

REVISED – MARCH 6, 2006
Mitchell Elementary School
1439 13th Avenue
Mitchell, NE 69357
(308) 623-2828

Type of School: Elementary

Name of Principal: Mr. Kirk Kuxhausen

Official School Name: Mitchell Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 1439 13th Avenue

City: Mitchell State: Nebraska ZipCode+4: 69357-1533

County: Scotts Bluff State School Code Number: 79-0031

Telephone: (308) 623-2828 Fax: (308) 623-1690

Website: mpstigers.com E-Mail: kirkk@panesu.org

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

Principal's Signature _____ Date _____

Name of Superintendent: Mr. Kent Halley

District Name: Mitchell Public Schools Telephone: (308) 623-1707

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

Superintendent's Signature _____ Date _____

Name of School Board President: Mr. Douglas Keener

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

School Board President's Signature _____ Date _____

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 the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configurations that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2005-2006 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statues. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. 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 status or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

DATA 2004-2005

DISTRICT

- 1. Number of schools in district: **1** Elementary school
1 Junior High/Senior High school
2 Total

- 2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: **\$7,497.00**

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: **\$8,200.00**

SCHOOL

- 3. Area school is located: **Small city or town in a rural area**

- 4. Years principal in this position: **2 years**

Years previous principal in this position: **4 years**

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

Grade	# Males	#Females	Grade Total
Pre-K	N/A	N/A	N/A
K	23	17	40
1	20	18	38
2	18	26	44
3	26	20	46
4	25	25	50
5	22	22	44
6	31	31	62

Total 324

Demographic Data (Continued)

6. Racial/ethnic composition of students: **75%** White
0% Black or African American
23% Hispanic or Latino
1% Asian/Pacific Islander
1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
100% Total

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: **21%**

Number of Students transferred <i>to</i> our school after October 1	30
Number of Students transferred <i>from</i> our school after October 1	38
Total of transferred students	68
Total number of students	324
Student turnover	20.98

8. Limited English Proficient students on the school: **6%**
18 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: **1**
 Languages used **Spanish**

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: **65%**
 Total number students who qualify **210**

10. Students receiving special education services: **11%**
 Total number of students served **36**

Demographic Data (Continued)

Below is the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>3</u> Autism	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	<u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	<u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impaired	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>8</u> Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0 Multiple Disabilities	

11. The number of full-time and part-time staff members:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
Administrators	<u>1</u>	
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff	<u>15</u>	
Total number	<u>51</u>	<u>4</u>

12. Average student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 18-1

13. Attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage:

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	95%*	96%*	96%*	96%*	96%*
Teacher turnover rate	11%	14%	7%	14%	4%

*Based on Estimates

PART III - SUMMARY

Mitchell Elementary was built in 1954. A new addition for grades 4-6 will open in March 2006. Mitchell Elementary is an elementary school for grades K-6. Beginning in March 2006, the main building will house grades K-3, Title I, Special Education, Physical Education and the main offices. The computer lab and music room will be located in a modular near the new addition and existing building. The mission statement for Mitchell Public Schools is as follows: Mitchell Public Schools in partnership with the community will empower all students to be life long learners and caring responsible citizens. This mission statement was established at the start of the 2005-2006 school year. Mitchell Elementary is currently in the process of establishing several building goals. The school is looking at goals in the area of math and reading. The school also is examining goals in the area of student leadership. These goals are expected to be established by the spring of 2006. This is a joint effort between teachers and the building principal. The school is North Central Accredited and is in the first year of a new school improvement cycle.

Mitchell Elementary student population fluctuates from a high of 355 students during the 99-00 school year to a low of 310 for the 05-06 school year. Mitchell is a bedroom community of nearby Scottsbluff and Gering. Mitchell is classified as a C-1 school in Nebraska with approximately 2,000 residents of the city.

Mitchell Elementary and Mitchell High School are currently in the process of aligning the curriculum. The end result will be a new curriculum for the 2006-07 school year. Mitchell Elementary uses an existing curriculum aligned to the Nebraska State Standards. Mitchell Elementary uses a variety of assessments to measure student progress. The philosophy of the school is to use assessments to drive instruction, chart student progress, and match instruction to student levels. Reading assessments used by the school are the GORT 4 (grades 1-6), DIBELS (grades K-6), NWEA MAPS (grades 2-6), the Nebraska Statewide Writing Assessment (Grade 4), and a recently added criterion referenced assessment (currently grades 3-6).

Mitchell Elementary does not have a "canned" program for science and social studies. Science and social studies are taught based on state standards and grade level decisions. The school district has a full time physical education teacher and a full time music teacher. Every class receives music and physical education every other day. Band is offered to the 6th grade students. The school is a targeted assisted Title I school with three title teachers. The school offers Title I, Speech, Special Education, Band, Music, Physical Education, Counseling, Library, and Keyboarding. The school has one full time principal, one full time counselor, a part-time nurse, five paraprofessionals, two administrative assistants, and twenty-five certified teachers. Mitchell Schools currently utilize a 4½-day school week. The elementary begins the day at 8:05 am and concludes the day at approximately 3:30 pm. School is dismissed for all K-6 students by 12:50 pm on Fridays. Friday afternoons are utilized for school meetings, trainings, collaboration with teaching colleagues, and miscellaneous duties.

Mitchell Elementary believes in student leadership and good citizenship. The school recognizes student leadership and attempts to foster leadership in young adults. There is a school wide discipline program that all staff utilizes. Mitchell Elementary recognizes

that students cannot learn in a disruptive environment. Classes take a minimum of one educational field trip per year. There are many field trip opportunities in Western Nebraska.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Assessment Results

1. Mitchell has been tracking “official” assessment results since the 2000-01 school year. This was the first year test scores were reported to the Nebraska Department of Education. The test results tabled for this application are from the years 2000-2005. A combination of assessments was used for this information. Nebraska uses four categories to group students after assessment results are received. The four categories are: Beginning, Progressing, Proficient, and Advanced. Any student deemed proficient or advanced has met or exceeded performance on that particular standard. A local consortium established through the Educational Service Unit #13 out of Scottsbluff, Nebraska developed STARS tests in the areas of reading/writing and math. Students were administered STARS tests in the month of April of each school year. The local ESU #13 would then develop cut scores after all students had completed the assessments. The scores would then be forwarded to a tracking system where individual student scores would be managed and organized. In addition to the STARS assessments, NWEA/MAPS assessments and Terra Nova tests are also forwarded to the tracking system. The tracking system assists Mitchell Elementary in triangulating the data on each student and establishing student standards performance reports. This tracking system allows Mitchell to utilize several different assessments.

The charts provided on pages 13 & 15-show reading and writing scores for fourth grade students from 2000-2005. NA means the scores were not available. Comparing fourth grade reading scores from 00-01 to 04-05, show a substantial increase in the percentage of students that met or exceeded the state standards. In 2004-05, Mitchell Elementary’s overall average reading scores at the fourth grade level were higher than the state average (Mitchell 91.83% - State 84.87%). Math scores at the fourth grade level have gradually increased from 2001-02 to 2004-05. In 2004-05, Mitchell Elementary’s overall average math scores at the fourth grade level were higher than the state average (Mitchell 96% - State 87.93%). The average yearly progress chart on page 14 illustrates that students who qualify for free and reduced lunch do exceptionally well in reading and math at the fourth grade level. The website is available at: www.nde.state.ne.us/

2. Assessment results are used to make instructional decisions. Mitchell Elementary began using the DIBELS reading assessment during the 2004-05 school years for grades K-3. This year, students are assessed K-6 using the

DIBELS reading assessment. This assessment gives teachers, specialists, and administrators an excellent tool to examine growth, successful instructional strategies, and an indicator of students requiring intervention. This test is given three times during the school year. GORT 4 is also used for grades 1-6 to measure reading fluency and comprehension. This assessment device supplements and/or supports the DIBELS assessment. In grades K-2, flexible grouping is used for reading instruction. Flexible grouping is matching instruction to the students' reading level. The GORT and DIBELS are two of several tools to assist in flexible grouping. Mitchell Elementary utilizes student led conferences during parent teacher conferences. The school uses the NWEA/MAPS assessment as a basis for student led conferences. Students in grades 2-6 are provided fall RIT scores in the areas of math, reading, and language usage. The classroom teacher provides the students with RIT goals, based on average growth for that particular grade level, in each of the three areas. Students know their RIT scores in each area and are constantly reminded what their target goal is in the spring. All teachers have access to these test scores. The online assessment is new this school year and is currently being evaluated.

3. Assessment results are reported through various means. The State of Nebraska requires schools to report results on specific standards each year. The state provides what is called a State of the Schools Report that is published and available on-line. The school distributes an Annual Report to district parents and patrons. Much of the information communicated to parents in this report is derived from the State of the Schools Report. Mitchell Elementary utilizes a standards based report card for grades K-2. Mitchell Elementary's philosophy for standards based grading is for each student to be at proficient and/or advanced level for each standard. Teachers report to parents both norm referenced and criterion based test results during conferences. Report cards are sent to parents at the end of each 9-week period (quarter). Mid-quarter reports are sent home to all parents on the fifth week of each quarter. Parents are provided prepared reports for the NWEA/MAPS assessment and the DIBELS assessment. All teachers are trained to explain to parents what the results mean. Assessment data is also communicated to parents and community during an Open House held the second week of school each fall. Mitchell Public Schools also communicates assessment results through its' local paper *The Mitchell Index*. The philosophy of the elementary is to only use assessment instruments that are researched based, relative to what we want to measure, and easy for parents to understand.
4. Mitchell Elementary shares its' successes with schools through various means. Mitchell Elementary teachers have met with their neighbor to the west, Morrill Elementary, to share ideas and share successes. Several teachers have visited local schools to give presentations on the use of DIBELS and GORT assessments. Mitchell Elementary teachers show how to

use the assessment and what the benefits are. Mitchell Elementary attempts to visit one school per year to observe and share ideas. Mitchell Elementary has established a positive relationship with neighboring Western Nebraska Community College and Chadron State College. Mitchell Elementary receives a high number of requests from Chadron State College students to do their observation/preparation hours and student teaching. Mitchell Elementary will send staff to participate in the Online Assessment Consortium Retreats. These retreats are held annually to add and modify the question bank for the consortium.

PART V – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Curriculum

1. Mitchell Curriculum is based on the Nebraska State Standards. Mitchell Elementary believes in sequential instruction that is aligned throughout the building. Flexible grouping is used for reading in grades K-2. The school supplements this program with a phonics program. All students are exposed to this phonics program in kindergarten and first grade. The same program is used as an intervention program in grades 2-6. Teachers also use guided reading and Accelerated Reader as supplemental programs, grades K-6. The school believes in a team approach to grade level instruction. Teachers meet together on a weekly basis and plan lessons together. The current math system systematically distributes instruction, practice, and assessment throughout the academic year. The approach to math instruction ensures that students not only gain but also retain essential math skills. Science and social studies are based on local curriculum and state standards. All instruction is tracked through a form the school uses called an “Opportunity to Learn” form. This form monitors all Nebraska Standards in the core areas. All classes take a minimum of one educational field trip yearly. All students have music and physical education twice a week. Title I, Special Education, Speech, Keyboarding, Library, and Counseling are several of the programs offered to supplement the curriculum. Title I targets students that struggle in the areas of math and reading.

Reading

2. The school’s philosophy is to keep reading resources basic and consistent at both the building level and grade level. The phonics system utilizes direct instruction to small groups. All paraprofessionals and K-3 teachers are trained in using this system that uses three sensory skills in instruction: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. All teachers utilize guided reading and Accelerated Reader as supplements to the core reading program. All grade levels are required to plan together and collaborate concerning reading instruction. K-2 reading instruction utilizes a 1 ½ hour of uninterrupted

reading instruction. All classrooms have two instructors working with students simultaneously. It is a goal of the school to appropriately use paraprofessionals and specials in this area. The Title I teachers, counselor, administrative assistants, and principal are all involved in reading instruction during this 1 ½ hour uninterrupted reading instruction. Most of the K-3 reading teachers have attended trainings in Nebraska Reading First instruction and strategies. The school closely monitors the progress of students through the DIBELS assessments and GORT 4 assessments. The information received from these assessments drives the type of instruction the student receives and if any intensive intervention/s are necessary.

Math

3. Mitchell Elementary uses a consistent K-6 math program. The school is very satisfied with the results of the program. This is an outstanding foundational program that distributes practice and review throughout the school year and moves students from understanding to mastery to fluency. Our approach to math instruction ensures that students not only gain but also retain essential math skills.

Comparing Mitchell Elementary's math scores to the state averages indicate that Mitchell is approximately 5.5% points higher overall at the fourth grade level during the year 2004-05. The Saxon Math program has had a tremendous impact on math scores at Mitchell Elementary.

Instructional Methods

4. Mitchell Elementary utilizes a variety of teaching methods to enhance student learning. Differentiated instruction is encouraged throughout the school. Many teachers have been trained in differentiated instruction and recognize the importance of this concept. Teachers are briefed at the first staff meeting on Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works* and *What Works in Schools*. Teachers are reminded of Marzano's research concerning instruction and expected to use these researched based strategies. Most teachers have been trained in the 5 Big Ideas in Reading. Many of the strategies in reading instruction are included as part of the formal teacher evaluation. Teachers use 6 Trait Writing strategies for writing instruction. Writing instruction is stressed as part of the language arts/reading program. Mitchell Elementary uses the A+ computer program for all subject areas. High ability and struggling students use this program. It is a computer program that supplements the regular curriculum. Students work independently on the computer, but are supervised by the classroom teacher. All teachers are required to use Quantum Teaching/Learning techniques in the classroom. The school district has trained all teachers and paraprofessionals in Quantum Learning. Quantum Teaching has many

benefits to student learning. Many of the district teachers use Jim Fey's *Love and Logic*. As described earlier, paraprofessionals work closely with the classroom teacher, especially in the area of reading. Struggling students are targeted, paraprofessionals work one on one or in small groups with these students. Homework Club is offered Monday through Thursday for students that need additional help with their schoolwork. Friday afternoons are also available for students to receive additional help. The school is involved through a local agency with the Foster Grandparent Program.

Professional Development

5. A majority of the professional development at Mitchell Elementary has been committed to 1) Reading instruction 2) Quantum Learning & 3) Teambuilding/Collaboration. As stated earlier, many of the elementary staff had attended workshops/trainings geared towards reading instruction. There have been professional development opportunities in The Big 5 Ideas in Reading, and Reading First. The school has concentrated on good reading instruction and closely monitors available trainings for research-based opportunities.

A major endeavor that the school district has taken on is Quantum Learning. All Mitchell teachers and paraprofessionals have been trained in Quantum Learning. Quantum Learning is a five-part training and all Mitchell teachers have received the first three trainings and will receive the final two in February of 2006. Quantum Learning is a methodology for creating an effective learning environment, designing curriculum, delivering content and facilitating the learning process.

Mitchell Elementary has adopted the philosophy that more working together is better than one person working alone. Teambuilding and collaboration have been strongly encouraged. Grade level teachers are encouraged to attend trainings/in-services together. Any training dealing with teambuilding and/or collaboration are closely examined and attended if possible.

Mitchell Elementary believes in keeping a narrow focus on professional development. There are many professional development opportunities available. It is the school's belief that professional development should be approached with caution. It can be detrimental to attempt to take on too many professional development opportunities. It is detrimental to students when their teachers are not in the classroom teaching. Professional development should be focused on the school's goals and vision. The school has a strong conviction that collaboration and teambuilding have a positive impact on student achievement.

Professional development has had a direct impact on student learning. Quantum Learning has provided teachers with a variety of skills. Quantum also creates a very positive learning environment that motivates and influences students. Mitchell Elementary students are motivated for school that is demonstrated by the constant 95% attendance figure. Parent-teacher conferences over a five-year period have a constant 97% participation rate. These figures indicate a positive relationship between home and school.

The reading assessments in place at the school have provided teachers immediate and valuable feedback concerning student achievement and growth. This information is also valuable feedback concerning student achievement and growth. This information is also valuable when conferencing with parents. Teachers have been very involved with professional development regarding reading assessments and reading instruction. The professional development acquired by teachers in reading and reading assessment has had a direct impact on student learning.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 4th Grade
Test: STARS ESU #13, NWEA/MAPS, Terra Nova

	2004-05	2003-04	2002-03	2001-02	2000-01
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
School Scores					
% Students At or Above Meets State Standards (Proficient or Advanced Level)	92%	93%	82%	NA	52%
<i>Nebraska State Average</i>	85%	NA	79%	NA	74%
Number of Students Tested	45	40	55	NA	49
% of total students tested	100%	100%	95%	NA	100%
Number of SPED students with accommodations	2	4	2	NA	NA
% of students SPED students assessed	4%	10%	3.6%	NA	NA
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free & Reduced Lunch Students	27	22	34	NA	NA
% Students – Free or Reduced Lunch	60%	63%	62%	NA	NA
% Free or Reduced Lunch Students At or Above Meets State Standards	93%	88%	71%	NA	NA
Number of Students Tested	27	22	34	NA	NA
2. Hispanic Students	*	*	14	NA	NA
% Students – Hispanic	16%	23%	25.4%	NA	NA
% of Hispanic Students At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	100%	71%	NA	NA
Number of Students Tested	7	9	14	NA	NA

Explanation of Table:

Mitchell 4th grade students take the local STARS Consortium Reading Test, the NWEA/Maps Reading Test, & the Terra Nova Reading test during the Spring of each of the above listed school years. The NA indicated “not available” due to the fact that official scores were not reported. A tracking system through the Educational Service Unit in Kearney, Nebraska is utilized for reporting scores. Scores are taken for each student from each test and entered into the tracking system. The tracking system calculates where each student performs for each standard and also provides an overall compilation of all students and all standards. The above calculations are provided by the tracking system. Mitchell Elementary uses three assessment tools so data can be triangulated.

Subject: Math

Grade: 4th

Test: STARS ESU #13, NWEA/MAPS, Terra Nova

	2004-05	2003-04	2002-03	2001-02	2000-01
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
School Scores					
% At or Above Meets State Standards (Proficient or Advanced Level)	96%	98%	76%	60%	NA
<i>Nebraska State Average</i>	88%	85%	NA	78%	NA
Number of Students Tested	45	40	55	49	NA
% of total students tested	100%	NA	100%	100%	NA
Number of SPED students with accommodations	2	4	2	NA	NA
% of SPED students assessed	4.4%	10%	3.6%	NA	NA
SUBGROUP SCORES					NA
1. Free & Reduced Lunch	27	25	34	NA	NA
% Students – Free or Reduced Lunch	60%	63%	62%	NA	NA
% Free or Reduced Lunch Students At or Above Meets State Standards	93%	96%	68%	NA	NA
Number of Students Tested	27	25	34	NA	NA
2. Hispanic Students	*	*	14	NA	NA
% Students – Hispanic	16%	22.5%	25%	NA	NA
% of Hispanic Students At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	89%	57%	NA	NA
Number of Students Tested	7	9	14	NA	NA

Explanation of Table:

Mitchell 4th grade students take the local STARS Consortium Math Test, the NWEA/Maps Math Test, & the Terra Nova Math test during the Spring of each of the above listed school years. The NA indicated “not available” due to the fact that official scores were not reported. A tracking system through the Educational Service Unit in Kearney, Nebraska is utilized for reporting scores. Scores are taken for each student from each test and entered into the tracking system. The tracking system calculates where each student performs for each standard and also provides an overall compilation of all students and all standards. The above calculations are provided by the tracking system. Mitchell Elementary uses three assessment tools so data can be triangulated.

**STATEWIDE WRITING ASSESSMENT
MITCHELL ELEMENTARY
Fourth Grade**

YEAR	STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STANDARDS District	STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STANDARDS STATE
01-02	63.04%	72.51%
03-04	76.19%	79.57%
04-05	65.96%	82.99%

Nebraska 4th Grade Writing Assessment is administered to fourth grade students every January/February of each school year. The state evaluates the writing assessments and provides levels for each student.