

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 12686 County Road K  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Manitowish Waters State WI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 54545-9324

County Vilas

Telephone (715) 543-8417 Fax (715) 543-8868

Web site/URL https://www.northlakelandschool.com E-mail bjelinski@nles.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.

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

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Brent Jelinski E-mail bjelinski@nles.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name North Lakeland School District Tel. (715) 543-8417

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 Mrs. Kari Moon  
(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**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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

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**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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
0 Middle/Junior high schools  
0 High schools  
0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	10
K	9
1	17
2	14
3	16
4	13
5	24
6	12
7	13
8	24
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	152

\*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 97 % White
  - 1 % 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: 13%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	141
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 37 %

Total number students who qualify: 56

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 15 %  
Total number of students served 23

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>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>2</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 2 %  
Total number of students served: 3

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 11

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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
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.	5

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	90%	93%	95%	95%	95%
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.

The North Lakeland School's mission is to provide a superior education for each student, where together everyone learns more.

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

<https://www.northlakelandschool.com/about/non-discrimination.cfm>

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

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North Lakeland School (NLS) was established in 1970 as a consolidation of several smaller community schools. Nestled deep in a beautiful woodland setting, surrounded by numerous lakes and streams, our school has a special charm. The five townships that we serve -- Boulder Junction, part of Land O'Lakes, Manitowish Waters, Presque Isle, and Winchester -- comprise the largest geographic elementary school district in the State of Wisconsin.

Our 4K through 8th grade school is known for its excellent academic programs, a low ratio of students to staff, unique outdoor education program, and innovative use of class configuration and technology. The school prides itself in the quality of care given to each student and upholds a tradition of creating competent and responsible citizens who will become tomorrow's leaders. Our core "buck behaviors" (named after our school's mascot) promote our students to be: Safe, Kind, Respectful, Responsible, and Attentive.

North Lakeland's faculty is exceptional. Teachers in this school care about each student and work tirelessly to provide the highest standards in classroom instruction.

The school's physical setting creates an environment where education and recreation, both in and out of the classroom, can be sustained. The school boasts its own school forest with marked nature trails, nine-hole disc golf course, and groomed cross-country ski & snowshoe trails. There is also a football field, soccer fields, four tennis courts, an outdoor track, and an outdoor ice rink. During the winter, the physical education curriculum includes cross-country skiing; during the fall, the curriculum includes biking on the paved trails adjacent to the school.

The school includes a 60-acre lakefront piece of property that previously had been used by the Department of Natural Resources as a YCC camp. In a unique cooperative effort among the community, school, and the DNR, a lease was created to allow the school the use of the property. A non-profit group made up of members of the community organized and created the North Lakeland Discovery Center. This multi-functional facility provides a gathering place for both children and adults to explore the region's extraordinary natural, cultural and historic resources.

One of the highlights of North Lakeland's curriculum is its outdoor education program. Six school days are set aside each year for three outdoor education sessions. The students participate in a curriculum developed for this outdoor experience. The fifth through eighth grade students have the opportunity to overnight at camp throughout their outdoor education years. A standards-based curriculum is used for primary, focusing on pioneers, miners, voyageurs, and lumberjacks, along with applying academics to real-life outdoor experiences. The middle school curriculum focuses on survival skills, basic canoeing, tenting, and outdoor cooking and culminates with two 8th grade adventure trips — backpacking in the fall and canoe trip in the spring.

The core curriculum at North Lakeland stresses fundamentals. NLS enhances the core curriculum with special programming for students with special needs. It has an excellent special education department, while also serving the needs of the gifted students.

North Lakeland School District recognizes the importance of providing learning experiences to students of all levels giving opportunities to challenge their abilities. Daily resource time allows students at all performance levels benefit from classroom differentiation.

Enrichment activities in the middle school grades focus on the development of critical thinking, analytical skills, interpretive reasoning and problem-solving. These have included the Super Art Trip, Math Competition, Professional Artist's Workshop, and other added activities that address the changing needs of North Lakeland's high-performance learners.

Students interested in drama, music, and art have opportunities to express themselves, and band and choral members have participated in Solo and Ensemble competitions and Band and Choir days.



The students have displayed a desire to achieve outside the classroom as well. North Lakeland students have received recognition with state champion youth hockey teams, student-designed duck stamp and peace poster drawings, as well as students competing in the spelling bee, geography bee, and National History Day. All of these opportunities demonstrate some of the outstanding experiences offered at this school, and the dedication of its staff to the education and development of the entire student.

North Lakeland also enjoys a wonderful relationship with its parents and community. Volunteers help the school thrive by helping teachers in the classroom as volunteers, working as chaperones, and generally supporting the excellent work of the staff. Special programming is one more way of keeping the community involved in the school.

North Lakeland remains at the cutting edge of innovation. Innovative curriculum and classroom design allow varied opportunities for meeting individual student needs. NLS is also at the cutting edge in technology with Smartboards in every classroom, 1:1 computer initiative, a Fab Lab, and a presence on the World Wide Web.

North Lakeland prides itself in the quality of care given to each student. The school and staff know they are helping to build responsible citizens who will be tomorrow's leaders. NLS students advance to the high school and continue to be positive, responsible leaders in that setting also.

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

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

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

North Lakeland School district maintains a continuous improvement process assessing the impact of programming in all content areas. Our ELA curriculum is built on the science of reading and writing. Our core curriculum is Amplify CKLA skills in elementary with a focus on the science of reading. We then employ Amplify ELA in middle school to continue our students' development in essential reading and writing skills. The program has embedded assessment opportunities that allow educators to provide extension and remediation as needed. Standards are aligned through our top-rated curriculum tools. In addition, we continuously assess the impact at both the student and programmatic levels to target alignment of priority standards.

Through an established focus on skill development in early childhood, we build a foundation for students to leverage as we weave in knowledge construction. Students leverage skills in a logical sequence and are assessed through both curriculum embedded, as well as research-based universal screening tools. All students are then supported in reading and writing instruction through daily intervention at all levels of our multi-leveled systems of support.

Primary teachers use a variety of instructional methods to engage students in the ELA content. This includes small group instruction, whole group instruction, individual work, peer-to-peer teaching, and many more. Primary teachers focus on individual students and their needs. Teachers are able to present new content to students and, based on formative assessments, are able to individually address students to close gaps or extend their learning. There has also been a focus on providing enough instructional time in ELA to allow for these small-group interactions.

In middle school ELA, a significant change to the amount of ELA time per day was made a few years ago. This change occurred in grades 6th through 8th and increased the ELA class time from 45 minutes to 80 minutes. This dramatic change allows for a variety of positive things to occur. With the extended time, the teacher can work through the content slower, allowing for a broader depth of understanding during each class. The teacher also has the ability to allow students to work on their classroom extensions (what would traditionally be homework) in the classroom. The students work on these classroom extensions in a variety of ways, including individually, in small groups, or in pairs. During this time, the teacher can provide clarification and assistance that the student wouldn't typically have if this work was done at home. This provides all students with the opportunity to have help, compared to those who might not have a family member at home to guide them through their work.

Various summative and formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning in ELA classes. This helps guide teacher planning and pacing. Along with classroom assessments, the STAR reading assessment is used as a piece of evidence to track student progress throughout the year. STAR reading and classroom assessments also help establish intervention tiers for students.

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

North Lakeland School has implemented Math Expressions as a core curriculum across our K - 4 student experience. Our 5 - 8 students then transition to Illustrative Mathematics. Our focus in the early grades is a blend of foundational skills and the development of mathematical practices through scaffolded instruction. Our staff uses the core curriculum as a backbone, but augments where needed based on assessment data from unit resources, research-based screeners, and universal testing.

Our K - 8 continuum of math instruction is designed to support inquiry and problem-based learning experiences that elevate foundational skills and mathematical problem-solving logically and sequentially. Both curricular tools serve as our backbone to providing access to all learners, and both extension and

remediation tools are embedded throughout. In addition to the structures in our core curriculum, we supplant instruction with various means throughout the MLSS system. This structure includes daily real-world applications in elementary through Drops in a Bucket.

Borrowing from the progress in our primary grades, we systematically changed the time allocated to math instruction in our 5 - 8 classes. Our class time was changed from 45 to 80 minutes of core instruction. Our data indicated that through targeted MLSS supports, we realized more significant gains and maximized our time in core instruction. Our middle school math curriculum is delivered with fidelity, and the additional time allows the teacher to differentiate heavily. We can flexibly group students and target needs in new ways. In teams, students work on non-permanent vertical surfaces to work through critical skills and problems. Doing so helps us meet the standards more authentically and develops a collaborative culture to support new learning among peers and students. It is common to walk through the classroom and see student groups developing solutions with peers, diving into problems individually, or receiving support from the teacher when needed.

Our teachers across the district are committed to meeting the diverse needs of our learners. Teachers meet routinely to discuss how the standards are aligned vertically and develop groups/strategies to help students' ability and efficacy rise. Through universal screening and progress monitoring, we can target resources to meet skill deficits and challenge students needing an extension. Formative and summative assessments are used to closely monitor student progress and growth in the classroom. STAR Math assessment is also used as a tool to help guide teacher decision-making.

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

Our science curriculum is supported by Mystery Science and the Discovery Education Techbook. In addition, our core curriculum, Amplify, is developed intentionally to integrate science across the learning curriculum. The Techbook is developed to include a range of experiences, including text, interactive video, and hands-on activities. It is a flexible tool allowing our teachers to customize lessons to meet the diverse needs of our students.

Our curriculum across the grades is structured on the 5E model of engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. Inquiry is a primary focus of the NGSS as well as our purchased and customized curricular tools. Both our integrated and course resources are developed in a way that allows students to engage with real-world problems and apply knowledge in order to go deeper on Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels. Students are challenged and supported to deepen their understanding of content through direct application and assessed through formative and summative tools.

Overall, our curriculum and the supporting resources are designed to be comprehensive and engaging. Through digital and physical tools, we are able to adjust and meet diverse learning needs, support inquiry, and develop essential problem-solving skills defined in the NGSS and Wisconsin standards.

Science lessons also incorporate hands-on projects that engage and encourage students to take active roles in their learning and be part of the scientific process. Some of these activities include mineral units in 1st grade where students learn about different minerals and break open geodes. Middle school students participate in science experiments of all kinds. As part of the outdoor education program, science curriculum is infused with lessons that are done outside the classroom. An example is 7th grade students participating in a day-long stream study where students learn about a stream's ecosystem, gather samples and rate the health of the studied stream.

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

Our Social Studies curriculum is scaffolded with intention across the school experience. Students are exposed to rich content and inquiry at an early age in order to build both knowledge and skill as they progress. We most recently implemented the "Wisconsin: Our State, Our Story: 2nd Edition" developed by the Wisconsin Historical Society in our 5th-grade curriculum in order to ensure standards alignment and current content. In our middle school programming, we utilize the Discovery Education Social Studies

Techbook. The curriculum is constantly updating, as it is a digital textbook, allowing students to engage with relevant content. All of our educators have spent time digging into the dynamics of the Wisconsin Social Studies standards in order to supplant where needed and develop high-quality instructional practices and procure resources to support meaningful learning.

We routinely engage our students with civic experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Our students participate in election cycles, with guest speakers, and on field trips with curriculum connections in order to develop transferable skills and learning experiences.

The social studies curriculum at North Lakeland aims to prepare students to be productive and informed citizens that actively participate in their local community, state, and nation. This is done through a strong curriculum and hands-on activities like holding elections, studying the constitution, and having an active student council. Students also participate in local history every year with a tour of the different townships and interviews with local historical societies.

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

Our school has a commitment to providing Academic Career planning and diverse learning experiences that allow students exposure to careers and opportunities. Through scaffolded lessons, all middle school students interface with a variety of professionals from career clusters routinely. We then collect data on interest and feedback to help develop a deeper dialogue with students on options outside of school. In addition to speakers, our students attend career-focused field trips with regional industries.

Our middle school curriculum includes a full trimester of career-focused learning experiences in our school's Innovation Lab. In the lab, students work through units aligned with career clusters and designed to put students in real-world situations. Students practice real-world skills such as interviewing community members to gain insight into product design, developing sales pitches, and financial planning and budgeting for business.

Students in grades 2-8 also participate in student council elections and meetings. This provides students a chance to practice leadership skills and work on interpersonal skills. These are important to all workplace environments and career success.

North Lakeland's Buck Behaviors are also crucial behaviors that lead to success in being college and career ready. North Lakeland focuses on preparing students for the next stage in their academic journey. We want students to be "high school ready," in order to succeed in their next level, and to ultimately succeed after high school. We build students' confidence at the primary level and challenge them at the middle school level. By being challenged, they learn essential life skills and can handle the rigors of high school, college, and other careers. Being a small school, we can support middle schoolers through their struggle and provide resources that build resilience and perseverance.

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

North Lakeland offers a full day, 5-day a week, 4-year-old kindergarten (4K). This program offers students an introduction to the school community and focuses on two things. The first focus is for students to learn what it means to be a school community member. This includes routines, expectations, and social and behavioral norms. 4K students practice lining up, interacting with each other, breakfast and lunch routines, and many more essential behaviors to being a successful student. 4K parents also get the experience and opportunity to be part of the school community. This is their first experience with North Lakeland, and we want it to be positive.

The second focus is academics through play. 4K and kindergarten are looked at as one continuous opportunity to learn foundational academic skills to foster future success. This is all done using play-based strategies. Each student is at a different level both academically and socially, play based learning allows students to grow at their own pace. Students in 4K learn counting and letter recognition. Playing also provides students with practice in social groups. Students in 4K at North Lakeland also receive the same

“specials” as older students. These opportunities include art, physical education, Spanish, library, and music.

North Lakeland 4K students are also active participants in our Outdoor Education program as well as embracing exploring the outdoors. Six days a year, all students, including 4K, participate in the outdoor education program. Along with outdoor education, students participate in outdoor activities throughout the school year. Special suits were purchased to cover the students' clothes to allow them to explore the outdoors without going home dirty and wet. Young students learn by play and being outside is the ultimate learning experience.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

### **2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)**

Our visual arts program focuses on developing more profound levels of inquiry. Our art and design program is scheduled for all students at minimum twice a week. Students work through presenting artwork and communicating new ideas relating to personal and cultural experiences or knowledge. They learn how to develop interpretations of artworks and identify design qualities such as art elements and design principles.

Overall, our art program is centered around the Wisconsin Visual Art standards in a way that helps students develop artistic skills and knowledge to help amplify their voice through the creative process.

As a district, we have decided to allocate Visual Arts at least twice a week for all students. In the experience, students explore who they are as artists and how artists make meaning through personal and cultural connections through various media, contexts, and levels. Our students investigate relationships between art-making identity, community, and history by engaging in research, tinkering, innovation, collaboration, revision, and problem-solving. They respond to themes emphasizing infusing the elements of art and design principles as a vocabulary to articulate their unique vision. They explore topics such as Mythology, History, Community, Sustainability, Justice, and much more. We work in a cycle developed through research to teach students the creative process. In addition to a cycle including Inspiration, Design, Create, and Present, we infuse the design thinking process to introduce a broader range of thinking. A key component of our curriculum is teaching students how to critique and present their work. They can engage in metacognition by explaining decision-making on digital platforms and in other forms.

### **2b. Physical education/health/nutrition**

Our school is highly committed to health and wellness across the 4k - 8 experience. Students participate in physical education daily. In upper grades, students begin rotating in health curriculum using the Wisconsin Standards beginning in upper elementary. Our physical education teachers seek to develop a current and relevant curriculum supporting the developing needs of all students.

A conscious decision was made to get students the physical activity they need daily. A schedule change was made to allow for students in the primary grades to have physical education every day. This is in addition to the two recesses that the students participate in.

Physical education at North Lakeland embraces the school's location in the middle of the forest, surrounded by lakes and woods. As part of the curriculum, students use the local bike paths, cross-country ski, snowshoe, and many other outdoor activities. Along with traditional sports, the physical education program introduces a variety of “lifelong activities” such as disc golf, yard games, and other physical activities.

There is also a focus on wellness and healthy lifestyles. This is incorporated into the health curriculum that middle school students participate in twice weekly. The importance of a healthy lifestyle is emphasized and also incorporated into other areas of the school such as the cafeteria and outdoor education.

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

Our students participate in Spanish instruction based on the Wisconsin state standards starting in preschool. They continue to work on skill development through the entirety of their 4K - 8th grade career. As a result, we have a very high percentage of our students that are able to begin high school with a full year of a language completed. Doing so prepares them for new opportunities while helping them with skill development during their time at North Lakeland School.

With students starting to learn Spanish at an early age, North Lakeland students score well in placement tests as they enter their 9th grade year. All students who choose to take the placement test and score a 90% or better; are placed in Spanish II at high school.

Along with the Spanish language, the culture of the different regions primarily speaking Spanish is also introduced. This helps students to gain a better understanding of the world beyond their local community. This year we were able to welcome a group from Mexico. They spent the week at school, introducing their culture, customs, and interacting with the students.

## **2d. Technology/library/media**

Our students engage with digital media in both dedicated and integrated experiences. Beginning early in the 4k - 8 experience, students work through typing skill development and lessons in digital citizenship. Digital citizenship focuses on the responsible use of technology as students interact with their school community and outside society. The focus is to promote responsible use of the internet. Students engage with our library program throughout their elementary school years. In our innovation lab, students begin to develop further skills in coding, computer science, digital media, and other areas throughout their time at North Lakeland.

North Lakeland is a 1 to 1 school for technology and uses this resource to not only support learning but also educate students on digital citizenship. Responsible use of technology is stressed at all levels. Students also use technology to connect with online communities, access resources, and connect to the regional library system.

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

A hallmark at North Lakeland School is our Outdoor Education program. Each spring, winter, and fall, our school has two dedicated outdoor education days (6 in total) that are curricular aligned with projects, experiences with regional experts, and educational trips. Students develop academic skills throughout the program and deepen a relationship with who they are as learners and community members. Our program is highly impactful and has been a tradition for decades.

Students develop new skills in nature and leverage these skills routinely as the program scaffolds with culminating activities in middle school. Such activities include overnight canoe trips, scientific studies, backpacking expeditions, survival simulations, and many more.

A standards-based curriculum is used for primary, focusing on pioneers, miners, voyageurs, and lumberjacks, along with applying academics to real-life outdoor experiences. The middle school curriculum focuses on survival skills, basic canoeing, tenting, and outdoor cooking and culminates with two 8th grade adventure trips — backpacking in the fall and an overnight canoe trip in the spring.

## **3. Academic Supports**

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

Our Multi-Level Systems of Support (MLSS) is an educational framework that involves high-quality instructional practice, continuous review of student progress, and collaboration among professionals and parents in order to ensure that all students are learning, growing, and succeeding. To monitor student growth, we screen all students three times per school year in both reading and math. Students performing below grade level receive Tier 1, 2, and/or 3 supports depending on individual needs. Teachers meet

regularly to tailor classroom instruction as well as reading and math resource instruction to identified student needs. All grades 5k through 8th grade have a daily, 30-minute resource time where they are broken into small groups based on needs. Students performing below grade level receive individualized and small group interventions targeting skill gaps. Students performing below the 30th percentile consistently across screenings are then assessed with FastBridge. Interventionists use the screening to intervention report within FastBridge, paired with classroom teacher input, to match interventions and weekly progress monitors for students.

Through this process, North Lakeland staff is able to address all students, and specifically those students that are economically disadvantaged. By employing small group interventions, staff are able to curate culturally appropriate material that is specific to the needs of this group of students. Staff members also work with the student's parents to provide them with resources to use at home.

Student growth begins in the classroom but can be supplemented to increase that growth. Our school's system focuses on the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the curriculum while supporting that curriculum with additional small-group interventions. We focus heavily on reading in grades kindergarten through second grade. This intense focus brings students to a reading level that encourages success and growth as they get older. After second grade math is another area of intense focus. We have been able to close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students and their peers through this process.

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

Just as we use our MLSS system to review student progress for students below grade level, we use the same system for students performing above grade level. Challenging students in the classroom is our top priority. Differentiation occurs for students above grade level to challenge them beyond their comfort levels. Teachers find ways to extend lessons, create extended learning opportunities, and support students above grade level. As a team we review data on routine cycles. We are able to adjust systematically to target skill areas to challenge students through instruction, projects, and other means. Routine cycles are also used as part of our guaranteed and viable curriculum. We have worked hard to review, and continue to do so, how our curriculum scaffolds to inform instructional opportunities for learners ready for more.

If a student continues to show accelerated growth and goes beyond what can be done in the classroom, the school's accelerated learning plan is implemented. This plan includes tiers of services that are offered to students depending on their level of achievement. The highest level would create an individualized accelerated plan for the student to meet their advanced needs.

North Lakeland also utilizes a variety of resources to challenge students within the school. This includes individualized learning opportunities, extended lessons, and class acceleration. If there are opportunities that can't be provided at North Lakeland, resources will be purchased including virtual learning opportunities. Through targeted approaches, high quality instructional materials, and teacher research, we are able to challenge and raise achievement levels for higher performing students.

### **3c. Students with disabilities:**

An inclusive culture throughout North Lakeland drives our special education successes. All staff members work collaboratively to ensure student needs are met in the least restrictive environments. Our experienced team of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and school psychologist work together with regular education teachers to provide a wide range of special education supports that are grounded in the belief that ALL students can learn and achieve given high expectations. Teachers employ a variety of instructional methods, including, but not limited to explicit instruction, modeling, flexible grouping, scaffolding, graphic organizers, guided notes, assistive technology, peer tutoring, and positive and constructive feedback to meet the needs of diverse learners on their caseloads.

Following our Department of Education's approach of Reading Drives Achievement, we work together with families to develop Individualized Education Plans (IEP) that identify individual student strengths,

disability-related needs, and services needed to improve student outcomes for students with disabilities. We utilize research-based interventions to target individual needs and progress monitor weekly or bi-weekly to ensure student progress towards meeting identified goals. Some of the interventions we use include the Sonday System for reading, Voyagers Passport, VMath, Language!, University of Florida Literacy Institute Foundations program (UFLI), Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), High noon spelling, Bridges Math, Building Thinking Classrooms for Math and Fastbridge Interventions. All students receive a minimum of 30 minutes a day of intensive, individualized, or small-group instruction targeting identified areas of need in either reading or math.

Our collaborative professional development focus is based on the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)'s High-Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities.

Our inclusive culture, high-quality instruction, intensive interventions, progress monitoring, and professional development all contribute to our progress toward closing the achievement gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

**3d. English Language Learners:**

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



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

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

North Lakeland welcomes all students to be active members of the school community. This starts with students just starting their academic journey in 4k and continues through 8th grade with the students that are finishing their time at North Lakeland. The staff and students focus on what it means to be a student at North Lakeland by concentrating on the 5 “Buck Behaviors”. These behaviors are Safe, Kind, Attentive, Responsible, and Respectful. They are called buck behaviors because North Lakeland’s school mascot is a whitetail buck. Through the buck behaviors, students are encouraged to be active participants in their learning, make good choices as school community members, and help others to be the best students they can be.

Positive student behavior relating to academics, social interaction, and character development is celebrated using a two-step process. The first step is done with a focus on positive behavior using the 5 buck behaviors. Students are given positive feedback when they demonstrate one or more of the buck behaviors. This celebration is done by staff, students, and administrators. Students may be asked to go to the main office to “brag” about how well they demonstrated a buck behavior. In the second step, students may also get a “Buck Tag” from a staff member if they notice the student engaging in one of the buck behaviors. These buck tags are handed out randomly and go on a board in the main commons area. When a horizontal row is filled, students in that row will get a “mystery motivator”. Some mystery motivators have included spirit wear, gift certificates, book fair dollars, and many other great items. By focusing on positive behavior, students get attention from their peers and adults in a positive manner.

As students enter their time as 6, 7, and 8th graders, buck behaviors are also related to what it means to be college and career ready. North Lakeland staff focus on what it means to be career ready. This helps students to engage in their work and social interactions as they start to look to their future opportunities.

This system only works to engage students because of the dedication North Lakeland staff members have to building relationships with each of their students. Engaged students have a strong sense of belonging and they feel safe. This can only happen when staff members form strong relationships with their students. North Lakeland staff know students beyond just the academics they provide.

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

Located at the intersection of the four townships that North Lakeland serves, the school has always been proud of the important role the school plays in the community. North Lakeland is often the focal point of some community events and is a gathering place for families and other community members. North Lakeland hosts several events that bring in a large number of families, works closely with outside organizations, and hosts community education classes.

Each year, parents are invited to attend several art events, teacher conferences, and an end-of-the-year picnic. Also, parents are always encouraged to talk to staff members through multiple lines of communication. In addition to these activities, North Lakeland hosted a fine arts night that showcased student work while serving as a fundraiser for the local food pantry.

Every fall North Lakeland invites parents to attend a two-night parent-teacher conference. This event is very well attended and allows parents to have great conversations with their child’s teacher. In addition to these two nights. Teachers are asked to dedicate an additional 12 hours to parent communication. This is in addition to daily communication that happens through programs like SeeSaw.

For 47 years, 8th grade students have been hosting a chicken dinner as a fundraiser for their class trip in the spring. This is a community wide event that families and community members look forward to attending. This year, the 8th grade students served over 400 chicken dinners during the evening event. 8th grade students are able to interact with those that attend and learn important life skills.

North Lakeland also has a strong community education program that focuses on learning opportunities for our community members. This program serves the larger community and is focused on adult learning. Almost all of the classes are held at North Lakeland and include cake decorating, yoga, intro to pickleball, astronomy, and many more.

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

A large portion of the success that North Lakeland has is due to the quality of staff. Treating staff with respect and making sure their expertise is valued is an important part of the culture at North Lakeland. Being a small school often means that staff members serve multiple roles throughout the building. In order for them to gain more knowledge in the variety of areas that they are involved in, staff are encouraged to constantly be involved in professional development.

The culture of professional development starts at the top with the North Lakeland Board of Education. The board has made professional development one of the priorities in the development of school policy. All staff members, including support staff like maintenance, food service, and teacher's aids have two days of professional leave that they can request to attend professional development opportunities. This also includes a three hundred dollar expense allowance for registration, travel, and lodging. This time is in addition to other days that a staff member may request leave. In addition to what is described above, teaching staff receives an additional amount of money that can go toward continuing education.

During the school year, professional development is a top priority and occurs before the start of the school year, during the school term, and at the conclusion. On top of student contact days, North Lakeland staff participate in up to 15 days of professional development. These days there are a variety of topics. They include school-wide initiatives, student support, and individual staff development. Throughout the school year, staff feedback is gathered to better serve the provided professional development opportunities and to also prepare for the following school year.

During the 2022-23 school year, North Lakeland has started to focus on personalized professional development for the teaching staff. This allows the experienced staff to pursue continued professional learning in areas that best serve their students, subject matter, and classroom. There is a diverse range of needs that each staff member must address. Personalized professional development helps staff to address these needs.

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

North Lakeland's school leaders serve multiple roles as there are a variety of needs in a small rural school. The most important role school leaders play is the role of servant leaders. The administrative team at North Lakeland includes a superintendent/principal, pupil services director, and technology/curriculum and assessment director. These three people are an integral part of North Lakeland and are there to support and guide North Lakeland staff to better serve the students of the district.

The superintendent/principal ensures that the staff and students are following the policies and procedures that are created by the state and local leadership. By following these policies and procedures, a safe and caring school is able to focus on student outcomes and support. The superintendent/principal also supports staff by creating an environment where they can focus on their craft and provide quality instruction and build strong relationships with students.

North Lakeland's pupil service director serves the students and staff that are at the most risk or in need of additional support to be successful. She supports the special education staff so they can provide intensive individualized instruction to the students they serve. The pupil service director also helps to make the student experience positive and helps those students in need when they struggle with mental health and social issues.

The curriculum and assessment coordinator provides resources to staff through curriculum education and

support while ensuring that the school is meeting the standards that are set by the state and the Board of Education. He also serves as the school's technology director, helping to bring the latest technology into the classroom to enhance learning and student engagement.

All of these roles' primary focus is supporting student learning and outcomes. The administrative team serves the families and community members to help support a successful and thriving school. The administrative team also helps to provide an environment that staff wants to work in, which helps to prevent excessive staff turnover leading to stability in the classrooms and other support positions. This all leads to a highly successful school, satisfied staff members, and strong community support.

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

North Lakeland is student-centered, meaning the main focus of what we do is driven by the needs of the students we serve. We welcome all students at North Lakeland and treat them as individuals. Being a small school allows our staff to know students well and provide them with differentiated opportunities based on their needs and interests. This allows North Lakeland to address the diverse needs of our students based on their backgrounds.

North Lakeland prides itself on providing an exceptional experience to all students in the school. We celebrate when each student grows academically, socially, and gains confidence in who they are. North Lakeland provides a wide range of opportunities to all students; many times these opportunities would not be available to them at home. We support every student so they can be successful.

We work closely with families to help provide support and guidance so they can help their own children at home. North Lakeland focuses on communicating with parents using a variety of avenues to ensure parents are part of their child's education.

All staff knows they serve a diverse group of children and they use a variety of resources and professional development to create a range of tools to help spark academic success. The most important aspect is the relationship between staff and students. Staff at North Lakeland care.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE**

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North Lakeland employs a variety of strategies that help to ensure student success across grade levels. Each of these strategies are important to what makes North Lakeland successful. At the same time, none of the strategies used would be successful without strong relationships between staff and students. The primary focus behind every strategy is that North Lakeland staff has a trusting relationship with students that have taken time and energy to build throughout the school year.

North Lakeland is a small rural school with a low student population. This allows a low student-to-teacher ratio in each classroom and helps each staff member to focus on individual students. A small student population also allows the students' previous teachers to see them on a daily basis. This means students are returning to familiar faces year after year. Also, the student's previous teachers can also serve as mentors for students as they get older, especially if they have made a strong connection.

Almost all conversations staff has are based on their relationship with students. They know students well, which helps to create opportunities that are geared towards individual students' needs and focus on using the students' strengths to close gaps. When teachers are coordinating services, they personally know the individual student whom they are discussing

The relationships that we build with students are the foundation for all that we do. No program or initiative would succeed without the bond and trust students have with their teacher(s). Oftentimes, parents comment that North Lakeland feels like a family. Just like a family, strong relationships bind students to their teachers and school. North Lakeland is a place that students can call home. They feel welcomed, safe, and cared for. In the end, this allows us to push our students to excel beyond what they thought was possible.