U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12MN8

School Type (Public Schools):
(Check all that apply, if any)

☐	☑	☐	☐
Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Amy Christensen

Official School Name: RTR Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 441 Duluth Avenue

Ruthton, MN 56170-5026

County: Lincoln County   State School Code Number*: 100

Telephone: (507) 658-3301 E-mail: amy.christensen@rtrschools.org

Fax: (507) 247-3876   Web site/URL: http://www.rtrschools.org/

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Bruce Houck   Superintendent e-mail: bruce.houck@rtrschools.org

District Name: RTR Public Schools   District Phone: (507) 247-5913

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Paul Henriksen

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

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

Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

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

2. District per-pupil expenditure: 9323

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	22	23	45		6	0	0	0
K	25	32	57		7	0	0	0
1	27	21	48		8	0	0	0
2	28	23	51		9	0	0	0
3	22	19	41		10	0	0	0
4	20	17	37		11	0	0	0
5	15	14	29		12	0	0	0
						Total in Applying School:		308

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
1 %	Asian
2 %	Black or African American
2 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
95 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: _____ 4%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	7
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	11
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	262
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: _____ 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: _____ 0

Number of non-English languages represented: _____ 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: __39%__

   Total number of students who qualify: __103__

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: __12%__

   Total number of students served: __38__

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

4	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
1	Deafness	3	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	8	Specific Learning Disability
1	Emotional Disturbance	9	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
2	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	10	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	0	1
Classroom teachers	14	3
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	5	7
Paraprofessionals	7	2
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	6	4
Total number	32	17

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: __18:1__

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

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
    Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

   Graduating class size: _____

   Enrolled in a 4-year college or university   _____ %
   Enrolled in a community college   _____ %
   Enrolled in vocational training   _____ %
   Found employment   _____ %
   Military service   _____ %
   Other   _____ %
   Total   **0**%

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

 ⦿ No

 ◻ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Russell-Tyler-Ruthton (RTR) Public School students, staff, and communities are excited and honored to have RTR Elementary nominated as a National Blue Ribbon School by the state of Minnesota. The RTR School District Mission Statement is "Educational excellence, enhanced student achievement, fiscal stability, and life-long learning are the four pillars of the RTR School. We are a community dedicated to providing a safe, friendly environment challenging students to be productive citizens in an ever-changing world." The RTR Elementary Vision statement is "RTR Elementary strives to provide a safe and respectful environment where everyone can learn to their full potential."

RTR Elementary is a small rural school located in the southwest corner of Minnesota. RTR Elementary is made up of students from the communities of Russell, Tyler, and Ruthton. Our school currently has 260 students in grades K-5. We have a dedicated staff of teachers, resource teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, and administrators.

RTR Elementary has shown an increase in student population over the course of the past four school years. We believe that is due to the strong education that we provide for every student. Our classrooms focus on differentiating to meet the needs of each unique student. We believe that all teachers need to collaborate to ensure student understanding of objectives and outcomes.

As a school, we are dedicated to providing an environment where each student and adult can learn to their full potential including staff members. We have early dismissals to provide staff development on curriculum mapping. We have scheduled Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and in-service times to work on power standards, common formative assessments, and differentiated instruction. We provide summer in-service days related to technology to improve the ability of our staff to meet the unique needs of our 21st century learners. We also use summer in-service time to analyze assessment data to assist us in our planning to help meet our students' needs.

Our elementary classrooms provide core instruction in language art, mathematics, science, and social studies. Our students also receive daily instruction in physical education and music, along with weekly instruction in computer and library. Students benefit from art instruction twice weekly as well. The wide array of offerings is beneficial in creating well rounded students.

Differentiating to meet individual needs is a strength for RTR Elementary. Our Special Education program provides specialized instruction for meeting individual needs. Our Title I is a targeted intervention program. Through regular communication between these resource teachers and classroom teachers, we are able to provide the appropriate amount of support to students needing assistance in Reading or Math. In addition, our classroom teachers provide enrichment activities to challenge those students who are able to move ahead at a quicker pace. Implementation of the Daily 5 program allows differentiation for our students to meet their needs at their particular learning level.

Our school goals consist of using technology to increase student achievement and to enhance communication among parents, students, and staff. In today's technologically savvy era, we understand the importance of incorporating technology into our classrooms to give our students the skills necessary to be productive citizens in a world that is constantly changing. Using technology to enhance communication helps build strong partnerships within our community. Our goal is to bring greater awareness of all the wonderful things that are happening on a daily basis at our school.

RTR Elementary continues to uphold a tradition of success through our consistently high MCA test scores, our dedicated staff, and our strong leadership of our administrators.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The standardized assessments administered at RTR Elementary are the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments II (MCA II) in Reading and Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments III (MCA III) in Math for our Grades 3-5. 5th grade also takes the MCA Science test. The MCA assessments are aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards. The assessment results are classified into levels of achievement. They are: Does Not Meet the Standard (D), Partially Meets the Standards (P), Meets the Standards (M), and Exceeds the Standards (E). When students meet and/or exceed the standards, they are considered being "proficient" in that subject area.

For our 3rd grade, the results over the past 5 years have shown a dramatic increase in the number of students showing proficiency on the MCA II Reading tests from 82% in 2007 to 92% in 2011 which was 13% above the state average.

3rd grade math results have fluctuated over the 5 year period. We scored 85% proficiency in 2007. We maintained consistent percentages over 90% proficient from 2008 through 2010. When we switched from the MCA II in Mathematics to the MCA III in 2011, our proficiency scores were 81%. This percentage of proficiency is still 10% above the state average.

In 4th grade reading, we have consistently moved our proficiency numbers upward. We started with 79% proficient in 2007, and have been over 90% proficient since 2009. In 2011, we had a 91% proficiency. This was 15% above the state average in Reading for 4th grade students.

For 4th grade Math results, our scores have ranged from 82% in 2008 all the way to 2011 with the new MCA III Math test where we had a 94% proficiency rate. This is 27% above the state average.

5th grade reading MCA II scores have increased steadily over the past five years starting at 78% proficient in 2007 and ending at 91% in 2011. This was 11% above the state average.

In 5th grade math, our scores have increased from 63% in 2007 to 76% in 2011 with the implementation of the new MCA III Mathematics test. This was 29% above the state proficiency average for 5th grade math.

Our school uses other yearly standardized assessments to monitor student progress including using the California Achievement Test (CAT5) previously, and currently using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). More frequently throughout the year, we use different assessments to monitor student achievement including STAR Reading, STAR Math, and AIMSweb reading probes. This data allows for educated decisions regarding teaching and learning.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Some of the strategies that we have used to analyze assessment data include data retreat and data mining, grade level team meetings, Response to Intervention (RtI), curriculum mapping, and Professional Learning Communities (PLC).

At the beginning of each year, we participate in data mining to delve deeper into the assessment scores of RTR Elementary students to analyze the different trends to determine areas of strengths and areas of improvement. Teacher grade level teams use the data provided to determine areas of focus for the upcoming school year and create their professional goals.

Throughout the school year, we use AIMSweb testing to monitor student achievement. For all students, testing occurs three times over the course of the year to get benchmark data. Students needing additional interventions are progress-monitored more frequently to determine student growth. Through our Response to Intervention (RtI) process, our team works hard to provide teachers with a variety of research based interventions.

For those students who need additional intervention, RTR Elementary offers a Title I program. Title I works with students individually or in small groups. One goal of our program is to introduce upcoming concepts, content vocabulary, and instructional strategies to our Title I students to increase their confidence and participation in the regular classroom.

For students needing intensive interventions, we have a Special Education program that works hard to provide students supplementary exposure for math and reading in addition to their regular mainstreamed class time. This allows students to be successful at their individual learning level while the repeated exposure helps them build necessary skills.

Curriculum mapping is used as a way to focus instruction, eliminate duplication, and ensure their grade level standards are being met. Professional Learning Communities are used to give teachers an opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues to enhance student achievement.

RTR Elementary feels strongly about informing parents, students, and the community about our students' academic achievements. Each year, 3rd and 4th grade students are tested in Reading and Math for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, 5th grade students are tested in Reading, Math, and Science. At the beginning of each school year, parents are given a copy of their child's state testing results from the previous spring. Parent/Teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter to further discuss student progress. To inform our community of our results, MCA data is also printed in our Friday Folder note which is a brief elementary newsletter that goes home to parents each week, our monthly district newsletter which reaches every household in our community as well as surrounding communities, and in not only local newspapers but the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Other methods for informing our parents and community members about our students' progress throughout the course of the school year include midterm reports, quarterly report cards, classroom newsletters, district website, local radio reports of weekly events, and our annual Title I parent meeting. Teachers also send home quarterly reports of student results for the Renaissance Learning STAR Reading assessment and STAR Math assessment. This allows parents to stay current on their child's Reading and Math levels.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

RTR Elementary is part of the Southwest Minnesota FLY Consortium. This is a regional group of 25 school districts who are working together to improve student achievement through collaboration, cooperative professional development, and following a common calendar. Our school district is able to attend area trainings and give presentations should staff members choose to do so. We have common in-services dates scheduled with many different break-out sessions offered. The FLY Consortium has also provided opportunities for cross district networking sessions for grade levels and/or subject areas. This is extremely important in rural Minnesota where collaboration opportunities are limited.

RTR Elementary participates in many research projects and these provide great learning opportunities for both staff and students. Last year, our 4th grade teachers completed a Hands-On Equations study focusing on the Math skills of our students. Our teachers presented their findings to our local school board. This year, we have teamed up with the National Reading Styles Institute to implement Power

Reading Online (PRO) focusing on the Reading skills of our students. We have a team that has applied to present the findings using PRO with our elementary students at the Minnetonka Summer Institute.

Many of our staff have researched and implemented action research projects in their classrooms. These projects have allowed us to investigate current trends in education, implement research based effective strategies in a classroom setting, and then determine the effectiveness on student achievement.

We have shared our successful strategies through written papers and articles in newsletters. Staff have also made oral presentations for the local school board as well as at area organization meetings.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

RTR Elementary School works diligently to build the home/school connection by working together with family and community to help ensure student success.

One simple strategy often employed by elementary staff is to e-mail parents. Our staff can quickly and easily send daily/weekly reports to parents to maintain the communication between home and school. Our staff also creates websites that allow students to participate in engaging activities while working on needed skills.

Communicating with our constituents occurs in other ways. We send a Friday Folder note home to all our students at the end of each week and many teachers send home weekly classroom updates as well. We send out a monthly newsletter to all households in our district and surrounding communities. Our local newspaper prints school activities, our school district website shows our calendar of events and other happenings at our school, and a weekly radio spot highlights weekly activities and upcoming events.

RTR Elementary has a strong volunteer program. For the past four years, community volunteers have worked in first and second grade to allow for additional differentiation in our reading program. Community volunteers have allowed small groups to be made up of anywhere between one and six students. During this block of time, each group reads children's literature at their individual reading levels.

Family Fun Nights have been an exciting opportunity at our school. Each month, we host a family fun night related to a theme and invite our students and their families to participate. We host a wide variety of different events that provide quality time for families to spend together. For some our Family Fun Nights, we partner with other groups to expand the content. One example includes our own RTR Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) students planning and hosting the activities for Family Fitness Night. The South Dakota State University (SDSU) National Children's Study participates in our Family Art Night by bringing additional activities for families and educating about the study. For Family Reading Fun Night, teachers present reading activities for parents to do with their children at home. For our Family Valentine Fun Night, teachers facilitated a parent session on quick and easy family activities. Parents decorated a box and were given a variety of enjoyable activities to do at home.

As our school belongs to our community, we open it to the public for a variety of activities including holiday and spring concerts, parent/teacher conferences, plays, talent shows, and sporting events to name just a few. We advertise each month on the radio any upcoming events to let everyone know about the different activities occurring at our school and inviting them to participate.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

RTR Elementary offers a well rounded curriculum supporting students' academic success. We have a seven year curriculum cycle. During the 2010-11 school year, we reviewed our Language Arts curriculum as part of our cycle. Teachers reviewed various samples, piloted various components of the samples, and made recommendations based on their findings. As we value community input in helping to make our school a successful place for our students, we have had community curriculum meetings to invite parents to provide input on curricular decisions.

For Language Arts, we selected the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys series for kindergarten through second grades. For the 2012-13 school year, we will purchase the series for third through fifth grades.

In Math, RTR Elementary uses the Harcourt curriculum along with the Minnesota Academic Standards. We incorporate hands-on manipulatives as often as possible in our mathematics instruction.

We use the Minnesota State Standards as the guide for our science curriculum. We've also purchased grade level readers related to the science standards to allow for differentiation at each student's reading level. The readers can be used to provide a multi-disciplinary approach.

The focus for Social Studies is the Minnesota State Standards. Through its connection with our reading curriculum, we are able to tie in Social Studies concepts, using the SMART Board and other forms of technology, to provide interactive cross subject lessons.

We are extremely fortunate to have a strong visual and performing arts program at RTR Elementary. We provide daily music instruction to students in grades K-5. In fourth grade, our students are introduced to the recorder in preparation for fifth grade band. In fifth grade, students are able to participate in band. We have a certified art teacher who provides instruction to students in grades K-5 twice a week. Our students have opportunities to participate in art conferences with our art teacher; she also hosts an annual family art night for students and their families.

We are also privileged to offer physical education to our students in grades K-5 everyday. Teaching our students how to live an overall healthy and fit lifestyle is a main focus of our physical education curriculum. We offer a variety of activities from students wearing pedometers in school to family evening events that focus on being fit, eating right, and making healthy choices.

One of the goals of the RTR School Board is to remain on the forefront of cutting edge technology to enhance student achievement. All general education classrooms have computers and SMART Boards to make instruction more engaging for their students. Kindergarten classroom have SMART Tables for student use. 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms have access to Senteo Classroom Response Systems to provide quick and accurate formative assessments. We have a computer lab available for student use. Currently we have some teachers implementing the use of iPads in their classrooms to provide opportunities for individualized instruction and it is projected that all elementary teachers will have them next year. The school incorporates web based instructional programs, including Renaissance Place Accelerated Reading and Accelerated Math, Study Island, and Tumblebooks, to provide additional differentiated instruction for our students. We believe that technology is the key for our 21st century learners.

2. Reading/English:

The school's reading curriculum is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. The Harcourt series has been implemented at RTR Elementary for many years because it, along with the Minnesota Academic Standards in Reading, provides a framework of high expectations. It is a challenging series but we have seen good success with it. When Language Arts came up for review on our curriculum cycle, we were hesitant to make any changes because of the successes that we have seen. After reviewing and piloting, we went with the new updated version of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. We purchased for grades K-2 last year and will be adding grades 3-5 this year. We especially liked the technology part of this series and being able to use and access all the different components on the Smart Boards in our classrooms.

Another aspect that we like is the leveled books that go along with the curriculum. When purchasing this curriculum, we spent a majority of our curriculum dollars on leveled books. With our focus on using the Daily 5 method in our classrooms to teach Language Arts, the leveled books provide wonderful resources to meet the needs of all students at the level where they are at academically. Reading research shows that you need to have repetition at the appropriate readability level to help ensure student success. We are able to provide our students with a wide variety of literature choices all related to our subject area power standards. Through individual or small group meetings with students, teachers are able to provide feedback to students while helping them progress at their appropriate level.

The reading basal provides phonics and vocabulary and is literature based for student enjoyment. We have our students test quarterly on Renaissance Learning STAR Reading to get an accurate readability level for each student and use Accelerated Reader to test for comprehension of stories. Our Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) has also purchased a license for Tumblebooks, a computer based literature series for our students to use at school and home.

Students at all levels are challenged in many different ways. Technology plays an important part in helping our students to achieve academic gains. All students in grades K-5 are tested three times a year using AIMSweb, a progress monitoring system, to determine baseline data. All students have access to Accelerated Reading which allows students at all levels to continue making growth in their learning. For students performing below grade level, they are provided additional time in reading instruction. This time consists of using research based interventions, such as additional reading instruction, the use of web based reading programs such as Power Reading Online (PRO) to build fluency and comprehension skills and for students in grades 3-5 Study Island is available for instruction, practice, and assessment related to the Minnesota Academic Standards, and we offer an after school reading class. Students who show a need for frequent and continuous interventions are progress monitored using AIMSweb to ensure the effectiveness of the interventions. Because our programs are so individualized, instruction and student learning is adaptable to meet each child's unique needs.

3. Mathematics:

RTR Elementary has been using the Harcourt Math series. Again we feel this series is challenging for our students. It is very cyclical in nature, which allows for plenty of repetition. Even though our Math scores are higher than most in the state of Minnesota, this series along with the Minnesota Academic Standards for math are used for teaching objectives and outcomes. As a school, we are continually wanting to improve and Math is an area that we are focusing on to improve our scores.

For instruction of math, we feel a hands-on approach is extremely beneficial. Students need to know and understand the "abstract" part of math. Just memorizing basic facts is not enough, they need to know the what and how behind what they are doing during the process. We place a lot of emphasis on mathematical vocabulary that are used on the MCA Math tests. A main focus of practice is on story problems and comprehension.

We challenge all students at different levels in a variety of ways. Again technology plays a major role in helping our students make academic gains. We test our students quarterly using Renaissance Learning STAR Math to get baseline information regarding the math levels of our students. All students have access to Accelerated Math which allows for individualization of math at all levels to continue growth in their learning. Students in grades 3-5 also use Study Island to practice skills and objectives necessary for the MCA Math tests. Students struggling with math are provided with additional time for math instruction. For example, students may participate in a short pre-teach lesson before the actual classroom instruction. This allows students to have background knowledge and confidence to participate in the instruction. We recently hired a math interventionist that we share with another district. The intent of this position is to work with our struggling students individually or in small groups on targeted interventions to help meet students' needs. We also provide an after school math class to continue working on necessary skills.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

One additional curriculum area that our district feels strongly about is our physical education (PE) program. RTR Elementary understands the important connection between movement and learning. We offer many opportunities to improve overall health and fitness of our students. We know that well-rounded students need to be provided with many different educational opportunities and daily physical education needs to be one of them. A structured movement time allows students exposure to overall fitness to build a foundation for a healthy lifestyle.

We have been the recipient of the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant to help improve the physical fitness of our students. The intent of the grant is to increase the knowledge of students for healthy living through education, nutrition, and activity. The funding provided through this grant has allowed the district to purchase many items to be used in our physical education department to help our students. We currently have a fitness room equipped with 2 treadmills, 2 ellipticals, 1 bike, 1 Active Motion Trainer, a multistack machine for weights, and a stretcher. This equipment is utilized by staff, special education students, physical education classes, and can be open for public use. We also have a rock climbing wall for student use.

A technology based curriculum available to our student is the HOPS sports program. It has 150 lessons that focus on fitness skills, dance/rhythm, strength, sports skills, and yoga. Currently our students wear pedometers to track their movement. We have strapless heart rate monitors to record heart rate during activities in physical education classes. We monitor heart rates during physical activity during the Pacer test and record resting heart rate and exercising heart rate. We take BMI readings three times per year to track students' body mass index. We use BOSU balls to increase strength, balance, and flexibility, kettlebells for total body workouts to increase strength and flexibility, Tebow platforms are utilized for balance, flexibility, and overall body workout, and stability balls and bands utilize core strength and upper body strength.

In addition to all of our in school health and fitness opportunities, our PE department works closely together with our FCCLA department to provide evening activities for the public including our annual Family Fitness Night.

5. Instructional Methods:

To meet individual student need, it is important to differentiate instruction. We use the constructivist approach at RTR Elementary. Through problem based learning and differentiated instruction, we are able to help our students at their own unique instructional levels. Students are assessed frequently throughout the course of the school year to determine their appropriate reading and math level. From there, instruction is differentiated in many different ways. When students are taught at their appropriate learning levels, they will be more successful.

Our main method to differentiate based on student need is through the use of the Daily 5 setup in our lower elementary classrooms. The Daily 5 program is built on the foundation of helping students learn independence, increase self-directed learning, and monitor their own progress. Each day the students have the ability to select from the following: read to self in which they use book bags filled with books selected from our classroom libraries at their own readability levels, writing, listen to reading, word work, and read to someone. This structure allows teachers the opportunity to work with individual or small groups of students to assist with learning at their appropriate level.

All of our regular education classrooms have Smart Boards. This allows for active participation of students during the learning process. Smart Boards are exciting for the students and learning is occurring through fun activities. RTR Elementary has purchased the technology component that goes along with our Reading series and that can be shown through the Smart Board as well. We also have white boards in classrooms so everyone has a chance to practice the skills and show their understanding of concepts. Grades 2 and 3 have Senteo Classroom Response Systems for students to use while being active learners. This permits all students to participate by selecting an answer as compared to having just one person respond. As every student clicks an answer, the results show up on the SmartBoard.

Our Title One program differentiates for students in both reading and math. Methods include hands-on manipulatives as often as possible with math to help students understand the concept. In reading, it is imperative to be working at the student's correct readability level to see growth. This time can be used for repeated reading of the story or leveled readers that go along with the series.

Students in our Special Education program work individually or in small groups with our teachers to reach their individual goals. This extra help is done in addition to the regular reading and math blocks of time as often as possible because we understand that to improve in those areas, we need to increase the amount of time exposed to those subjects.

Another opportunity that we provide is our After School Reading and Math classes which allows more time for those students who show a need for additional help on specific skills related to reading and/or math. Our After School Reading class meets twice a week and our After School Math class meets one time per week.

6. Professional Development:

RTR Elementary understands the importance of professional development to assist our teachers. Teachers are given opportunities to learn about differentiated instruction through professional development on topics such as the Daily 5, technology integration, and summer workshops.

When planning the schedule, we try to maintain common prep times for teachers to allow collaboration. We are part of a consortium that has a focus on a mentor program to help new teachers as they begin in this profession. The consortium schools also pool their resources to provide more effective professional development for all staff. This also allows for inter and intra Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Through our own PLC time, we have set subject power standards, SMART goals, learning targets, and are working on common assessments.

The work that is being accomplished during PLC time is then moved forward into each teacher's curriculum map. Through the use of our on-line curriculum mapping system, teachers are able to track Minnesota Academic Standards to ensure all standards are being met and data from common assessments guides instruction.

Staff meetings have been used for professional growth and sharing. Teachers have taken turns sharing instructional techniques and strategies that have been successful for them in the classroom. Some of the

topics teachers have shared have been technology, multiple learning styles, student portfolios, and behavior management techniques.

Beside the plethora of professional development opportunities provided by the district and the consortium, our teachers are also allowed two professional development days for self-selected workshops of interest.

7. School Leadership:

RTR Elementary is fortunate to have an effective and caring leadership team. The school is lead by a school board that values the success of its students. The school board focuses and makes it their goals to provide "educational excellence, enhanced student achievement, fiscal stability, and lifelong learning" for all students. It is through this mission that the school board makes it a priority to provide teachers and students with the most up-to-date technology, and working to maintain teaching staff to keep student to teacher ratios low. Their commitment to RTR Elementary is essential in the teachers and staff's ability to be effective educators.

The school has a superintendent who is budget savvy and equipped with extensive knowledge of grant writing. This has garnered the district grant dollars to continue offering programming to meet the needs of our 21st century learners at RTR. He provides collaboration with other school districts including sharing of staff which allows us to offer a wide variety of classes to meet our students' needs

The principal at RTR Elementary is innovative and makes it a priority to keep RTR Elementary up-to-date on current educational trends. She has created a leadership structure that gives everyone in the school the ability to be involved. Teachers are encouraged to be part of committees such as the Curriculum Committee, Teachers Assisting Teachers (TAT), Child Study, Sunshine Club, and the Community Education Committee. As well, she takes on the role of lead teacher and is willing to provide assistance as an instructional leader.

As a dedicated life-long learner, she is currently completing her Doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. This plays an important role in being a knowledgeable instructional leader. Recently, through her dissertation on fluency, we were able to pilot and use the Power Reading Online Program (PRO) at our school. This program helps struggling readers through the use of recorded stories and games students listen to and play online. PRO has helped students make one to two year gains in reading levels, just within the past school year. As well, the principal is working with other teachers to create a behavior plan based on the Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (PBIS) model to create an overall school climate that promotes "RTR" - Respectful, Thoughtful, Responsible. Through collaboration with other teachers, she led the initiative to create an elementary mission statement that encompasses the overall school goal and has worked hard to create an atmosphere based on it throughout the school. Our mission statement is, RTR Elementary - a safe and respectful environment where everyone can learn to their full potential. RTR Elementary is lead by a principal with strong work ethics, fair judgment, and an extensive knowledge of education and helping students learn. Her leadership is a key factor in why RTR Elementary as a whole consistently performs at a high level.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 3 Test: MCA II/MCA III

Edition/Publication Year: Second/Years 2-5; Third/Year 1 Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	81	94	95	95	85
Exceeds the Standards	31	55	55	43	36
Number of students tested	36	31	38	37	33
Percent of total students tested	100	97	97	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		1	1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed		3	3		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	87	91	87	88	86
Exceeds the Standards	20	36	53	38	14
Number of students tested	15	11	15	16	14
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1		1		3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1	1		1	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	4	2	5	5	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					1
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
The third edition of the MCA Math test was implemented during the 2010-11 school year. The second edition was used for all previous years listed in these results.					

12MN8

16

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 3   Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Second   Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	92	87	95	95	82
Exceeds the Standards	67	81	65	73	45
Number of students tested	36	31	37	37	33
Percent of total students tested	97	97	97	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	3	3		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	93	82	86	94	79
Exceeds the Standards	40	82	50	56	36
Number of students tested	15	11	14	16	14
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1		1		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1	1		1	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	3	2	4	5	5
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					1
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 4 Test: MCA II/ MCA III

Edition/Publication Year: Second/Years 2 - 5, Third/Year 1 Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	94	89	92	82	84
Exceeds the Standards	31	38	59	30	47
Number of students tested	32	37	37	33	38
Percent of total students tested	97	97	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	3			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	92	81	85	77	69
Exceeds the Standards	23	38	54	15	50
Number of students tested	13	16	13	13	16
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested		1		1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1		1	2	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	2	6	4	5	9
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested				1	1
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

The third edition of the MCA Math test was implemented during the 2010-11 school year. The second edition was used for all previous years listed in these results.

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 4   Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Second   Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	91	92	92	85	79
Exceeds the Standards	53	67	65	48	55
Number of students tested	32	36	37	33	38
Percent of total students tested	97	95	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	5			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	92	87	92	77	75
Exceeds the Standards	38	53	46	38	50
Number of students tested	13	15	13	13	16
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested		1		1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1		1	2	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	2	5	4	5	9
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested				1	1
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 5 Test: MCA II/MCA III

Edition/Publication Year: Second/Years 2-5; Third/Year 1 Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	76	83	64	76	63
Exceeds the Standards	21	40	33	24	20
Number of students tested	33	35	33	37	42
Percent of total students tested	100	97	97	97	100
Number of students alternatively assessed			1	1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed			3	3	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	85	62	53	85	36
Exceeds the Standards	38	31	13	23	0
Number of students tested	13	13	15	13	14
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested			1		2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1		2	1	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	5	5	5	8	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested			1	1	
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

The third edition of the MCA Math test was implemented during the 2010-11 school year. The second edition was used for all previous years listed in these results.

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 5   Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Second   Publisher: Pearson/State of MN

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	91	89	88	86	78
Exceeds the Standards	47	39	39	51	49
Number of students tested	34	36	33	37	42
Percent of total students tested	100	97	97	97	100
Number of students alternatively assessed			1	1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed			3	3	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	86	86	80	100	57
Exceeds the Standards	50	29	27	69	29
Number of students tested	14	14	15	13	14
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested			1		2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1	1	2	1	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	6	5	5	8	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested			1	1	
6.					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	83	88	84	84	76
Exceeds the Standards	27	43	49	32	33
Number of students tested	101	103	108	107	113
Percent of total students tested	99	97	98	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	2	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	3	3	3	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	87	77	74	83	63
Exceeds the Standards	26	35	39	26	22
Number of students tested	41	40	43	42	44
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1	1	2	1	5
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	3	1	3	4	5
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency	45	61	42	61	31
Exceeds the Standards	18	15	14	5	31
Number of students tested	11	13	14	18	16
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency	0	0			
Exceeds the Standards	0	0			
Number of students tested	0	0	1	2	2
6.					
Proficiency	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the Standards	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

The third edition of the MCA Math test was implemented during the 2010-11 school year. The second edition was used for all previous years listed in these results.

12MN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficiency	91	89	91	88	79
Exceeds the Standards	55	61	56	57	49
Number of students tested	102	103	107	107	113
Percent of total students tested	98	96	98	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	3	2	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4	3	3	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficiency	90	85	85	90	70
Exceeds the Standards	42	52	40	54	38
Number of students tested	42	40	42	42	44
2. African American Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	1	1	2	1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficiency					
Exceeds the Standards					
Number of students tested	3	2	3	4	5
4. Special Education Students					
Proficiency	36	41	61	66	47
Exceeds the Standards	18	25	23	16	18
Number of students tested	11	12	13	18	21
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficiency	0	0			
Exceeds the Standards	0	0			
Number of students tested	0	0	1	2	2
6.					
Proficiency	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds the Standards	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12MN8