

Wilder Elementary School

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Sumter School District

Application for 2023 Riley Award

Wilder Elementary School Case Statement

Issue

In 2021-22, Wilder Elementary School was in full recovery mode from the global pandemic that rocked educational systems around the world. Our students, families, faculty, and community were desperately seeking a “normal” school year. Covid was still lurking in our community so although we had face to face instruction, classes were being quarantined due to the percentage of positive Covid cases. Our PTA dwindled due to the inability to meet in person. Our SIC had to meet virtually, but included a willing group of individuals. We intentionally decided to put our students first and figure out a way to support our beloved Wilder. Our school prides itself in the diverse makeup of our 371 student population. 76% of our students are black, 19% percent are white, 3% are Two or More Races, 1% are Hispanic/Latino, and one percent American Indian or Alaska Native. Our Gifted and Talented students make up 9.6%. We strive daily to make each student and family feel valued. We encourage parents and students to participate as an essential partner in the success of every student.

In the fall of the 2021-2022, our School Improvement Council (SIC) began its year by analyzing school data. Only 10% of our students in Kindergarten demonstrated readiness on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. Our hardest hit grade level, second grade, had 40% of its students scoring from the 1st to 20th Percentile on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). While many families and individuals had suffered financial hardships, the isolation from their educational setting had taken its toll. Our leadership team meets our students first thing in the morning as they get out of their cars and off the buses. These individuals as well as teachers and parents reported the lack of response when spoken to and the overall feeling of children not being excited about attending school and about their learning. Our Related Arts teachers were seeing children not being able to work as a team and getting frustrated with peers. This social and emotional state of our students raised concerns. Wilder’s SIC decided that they wanted to impact student achievement by providing social emotional support to impact the areas of **literacy, math, and behavior.**

Action

What could SIC do to support the needs of our Thunderbirds? The group decided that our mission would be to **CELEBRATE** students! **CELEBRATE** them to support the social emotional needs of our students in the areas of literacy, math, and behavior. We wanted our students to build confidence, feel loved, have a secure sense of belonging, and opportunities to accomplish success. SIC partnered with Wilder to implement opportunities for children to experience success and that would allow us to **CELEBRATE** our students. While focusing on enhancing the Performance Goals set forth in the School Improvement Plan, Wilder implemented the Accelerated Reader (AR) Program to assist with **literacy**. SIC members donated and solicited business partners to support a newly developed “Wild About Reading” AR store. Students were able to earn “Wilder” money for meeting goals and then were able to spend that money. AR Quarterly Celebrations with dancing, snacks, ice cream sundaes, and popcorn were held for

students meeting all three criteria for the quarter. Students had to read within their Zone of Proximal Development as identified by the STAR test, have at least an 80% average, and earn the designated amount of points to qualify. To complement **math** instruction, our SIC helped to sponsor a Math Bowl emphasizing math fluency. Students competed in their classrooms and the best of each classroom were invited to participate in the school-wide event. Winners were honored with ribbons and gift certificates while it was live streamed to parents and the community. Also, “Magnificent Mathematicians” of the Week were recognized. Writing instruction was celebrated by having “Wonderful Writers” of the Week displaying their writing in our front foyer and awarding writers with certificates and pencils. Alvidrez and Weinstein state that “Behavior in the classroom was found to predict later academic achievement and also important life outcomes in education and the labor market, even beyond the influence of achievement in standardized tests.” Wilder already had in place a positive behavior reinforcement program to recognize individuals with SOAR tokens. After a discussion about challenging **behavior** in related arts classes, SIC partnered to help Wilder implement a SUPER SOAR CLASS token incentive. Once a class earned ten SUPER SOAR tokens, they were awarded a pizza and cookie party. SIC members were able to assist with pizza pick up and distribution. We also celebrated good behavior by hosting a Quarterly Good Behavior Celebration. This featured a bounce house and/or obstacle course where SIC members volunteered to help monitor and distribute snacks. Last but not least, our SIC reached out to business partners to host a Chick-fil-a Celebratory Luncheon for every student scoring Met or Above on the MAP test.

Results

Our Thunderbirds have never been so excited! CELEBRATING students seems like a simple concept; however, we have witnessed a renewed excitement for success here at Wilder Elementary School. With the support of our SIC and the focus on celebrating, our students are skipping off the buses and high-fiving our leadership team on the way into school. Teachers and students are smiling. Parents report that kids are excited about coming to school. Related arts teachers see improvement in behavior. In conclusion, our SIC and school have witnessed the positive impact CELEBRATING students can have on student achievement in the areas of literacy, math, and behavior. We want to continue to support Wilder Elementary in all endeavors to help each student and family reach their highest potential. These positive results are exciting and are the foundation upon which our students can launch to be successful citizens. The following tables show the growth in **literacy, math, and behavior**. The final table shows the culmination of how satisfied our students are as reported on the Student Engagement Survey. While we were hoping for a “normal” 2021-2022 school year, we are happy to report it was beyond normal....it was a GREAT school year thanks to the support of our School Improvement Council!

Literacy

Overall Student Performance SC Ready ELA as reported on School Report Card
Students Met or Exceeding

2020-2021	22.8%	2021-2022	36.3%
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Math

Overall Student Performance SC Ready Math as reported on School Report Card
Students Met or Exceeding

2020-2021	21.1%	2021-2022	32.2%
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Behavior

Number of Referrals as reported by ScholarChip ABE Behavioral Management

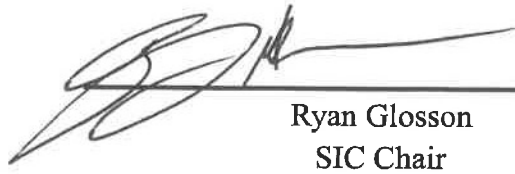
2019-2020	178	2021-2022	75
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Note: 2020-2021 was not used due to students being taught virtually.

Social/Emotional

Student Engagement Survey Results on School Report Card 2022

Percent satisfied with learning environment	93.6%
Percent satisfied with social and physical environment	92.7%
Percent satisfied with school-home relations	96.3%



Ryan Glosso
SIC Chair

November 30, 2022

Dear SC-SIC Awards Committee:

My name is Jaime Patterson and I teach at Wilder Elementary School. I am writing this letter in support of Wilder's School Improvement Council's pursuit of the Dick and Tunky Riley Award. As a veteran teacher recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic I was so excited to be at school full time for the 2021-2022 school year. However, I noticed a huge lack of interest in attending school again by my students and families. Some parents were still concerned about their child getting sick and others just got used to not having to get up, get dressed, and go to school. As a school, we also noticed our student's social emotional development had effectively stalled out. Due to these needs our SIC decided they wanted to target student achievement through providing social emotional support to impact the areas of literacy, math and behavior.

The SIC began to implement several opportunities for my students to celebrate them and their achievements. For reading, each class began to participate in the AR (Accelerated Reader) program. My students STAR tested to find their individual Zone of Proximal Development. Students were tasked to read books on that level with an 80% accuracy rate and to meet a personalized goal each quarter. Students who met these qualifications were then rewarded with quarterly AR Celebrations such as dance parties, ice cream parties, and bounce houses to celebrate their success. To keep them engaged and motivated to read and AR test daily, the SIC with help from sponsors funded an AR Store. For each point my students earned they received AR Bucks to spend on an array of items at the AR Store. My students worked so hard each day and were so excited to see the amount of AR Bucks they were earning. Shopping at the store was the highlight of their week!

For Math SIC targeted fluency standards and we began to take weekly timed fluency drill tests. The two students from my class who made the highest overall average on these tests were sent to a quarterly Math Bowl. This was so exciting for my students to participate in! My students worked so hard to be our classes representative and challenged each other weekly to do better in order to advance to the Math Bowl. Each Math Bowl was streamed to the school and parents to watch the students compete against each other.

For behavior, Wilder has always used a behavior incentive called a SOAR Token. Students who were caught behaving or going the extra mile are rewarded with a token. The token is then put into a lottery which is pulled each Friday by administration. Students who have their name chosen are called down to choose items from the Prize Warehouse. Students LOVE this and really work hard to earn SOAR tokens daily. However in the 2021-2022 school year, SIC added the SUPER SOAR token which is awarded to the entire class by any

staff member at the school. When a class reaches 10 SUPER SOAR tokens they cash them in for them for a pizza and cookie party. While the students were over the moon about pizza, I promise they were more rewarded and pleased with themselves by displaying their SUPER SOAR tokens in the hallway outside our classroom. It was a point of pride and really motivated them to keep earning to "show off" how awesome our class was!

I really do credit these three new initiatives by our SIC with the improvement of student achievement, behavior, and social emotional health. Students showed growth in leaps in bounds on MAP testing and the student's outlook of school totally changed to a positive light. They began to attend on a regular basis and had such a positive outlook about themselves and their school.

Sincerely,



Jaime Patterson
Wilder Elementary School

November 29, 2022

Dear SC-SIC Committee,

With great pride and honor I would like to highlight the many ways Wilder Elementary's SIC helped celebrate our students for not only academic achievement and improvement, but also their exemplary positive attitudes and behaviors. I am the school guidance counselor and see first-hand the behavior struggles of many of our students. One of the most powerful aspects of our initiatives to celebrate students is that every student has the opportunity to shine. Some may struggle academically but exhibit excellent attitudes and determination to be the best student they can be. Wilder's SIC partnered with our school and decided to host a Behavior Celebration once a quarter for students who were respectful, socially responsible, and resolved to be the best students they can be. Students enjoyed time in a bouncy house and a snack along with school-wide recognition.

Also, while Wilder students had always been able to earn individual Soar Tokens for exhibiting the Wilder Way positive behaviors, whole classes are now able to earn Super Soar Tokens. These are given to classrooms when all students have stayed on task, been responsible for themselves, and followed the rules in music, art, PE, and library. Once the class receives 10 Super Soar Tokens the whole class receives a pizza or ice cream party. This has inspired students to model good behavior in a way that encourages others to follow suit. When students see themselves as part of a family instead of a class, they strive harder to be the best child person they can be. As a result of celebrating our students for their positive behaviors and actions, discipline referrals have dropped significantly. Prior to implementing the above strategy, Wilder had a historical average of 16% of the student body that received referrals. Now, the average is only 8%.

I look forward to the continued success of our students with our SIC's help. We are working on recognizing students weekly this year and look forward to seeing more success.

Thanks,

Carrie Lewis
Wilder Elementary
Guidance Counselor





Wilder Elementary School
SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

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November 30, 2022

Dear SC-SIC Awards Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I have this opportunity to share and support the valuable work of our School Improvement Council (SIC) with the SC-SIC Awards Committee. Rising out of the ashes of the pandemic, our SIC has been a fundamental component in shaping our upward trajectory in developing a positive school environment that promotes academic success and overall school improvement. With powerful interactions, collaborative contributions of our internal and external stakeholders have impacted Wilder Elementary's vision of helping students be life-long, self-directed, responsible, and caring learners who will shape tomorrow's future.

Based on the foundational hardwork and effort of Wilder Elementary's SIC during the previous school year, the 22-23 school year in collaboration with all stakeholders has allowed our school to embrace our theme of "There is no stopping us now!". With our recent success, our goals continue to align with our school strategic plan that promotes overall school and student achievement. Wilder Elementary School Performance Goals are as follows: Area One: College and Career Readiness; Area Two: High Performing Workforce; Area Three: Safe and Supportive Schools; Area Four: Strong Stakeholder Partnerships; and Area Five: Effective and Efficient Operations. With the guidance, support, and collaboration of our SIC family, we are realizing our true potential.

The impact of our SIC on student and school achievement in the areas of literacy, math and behavior is evident. In recent years, Wilder Elementary was a "Below Average" school and was close to being an "Unsatisfactory" school according to the SC school report card. On the 2021-2022 SC report card, we moved to "Average". In a district with 15 elementary schools, Wilder has traditionally been one of the lower achieving schools. Based on this past year's SC Ready and SC Pass data, Wilder held 2nd place for ELA/Math for 3rd grade, 3rd and 5th place for ELA/Math for 4th grade, and 3rd place for ELA/Math for 5th grade in the district. Our students continue to meet MAP and Accelerated Reader Goals. In addition, our behavior and attendance are improving. Teachers and students are excited about being a part of the Wilder family and external stakeholders value Wilder as being a safe place where there is a passion for learning and children are loved and nurtured. Our SIC celebrated students and it's work was fruitful.

All schools suffered and struggled due to the pandemic; however, Wilder Elementary's mindset based on SIC collaborations, has refused to use the pandemic as an excuse, but an opportunity to be an anomaly for success. Wilder Elementary is an awesome place to work, learn, and grow. As an instructional leader, I am so very appreciative and thankful for our School Improvement Council. On behalf of our Wilder family and SIC, I appreciate the consideration of the SC-SIC Awards Committee.

Yours in School Improvement,

David A. Wright, Principal
Wilder Elementary School

Narrative

Wilder Elementary's School Improvement Council (SIC) worked diligently to "**CELEBRATE Children**" during the 2021-2022 school year. Collaboration among our faculty, staff, students, community partners, and SIC made a huge difference in our school. We had many classes still being quarantined due to Covid. We were also unable to open our building fully to parents due to the high percentage of positive cases in our community. Our students were not flourishing and we wanted to change that. As stated in the minutes from our very first SIC meeting, "Much discussion was given to children returning to the building, being disconnected, and learning loss from the pandemic. Ultimately, the team decided that we would concentrate on the social emotional needs of our students." We decided we would concentrate our efforts in the areas of **literacy, math, and behavior**. We wanted to celebrate children in any way possible to help them have a positive transition back into "normal" school. In the area of **literacy**, we established the Accelerated Reader program. SIC helped to establish and maintain our incentive AR store. We ended the year with 50% of our students meeting personal goals for AR. **Math** fluency was discovered as a real weakness for our students. A daily practice and assessment was put into place with our first ever Math Bowl which was sponsored by members of our SIC. Good **behavior** was celebrated throughout the year with Good Behavior Celebrations. Our Super Soar Token incentive program sprung out of concern with classroom behavior during Related Arts. SIC came alongside to provide pizza parties when a class earned ten Super Soar Tokens. Our **results** were astonishing. Overall Student Performance on the SC Ready ELA increased from 22.8% to 36.3%. Overall Student Performance on the SC Ready Math increased from 21.1% to 32.2%. The number of referrals as reported by ScholarChip ABE Behavioral Management decreased from 178 to 75. Our students reported that 93.6% were satisfied with the learning environment. 92.7% of students were satisfied with their social and physical environment. School-Home relations showed 96.3% of students satisfied.

Orchid International School reports that "Aside from feeling good about themselves, there are several benefits to celebrating children's accomplishments. When a child feels reassured and supported by people who care for them, it will lead them to continue working hard towards their goals, which will improve their overall performance." We realize that our work has only scratched the surface. This year we are continuing our **Celebrations** that began last year in **literacy, math and behavior**. The AR Program, Math Bowl, and Quarterly Behavior Celebrations are now a part of the fabric at Wilder. To expand on the goal set last year to "**Celebrate Children**," we are now including experiences beyond our school walls. During this 22-23 school year, we are inviting monthly guest readers. The Governor's wife, Peggy McMaster was our very first visitor. She extended an invitation for us to tour the Governor's Mansion and we are pleased to say that we have that scheduled for the spring. We are also on course to take the top 20 AR Readers in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade to participate in the Read-In at the State House in April. Camp Leopold is scheduled for students as an incentive for students scoring in the Met and Exceeds Category on State Testing. After looking at the population at Wilder, SIC felt like we needed to target an initiative with our special education students. Therefore, we are so excited about a new Unified Sports program that began this month. This will incorporate our regular education and special education students. Winston Churchill once said, "Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence- is the key to unlocking our potential." Wilder's SIC is continuously putting our efforts into "**Celebrating Children**" inside and outside of the classroom in order for our students to reach their full potential. Our hope is that each student is able to feel loved, respected and most of all **celebrated**. Go Thunderbirds! SOAR high!