

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [X] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr James Bailey
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 1890 Hemmeter Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Saginaw State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 48638-4672

County Saginaw

Telephone (989) 797-1832 Fax (989) 797-1854

Web site/URL https://www.stcs.org/HES/ E-mail jcbailey@stcs.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Bruce Martin E-mail dbmartin@stcs.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Saginaw Township Community Schools Tel. (989) 797-1832

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. David Jaffe
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

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

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	14	31	45
1	26	25	51
2	27	28	55
3	23	30	53
4	30	28	58
5	24	34	58
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	144	176	320

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 11 % Asian
 - 6 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 71 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 2%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	357
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Mandarin, Spanish, Hindi, Marathi, Malayalan

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %

5 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 16 %

Total number students who qualify: 52

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %
3 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 27:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

We the staff of Hemmeter Elementary School, in partnership with family and community, will provide a positive educational environment for gifted and talented students: to grow academically; to develop a positive self-concept; and, to become responsible, contributing citizens.

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

We complete evaluations of students free of charge during the spring of each year. Additionally, often times, we accept evaluations completed by outside sources, as long as original documentation is available, and the evaluations given meet our guidelines. In general, we accept evaluations completed by school psychologists, outside psychologists, and trained evaluators who use high quality, most recently published evaluations of academic achievement and/or cognitive ability. Students that score in the 90th percentile (IQ: 120+) or above qualify for the accelerated program at Hemmeter. We currently have a waiting list for two grade levels.

PART III - SUMMARY

Saginaw Township is a suburb of Saginaw, a historic city located on the Saginaw River, 15 miles inland from the Saginaw Bay, an arm of Lake Huron.

Hemmeter Elementary School is one of five elementary schools in the Saginaw Township Community School District. Built in 1837, it is the oldest of the district's seven school buildings that includes one middle school and one high school.

Hemmeter is the gifted and talented magnet school for our district. The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test 2nd Edition, Woodcock-Johnson, and Cognitive Abilities Test are utilized to identify students in need of an accelerated program. We proudly serve a diverse population of students, and families search out this school because of its gifted and talented program. Parents of Hemmeter students are largely college-educated adults seeking a positive, challenging, and enriched learning environment for their children. We attract students within this district, as well as from surrounding districts through School of Choice. The School of Choice program allows students to apply to attend a school in a district that they do not live in.

The school currently has two classrooms at each grade level, kindergarten through fifth. Other rooms include an art room featuring its own kiln, a computer lab, media center, and large gymnasium/cafeteria which also serves as our auditorium for special programs.

Hemmeter embraces and fulfills the motto of all Saginaw Township Community Schools: Every Student, Every Day.

We take pride in the academic opportunities we provide for our students. Through differentiated instruction and a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), Hemmeter meets students at their levels academically, socially, emotionally, and culturally to help them grow to their full potential. We strongly believe that students learn best when they have choices in their learning.

In addition to a very strong academic program, the curriculum at Hemmeter includes special classes in music, art, and physical education. Hemmeter is one of the first schools in the area to add computer coding as part of its curriculum. In fact, our students have presented professional development to teachers in neighboring districts to assist them in beginning a coding program in their buildings.

It is common for Hemmeter students to identify and address problems in our school and community. For example, they have raised money for bottle-filling stations and tackled recycling in the cafeteria. Cleaning up the playground during recess, earning money for new recess equipment, and in-school advertising to keep the learning environment clean are additional initiatives Hemmeter students have addressed on their own. Our students know they have the power to solve real world problems.

Hemmeter also focuses on the emotional well-being of its students, staff, and families. The staff has been trained on Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The entire community of Hemmeter's students and staff have been trained on the Zones of Regulation, and resources are available to support our students. The Zones of Regulation is a systematic, cognitive behavioral approach used to teacher self-regulation, executive functioning, and social cognition. The framework is designed to help move students toward independent regulation. This commitment to the whole child has been implemented through school-wide training using the Great Expectations framework. This program provides professional development to create harmony between academics and social/emotional well-being. A safe learning environment is essential for student learning. We have recently added a social worker to our staff to support these efforts.

Hemmeter offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities to engage students. The programs are constantly changing as our students' interests evolve. This year we are offering Lego Club, First Lego Robotics, Art Club, Chess Club, Choir Club, Elementary Engineering, Coding Club, German Club, Hornet Running Club, and Student Council. Students may compete in the school Spelling Bee or Who Was? History Bee. Hemmeter Elementary is known nationally for its incredible success in Destination

Imagination (DI). DI engages students in project-based challenges to build and develop creativity, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills. Hemmeter has qualified for the Global Finals nine years in a row!

Visitors to Hemmeter often comment on the excellent manners and respect exhibited by our students. Classroom teachers and staff regularly teach and model positive behavior. During the summer, multiple staff members participated in an optional book club focusing on Ron Clark's *The Essential 55: An Award-Winning Educator's Rules for Discovering the Successful Student in Every Child*. Our One-Book, One Community title, *Go Be Kind*, has been the impetus for special activities in classrooms.

Hemmeter Elementary School is fortunate to have an exceptional faculty. We are also blessed to have the assistance of so many active families and volunteers. This year, Hemmeter Elementary School will be the parent-selected school for approximately 340 gifted and talented students in kindergarten through fifth grade. We are very proud of the fact that our magnet program attracts students from throughout the region and beyond!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

The staff at Hemmeter Elementary School, in partnership with family and community, strive to help students grow academically, develop a positive self-concept, and become responsible and contributing citizens.

Our educational excellence is the result of a collaborative process between staff, students, parents, and the school district. Using the Michigan K -12 Standards as a guideline, we make decisions regarding curricular resources used to educate our students and usher them toward success. We believe that learning should be inquiry-based, hands-on, collaborative, and engaging to students. Our multi-tiered systems of support ensure that all students receive the instruction they need, when they need it. Student progress is monitored frequently through formative assessment and conferring sessions.

Whenever possible, students have choices in their learning. Whether it is the books they read, the subjects about which they write, the format of a project or presentation, or even problems to research, teachers understand that students will be more engaged when they select the focus of their learning. By allowing our students to self-differentiate, they have more control over their education. We want our students to be personally invested in their education and to seek ways to challenge themselves and others. Hemmeter is known for having a healthy respect for competition!

We believe the highest levels of personal growth and academic achievement can only be reached with a growth mindset. Our staff has been trained on Carol Dweck’s growth mindset research. Parents, also, became familiar with this philosophy of success through an organized book club exploring *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck.

1b. Reading/English language arts

In reading and writing, Hemmeter teachers implement the workshop model approach. Daily instruction is informed by Michigan K-12 Standards, Lucy Calkins Units of Study, Essential Practices in Early and Elementary Literacy, as well as data. The workshop model has been in place for many years at Hemmeter. However, the district officially adopted Units of Study for the elementary and middle schools last year.

As part of the Reading Units of Study program, each grade level explores nonfiction and fiction units in depth. Students learn to identify, analyze, and interpret multiple genres. Examples of reading units include fantasy, historical fiction, biographies, journalism, as well as personal and persuasive essays. The Units of Study program provides a variety of techniques and strategies for students to utilize when dissecting text. For example, students take notes in individual journals that reflect the text structure of the reading source. Research teams identify subtopics, assign roles, and regroup to share information before presenting to an audience.

Students learn how to write both narrative and expository pieces. When writing stories, students develop strong characters with needs or wants, provide conflicts along a story arc, and then create a satisfying resolution. Narrative writing genres include personal narratives, realistic fiction, and fairy tales. Nonfiction genres such as personal and persuasive essays, research reports, and memoirs are also explored, and students become familiar with the key elements of each type of writing.

As part of Michigan’s Essential Practices, our teachers regularly incorporate read alouds, small group and individual instruction, phonological awareness, shared, guided, and independent reading and writing, and vocabulary into their instruction.

Instruction is informed from various sources and in multiple ways. Students are screened three times a year (fall, winter, spring) in reading using the Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measure of Academic

Progress for Reading (NWEA MAP). Data is also gathered from the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP), as well as Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA's). Informal assessments from running records, conferring notes, and observation are also utilized.

We participate in Classroom Book-a-Day. Every effort is made to read a picture book to the students each day of the school year. On snow days, the principal shares books with kids and engages families in other learning activities.

Art and Reading Night is a special outreach event in which families are invited to read the same book and create a family art project around a selected common theme. For example, when we read *Pink is for Blobfish* by Jess Keating, each participating family created artwork involving animals. We then hosted an evening gallery walk and a Skype session with Jess Keating as the culminating event.

National Reading Month is celebrated in March at Hemmeter. Our student council works with a lead teacher to organize exciting classroom and school activities to promote reading. This year each classroom designed and decorated a canvas art piece to be displayed and raffled off to a classroom member. Money earned from the raffle will be used to purchase more books for the school. Students will attend an assembly featuring a local comic book artist. A school book fair, an ice cream social, character dress-up day, and classroom read-ins add to the excitement.

1c. Mathematics

Hemmeter utilizes Math in Focus as its primary resource to teach mathematics and address the Michigan K-12 Standards: Math. This program is based on the highly successful Singapore Math philosophy, a problem-based philosophy introducing concepts in a progression (concrete to pictorial to abstract). Students are taught not only the process for solving problems, but also the reason the process works. For example, when teaching multiplication, our instructors will always start with hands-on manipulatives (Base Ten Blocks, Cuisenaire Rods, Counter Arrays, etc.) that students may use to establish a concrete, foundational understanding of the concept. Once students have mastered the concept at this level, they move on to solving problems by drawing out solutions on their own. The final level of mastery is the abstract level in which students can use their understanding of the concept to solve problems in real-world situations. They apply their knowledge to solve problems in new ways.

Students are screened three times a year (fall, winter, spring) in mathematics using the NWEA. Based on gathered data, teachers use a combination of whole group, small group, and one-on-one instruction to deliver Tier 1 and Tier 2 support. The teachers use frequent progress monitoring strategies to ensure student learning such as conferring, Khan Academy, Reflex Math, Freckle, as well as interim assessments.

Differentiated instruction has been key to our success in mathematics. Before each unit, the teachers conduct a pre-assessment to ascertain concepts in the unit that have already been mastered by students. In addition, each student, based on his/her individual NWEA score, is placed into the Mappers program in Khan Academy. This allows a student to work at his/her own pace to learn new concepts when time allows. After-school math clubs are offered to those in need of more instruction.

Creative and frequently-changing hallway displays offer students opportunities to discuss and solve puzzles or problems; for example: Which does not belong: 9, 16, 25, 43? Multiple answers are possible as long as students can provide valid reasons.

Students have opportunities throughout the year to apply their math knowledge in extracurricular activities. Our school participates in Mathnasium's TriMathlon. The winners at each grade level (2-5) are recognized at a Family Math Night. Our fifth grade students also participate in Math Olympiad, a national competition that helps students develop math flexibility in solving problems, fosters creativity and ingenuity in problem solving, and stimulates enthusiasm for mathematics.

Hemmeter has consistently scored in the top 5% of all schools in the State of Michigan in mathematics.

1d. Science

Hemmeter follows Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) as our K-5 science curriculum. Our fifth grade students are assessed in the Spring with M-STEP, and they consistently fall in the top 5% statewide. Hemmeter's fourth grade students participated in the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Students are assessed based on project rubrics, teacher observations, formative assessments, and student reflections.

Several Hemmeter teachers received five years of intensive training through Discovery Education. These teachers observed highly-qualified trainers in action, participated in hands-on lessons, debriefed with the trainer, and then took these skills back to their own classrooms. Sharing of new learning, successful strategies, and tips took place at staff meetings.

Hemmeter students regularly experience hands-on activities in science. For example, second grade students tape baggies to the classroom windows to see the water cycle in action. Third grade students make bobsleds to experiment with speed and friction. Fourth graders create elaborate contraptions to show their knowledge of electricity and circuits. Fifth graders experience the steps of the scientific method while creating science fair projects.

SPARK (Science Plus Art Reaching Kids) Day is a day that students, teachers, and parents look forward to all year. Classrooms are transformed into art and yoga studios, foundries, science labs, and animal exhibits. Students select their curriculum for the day by prioritizing classes that will be offered. Community and parent volunteers make this day a success by leading the sessions and sharing their knowledge with the students.

Our location in the Great Lakes Bay Region allows our students opportunities for field trips to places such as the Delta Planetarium, Chippewa Nature Center and Hartley Outdoor Nature Center. Students use prior classroom learning to problem-solve and investigate in the real world.

The Hemmeter staff also seeks out opportunities for in-house enrichment activities. We have invited employees of corporations and companies from our surrounding community to present and teach science lessons. Employees from Saginaw Valley State University and Michigan Agriculture in the Classroom: Farm Science Labs have both brought mobile labs which reinforced our grade level standards through hands-on experiments. The Dow Ambassadors program has brought exciting S.T.E.M. (Science Technology Engineering Math) activities to our classrooms, as well.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

In Social Studies, Hemmeter follows the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations. This curriculum has strong literacy and College, Career, and Civic Life components. The strands of history, geography, and economics are studied with special emphasis on how they relate to our families, schools, community, state, and world. It is our goal to inspire students to be productive members in society.

Inquiry is our main form of instruction and guides our daily lessons. Our students learn through asking questions and seeking answers. Students are assessed based on project rubrics, teacher observations, formative assessments, and student reflections.

Grade level service learning projects teach students about giving back to the community. Our first grade students raise money in the fall in order to purchase toys for the Marine Toys for Tots program. Second graders make blankets for children in need through Project Linus. Hemmeter's third grade students partner with residents of a local nursing home to practice communicating through cursive writing. Fourth graders participate in the St. Jude's Research Hospital Math-a-Thon. Fifth graders decorate and sell pumpkins in October and donate the money to an organization of their choice. Hemmeter Elementary graduates leave this building with a strong sense of community and helping others.

This year a group of Hemmeter students joined the Great Lakes Bay Economic Club for a luncheon with the NBRS 2020

Governor of Michigan. At this event, the students were able to participate in a question and answer session and even had their picture taken with the leader of their state!

Technology has a strong place in our social studies curriculum. Fifth grade students create Google Maps and use them to track places and events as they learn. The website, Storyboard That, provides students with creative ways to document causes and effects of history. A green screen is used as a backdrop for Wax Museum presentations, allowing the students to better showcase their noteworthy person and time period.

Over seventy of our third through fifth grade students voluntarily participated in the Hemmeter Who Was? History Bee. These students challenged themselves to read as many as possible of the 172 Who Was? books. Grade level bees and a school bee took place to determine a final Hemmeter Who Was? History Bee champion. Multiple choice and short answer questions regarding facts from the books were used during the bee, and our school wide winner actually read all 172 books!

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Hemmeter, our special area teachers work closely with staff to support the core curriculum but also expand upon it to support the whole child. All of the teachers follow the state standards for their curricular area.

Two of Hemmeter's educators are in charge of our physical education program. They work collaboratively to increase the physical competence, health-related fitness, self-responsibility, and enjoyment of physical activity for all students. It is their goal to prepare our students to be physically active for a lifetime. The curriculum is aligned with the Michigan K-12 Physical Education Standards. The activities promote overall fitness, fine and gross motor skills, teamwork, nutrition, and sportsmanship. During a 35-minute class, every other day, students engage in hands-on physical activity. One of the students' favorite days of the year is when players from the Saginaw Spirit of the Ontario Hockey League come teach the students about hockey and overall fitness goals. The lesson continues as the 2nd grade students take their learning on a field trip to the local ice rink where they learn to skate.

Our music program is aligned with the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The main topics of focus are learning to read, create, and understand music in historical and cultural contexts. In music education, our team of two teachers work together to ensure that music is an important part of daily life. To enrich the curriculum, each grade level performs a music program during the school year. The culminating program in fifth grade is a large scale musical performance. Hemmeter fulfills another standard by offering instruction on various instruments. The students are able to play the recorder and the ukulele at basic level during their time at Hemmeter.

Through a district-wide grant, each grade level is able to visit our local high school to see performances from the high school band, choir, orchestra, and drama department. Hemmeter Idol is an extracurricular activity, offered and led by one of our music teachers, that allows students to shine musically in a fun, friendly school-wide singing competition. Students audition several times during the year with the top three finishers from each grade level performing at a school-wide assembly for the chance to be named Hemmeter Idol.

Hemmeter's walls are decorated with art pieces created by our students as well as visiting artists. Although students have a formal art class once every ten days, Hemmeter teachers regularly include it during classroom instruction while integrating it into the core curriculum.

The art curriculum provides opportunities for students to create pieces utilizing a variety of mediums. Our instructor aims to help the children understand art in its historical, social, and cultural context, as well as how to analyze examples and use materials safely. Hemmeter's art room features a kiln that enables students

to build and fire clay pottery.

Our school library is packed with diverse, high interest books. New books are ordered based on student recommendations and interests. Our librarian is a member of the Nerdy Book Club, an online educator-and-author group dedicated to children's literature. Reading the Nerdy Book Club blog daily allows this dedicated member of our staff to stay up-to-date on the most popular published books. In the lower grades, students visit the library once a week during which they listen to a story and then check out books. In the upper grades, students visit the library as needed.

At Hemmeter, we believe that technology is more than just a tool to enhance the curriculum. It is a resource to engage with the world. Hemmeter has a 34-station computer lab, five Chromebook carts, Promethean Boards in each classroom, and sound amplification systems for all teachers.

We use technology to connect with other schools during the Global Read Aloud, to Skype with authors, and to attend virtual field trips. Hemmeter is also one of the first schools in the area to implement computer coding into our curriculum. The coding curriculum has taught the students far more than just the basics of coding. It has also reinforced collaboration, perseverance, creative problem-solving, and empathy. Google's Internet Awesome program has been implemented in our fourth and fifth grade classrooms to teach digital citizenship. Lesson topics include communicating responsibly, discerning between what is real and what is fake, privacy and password security, and being kind online.

Great Expectations training has been a tremendous resource for character building at Hemmeter. Our unique Hemmeter student creed is recited at the beginning of each week by all students. Additionally, individual classes have created their own which are shared daily. During his Monday morning message, the principal highlights a different life principle (empathy, honesty, responsibility, etc.). He defines the principle, gives examples of its use, and uses famous quotes to strengthen the lesson. Books highlighting each principle are set aside by our librarian for use in classrooms for further exploration.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Students working below grade level are given additional support as defined by our MTSS protocols and procedures. We screen students using the NWEA assessment three times a year. Any student below benchmark, will receive tier 2 or tier 3 interventions as needed. Students receiving tier 2 or tier 3 interventions are progress monitored using DRA2 progress monitoring or AIMSweb progress monitoring assessments. The interventions continue until the students have reached benchmarks.

Students scoring below the 20th percentile on NWEA and below the expected DRA level in reading are required to have an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (I-RIP). The I-RIP outlines research-based interventions and provides a read at home plan for parents to implement. An additional reading intervention that has been successful with many of our kindergarten through second grade students is Lexia Core 5. Hemmeter provides licenses for students to use this program during the school year and over the summer to improve the foundation blocks of literacy. Last year, we received a grant to mail books to all of our I-RIP students over the summer. The students received between 8-12 books of their choosing. After all, as Stephanie Harvey says, "the best intervention is a good book."

In the classroom, exit tickets and conferences are used to quickly assess students to determine areas of need. During ELA workshop time teachers meet with individual students weekly to monitor progress in reading and writing. Exit tickets are used in math and other content areas to ensure students have mastered the learning target of the day. Teachers post a question and students jot their answer on a post-it note or scrap of paper. The teachers can quickly sort through these and make adjustments to the next day's lesson.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Hemmeter offers high ability students an advanced and accelerated curriculum. Research tells us that high ability students are best able to reach their full potential if they are placed in a classroom with like ability peers. Our curriculum moves at a much faster pace and drills down deeper into academic standards. Hemmeter has been extremely successful with 100% of our students taking at least one advanced class in middle school. Ninety-six percent of students take all the advanced classes offered at the middle school. In math, 52% of our students are able to skip 6th and 7th grade math and enroll directly in the 8th grade math class. Forty-six percent are able to skip 6th grade math and enroll directly in the 7th grade math class. This means that 98% of our students test out of grade level math their first year of middle school.

Our project-based, workshop approach to learning enables teachers to differentiate instruction to support learners above grade level. Building diverse, robust classroom libraries has been a huge emphasis at Hemmeter. Classrooms have a wide range of reading levels and these large classroom libraries support learners at all levels.

Classrooms in the school offer Genius Hour which gives advanced students opportunities to study non curricular based topics of their choice. Genius Hour is an idea that started at Google and has transitioned into Hemmeter's classrooms. The time allows students the opportunity to explore their own passions and encourages creativity. It provides students a choice in what they learn and how they want to present it to their classmates.

Khan Academy is an example of a way we challenge our high students while providing remediation and filling in the gaps of our struggling students.

As mentioned in other sections, we have a vast number of extracurricular activities to challenge our high achieving students. These include Math Olympiad, History Bee, Spelling Bee, and TriMathlon, to name a few.

3c. Special education

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Hemmeter’s faculty and staff take pride in instituting a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Guest teachers often pay tribute to our well-behaved students. Field trip coordinators compliment them on their polite, respectful behavior. Excellent classroom management combined with elements from Ron Clark’s Essential 55 prepare students to conduct themselves well in any environment. For example, on field trips we ask that students compliment the place they are visiting, shake hands with and thank chaperones for their time. Students are encouraged to use names when greeting others. We teach our students to allow others to go first, and respect the thoughts and opinions of others.

At Hemmeter, creating and building our school culture is a daily focus. New students, whether joining our school on the first day or midyear, are invited to meet with the principal for “Donuts and Discussion.” This special morning offers a unique opportunity for new students to feel more comfortable and welcomed, and it gives them a chance to share ideas and begin their journey to become a valuable member of the Hemmeter community.

Hemmeter prides itself on student choice. Our Student Council members meet twice a month to decide on school-wide events. They select monthly spirit days, brainstorm and coordinate fundraiser events, and determine how to spend the money raised. The funds from a recent cookie sale were used to purchase a Lego/STEAM cart for all grade levels to share.

Genius Hour is a time set aside during school hours for students to explore a topic of their choice through an inquiry model. Hemmeter students have identified and tackled problems in our school and community. One group of students wrote a grant which resulted in a water bottle filling station for our school. Another group of students, bothered by the number of milk cartons thrown away each day, started a lunch time recycling program. Our students know they have the power and support to solve real world problems.

Our fifth grade students started a YouTube channel highlighting Hemmeter’s Hidden Helpers. The students brainstormed a list of adults, excluding Hemmeter teachers and staff, who enriched their educational experiences. This list included bus drivers, substitute teachers, visiting authors, and Hemmeter Parent Teacher Council (HPTC) members. The students created graphics, composed a theme song, wrote scripts, and edited before posting their final products online.

Every school in our district is responsible for a presentation to the Saginaw Township Board of Education each year. Hemmeter students use this as another opportunity for their voices to be heard. The board provides a theme, the principal determines the topic, and the students present the majority of the content. Hemmeter students are confident presenters and communicators.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Hemmeter endeavors to make our families feel welcome. On the first day of school, coffee is served in the parking lot as parents drop off their students. A presentation is given to all kindergarten and new parents introducing them to the school, answering questions, and offering time for families to get to know each other.

At Hemmeter, we believe that parent involvement is key to student success. We have a strong parent group, the Hemmeter Parent and Teacher Council (HPTC), that meets monthly to organize and support the curricular goals of the school. The HPTC hosts events such as SPARK Day, Camp Hemmeter, and special assemblies. They raise funds through the Hemmeter Book Fair, the Hemmeter Fun Fair, and Scrip program. The funds raised are used to purchase items such as classroom books, science materials, Chromebook carts, as well as to cover travel costs for field trips.

Since we have such a diverse population, we find opportunities to highlight a variety of cultures. Hemmeter

hosts a community wide Multicultural Night. Community members are invited to share traditional food and customs of their culture. Several of our Indian students, along with their parents, presented an assembly to teach our students about Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. The Chinese New Year was celebrated in our kindergarten classrooms this year. Inspired by a kindergarten student and her mother, fellow students experienced the tradition by wearing the ceremonial color red, making pot-stickers, and reading popular books about the new year from China.

Our teachers find ways to bring the community to the students. During National Reading Month, our classrooms are visited by politicians, local television personalities, and professional athletes. We partner with corporations and local businesses like Dow Chemical, Wildfire Credit Union, and Consumers Energy to bring real world learning into the classroom.

To bring our families together outside of the school day, we offer events such as Math Night, ice cream socials, evening musical performances, and Fun Fair. Partnering with our local Mathnasium, this event allows parents an opportunity to learn math games that can be played with their children at home using ordinary household materials. TriMathlon winners are recognized, and prizes are given to them, as well as to randomly drawn participating families.

Another key to Hemmeter's success is communication! Teachers and parents utilize many avenues to discuss students' academic achievements and challenges. Among those avenues are parent/teacher/student conferences, email, use of planners, and daily SeeSaw messages. The principal uses a weekly newsletter, "The Buzz," to share upcoming events and student and school successes. Facebook is a prominent form of communication with the majority of our parents belonging to our closed Facebook group. Many teachers post class updates, and the principal often posts Facebook Live videos of school and classroom events. The Saginaw Township View, our local newspaper, highlights classroom events and honors.

Hemmeter has consistently scored in the top one percent on our State standardized tests and has received an A ranking from the Department of Education. We recognize that these achievements would not be possible without the tremendous support we receive from our families and the community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At Hemmeter, we pride ourselves on being lifelong learners. We do not believe in one size fits all professional development. We offer a wide variety of professional development opportunities, so teachers can customize their learning. On many of our professional development days, teachers are encouraged to submit proposals to focus their learning on specific content. They also have the option to use EduPaths. EduPath is a free online professional development portal that provides understanding on a wide variety of topics and helps educators share best practices.

Hemmeter has a full time instructional coach who works with staff. Our instructional coach helps teachers focus on their individual classroom needs. She does this in a variety of ways: locating resources to help support teaching and learning; modeling best practice lessons and strategies; brainstorming solutions to problems, and providing feedback to the staff. She also facilitates biweekly, micro-professional development sessions after school.

For the past five years, Hemmeter has participated in "Patio PD." Patio PD is held at rotating staff members' houses throughout the summer. These are optional professional learning days over the summer intended to assist teachers in improving their craft. Every Hemmeter teacher attended at least one session of Patio PD last year! The topics for Patio PD are based on the results of feedback from the staff and our building's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA).

Book clubs are another source of professional learning at Hemmeter. Our social worker, instructional coach, principal, and librarian have an on-going, weekly professional book club. Book Club topics for this year have included mindfulness, growth mindset, messaging, and school culture.

The staff has been recognized numerous times over the past five years with many awards. Award
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recognitions include the Saginaw Spirit Spirited Teacher Award, Michigan Reading Association Administrator of the Year, Benevolent Leaders Award, Ruby Award, and American Chemical Society Science Teacher of the Year.

Hemmeter has a wellness committee that focuses on showing appreciation and value to staff in the building. This year the wellness committee organized a group outing at a local yoga studio, renovated the lounge with more comfortable seating, and hosted a Breakout Escape Room challenge. The wellness committee also brings in treats and posts uplifting messages throughout the year. The instructional coach celebrates successes in the classroom by highlighting teaching strategies she has witnessed. She shares these successes with all staff members in a weekly staff newsletter.

4. School Leadership:

The main leader of Hemmeter Elementary School is the principal. He is recognized as an exceptional leader in the state of Michigan, has presented at the National Council of Teachers of English, is quoted in *The Read Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease, and actively contributes to well known educational blogs.

In 2013, our principal was selected as a member of the Gerstacker Fellowship Program. During his year in this leadership development program, he spent one week in Finland learning about their educational philosophy. Positive components of Finland's approach to teaching and learning were brought back to Hemmeter. In 2016, our principal was selected as the Michigan Reading Association Principal of the Year. In 2018, he was the recipient of the RUBY Award (Recognizing the Upward, Bright, and Young).

Parents, students and staff give accolades to our principal for his core beliefs, leadership, and promotion of a school culture that drive the success of Hemmeter Elementary.

The principal has high expectations for all stakeholders and, because he leads by example, everyone rises to the occasion. The teachers are expected to teach the curriculum; however, they are allowed the autonomy to make decisions that will best support the academic and social growth of their students.

Hemmeter's leaders understand the importance of relationships. We recognize that a positive and healthy relationship between all engaged parties: students, parents, teachers, staff, and community members, must be cultivated. Students know they are respected and valued. Parents know that their input will be taken into consideration and that the leadership will make the best decisions for all involved.

The relationships between our building leader and teachers are strong. Teachers do not hesitate to go to our principal with curriculum or other concerns. We know he will listen and engage in a conversation in order to get a full understanding of the issue being addressed. Together, decisions are made with the best interests of students in mind.

Our school improvement team leads our school as well. This group consists of the principal, selected teachers and parents. They work together to drive our academic focus regarding all policies, programs, and resources. The yearly plan created by this group is determined by our current data and sets the school on a course for success. They also help allocate resources for the upcoming year.

The HPTC is yet another leadership team within Hemmeter. This parent/teacher group organizes multiple fundraisers to support the Hemmeter curriculum and focuses on providing hands-on, enrichment activities that would otherwise not be possible.

Hemmeter Elementary School is fortunate to have so many dedicated members committed to student success.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Hemmeter has been a national leader when it comes to transforming the reading culture in our school. Staff members have presented at numerous conferences including the National Council of Teachers of English, Michigan Reading Association, Nerd Camp, and Great Lakes Bay Literacy Leaders. The staff has also been asked to speak to numerous local schools about cultivating a love of reading in students.

Hemmeter has three core beliefs when it comes to reading. Students need to have access to high-quality, diverse books. Students are allowed to choose the books they read during independent reading. Students have time in school to read every day.

No single initiative has had a bigger impact on our school reading culture than #classroombookaday. We first learned about #classroombookaday during Nerd Camp from its creator, Jillian Heise. The idea is fairly simple. Every classroom in the building commits to reading one picture book each day for the entire school year. Doing so guarantees that every student in our school will read at least 180 books every single school year. Students will have more than 1,000 shared book experiences by the time they leave Hemmeter. These shared experiences create wonderful opportunities for using literature to build classroom environments. Do you have a student that teases another student? You can read *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson. #Classroombookaday provides 180 opportunities each year to strengthen our reading and classroom culture.

March Book Madness is another annual event (created by Tony Keefer and Scott Jones) that has had a huge impact on our school reading culture. Each year our school leadership team works with fellow teachers across the globe to build the brackets for this annual children's literature event. Hemmeter participates in the picture book bracket and middle grades bracket. Sixteen books are selected for each bracket to face off in a month-long tournament. The students read the books throughout the year and vote on their favorites. Titles that receive the most votes move on to the next round until a winner is crowned in each bracket. No single event builds more excitement for reading than March Book Madness!

However, it is not just the events or initiatives that have transformed the culture of reading at Hemmeter. It's the teachers and staff that work with students every day. We are a staff of readers! Every staff member has committed to reading at least 20 minutes a day. You can see the love of literacy everywhere you go at Hemmeter. During a walk down the hallway, you will see artwork from author visits, bulletin boards with upcoming book birthday releases, doors decorated with reading themes, student lockers with book recommendations, and bookshelves loaded with popular titles for student selection.