

Indiana Department of Education
School Improvement Plan
2020-2021

Peter J. Beiriger Elementary School

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School #4147

Corporation #4700

Mrs. Ambre Cain, Principal
Mrs. Michelle Riise, Superintendent

Part One

I. Description of School

Beiriger Elementary School is one of three elementary schools, two public and one parochial, in Griffith, Indiana, a town of seven square miles and a population of 16,900. This small stable, urban community is basically comprised of blue-collar workers and depends heavily on the various steel mills and related industries located in the region for employment opportunities.

The current enrollment is 429 students in grades 3-5 and 10 students in grades K-2 that are a part of our special education programming. Our ethnic make-up is as follows: 20.5% African American, 0.09% Asian, 27.1% Hispanic, 46.2% Caucasian, and 5.2% Multiracial. The current classroom average per grade level is as follows: 27 in grade three, 24 in grade four, and 29 in grade 5. Free and reduced lunch is provided to 55.6% of our student body. Additionally, we provide district bus service to 65.8% of our students.

Our full-time certified teaching staff consist of the following teachers: 15 certified grade-level teachers-five in each grade level (3, 4, and 5), four Special Education Teachers, two Title I Teachers, two High Ability Teachers, and four Allied Arts Teachers (Art, Gym, Music, and STEAM). We have one part-time certified English Language Learner Teacher. We also employ a full-time registered nurse, social worker, maintenance supervisor, and library assistant. In addition, we have the following part-time staff: an elementary School Resource Officer, a Speech Language Pathologist, an Speech Language Pathologist Assistant, four part-time special education paraprofessionals, and four evening custodians. The cafeteria staff consist of a manager, server, dishwasher, cashier, and matron. Our office staff is comprised a full-time secretary, dean of students, and principal. Together, our staff help and guide the students and parents of the BES community.

The Beiriger Elementary School staff and various community vendors address the needs of students with disabilities jointly. Beiriger provides facilities and staffing for children with moderate, severe/profound, and multiple disabilities for Griffith Public Schools. All special education academic support services at Beiriger are delivered within the classroom with the exception of our intense and therapeutic program. Support services for physical therapy, occupational therapy and behavioral therapy is provided by outside agencies to those students who have qualified. Other special education services are provided for students with mild disabilities and speech/language disorders. These students are mainstreamed into

the general education setting whenever it is appropriate. We also work with community partners like Crown Counseling to offer students' families services that can be delivered within the school day.

The Griffith community is very supportive of its schools. The Education Foundation supports unique teaching/learning opportunities for students and school staff. Since its inception in 1985, over \$325,000 have been released to provide these opportunities to the Griffith Public Schools. Community-based corporate sponsorship by Pepsi, Target, Office Depot, and Meijer Superstores are examples of continuing community support. Partnerships with Indiana University Northwest, Purdue University Calumet, Purdue North Central, and Calumet College of St. Josephs allow field experiences for aspiring teachers. Seniors from Griffith High School participate in the Cadet Teaching Program, which provides future teachers with elementary classroom experiences.

The school population can be seen as stable with a transient rate of less than five percent. Beiriger Elementary School has been recognized as a Four-Star school on three occasions with the last distinction being bestowed in 2004 and has received eleven state school improvement awards since 1989. In recent surveys, the stakeholders at Beiriger Elementary School overwhelmingly see their school as a safe, open, nurturing environment with strong leadership and effective communication. Beiriger students view the teaching staff as supportive, helpful, and clear in their expectations for student learning. In addition, the instructional staff views their workplace as a welcoming and cohesive environment with high expectations. Parents are active participants in their child's education. A high percentage of parents also attend Open House and volunteer for various school committees. PTC membership is high with over 100 of our families actively participating in projects.

II. Mission, Vision, & Beliefs

Griffith Public School's Vision

Achieving Success, Academic Excellence, & Panther Pride

Griffith Public School's Mission

Griffith Public Schools is leading the way as a diverse school and community driven by continual improvements in academic excellence focused on producing lifelong learners.

Griffith Public School’s Core Values

Griffith Public Schools is committed to:

- Purposeful Professional Development
- Diverse, progressive curriculum which integrates technology
- Strong stakeholder communication
- Intentional community and parental partnerships
- Fiscal responsibility
- Celebrating every child's accomplishments
- Preparing students for graduation with employability skills to meet a competitive marketplace

Griffith Public School’s Technology Vision

Our learners create, innovate, and can learn anytime, anywhere.

III. Data

During the 2019-2020 school year, our district closed an elementary school and reconfigured the grade levels. The data listed below is inclusive of all students currently housed at BES in grades 3-5 that took the ILEARN assessment during the 2018-2019 school year. No data is present for IREAD-3 as a report cannot be generated to include current 2020-2021 students. Information from the 2019-2020 is unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proficiency Level				English Language Arts			
Below	Approaching	At	Above	Current Grade	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
40	37	40	33	4	150	73	49.0%
1	2	0	0	5	3	0	0%
School Total English Language Arts Data							
41	39	40	33	4-5	153	73	47.7%

Proficiency Level				English Language Arts			
Below	Approaching	At	Above	Current Grade	Number Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
28	23	58	41	4	150	99	66.0%
1	2	0	0	5	3	0	0%
School Total Math Data							
29	25	58	41	4-5	153	99	64.7%

IV. Other Information

Curriculum is ever changing at BES. It is established and focused around the core standards, state standards, and local expectations. We adopted NWEA in the fall of 2018 and now use the adaptive assessment to monitor growth, locate students who need additional support, and identify standards that need additional review. This data aides our staff as we provide the individualization of instruction. Teachers continue to participate in professional development to learn how to collect, review, and apply the NWEA reports. NWEA results are closely tied to the Title I program that we use to support at risk students from 3-5 and K-2 intense, therapeutic, and social emotional students.

For the 2020-2021 school year BES is offering weekly STEAM, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Library courses for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students. Our K-2 special programming also receives this coursework weekly.

The students of BES are very involved with the community by participating in both in-school and out-of-school activities that nurture the relationship between school and community. A very active student council coordinates numerous activities throughout the year such as raising money and collecting for emergency relief. The Parent Teacher Council (P.T.C.) holds annual fundraisers and donates proceeds to "Shop with a Cop" and other local charities. In addition, the school is a host meeting site for many community activities.

Unique learning opportunities/programs are available to BES students. Our school is a charter member of the Challenger Space Program, which is located at Purdue Calumet, Hammond, Indiana. Our fourth-grade classes annually travel to Camp Tecumseh. An annual Science Olympiad, which involves many BES students, enhances the understanding and interest in science. Academic competitions, which are open to students in grades four and five have become a part of our offerings.

Spell Bowl, Science Bowl, and Math Bowl competitions allow opportunities for students to compete on an academic level while learning team cohesiveness, sportsmanship, and responsibility. Our Spell Bowl and Math Bowl teams have consistently captured regional and state honors. Beiriger Elementary School strives to offer learning opportunities for students that are unique, challenging, and enriching, through a variety of activities and methods. Students with high ability require different instructional strategies. They have unique talents and abilities. They need daily independent self-directed activities. There is a need for differentiation of their curriculum. Learning opportunities that challenge students to think at high levels, accelerate the pace and depth of curriculum, and creates opportunities to utilize new skills in problem solving situations are goals for our staff. Teachers design instructional strategies that allow these students to work together to problem solve and discuss.

V. School's Curriculum and Instructional Strategies

The staff of Beiriger Elementary School optimizes the opportunities to align the curriculum with the Indiana State Academic Standards by upgrading textbooks, enhancing the current curriculum, and shifting the goal of teaching from covering a variety of materials, skills, and information to teaching specifically for the mastery of standards.

A great emphasis has been placed on acquiring textbooks that meet all the new requirements. Our reading series, HMH, adopted in 2019, aligns highly with the Indiana Common Core Standards. Teachers use NWEA for ongoing assessments and data, along with programs like Scootpad and HMH Growth Measure (lexile).

In the area of Language Arts, we are working with our new HMH reading series to address our areas of need in ELA. Teachers have received multiple professional development sessions to enhance our ability to meet the reading needs of our students. This includes guided reading, HMH professional development, and technology support to aide in differentiation of instruction based on individual student need.

The Pearson enVision 2.0 math textbook was adopted three years ago. A vast group of teachers carefully hand selected this textbook to meet the needs and deficits of our previous math series, Saxon Math. Our staff has received extensive training in the implementation of the series along with best practices to engage our struggling learners. This was coupled with a layered instructional model to help students develop stronger mathematical concepts. We have seen improvement in our Math

scores as a result of the lay out and rigor of the program.

Beiriger's instructional strategies are changing to support the achievement of the Indiana State Standards and the Common Core Standards. Current strategies, such as Peer Tutoring and small group instruction will continue to reach a select group of students. However, data has shown there are many other students who need additional support. This knowledge prompted the Beiriger staff to look into best practices to meet those needs. After researching strategies, we have trained our staff to meet the needs of our diverse high ability and high achieving students by utilizing one of the Six Approaches to Co-Teaching (One Teach-One Observe, One Teach-One Assist, Parallel Teaching, Station Teaching, Alternative Teaching and Team Teaching).

VI. Analysis

Our English Language Arts and Mathematics scores declined across all grade levels, due to the fact that a new state mandated assessment (ILEARN) was administered during the 2018-2019 school year. Data from the 2019-2020 school year is not available due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A comparative analysis between ISTEP and ILEARN cannot be done because of the differences in the design of the tests. However, it is evident from a reoccurring trend that our ELA scores are not as strong as our Math scores. Being said, ELA will be our focus as an area that needs improvement.

VII. Interventions

Beiriger has interventions in place to address our school's improvement goals. Our students are referred to our Title I services based upon a list of criteria developed to qualify students. Two teachers provide Title 1 intervention services to student who are identified as being at-risk based on NWEA, LLI, HMH Growth Measure (Lexile), DIBELS, and iLEARN scores. In addition, we administer universal screening to our student population for dyslexia in grades K-2. We will also screen any student in grades 3-5 with reading concerns. Our primary focus with Title services is literacy however, we are layering in some supports for mathematics in order to better serve our students.

We continue to be data driven and result focused. Our Title I program targets students that meet an established criterion for additional support. Title staff use researched based programs to 'fill in the gaps' of struggling students. Title staff works with general education teachers to help all students at BES. In addition to

our data-driven approach to teaching, our dean of students supports our staff by analyzing data and supplying teachers with training and information necessary to increase growth for each student.

During the 2020-2021 school year, our staff instituted 45-minute remediation sessions to provide small group instruction for students that have been identified as being deficient on a particular skill by their classroom teacher. These groups are led by our Allied Arts Teachers and they contain four or less students. The small group remediation sessions allow students to hone specific academic deficiencies in the areas of Math and/or English Language Arts. Due to the fluidity of the grouping, the groups can change bi-monthly.

Part Two

I. Objectives

- English Language Arts-Students in grades 3-5 will demonstrate a 3% increase in the passage rate of the “At or Above” proficiency level on the state administered exam in the Spring of 2021.
- Mathematics- Students in grades 3-5 will demonstrate a 3% increase in the passage rate of the “At or Above” proficiency level on the state administered exam in the Spring of 2021.
- Goal Setting-Students in grades 3-5 and those in our social emotional program will meet once per semester to establish and review their NWEA academic goals and take ownership of these goals through personal monitoring with the support of the classroom teacher and the dean of students.

II. Improvements

Literacy is our district-wide targeted subject for academic improvement. We have revamped our Title I department to offer more support within the English Language Arts instructional block. Title I services are targeted to meet those students who are literacy challenged. Title I staff provides an additional session of literacy support for our identified students within their classroom setting. Those requiring our most intensive support work in groups of four or less. They receive direct instruction at least four times per week.

Our partnership with the Griffith-Calumet Library, affords another way for our students to access reading materials. Additionally, students visit the school library

weekly. While in the library, our librarian assistant completes literacy activities with the students in an effort to further support our mission of developing proficient readers. We also offer an interactive Literacy Night for our families to hone literacy skills by engaging them in creative literacy stations. Our one-to-one initiative makes a variety of reading applications and online libraries accessible to our families anytime, anywhere.

Our mathematics goal will be addressed during our math instructional time, morning work, and with skill reinforcement activities. Title I will be providing support based upon NWEA data to students who could benefit from math support. This year our school is eager to have expand the department to include two Title I Teachers. One teacher will focus on English Language Arts while the other will focus on Mathematics for at least 50% of the allotted daily schedule. Once our students demonstrate an increased improvement in English Language Arts skills, more time will be designated to Mathematics.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we will start offering a quarterly Title I newsletter for our families. This newsletter will provide valuable information that allows parents to understand services that are available to them, skills that can be incorporated into real-world experiences, and applications and websites that provide continuity of what is being taught within the classroom.

Our last area of improvement will require students to become familiar with NWEA data and goal setting after the first assessment of the school year has been completed. Data discussions will be held with staff, students, and parents alike. Our Dean of Students and teachers will engage students in data discussions after the NWEA results are received. Staff will sit with each student and explain their student summary report. The students will then be responsible for actively engaging in the goal setting process by creating a bar graph depicting how they presently score and where they need to score by the end of the school year. In addition, the students will set a personal goal and state the steps they will implement to achieve their goal. During the first Parent Teacher Conference, the student will be responsible for interpreting their data results to their parents.

III. Curriculum

- Math: Our students and staff currently use enVision for grades 3, 4, and 5. Students have print and digital access to materials.
- English Language Arts: Our students and staff currently use HMH-into

Reading for grades 3, 4, and 5. Students have digital access to materials.

- Digital Supplements: Our students and staff currently use a plethora of digital supports including but not limited to ScootPad, Nearpod, Read Works, Xmath, Khan Academy, Prodigy, Spelling City, and Epic for students in grades 3, 4, and 5.

IV. Assessments

Our district uses the following assessments to determine the present levels and growth of students:

- NWEA K-6 Map Growth (Reading, Math, and Language Arts)
- CoGAT High Ability Screener (Grades 1, 2, and 4)
- HMH Reading Growth Benchmark Test
- WIDA-ELL (Measures the growth of ELL students)
- DIBELS, NWEA Skills Checklist, Words Their Way and the Arkansas Rapid Naming Screener (Dyslexia)

V. Learning Needs

Our current district led special education program works closely with our Title I department to provide inclusion services at every grade level. In addition, our district offers a high ability program for elementary aged students. Students are assessed in grades 1, 2, and 4 for this program.

VI. Parent Support

Our Parent Teacher Council (PTC) is actively involved in the functions of our school. Monthly meetings are held at the school in the evening hours to accommodate the schedule of working parents. In addition, if parents are unable to attend meetings in person, they are livestreamed via Facebook on our PTC Facebook page.

Throughout the year, parents are called upon to chaperone field trips, assist with school events (such as Literacy Night, STEM Night, Fundraisers and Field Day), and share their special skill, talent, or knowledge within the classroom. Our school year started with a Virtual Meet and Greet the day before school started. Fall Parent-

Teacher conferences will be held virtually as well to review the academic progress of students.

Our staff primarily uses two messaging systems to communicate with parents. Schoology is used to post assignments, upcoming deadlines, classroom agendas, fields trips, and virtual meetings. The district also utilizes SwiftK12 messaging system to make parents aware of pertinent information that impact all learners. This messaging system has the ability to send messages via email, text, and voice.

VII. Safety & Discipline

Our school uses a variety of programs as safety measures to support our students, staff, and visitors. Below is a comprehensive list of measures that our staff uses in order to provide a safe and disciplined learning environment.

- **PBIS:** BES uses the PBIS system of rewards to encourage our students to be uphold our guidelines of Being Respectful, Responsible and Safe. We track quarterly data for our awards and offer Bulldog Bucks that can be entered for our bi-quarterly recognition event. We hold bi-annual PBIS training facilitated by our Teachers and the Griffith Public Schools Transportation Department (we meet our bus evacuation drills at this time as well).
- **CICO:** We have a Check-In/Check-Out system in place for students that need additional supports due to behavioral, academic, or social needs. Teachers are required to complete a referral and parents are contacted prior to implementation. Once the referral is completed, our Social Worker, School Resource Officer and Dean of Students collaborates to create a plan to work closely with the at-risk student in order to develop regulation skills and meaningful adult connections.
- **Counseling:** Our school social worker provides support through classroom programs, small group, and individual counseling to our students. During times of crisis, all social workers and counselors throughout the district avails themselves to support for our MTSS team.
- **ID Badges:** All staff members are required to wear identification badges at all times. All classroom doors are locked during the school day. Additional safety measures are practiced within the main office to provide other levels of security as well.
- **Messaging Systems:** The SwiftK12 messaging system allows us to place a

call, text, or email to entire school family quickly. Our Schoology platform allows us to share information with parents via post or text. District-wide radios allow immediate communication between buildings and departments. In addition, all classrooms and offices are equipped with telephones.

- **Raptor:** The Raptor system is employed in our school office for any visitor that will cross the threshold of the building. A more extensive background check is completed with the Indiana State Police for our field trips and school invitational events. We have two School Resource Officers assigned to our school system.
- **Safety Bags:** Bags containing safety items are located in all classrooms and offices. The bags are used for monthly drill. They contain a safety vest, an ink pen, a clipboard, a class list containing student contact information, a whistle, first aid kit, disposable gloves, and a flashlight.
- **Safety Drills:** Monthly fire drills are facilitated as well as other safety drills as dictated by Indiana Code. Evacuation signage is located on each classroom door with two routes of exit. The District is notified of drills prior to their execution and our alarms are taken off-line for a specified time period. Lockdown drills are used whenever there is a need.
- **Trauma Sensitive School:** Our school is working with PSDI to reconstruct Beiriger to be a Trauma Sensitive School. We are in year three of this process. This process is creating a reflective process that allows the staff to re-think how we deal with our students when they are dysregulated. This process is certainly a strength for our students and building culture, as the end goal is to build a more supportive and loving school environment. This process also allows us to better understand our students and build stronger bonds to support our at-risk students who may have endured traumatic childhood experiences.
- **Video Surveillance:** All activity on campus is recorded. The live feed recording is accessible to first responders who also possess maps of our building. Our staff is trained on our Emergency Plan.
- **Additional Measures:** Our school handbook is reviewed and updated yearly by staff. After all updates have been approved by our school board, the handbook is placed on the school's and district's website. In order to gain entry into the building, visitors must state their name and reason for visiting prior to being buzzed into our double entry doors.

Continual review of our safety procedures and plans are on-going. Our administrators and local first responders are committed to regularly discussing safety measures during district safety meetings.

VIII. Technology

Beiriger Elementary and Griffith Public Schools are in year three of the roll out of a 1:1 iPad initiative. Students have access to the iPad throughout the day, and while at home. This initiative is being supported by ongoing Apple professional development for both teachers and administrators. In addition to the 1:1 initiative, Griffith Public Schools offers one e-Learning day per month for our students. Our district has taken the steps to have a blended learning environment. We have held practice eLearning days to familiarize students with the procedures that would be followed during scheduled eLearning days and emergencies. During eLearning days, students complete work digitally while teachers attend professional development. Time is allotted during the day for teachers to check-in with students to address any concerns.

Our Director of Technology works hand in hand with her assistant and technology coach to ensure that staff and students are productively utilizing technology. The technology coach visits classrooms and partners with educators to improve and enrich the student's technological experience. During our monthly Professional Development eLearning days, staff is offered training opportunities from companies such as Apple and 5Star. Teacher leaders also present and facilitate technology-based professional development.

PowerSchool and Schoology are the district's learning management systems and they are used by staff, students, and families. In addition, we also use Office 365 to share and communicate.

VIII. Professional Development

Our district currently has one day a month scheduled for eLearning instruction. This time has been designated for staff professional development. Our Professional Development is based on the needs of our students and staff. Periodic surveys are given to gather feedback and best meet the needs of our school community. Our staff has been offered training involving:

- Reading and Math curriculum
- Literacy Framework

- Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports (PBIS)
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Positive School Discipline Institute (PSDI) a Trauma-Informed Approach to School Discipline
- DCFS
- Safety
- Data interpretation
- Technology
- IDOE
- State mandated training- i.e. suicide, test security
- Grade level collaboration sessions

X. Cultural Competency

Our aim is to increase the educational opportunities and academic performance of all BES students by developing a climate that encourages participation for all stakeholders in the educational process. Implementing PSDI in conjunction with our schoolwide PBIS program allows students to continue to perfect behavioral and academic expectations.

Beiriger PTC members continue to contribute to the culture of the building by planning and executing fundraisers, organizing student led and developed events, and supporting learning through financial support and manpower.

Cool-down areas and meeting students where they are is a focus this year. Maintaining an atmosphere where everyone is shown respect continues through conversations and collaboration with our Beiriger school community. Our staff provides opportunities to expose students to all cultures and customs to facilitate an understanding that we are more alike than we are different. We celebrate differences when appropriate.

We provide translators for conferences. We have small group instruction for our English Language Learners. Our social worker contacts families to better serve their needs. In some instance, referrals are made to outside agencies to support the family

within their house. Our monthly PTC meetings give parents the chance to be involved in our school. Majority of our school events are hosted on campus in order to welcome our families to be a part of their child's education. Staff members volunteer their time to be a part of these activities. We embrace all cultures and strive to build positive relationship with all stakeholders.

Statues and Rules to be Waived

Peter J. Beiriger Elementary is not requesting any statues or rules to be waived.