilities and what interventions are needed to help them progress. Nobody is forgotten about or falls through the cracks. Our school wide goals are implemented based on the growth of students. We reward this growth with a quarterly reward that is fun, exciting, and motivational. Our Goal this year is that 80% of all students in grades K-6 will achieve adequate growth in reading. Mid Year we were at 75% so we are very hopeful of obtaining this goal. High expectations is another core paradigm that Milford Elementary lives by. We do not and will not accept mediocracy. We push ourselves and our students for excellency. Every teacher sets a goal for themselves of what they want to achieve in reading, math, and end of level scores.

In conclusion Milford Elementary is a school that transformed itself by implementing quality professional development, providing character education and leadership to staff and students, creating and working through school wide/personal goals, and analyzing data to provide instruction and interventions. All the research shows that the most important factor in a students education is an effective teacher. Milford Elementary is effective because the teachers and staff pour their heart and soul into providing their students the best education possible. Milford Elementary was awarded the National Blue Ribbon School award 12 years ago in 2011 and most of the teachers have moved or retired that were here then. However, there is a very large banner that hangs in the gym to this day and a plaque in the main office that remind us we were once a blue ribbon school. This helps the morale of all stakeholders that we were chosen as a Blue Ribbon school in the past. We feel honored and privileged to be nominated by the state of Utah as a Blue Ribbon School and hope you will strongly consider us.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

In our Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, students are taught various skills such as reading comprehension, writing, speaking, listening, and language conventions. These skills are developed through the study of literature, informational texts, and language usage along with our instructional program and the Utah Common Core Standards.

Our ELA instruction focuses on a balanced approach to literacy using the Science of Reading. Our instruction takes on many forms, including direct instruction, guided practice, independent practice and collaborative learning. Teachers use a range of strategies such as modeling, scaffolding, and higher level questioning to support students' learning and help them develop their skills. Technology is used to supplement traditional instruction providing interactive and engaging resources to support student learning.

Assessment is an important component of the reading/ela curriculum. Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to measure students progress in developing the various skills. Common assessments include reading comprehension tests, writing assignments, and quizzes. These assessments help teachers identify areas where students need additional support, monitor student progress and adjust instruction accordingly.

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

Our Mathematics curriculum is taught through the use of our instructional program and the Utah Common Core standards that helps our students build math skills that allow them to become mathematical thinkers and problem solvers. Concepts are introduced and taught, and then revisited and reinforced over the course of the year.

Our math instruction includes direct instruction, guided practice, independent practice and small group work time. Our teachers use a range of different strategies to help our students develop their skills in problem solving, reasoning, and critical thinking.

Assessments in math are an integral part. We use a variety of formative and informative assessments to make sure our students are meeting their goals. We use benchmark testing as well as progress monitoring through Acadience Math. We also use our unit and chapter assessments to monitor and adjust our instruction so our students are able to master the skills needed to become problem solvers and critical thinkers.

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

Our science curriculum is based on our Utah Common Core Seed standards. Which include engaging, exploring, explaining, elaborate, and evaluating each standard and concept taught. Our teachers incorporate a lot of informational texts as well as videos and hands-on activities to help build the scientific knowledge for our students.

Instruction involves a combination of direct instruction, demonstrations, and hands-on activities that will help our students develop and apply scientific knowledge into their everyday thinking. We want our students to be able to develop their own understanding of how the natural world around them works.

Assessments in science is to evaluate a student's understanding of the concepts and skills they have learned. Assessments may include quizzes, tests, labs and other projects that are designed to measure different aspects of student learning.

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

Our social studies curriculum is aligned with the Utah Common Core Standards with each grade level focusing on a specific content. Our students learn through the use of non-fiction and fictional trade books, as well as hands-on activities and projects, such as our 4th grade Utah Play.

Instruction includes direct instruction, group work, hands on activities, and field trips to help build the learning of our students.

Assessments in social studies typically involve chapter and unit quizzes and tests along with projects and presentations that measure student learning and their understanding of the world we live in.

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)

Each class from Kindergarten to 6th grade participates in music once a week for 30 minutes all year. For Veteran's Day everyone learns patriotic songs to sing at the Cemetery. At Christmas time everyone participates in the Christmas Program. This year the students learned a song about the different names of Santa Claus around the world and the stories associated with them. They learn actions for each song which helps with hand eye coordination in relation to the beat and rhythms of the music. In March the 4th graders put on a Utah History Program. They were taught songs that help them remember the different groups of people who settled Utah. In April the 2nd graders put on a World Fair Program and were taught songs to help them learn about the continents and how to count and sing in four languages. When teaching rhythm to the younger grades they are taught by using words and syllables. When speaking rhythms all students solidify their skills of tracking while they point to the rhythms from left to right. In music class students learn how to present themselves and gain confidence that helps them in other aspects of school and life.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Milford Elementary provides our students with a well balanced meal in the morning and at lunch. We have two cooked items as well as cold cereal available in the morning to students. The menus are made using the goals of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The schools are required to offer students a certain balance of fruits, vegetables, low-fat or fat-free milk, whole grains and protein food. Students are also required to have three items on their plate including one vegetable item or fruit item.

Our students have three 15 minute recesses a day. They get one recess in the morning, one after they eat lunch and another one in the afternoon. Sometimes the afternoon recess is a scheduled and organized PE game or activity and at other times it is free play.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

We're excited about our 1 to 1 student to chrome book ratio in grades K-6, that means that our students can start learning to log in with their passwords in kindergarten and start maneuvering with Clever, Typing Agent and other apps that provide a new and exciting learning experience. That means, by the time they are

in 6th grade they are proficient in keyboarding skills and ready for the next level. Since Covid, we have started teaching coding with Techsmart to our 3rd-6th grades. The students are having a great time seeing how to make animated videos.

Our library has several different levels. A portion of it is geared towards Accelerated Reader. We have reading incentives each quarter that the students need to meet to earn a special day. We also have a Leveled take-home library K-6. We also have a Guided Reading library for group reading. If the students can't find the book they need we have the SORA app through SEDC. Since we are a Leader in Me School, we have a section of books that our teachers and students can use to enhance their learning of the 7 habits.

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

We provide many opportunities for students to have differentiated curriculum and to move at a pace that is tailored to their progress and learning styles. In the lower grades we provide RAZ KIDS, AMIRA, and WATERFORD which are all reading programs that students can utilize on line. All these programs offer assessments and then deliver instruction according to where they are placed and how they are progressing. In the upper grades we use Achieve 3000 to help with comprehension and fluency. Students have the ability to move vertically and horizontally(breadth and depth) in their individual reading skills. We also offer Math online programs as well as science! We provide great Tier I core curriculum but we thrive in offering supplemental curriculum which allows both struggling and gifted and talented students alike to be successful.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

After administering school-wide screenings, those students who fall into the achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points below the benchmark receive specific and tailored instruction

during tier two regularly scheduled interventions periods. Milford Elementary uses the Acadience program in reading and math to screen for those students who need extra help in tier two. Reading foundational principles learned from the LETRS program are used to guide the reading interventions along with intensive phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, word recognition, accuracy, fluency, oral and written comprehension, spelling, and writing instruction. Tier two math interventions work much the same way. Students performing 10 or more percentage points below the benchmark receive specific instruction in the sector where they are struggling. Instruction includes number identification, counting, computing in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. In the upper grades, students receive extra help with fractions, geometry, algebra, measurement systems, and ratios among others.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Milford Elementary School uses the multi-tiered system of supports to guide our instruction and student learning. In tier one all students receive core instruction in reading, math, science,

writing, English, and history in the classroom from their highly-qualified teacher. Those who perform above grade level are given enrichment opportunities online using IXL in math, reading, and science. Some students are in charge of writing a school newspaper that is printed every quarter. Other students have the opportunity to participate in spelling and geography bees and science and history fairs. Second grade students host a "World Fair" where they make an exhibit of their county and answer questions from viewers. Students in 5th grade make multimedia presentations about the 50 states.

3c. Students with disabilities:

All students with disabilities in our school, as far as we know, are in special education and as such have an IEP which guarantees their access to the general education curriculum. We strive to give students with disabilities individualized help and intensive, personalized instruction.

Teachers and para-educators usually work with only one or two students at a time. We have seen great success in keeping our instructional groups small. In the school year 2021-2022, special

education students made a 53% gain in reading fluency in correct words read.

Students with disabilities are usually identified by their teachers who notice they are failing academics, appropriate behavior, or some other area. Teachers also have observed that the student is not making progress in tier two. Parents contact us when they believe their student has a disability. When the student with a suspected disability is referred by a teacher or parent, it starts the process of the IEP team determining if the student qualifies for special education and related services. Consent is received from the parent to test the child. We use the Woodcock Johnson IV Tests and other tests and screenings to help determine if the student has a disability.

The IEP team also considers other factors such as attendance and English language fluency. Everyone from the parents to the paraeducators cares deeply about each student with a disability,

and it shows in the academic and behavioral progress of the students.

3d. English Language Learners:

The English language learners in our school receive the regular instruction in the different tiers. They also receive systematic help from a migrant paraeducator to aid in their oral and written

understanding and expression of English. I know the process we have in place is effective because some of our top academic students in the upper grades started out as English language

learners. Every staff member in our school goes the extra mile to reach out to the ELL kids to make them feel loved, welcomed, and wanted.

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

In our behavior program we have a lot of resources we can use for our students. A couple of them are positive reinforcements, behavioral trackers, color noise, Bi-Tapps, and Fun Friday. Our program helps students with disabilities, ADHD, and those who need that little extra help or push. Our program isn't strictly set for disabilities, we have modified it so we can make sure that every student in our school can be as successful as they possibly can and they can get the help they properly need.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Milford Elementary is a school that thrives on building a positive climate and atmosphere for students and all staff. Our climate and positive environment is due to the attention spent on fostering a place where students feel safe and welcomed. We have at our school a common vision where we have set goals and expectations for all of our students that support their academic, social and emotional growth and that makes students look forward to their future.

Our vision and our foundation of building a positive environment for our students begins with our school mission statement that all students and staff know by heart. Our school mission statement is posted throughout our school and said at each of our habit assemblies. This mission statement states, “As a leader, I make a positive impact wherever I go.” This statement exemplifies the message that we want to instill in all of our students. That they are all leaders and that they matter. Their lives are important and that they have an impact on the world around them. At Milford Elementary we use the 8 habits of the Leader In Me Program as our driving force to establish school norms and to teach our students life skills that they will use in their future in becoming successful adults.

Milford Elementary has a staff that values building positive relationships with students while helping them to set academic and personal goals. Each student keeps a Leadership binder where they track their goals, academic and personal progress as well as achievements. Teachers help students track their data and meet with students to discuss how they are achieving their goals. This type of work shows students that we are invested in them and we care about them and their success. It also helps students come to value who they are more and take on the role of being in charge of their learning. It helps to motivate them to strive to become better both academically and socially. This type of practice also helps students build a positive mindset in knowing that their efforts are important in school.

At Milford Elementary we like to recognize the leadership qualities that we find in our students. One way that we do this is by encouraging students to become more involved in our school community and activities. We want students to feel like they have a voice and that their ideas matter. At the beginning of the school year we have students apply for leadership jobs throughout our school. These leadership jobs encourage students to feel that they are an important part of our school community and help students to recognize in themselves a leader while learning how to build rapport and positive relationships with staff and other students. We also like to recognize and reinforce leadership and positive behavior at our school by giving out Leader in Me tickets and by recognizing a student from each class each quarter who exemplifies what a leader looks like and acts like. We honor these students at our awards assemblies.

Milford Elementary has a warm and welcoming physical environment. Our hallways are filled with colorful bulletin boards as well as the 8 Habits of Leadership to remind our students about our vision as a school. You will find inside classrooms bulletin boards that track student data as a class and encourage students to strive for excellence and progress.

Anyone who enters our school would be able to see and feel the positive vibe that has been built around leadership and social and emotional growth.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Milford Elementary School has implemented many strategies in working with families and community members for student success and school improvement.

We are part of the Leader in Me program and hold a Leadership Day each year. Leadership Day 2022 involved a community clean up/improvements with volunteers from our community. Leadership Day 2023 was centered around careers in our community. We included different professionals to come into our school and present to our students.

We have an active parent club that is supportive of our school and helps to promote community involvement in our activities. We work in conjunction with our parent club to provide community help on such activities as a Food Drive each November for our local food bank, selling candy canes in December to benefit a local program such as Shop with a Cop or Milford City Community Christmas Lights, and a color run in the fall.

We have annual events such as a participation in the local Veteran's Day Program by singing, Christmas Program, School Carnival, and Back to School Night. We partnered with Milford Lions Club and Smithfield to serve a meal and offer support for families during our Back to School Night. Class programs are held in addition to school programs.

Boys and Girls Club, our after School Program, provides each student in our school with a daily nutritious snack bag to take home, in addition to helping those students after school in the program.

We hold family events such as Storytelling Family Night. Families are invited to come with their child for stories from community members and snacks.

We also team up with the Utah State Extension Office to educate our students about agriculture in our area and healthy lifestyles. Discovery Gateway Children's Museum educates our students about science concepts each year with a visit to our school. We encourage all families to participate in any activity that we hold in our school.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Within our school, Milford Elementary, there is an environment in which teachers feel valued and supported. There are a multitude of factors that have contributed to this type of environment. Some of these factors include the impact of our professional development, an administration that supports staff with fairness, and our leadership program implemented within our school. These are some of the supports that are provided to our teachers and staff.

Milford Elementary School has had many opportunities for professional development throughout the years. Each year our staff is required to complete hours of professional development. Some of these hours have been to improve classroom management, navigate through new curriculum, implement new teaching strategies, and revive existing curriculum maps. Our school district values the thoughts of employees, therefore there have been instances that the staff and teachers have been given a choice of what they would like to participate in. This is an effective way to give training in what is needed and what will be useful to employees. By giving the teachers and staff these choices, it has created a feeling of being valued. We have high expectations of ourselves and from our administration, and it shows. Our school district is really thriving, and continues to excel in multiple areas.

The administrative staff is responsible for bringing support to the school. An example of how support is shown is giving value to each of the staff members. Teachers and staff can approach our school principal anytime with a concern or issue, and they understand that they will be supported. It has been shown time and time again that our opinions are valued. With these reasons, it is shown that the administration staff is helpful to create a positive environment where teachers and staff feel supported.

Our school has implemented the "Leader in Me" program into our curriculum. By doing so, the impact has been very uplifting to our students and staff. This is a program that teaches the 7 habits of highly effective people. Teachers teach these same habits to their classes. By teaching and learning these, the habits have embedded themselves into the lives of our teachers and staff. This program has brought additional support to our workplace and has created a flourishing climate.

Again, our school has created a professional culture in which people want to excel and improve in what they are accomplishing.

4. School Leadership:

Our principal is also the team leader. Whenever there is a conflict with parents, he always assures us by saying, “You know I support you entirely. I have your back.” He always makes sure he is present with any meeting with difficult parents or anything that might be confrontational. At the first of the year and at the end of the year, the principal takes us all out to lunch at a sit down restaurant here in town. He picks up the tab with his own money. We are all involved in the decision making for our school. He values our opinion.

Over the last two years, k-3 teachers have been engaged in the LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) class. Three times in the school year, we had a sub come into our classroom and sub for us while we attended a full day of professional development. Whenever the superintendent notifies him of an endorsement class or some other PD opportunity, he is sure to share the information straight away. Many times offering to pay for the seminar and provide transportation.

In the summer of 2022, our school attended a model schools convention in Orlando, Florida. All expenses paid. It was a great experience to meet with other educators from all over the world. We were gone for 5 days, counting the days for travel. It created friendship between our staff and the entire school district as well.

In addition, we have a highly skilled group of paraprofessionals, which support us in individual student literacy needs. These paraprofessionals have played a vital role in the literacy success of our school.

As for appreciation, the principal has the habit of coming around to our classrooms with a cart full of drinks and treats for each one of us. At the first of the year, he sent out a survey to find out our favorite treat and drink.

Our staff is extremely united in our goals. We will help and share support and ideas between us liberally. We realize that we succeed only when we stand united in our goals as educators.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning

Milford Elementary addresses the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, families, and staff in many ways. First, we use a variety of ways to ensure parents and teachers can accurately communicate by sending home bilingual notes, using Remind to translate communications, and using translators for conferences. Second, because our faculty is not the most diverse, we have had to find other ways to reach out to the other groups within our community. We have built a relationship with people from the community who are able to come into the school and translate, volunteer, help organize activities, or help ELL students. Third, we utilize a high school program (Latinos in Action) to help ELL students where high school students come to the elementary and work with students. Fourth, we promote curriculum mastery by using online resources and programs that allow students to learn using their native language. Lastly, we are a Leader in Me school which promotes and teaches students to be themselves and to accept others’ differences, unique abilities, and to learn that everyone can be a leader.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Narrowing down the vast attributes that make our school great is like trying to pick a favorite ice cream on a summer day. They all look so wonderful for so many reasons! There are many characteristics that are practiced at our school on a daily basis to contribute to its success! Really, most of the things we do are probably considered minute, but I'm told that it is the little things that are the biggest and most important things. For example, we have a tightly knit staff who support each other and cheer each other on when things are going well and when we need help as difficulties arise. Teachers and staff are also trained using appropriate professional development and hold a high standard for the content and curriculum being taught. Teachers at our school spend time reflecting on data and informing instruction and students are held accountable by tracking their own performance on data charts and graphs. In addition, our MES staff have a deep and genuine care for each student in our school. Our small population allows each teacher to build a solid relationship with students, which empowers us to identify potential and work with fortitude to provide opportunities for each to excel. We truly see the whole child, understanding that academics as well as good character are essential to success. To be frank, the people and students here want to learn and communicate and each of them works very hard every day. Our school culture is one that portrays a family dynamic where each contributes to a positive environment. To cite one of the most instrumental practices at our school that has contributed to the amazing learning environment is our Leader In Me Program. Over the past 6 years, our school has gone "all in" with developing the philosophy that each student is a leader. The Leader in Me has provided a threshold of opportunity for personnel at our school to ignite students in a variety of ways. The real gems of its implementation come from the ideas and contributions made by real staff and teachers who use this avenue to create a unique school experience at Milford Elementary. Among the many things generated by the idea of leadership at our school are: monthly habit assemblies, weekly leadership lessons, class and school leadership roles, student and class data tracking and goal setting, leadership day events, family involvement events, and incentive programs to foster motivation. We have adopted the Stephen Covey 8 habits of highly effective people into the language and culture of our school, and we have encouraged our students to take the initiative to become the very best leaders of themselves as well as the very best leaders of others. Children here at MES apply their knowledge of leadership throughout their daily lives both in the academic and personal arena. Students here believe that they can truly make an impact through effort, kindness, synergy, balance, and by finding their unique strengths and exploring and refining them!