

U.S. Department of Education
2021 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 Mrs. Sara Toedman
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 101 Oregon
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Sabetha State KS Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 66534-2804

County Nemaha

Telephone (785) 284-3448 Fax (785) 284-2480

Web site/URL https://www.usd113.org E-mail toedmans@usd113.org

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. Todd Evans E-mail evanst@usd113.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Prairie Hills USD 113 Tel. (785) 284-2175

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Edward Reznicek
(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 electronic signature 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 2021 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 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools.)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not 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 as of October 1, 2020 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 Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	14	12	26
K	26	43	69
1	27	29	56
2	36	32	68
3	25	24	49
4	32	27	59
5	23	35	58
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	183	202	385

*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
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 5%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	10
(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, 2019	395
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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: 15 %

Total number students who qualify: 59

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %
68 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>5</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>21</u> Developmental Delay | <u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</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. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. 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.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	20
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

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

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

The mission of Sabetha Elementary School is to provide an environment where the school, family and community work together to help students develop skills to become self-directed learners.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

During the 2020-21 school year, Sabetha Elementary School has provided on-site learning opportunities. At the beginning of the school year parents were provided the option to have their child attend remotely if they had COVID-related concerns. This choice was made by two families for a specified period of time to support personal situations. Currently we have three students attending remotely due to parent choice. In early November, the entire school did enter a two-week remote learning phase due to the lack of staff available because of quarantine. Except for this time, learning opportunities have been provided within our building.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

Sabetha Elementary School (SES) is situated in the northeast corner of Kansas. Our community has been shaped by its rural, agriculture-based economy. In addition, the entrepreneurial spirit flourishes in Sabetha. We are home to international businesses that provide innovative technology and industry. Along with the other four schools in the Prairie Hills school district, progressive ideals, strong ethics and hard work comprise the values of SES. We strive daily to live the “Bluejay Way.” We are committed to being respectful, responsible, and safe. Everything we do is a representation of these expectations.

SES staff endeavors to support the educational needs of all students. Innovative curriculum, textbooks and online resources offer a variety of learning tools. Students enjoy the advantage of a 1:1 initiative with iPads. COVID-19 brought new needs for students and teachers alike. It required us to face the challenges of ensuring consistent, reliable connectivity throughout the district. As educators, we found ourselves building the future while living the present. Throughout this process, we strived to demonstrate and promote grace amongst students, parents, and educators.

Recognizing differences in learning styles calls for implementing varied learning strategies. The staff at SES employs a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in the areas of math, reading, and behavior. Students are making gains in these areas. This is especially true among students who are most in need of additional assistance. Records are maintained and reviewed on a continual basis. This allows immediate adjustment and adaptations through small group instruction based upon individual student needs. Classroom teachers and the interventionists are then more able to communicate effectively regarding the learning of each student.

Young minds face more varied and difficult challenges than ever before. The Second Step social-emotional program has been implemented at Sabetha Elementary to teach our children how better to deal with their emotions, stress and daily frustrations in constructive ways. Teachers use the STEP (Say the problem, Think of solutions, Explore consequences, Pick the best strategy) method when having students solve their problems both in and out of the classroom. We know that providing a holistic approach is best. We prioritized the funding and hiring of a ‘School-Family’ liaison. The liaison’s primary responsibility is to connect parents with skills needed to support their student in school. Strategies are designed to diffuse emotional situations and encourage academic success. During these planning meetings, the liaison and the child’s caregiver work together to identify tools to meet the needs of each family. This removes a direct barrier for the child, creating the holistic experience SES staff and families seek for each student.

The development of character, self-esteem, relationships and mentorships are an integral part of the educational environment at SES. It is a focused goal that students have a real sense of belonging. This is exemplified by the development of our Blue Crew program. Each staff member leads a multi-grade level group of 7-8 students with the intent of providing each student another adult contact. These groups remain constant throughout the child’s time at Sabetha Elementary. Developing strong relationships with others in our school community, building self-esteem, fostering leadership skills, and encouraging children to become mentors are goals of this program. Annually, SES celebrates the Great Kindness Challenge. This gives students an opportunity to publicly recognize impactful individuals in their life. A key component is our “Sabetha Kindest Citizen” essay program. In addition, we develop activities during this week that support our larger community.

Along with the rest of the world, members of Sabetha Elementary found ourselves changing our direction as COVID-19 began to influence our country and our community. We met that challenge head-on by focusing our conversations around the needs of our students. District leadership led our actions to continue to effectively educate students within the given parameters. Not doing so was never an option. At SES, an exceptional and dedicated staff rallied around this common goal. Via Zoom, Google Classroom, and SeeSaw, SES educators worked to gather and deliver remotely the best possible educational opportunities to our students. This rich variety of online offerings were made to ensure that various learning styles were addressed. Similar efforts were evident within every aspect of our building and district. Members of our food service program developed a process to distribute daily nutrition to our students. Staff and community

members volunteered to distribute these meals. We remain mindful that students' success is enhanced through healthful nutrition.

At SES, we are committed to the ideal of each student gaining lifelong skills and confidence for personal and academic success. We work to meet the needs of every child, precisely where that child is on their educational journey. Be it online or in the classroom, serving kids is the ultimate goal of Sabetha Elementary School educators.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Sabetha Elementary is proud of the quality curriculum we provide to all students in each content area aligned to the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. Through a detailed curriculum review and textbook adoption process which included teachers analyzing both assessment data and research-based curriculum from numerous reputable publishers, the English Language Arts (ELA), Science and Social Studies content areas have all recently undergone curriculum revisions and the adoption of new resources. Throughout the adoption process alignment to the standards, supports for differentiating instruction, and technology-rich components compatible with iPads were priorities that were closely monitored to ensure that the resource would meet the needs of the school and district.

The instructional approach at Sabetha Elementary School is shaped by several intersecting influences, including the work of John Hattie around effect size, Marzano’s instructional strategies, and Anita Archer’s Explicit Instruction. Sabetha Elementary School’s MTSS model and universal instructional strategies are delivered to all students through rigorous Tier 1 instruction. Strategies that are incorporated into the core curriculum include but are not limited to the following: structured literacy, opportunities to respond, mathematical practices, differentiated small group instruction, behavior-specific praise, instructional feedback, project-based learning, and Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies. Sabetha Elementary has made it a priority to focus on instruction of the core as well as providing interventions to students that are not performing at benchmark in reading and math at each grade level. In addition to the classroom formative and summative assessments that are utilized through the textbook resources, the Kansas Assessment Program, and the Kansas Interim Assessment system Fastbridge is utilized as the universal screener. Fastbridge is given to all students three times a year and is also utilized as a progress monitoring assessment for students receiving an intervention. The Fastbridge assessment data is analyzed by the District Leadership Team, Building Leadership Teams, collaborative teams, and individual teachers to determine individual student’s need for intervention as well as monitoring the effectiveness of our Tier 1 curriculum. At Sabetha Elementary we are able to measure the effectiveness of our universal instruction by looking at the percentage of students performing at or below the benchmark. This data has been valuable for setting priorities regarding our curriculum alignment and textbook adoption goals.

Reading/English Language Arts is at the center of learning, and at Sabetha Elementary we are in our first year of utilizing Superkids Reading in grades K-2 and Wonders 2020 in grades 3-5. Utilizing research on the science of reading and recommendations from the Kansas State Department of Education Dyslexia task force, a strong focus on structured literacy, phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency were the key determining factors for selecting Superkids and Wonders. While analyzing FastBridge screening data at the K-2 level a weakness was noted in teaching students decoding skills. Finding a resource to address this deficit was a focus area of the committee and the reason why we decided to go with two different programs across these grade levels. In the first year of implementing Superkids Reading the feedback from teachers has been extremely positive as students are very engaged with the reading content, stories, and characters that are a part of the Superkids Reading program.

Everyday Math has been utilized as the core math curriculum for almost ten years in the district. This resource provides students with a strong foundation in math to support the future attainment of higher-level math concepts. Among Everyday Math’s many benefits is its strong alignment to Common Core State Standards, vertical alignment across grade levels, and focus on the implementation of the standards of mathematical practice. Similar to its approach in reading/English language arts, Sabetha Elementary maintains an academic framework that combines a strong curriculum, supplemental instruction, data-driven decision-making, and a variety of math learning opportunities for students. PLC teams meet following each screening window and have noted tremendous growth across screening periods in the area of math in several grade levels.

Science and social studies are also taught at each grade level within the elementary core curriculum. At the K-2 level Studies Weekly and Mystery Science are utilized to support instruction. These curriculum

resources provide students with hands-on experiences at the appropriate level. In grades 3-5 Impact Social Studies and Elevate Science serve as resources around which our curriculum is aligned. These programs allow for a deeper dive into these content areas. Hands-on instruction providing students with opportunities to explore and solve problems is the focus of our science curriculum. Our social studies curriculum aligned to the Kansas History Government and Social Studies Standards focuses on helping students view the world around them by making connections to the past and present. Cross-curricular planning has helped to integrate science and social studies into other subject areas, reinforcing and contextualizing the content. Inquiry and project-based learning are two strategies that we continue to explore and encourage in the delivery of instruction in these content areas.

With the adoption of a new reading series, each grade level collaborated to create a comprehensive scope and sequence including all core content areas and the social-emotional curriculum. This scope and sequence has proven to be very valuable as teachers have had to prioritize instruction during the pandemic. Even with the unknowns of COVID-19, Sabetha Elementary has been very fortunate to maintain face-to-face instruction for all but two weeks of the 2020-2021 school year. The 1 to 1 iPad initiative, extensive instructional technology training and support, online textbook resources, and applications such as a Seesaw and Google Classroom have allowed teachers to successfully handle the quarantine interruptions and have facilitated student participation in instruction from home. Through the dedication of a great staff, Sabetha Elementary has been able to maintain the curriculum and minimize learning loss caused by the pandemic.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

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

Sabetha Elementary School offers a State At-Risk preschool for four-year olds. This program works in tandem with the three through five-year old special education preschool program. This program is located on the SES campus but is under the supervision of a special education cooperative involving multiple school districts. We place great importance on educating the whole child and preparing our students to be kindergarten ready. The core curriculum is provided through the Frog Street education program and is focused primarily on literacy and numeracy. It also provides activities in the areas of creative arts, social studies, and science. Physical education is addressed through the Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) early childhood program. Second Step is utilized as the primary social-emotional curriculum.

Information regarding student progress is collected throughout the year and communicated to parents. Caregivers of each student are asked to complete the Ages & Stages Questionnaires; ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE2. These forms are filled out at the beginning of the year and allow us to have a better understanding of student skill development. The myIGDIs (Individual Growth and Development Indicators) assessment by Renaissance is utilized as a universal screener. This tool utilizes research-based indicators for early literacy, early numeracy, and social-emotional development. It allows our teachers to quickly and accurately assess whether students are meeting growth expectations or if they require intensive support. Students that are not at benchmark on the myIGDIs assessment are provided embedded interventions. Additionally, student progress is reported to parents quarterly using the Educational Software for Guiding Instruction (ESGI) assessment system.

In addition to the Second Step program that is aligned prek-5th grade at Sabetha Elementary School we also started utilizing the Zaner Bloser handwriting resource to support alignment between early childhood and the K-3 handwriting standards. A focus on phonemic awareness and early numeracy development also supports the core content that is taught at the K-3 levels. As a preschool team we continue to focus on supporting kindergarten readiness to ensure our students have the skills to be successful in kindergarten. Data indicates learning at this early age contributes to continuing success for our students.

Modifications related to COVID-19 are primarily seen in structures put in place to help promote physical distancing within the classroom. Designated student spots are clearly marked for each individual child. Adjustments have been made in the activities offered during “centers” in order to reduce close contact

between students. Staff have also increased cleaning procedures to align with our district policy. In regard to instruction, teachers have noted a need to provide more pinpointed opportunities for students to apply skills addressed in the social-emotional curriculum.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Sabetha Elementary School is committed to providing students with a well-rounded education not limited to core academic content. Providing rich curricular opportunities in art, music, technology, robotics, library, and social-emotional curriculum all contribute to supporting well-rounded individuals that lead to a healthy society. It is the goal of SES to support the various interests and learning styles of the students while developing their passions as they explore the arts, technology and learn more about managing their emotions.

Sabetha Elementary's schedule allows all students to participate once a week in the art program. The program offers a rich curriculum that encourages exploration, cultural awareness, visual storytelling, critical thinking, creativity, and self-expression. Through projects, students have the opportunity to explore a variety of art mediums, allowing them to develop new skills, learn various techniques, and strengthen their fine motor skills. Progress aligned to the standards is reported to parents on the standards-based report cards that are distributed quarterly. Art created throughout the school year is published in the online art gallery Artsonia and shared with families. Through this gallery, students are able to see their growth, receive feedback, and even order items with their artwork printed on it.

The physical education program at SES is a vital element in keeping students active, healthy, and engaged. Students are fortunate to be able to participate in physical education class each day. The elementary Physical Education curriculum is aligned to the Kansas model grade-level outcomes for physical education. Standards-based grading is utilized in this content area and provides parents and students with information regarding performance aligned to the standards. The physical education teacher works with the American Heart Association on the Hoops/Jump Rope for Heart Program. Through this program, students learn the do's and don'ts to keep their hearts healthy, as well as the joy that comes with helping others. Sabetha Elementary also hosts a "Field Day" at the end of the year that allows students to compete in teams in various track and field events at the Sabetha High School track. It is a day in which parents and community members come out and enjoy watching the children's hard work!

Students at Sabetha Elementary are also able to participate in music daily as part of the "specials" rotation. The music curriculum is aligned to the Kansas Music Standards and the Interactive Music resource by Saavas is utilized to support the implementation of these standards. By studying and experiencing music, students learn its connection with other disciplines. Music is a powerful means of communication, and through music education, students learn how to express themselves through song, dance, and movement. Music is also a powerful way to explore and learn about other cultures. The Sabetha Elementary music department traditionally has each grade level perform one program during the year. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19 restrictions, students were unable to present the traditional programs this year. Students, parents, and teachers are all looking forward to returning to this tradition next year.

The technology curriculum at Sabetha Elementary School is supported through integration into the core content areas and not a pull-out special in the rotation. Through technology integration Sabetha Elementary embraces the following aspects of 21st century learning: being creative/innovative, communication/collaboration, research/information fluency, critical thinking, problem-solving, and becoming decision-makers. Additionally, teachers promote digital citizenship and make clear how that transfers into everyday life. Teachers utilize the Learning.com program to teach keyboarding and other technology skills. A variety of projects aligned to core curriculum topics are completed using the various apps on the iPad. Students are also able to publish their work to their class Seesaw or Google Classroom accounts where they can reflect on their work and provide feedback to their peers. Dot and Dash robots are also utilized as a component of the technology curriculum. With support from the technology integration specialist, after school robotics clubs have been conducted at various times throughout the year.

Sabetha Elementary School also maintains library time as a component of the "specials" rotation. Utilizing

the Kansas Library/Information and Technology Standards. Lessons are designed to give students opportunities to explore the library, expand their knowledge of resources available to them, and gain practice with reading strategies, book relations, and communication. Students are provided time to choose books to check out and then encouraged to read independently throughout the week.

The Second Step social-emotional curriculum is also taught and reinforced at all grade levels by the classroom teachers. Utilizing a consistent schedule teachers present the lesson during the week and then work to reinforce the concepts taught throughout the week and the entire school year. This program has provided a consistent vocabulary for helping students understand and respond to the emotions that they experience throughout the school day. The implementation of this curriculum has been very positive and will have a lasting effect on all students.

3. Academic Supports:

Sabetha Elementary staff feel strongly that it is our responsibility to provide students with quality instruction that meets their individual needs. We provide daily academic support for every student. The Kansas Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework has been implemented schoolwide and we continue to refine this structure. A walk-to-intervention model is a core feature of our support structure. We utilize a detailed process to determine student needs. Students with comparable needs are grouped accordingly and receive additional skill-based instruction. Interventions are provided by classroom teachers, special education staff, and a team of instructional support staff that are under the supervision of an intervention specialist. All students receive reading (40 minutes) and math supports (30 minutes) four to five times a week in addition to daily core instruction.

Established district protocols help to guide the process for determining student placement in extension, on level, Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Our district utilizes the Fastbridge Learning suite of universal screeners and progress monitoring assessments to assess student skill levels. Screeners are administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Students demonstrating risk are given additional diagnostic measures to focus on what specific skill areas are a concern. These areas are matched with the appropriate, district approved interventions. Professional development opportunities are routinely provided to ensure these interventions are implemented with fidelity. Students who perform above the benchmark also are provided opportunities to challenge themselves during the scheduled reading and math intervention times. Teachers design learning activities that allow students to utilize critical thinking skills, demonstrate problem solving, and collaborate with peers.

Monitoring student progress is a vital component of our MTSS structure. Formal progress monitoring within the Fastbridge system occurs every two weeks for reading and every three weeks for math. Grade level teams meet monthly with administration and interventionists to review Fastbridge scores, Kansas Assessment Program results, and core curriculum assessments. This quantitative evidence is compared to classroom anecdotal information and other measures in order to help assess student growth and guide decision-making. Adjustments are made to interventions as deemed appropriate. Sabetha Elementary teachers and support staff work in collaboration to communicate student progress with both students and parents, celebrate student growth and encourage confidence and persistence. Formal communication is provided through parent-teacher conferences, quarterly report cards, and universal screening reports.

Due to COVID-19 operational procedures, some adjustments have been made this year to help ensure student health and safety while receiving additional academic support. An emphasis has been placed on maintaining classroom cohort groups during instruction. In addition, instructional support staff have been assigned to a specific grade level rather than assisting with multiple ages. During the two week hiatus in November 2020 due to the pandemic, SES staff critically reviewed NBRS 2021

the learning needs for the few students for whom onsite instruction was imperative. Subsequently, successful methods were implemented to provide the necessary onsite instruction.

Sabetha Elementary is focused on providing an inclusive learning environment for every student. Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are served and supported predominantly in the mainstreamed general education classroom. Participation and placement in interventions is the same as non-IEP peers. The involvement of special education students in our walk-to-intervention model is directly aimed at reducing the achievement gap. In some situations, small groups of students may receive core curriculum pull-out instruction to work on individualized academic needs. Through positive early intervention, the 4-year old at-risk preschool as well as special education preschool classes address the specifically identified needs of each child. Blended instruction has proven to be effective in this model. Likewise, SES ensures that special education students receive needed and appropriate grade-level instruction. Through consistent staff collaboration, resource teachers, paraprofessionals, and speech, occupational and physical therapists work closely with general education teachers to make informed educational decisions.

The Student Improvement Team (SIT) collaborates with SES educators to stay on top of the changing needs of each individual student. Regular meetings are held to assist teachers in addressing specific student academic and behavioral concerns. Our SIT meetings allow us to bring together differing viewpoints and professionals with a wide variety of expertise to support each individual student. Discussions are focused on determining a course of action which will have a positive impact on student development. Data drives the decision-making process.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The Sabetha Elementary School (SES) faculty and staff are committed to the success of their students. With a schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program in place, students learn to be respectful, responsible, and safe in a variety of school settings. Our PBIS is called “The Bluejay Way.” It establishes expectations that support students socially, emotionally, academically, and behaviorally. To motivate students, many opportunities are available to earn Bluejay Way tickets for outstanding behaviors. Weekly, these tickets serve as a drawing pool for a Bluejay All Star from each classroom. Bluejay All Stars are highlighted on a special hallway display, and their parents receive notification highlighting the child’s selection.

Several SES teachers have received Kagan Cooperative Learning training. Kagan strategies are student-centered, focused on learning, and excite and motivate students. In order for these strategies to potentially extend to all classrooms throughout the building, these teachers have shared their knowledge through hands-on professional development at staff meetings, as well as building and district in-services. A second effective method of student engagement is the professional development effort of Opportunities to Respond (OTR). Several teachers have shared their practices for OTR at faculty meetings. Teachers are held accountable through the eWalkThrough documentation of classroom observations.

Prior to COVID-19 protocols being put into place, SES had implemented the Blue Crew program. Each staff member had a family of students across various grade levels, known as their Blue Crew. These groups would meet monthly for bonding through planned activities. Even though we can no longer meet in-person, Blue Crew family members still communicate and connect with each other through hand gestures they determined upon the inception of the groups. Blue Crew activities will be reintroduced as pandemic restrictions decline.

Although SES has primarily been learning onsite, a brief period of time existed with schoolwide remote learning. Additionally, some students remain remote learners due to COVID-19 related guidelines. To keep students engaged through Zoom, various methods were implemented, including student check-ins using an emoji, screen sharing, leveraging whiteboard features, breakout rooms, inviting a mystery guest, Zoom meeting themes, use of chat, and encouraging virtual background usage. Many teachers kept their Zoom meetings open after the scheduled end time in order to connect further with any students wishing to do so.

A key component to students being engaged at Sabetha Elementary must be contributed to the experience and dedication of the faculty. SES is fortunate to have a very seasoned staff. These teachers dedicate an enormous amount of time to ensure they are prepared daily and that they know their students on a personal level. This guarantees that students feel an important sense of belonging and therefore, are able to engage actively and openly in their learning. The SES teaching staff embraces what Eric Jensen, author and former teacher once said, “Strong teachers don’t teach content; Google has content. Strong teaching connects learning in ways that inspire kids to learn more and strive for greatness. With all these wonderful things happening at SES, some might say “Engagement” is our middle name!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Sabetha Elementary continually strives to establish open lines of communication and promote parent engagement in student learning. Monthly parent site council meetings are held in order to provide information and receive input regarding activities that have an impact on the educational process. Weekly electronic newsletters highlighting information and requesting feedback are also sent by our principal to every parent. These meetings and newsletters have been especially crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, for they have enabled the school to keep everyone updated on policies, procedures, and next steps. Grades K-3 teachers also utilize SeeSaw daily to communicate with parents.

A close working relationship with our parent-teacher organization has been established. Sabetha PTO is

involved in providing various resources to teachers, students and support staff. This organization has also established a formal financial support program available to all staff members. Through their Classroom Enhancement Program (CEP), staff members have the opportunity to submit applications requesting items for their classroom or program that will enhance student learning. The CEP is in part supported by funds donated by community members through the Greater Sabetha Community Foundation, a nonprofit organization focused on promoting philanthropic giving to meet community needs. This works in conjunction with the USD 113 Foundation Appleseed Innovation Grant. Through this resource, teachers may apply for funds that support student engagement and learning opportunities.

The Kids Klokset continues to be a wonderful resource for our families. This organization works collaboratively with SES to provide clothing, hygiene items, and school supplies to families in need. During enrollment, this program is promoted to our parents and times are established for them to visit with the program organizers. As family structures change or new students enroll throughout the year, school staff help to connect a family in need with this resource. A small area within our school has been designated to house items that can be accessed on a daily basis.

Working with other local preschools, Head Start, and Parents As Teachers, Sabetha Elementary has focused on building a strong partnership promoting kindergarten readiness. Leaders of each group meet each semester to discuss curriculum, student needs and other pertinent issues related to child development. This committed group effort led to the establishment of the Early Childhood Fall Festival, a jointly-sponsored community event. The purpose is to connect parents with available community resources and increased knowledge in developmentally-appropriate activities which support skill development.

As SES abruptly transitioned to remote learning in the spring of 2020, we became acutely aware that an immediate need for many parents was assistance in the area of technology. District staff worked with our local internet provider to establish additional hotspots that would provide free internet access to families. Also, a specific Facebook page was developed to assist both students and parents in the navigation of technology needed for instruction. This resource provided a wealth of information regarding ways to trouble-shoot iPad issues, to utilize our selected delivery platforms, and to request more help for unique situations.

The Sabetha community has been extremely supportive of SES in meeting specific needs during remote learning and the 2020-21 school year. A local insurance company provided a water bottle for each student to use during the suspended use of drinking fountains. A constant supply of bottled water has also been donated. A team of parent volunteers helped to complete student temperature checks each morning during the first quarter of school. Masks and other items have been donated. Throughout this entire experience, our community has stepped up to help meet our communicated needs.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Sabetha Elementary School values people. Each staff member is an important person who contributes to the successful education of each child. The members of our educational team are the focus of quality and relevant, ongoing professional development opportunities. Likewise, compassionate emphasis upon the whole person has been crucial for a sense of solidarity, especially during the challenges of dealing with COVID-19. An example of pandemic-related planning during a two-week remote learning period in November 2020 was that of allowing staff members to bring their children onsite. Reaching out in this way helped lessen the stress for SES employees as they fulfilled their professional responsibilities. Their children were able to continue their educational assignments and tasks while remaining under parental care.

In addition to the recognition of contributions from all staff members, focus is placed on providing the opportunity for all voices to be heard in educational discussions. Our collaborative groups have been structured to include support staff, such as interventionists, in the data-driven discussions surrounding student progress. Staff are routinely surveyed to obtain their input regarding district and building initiatives. During the pandemic, staff have been able to provide feedback on a variety of pertinent topics, such as mask policies, remote learning structures, and identified needs for instructional and emotional support. Evaluations are conducted following inservices. There is an expectation that questions or concerns receive a

prompt response. Administrators promote an open-door policy that allows teachers and support staff the opportunity to share general information or concerns. This has been especially important during remote learning as emotions have been high in such a volatile time. In the fall of 2020, Sabetha Elementary staff communicated to district administration frustration connected with the demands of preparing for remote learning instruction. This conversation led to the addition of protected individualized professional development time for staff.

When transitioning to remote learning last spring, it was determined that a key to our success would be providing support to teachers that matched their level of confidence in using technology. Professional learning was presented on digital tools whose use was deemed critical to instructional success. Training was offered with the experience of the user in mind. We wanted to acknowledge that while some staff were still beginners, others were quite experienced utilizing electronic tools to provide instruction. Basic and advanced sessions were made available by our district professional development team. It was recognized early in the transition that there were some areas in which information needed to be provided to all staff. For example, nearly every teacher needed support in teaching with web-conferencing tools. Multiple learning activities were scheduled to allow educators to join sessions and learn the basics first through experience. These were followed up with opportunities to "practice" the web conferencing skills with support prior to connection with students. For many staff members, this extra practice was a huge confidence boost before transitioning into a fully remote setting. Recorded video training was also provided to allow for staff to watch the training at the time that best fit their own schedule.

The information gained last spring has had a positive impact on instruction during the 2020-21 school year by providing teachers the skills to better prepare students for remote learning experiences. Administration and the Building Leadership Team (BLT) reviewed those structures that aided remote learning and those that were more difficult to manage. Decisions were made to narrow our instructional platforms to SeeSaw and Google Classroom. Professional development sessions focused on training staff with these programs along with other topics introduced in the spring. In order to meet the learning needs of staff, additional professional development days were added to the school calendar prior to the first day of school. Teachers were, and continue to be, encouraged to feel comfortable reaching out to the district's technology integration specialist for one-on-one time to plan, practice, troubleshoot or even co-teach, whether in onsite or remote instruction.

4. School Leadership:

Strong, supportive district leadership is at the heart of Sabetha Elementary School's success. We utilize a self-corrective feedback loop that assists us in the problem-solving process. The focus of this process is to target the improvement of instruction, the building system and the district system. Structures are in place that support the continual collection of data, analysis of results, and allow for adjustments aimed at positively impacting student learning and achievement. This includes the development of a schedule which protects time for building Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to meet and report to the Building Leadership Team (BLT) analytical insights of student progress. Our BLT utilizes this information in conjunction with a review of schoolwide data to refine school improvement procedures. They also meet regularly with our District Leadership Team (DLT) to evaluate the effectiveness of our system initiatives. Focused collaboration and communication among these three entities have been crucial to the success of SES. The outcome of these efforts has been a more efficient, effective, and sustainable system that is inclusive of stakeholders and targets student success.

The philosophy that has been clearly set by the Sabetha Elementary principal is that the underlying thought of every decision is to be "What is best for our students?" This is the standard question guiding all of the decisions made by building leaders. We are committed to ensuring that our actions reflect the answer. Staff and students are reminded daily that their best efforts to follow The Bluejay Way (Be Respectful. Be Responsible. Be Safe.) is expected. This philosophy is communicated verbally and visually throughout every area of SES.

The work of the district leadership team has been critical to the successful operation of SES throughout the pandemic. This group, along with the school nurse and technology department, have worked tirelessly to

implement procedures that are responsive to our parent and community needs, followed our state educational and health regulations, and focused on providing effective instruction. Throughout the summer of 2020, meetings were held to develop a Return-To-School Plan that fulfilled the USD 113 Board of Education's (BOE) established priorities of keeping students and staff healthy while providing onsite learning. This monumental effort included a tiered approach towards instruction. Within this framework, clear, actionable steps allowed SES the flexibility to meet the individual needs of our students.

As the 2020-21 school year has unfolded, our administrative team has held weekly virtual meetings to navigate the challenges that COVID-19 has brought. Topics include instruction, technology, and social-emotional support. In addition, regularly scheduled meetings with local health officials have provided invaluable information regarding the health status of our community and the possibility to adjust procedures in a responsible manner. Collaboration with our food service director has also been key in our ability to help keep our students nourished. A variety of surveys have been conducted to assess the wider needs of our staff, students and families. Our Building Leadership Team reviews this information in order to determine the appropriate next steps.

What has been evident throughout this process is that the staff at Sabetha Elementary are resourceful leaders who give their best effort every day to provide quality instruction and emotional support for students. They have been innovative in their approach to providing learning activities to remote learners while also instructing students in the classroom. Relationships have continued to be developed and strengthened throughout this difficult, unprecedented time. We are very proud that, except for two weeks, we have been successful in meeting the BOE goal of providing onsite learning.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Diversity, equity, and access are areas that we give full consideration when making decisions in our school and district. As we have worked through the curriculum adoption process, such topics were part of the discussion when selecting which resources to adopt. While analyzing data we ensure our systems are supporting all students. There is a continued focus on practices that allow us to meet the needs of all students, including resilience, trauma-informed practices, and the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process. Professional development offerings continue to be provided to help staff become more knowledgeable about these areas.

A School-Family Liaison (social worker) was hired for the Sabetha schools in 2019 to support teachers, students and families. The positive impact of this role has been felt throughout the building. Referral documentation indicates services lie heavily in the realm of providing social emotional learning support. This position, along with our counseling department, works in conjunction with our social emotional curriculum, Second Step. Second Step is a program with an emphasis on the importance of showing respect for diverse groups of people. Our staff works relentlessly to stay strong in their connections with our students. Individual check-ins and classroom discussions reinforce cohesiveness within the individual child as well as among the wider student population.

During our time of remote learning in the spring of 2020, our district partnered with the area internet service providers to increase internet availability. Our goal was to meet all the technology needs of our families. Multiple free hotspots were added within our community. Connectivity in our rural areas has historically been difficult and this was heightened with the added educational demands. Kajeet internet hotspots are available for check out for those families experiencing unstable service or who do not have wifi access. When learning remotely, we made decisions regarding appropriate educational support that allowed us to continue to provide onsite instruction for those students identified as requiring additional learning needs.

In response to our community's expressed desire to have students in our building this year to

receive instruction, much planning occurred by SES building leaders to implement procedures to assist in reaching this goal. Our focus on how to make in-school learning possible has allowed us to improve access to learning for all students with videos, live-streamed classes, online access to notes/assignments, and improved communication between schools and families.

Sabetha Elementary recognizes that in order to truly educate and support our students, it is crucial that we ensure that their basic needs are met. Our Food Service staff has worked with state and federal entities to provide free breakfast and lunch meals for all students both during onsite and schoolwide remote learning. Meals are provided in individual quarantine situations as well. Through the feedback from parent and staff surveys, adjustments continue to be made to maintain quality and accessibility.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The deep dedication of staff and administration to the continuation of providing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) throughout the pandemic has been key to supporting student academic success. Sabetha Elementary has worked diligently over the past four years to implement and sustain a walk-to-intervention model. The positive impact of this model is profound in regards to individual student skill development. As several other local school districts chose to discontinue similar services due to the pandemic, MTSS was deemed imperative for the student population in USD 113. This effort provided direct academic interventions for every student. It was important that we do what we could to help students recover from the loss of on-site instruction last spring and promote continued growth.

Our administrative and building leadership teams worked closely to problem solve ways to provide this needed support while complying with community health recommendations. Multiple planning sessions were held throughout the summer to determine critical district and building operating procedures that would lead to a successful school year. We were aided in this process by guidance set forth by the Kansas State Department of Education's Navigating Change document. This document provided school districts with information on best practices for education during the pandemic. As the year began, these leadership groups continued to meet in order to review and refine procedures. Administration meetings were also scheduled on a regular basis with local health officials to keep school leaders updated on pertinent information and provide input on the establishment of district policies and procedures. This collaboration led to the implementation of a practical mask policy which was important to Sabetha Elementary's ability to provide small group instruction. Emphasis was also placed on adjusting operating procedures that would develop and maintain cohort groups throughout the school.

As the school year unfolded and our community health status fluctuated, it was necessary to make alterations to our MTSS structure in order to reflect our reality. In a normal school year, our interventionists work with students from multiple grade levels. We began the year attempting to continue this procedure. In September, as the number of quarantined students began to rise, we made the decision to assign specific interventionists to work with only one grade level. This resulted in the need to adjust instructional schedules at all levels in order to allow staff to utilize the walk-to-intervention model while maintaining homeroom rather than grade level cohort groups. Although SES has needed to refine our process, we have remained dedicated in our efforts to provide these vital supports.

Data collected throughout the year has reinforced our confidence that our efforts have been well-placed. The analysis of fall to winter student growth reports of Fastbridge universal reading and math screeners indicate impactful growth in both areas. In the area of reading, 80% of students in grades 2-5 demonstrated typical or aggressive growth on the CBM Reading (fluency) and 71% on the aReading (comprehension) assessments. Kindergarten and first graders had similar results (69%) on the Early Reading assessment. Math results showed impressive gains as well. Grades 2-5 experienced 77% typical or aggressive growth on the aMath assessment while 89% of kindergarten and first graders demonstrated growth on the Early Math screener.

The key to the success of Sabetha Elementary's MTSS program and the impact it has had on student development lies within collaborative problem solving. The continuation of providing interventions required the development of close, working relationships. Conversations among community healthcare professionals, the Board of Education, administration, building leaders and instructional staff led to the development of procedures which protected the use of small group instruction while following health and safety protocols. These relationships were strengthened through a continuous flow of communication and discussions focused on doing what is best for students.