

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Stacey Hill-Simmons
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 1835 Fairfax Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Cincinnati State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 45207-1811

County Hamilton

Telephone (513) 363-2700 Fax (513) 363-2720

Web site/URL https://evanstonacademy.cps-k12.org/contact E-mail simmons@cpsboe.k12.oh.us

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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mrs. Laura Mitchell E-mail mithec@cpsboe.k12.oh.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Cincinnati Public Schools Tel. (513) 363-0000

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Carolyn Jones
(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.

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

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):
- 42 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 13 High schools
 - 7 K-12 schools
- 62 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	8	12	20
K	18	18	36
1	20	23	43
2	20	23	43
3	18	16	34
4	17	17	34
5	25	17	42
6	21	35	56
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	147	161	308

*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
 - 0.3 % Asian
 - 90 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 4 % White
 - 2.4 % 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: ≤1%

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

The mobility rate for the 2018-19 school year was 17%. Our inner city neighborhood school has a high rate of transiency due to homelessness and students being placed in foster care. Source data is the Ohio State Report Card.

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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	0
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	0
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
10 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 308

8. Students receiving special education services: 27 %

83 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>24</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>33</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>6</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: 20

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.	14
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	20
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 21:1

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	89%	90%	94%	96%	94%
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.

The Evanston School Mission is preparing students today for a successful tomorrow by developing academic excellence and positive self-concepts to foster values and achievement for all.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

Evanston is a Pre-K through grade six, Title One neighborhood school. We serve a population of 98.5% economically disadvantaged, 90.4% African-American, and 27.7% students with disabilities. Four classrooms serve our students with autism; six students per classroom. Other students with special needs are fully included in the general education classrooms and receive additional push-in, pull-out services from Intervention Specialists. All of our students qualify for free or reduced lunches and are served Universal Breakfast daily.

Evanston uses three specific strategies to promote student achievement. Those strategies are the use of data, innovative schoolwide initiatives, and staff development.

Data - At the beginning of the year and consistently throughout, administration and teacher teams analyze student performance on state tests, item analysis reports, and weekly and monthly assessments to identify learning gaps and deficits. We use the PDSA Model.

Plan = analyze data;

Do =implement rigorous researched-based core instruction;

Study = progress monitor and analyze student performance data;

Act = adapt instruction based on current needs

During weekly “Admin Meetings” with grade level teachers, intervention specialists, the principal and schoolwide lead teacher, strategic academic improvement plans are developed. Some improvement plans include additional resources, such as assistance from the school’s social worker, mental health provider, or connecting a student with a staff mentor.

Schoolwide Initiatives - Evanston has created several schoolwide initiatives, incorporating best practices, to address the diverse instructional needs of our total student body. Some of these initiatives include: PUSH, Mini-Lab, Math Lab, Red Binders, Study Tables, NASM (the National Air and Space Museum program), and Vision 20/20.

3rd Grade Push and Primary Push - Students are assessed for grade level performance the first week of school. Skill deficits are identified and interventions begin the following week to get students performing at or above grade level. K-2 students receive targeted small group instruction during the first bell of the day and third graders participate during the 1st two hours of the school day.

Mini-Lab is a tier two intervention focusing on reading skills deficits in fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development. K-2 students also have a targeted focus on reading foundations, such as phonemic awareness and phonics. K-6 Students work in small, interactive, homogeneous groups with an instructor for 45 minutes per day, three to four days per week. Progress monitoring occurs weekly and assessment data is used to reorganize student groupings and adapt instructional materials as needed.

Math Lab is staffed with a combination of in-house staff and community volunteers, such as Central Office Staff and university students. Grades K-6 attend an engaging and structured weekly lab session with hands-on activities, games, and problem-solving tasks for skills mastery. Students are homogeneously grouped to provide extra support for those struggling as well as enrichment for those needing the extra challenge.

Red Binder is a collection of 10 high-impact reading, math, and science skills for grades K-6 used primarily during teacher-led stations. Students who have mastered the identified skill for the month, using a performance exit ticket, progress to the next skill. Individualized plans are made for students requiring additional support for mastery.

The Study Table is an extended day program for grades K-6 where 20 students per grade level are targeted for additional small group support in reading and math for 40 minutes per day. Study Tables are manned by our staff of paraprofessionals. Instructors for each grade level monitor students' progress daily and maintain on-going communication with teachers about any needs or concerns.

National Air and Space Museum (NASM) Evanston was selected to pilot NASM five years ago. It is a quarterly Interactive Video Conferencing from the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. NASM reinforces S.T.E.M. related concepts via project-based learning where students, grades 3-6, interact with experts on topics being taught in the classroom. Students engage in real-life simulations utilizing their critical thinking skills. Each quarter, students demonstrate their knowledge to Smithsonian experts by way of culminating science projects.

Vision 2020 Program - This program enhances our curriculum with hands-on, real-world experiences that help students identify their special interests and skills, and make the connection between academic performance and their future career endeavors. For example, our students were partnered with a manufacturing company and participated in a program called, "What's Cool About Manufacturing." The culminating activity was to create and video-tape a commercial. Currently, as students explore broadcasting, they develop their own script and render an entertaining broadcast schoolwide three days per week. Our students, grades 1-6, participate in the Vision 2020 Program a minimum of four times monthly.

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

As a PreK - 6 elementary school, including four units of students with autism, our goal is that every student will make academic gains. However, each student's needs are very different. One overall approach that we use that is common across subjects and grade levels is the use of stations. Teachers routinely use a variety of formative assessment data to create student groupings (both heterogeneous and homogeneous). Student groups participate in stations that include a teacher-led and/or paraprofessional-led instructional station, a computer station, a station for independent work, and a cross-curricular station that incorporates writing and educational games. Teachers plan different activities for each group of students based on targeted needs. Student groupings are flexible and change when new formative data is collected. In this way, students are able to receive instruction that is tailored to meet individual needs.

Another schoolwide intervention we have put in place at Evanston Academy that crosses subject areas and grade levels is Red Binders. Every teacher has identified the four or five most important concepts for students to master in Math and ELA at each grade level. Teachers then design a series of activities culminating with a summative assessment at the end to determine student mastery of identified concept. Many teachers use Red Binder activities in their teacher-led stations.

Two assessments that are used schoolwide are Mock assessments and MAP. Mock assessments are administered on a monthly basis. MAP assessments (from the Northwest Evaluation Association) are given three times per year in Math and Reading for grades K through 6. Data from monthly mocks and MAP assessments are reviewed during team meetings and help to guide next steps for instruction.

The implementation of stations, the Red Binder intervention, mock and MAP assessments help teachers to diagnose students' strengths and challenges in order to provide prescriptive instruction.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Our English Language Arts teachers use the Ohio Learning Standards (revised 2017), for developing instruction, along with current research on the science of reading to guide instructional practice. Currently, 77% of our Language Arts teachers and Intervention Specialists are trained in the Orton Gillingham Approach to teaching reading, writing, and spelling. Our goal is to have 100% of our ELA staff Orton trained. Orton Gillingham is a multi-sensory approach to reading that teaches students how to think about the code and structure of language in a logical, progressive format. We also have an Orton Gillingham master teacher on staff at Evanston who supports instruction schoolwide. She has also trained our paraprofessionals to implement Orton Gillingham's auditory, visual, and blending drills during small group instruction (such as intervention groups and stations).

Additionally, writing is a focal point at every grade level and in all content areas. All Evanston teachers use our own revised and scaffolded versions of the Vermont painted essay structure to teach writing. It is beneficial to have the continuity of utilizing the same structure for writing at every grade level as it enables teachers to build on the same foundational core. This writing structure helps students organize their thoughts in a logical sequence and to visualize what good writing looks like. Our revised versions of the painted essay are scaffolded to support developing writers at each grade or ability level. By teaching the painted essay format schoolwide, we reduce the amount of time spent reteaching while simultaneously building on a structure that is already in place. We have the added benefit of Evanston students being able to focus on improving their writing prowess each year because our writing structure is static.

The Vermont Painted Essay was developed by Diana Leddy, a Vermont elementary teacher. Her model provides a visual of what informational writing looks like from start to finish. The structure is segmented and color-coded, providing a framework for writing with four paragraphs.

Our adapted version has been simplified from Leddy's original Painted Essay structure, to support the needs of young and growing writers. It was scaffolded to a greater extent so that students know exactly what goes in each section. Our revisions maintain the four colors (red, yellow, blue, green), but specifies exactly what goes into each section:

red = introduction and two points that will be elaborated on (paragraph 1),
yellow = information/details for point one (paragraph 2),

blue = information/details for point two (paragraph 3),

green = conclusion (paragraph 4)

This writing structure is strategically and explicitly taught; section by section, with the focus on the introduction. The specified colors assigned to each paragraph helps students to internalize the structure and format. We practice, model, and support the writing process every single day.

Having trained each staff member on this writing process and being equipped with the time, content, and best practices; we are creating a literacy program that allows our students to flourish as readers, writers, communicators, and thinkers here at Evanston Academy.

1c. Mathematics

Teachers at Evanston Academy use the Ohio Mathematics Learning Standards (revised 2017) to guide their instruction. The goal is to deliver grade-appropriate instruction while providing interventions for those students who have learning deficits. Our teachers use curriculum materials from Engage NY to teach mini-lessons. During stations, teachers are able to differentiate instruction within flexible skill groups. Technology-based supports such as Zearn, Schoology, Google Classroom, Pear Deck, and Flip Grid are used to practice and reinforce taught concepts, differentiate instruction, and assess students. Teachers also use formative assessments such as exit tickets, weekly quizzes, and monthly mock assessments to adjust student groupings as needed.

One schoolwide Mathematics intervention used at Evanston Academy is Math Lab. Students at every grade level participate in one hour of Math Lab per week (two hours per week for 3rd grade). Mathematics teachers use formative assessment data to group students homogeneously for Math Lab. During this time, students work with a tutor in groups of 4-6 to gain deeper understanding of a targeted Math concept. Math Lab is designed to be fun and engaging for students, utilizing interactive materials such as games and manipulatives. Students are also able to apply their math skills to real world problem solving scenarios during this time. These small, interactive groups are a perfect setting for problem solving as well as for identifying misconceptions students may have. Students feel safe and supported during trial and error. We are fortunate to have active support and participation with our Math Lab groups. Participants include parents and community volunteers as well as in-house instructional staff, support staff, school nurse, office staff, and custodian. They all look forward to Math Labs and take a vested interest in the academic growth of our students.

Despite the interventions and supports provided during the instructional day, there are students who need extended day support. Students who continue to struggle with Math concepts are invited to stay after school for Study Tables. Study Tables occur Monday-Friday for 40 minutes. During this time, students who struggle in Math and/or English Language Arts receive small-group and even one-to-one instruction that helps them to fill in learning gaps. Classroom teachers work closely with paraprofessionals to identify each student's areas of need so that the instruction during Study Tables can be very personal and targeted. The added support of consistent daily practice, review, and reinforcement during Study Tables; in tandem with classroom instruction and interventions, enables the deficit learner to progress toward grade level performance.

1d. Science

The Ohio Learning Science Standards are used as the driving force behind Science instruction at Evanston. Our school district provides a curriculum map for pacing those standards within the four quarters of the school year. Student-centered learning and projects are developed using standards and content, incorporating cross-curricular subject matter and real-life scenarios.

Teachers engage young learners in hands-on experiences, drawing on their observational skills. Students learn how to conduct research, make justified predictions, and collect data. Technology, and a variety of other media, is used to enhance knowledge, for research, and for student presentations. One learning experience involved planting trees on the school grounds. Students gained a tangible connection to elements needed for the well-being of these trees, as they continued to explore life cycles of other living things.

The intermediate classrooms feature the 5E Science Instruction Model; Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate to achieve deeper science mastery. The Frayer Model is used for vocabulary development and application; Questioning, Claims, Evidence and Reasoning re-enforces application skills, and the Scientific Method Lab Report develops analysis skills. At the synthesis level, students create projects to connect vocabulary, content and all information related to the standard. The project and presentation components demonstrate depth of understanding and developing oratory skills.

Evanston participates in two annual Science events. The school-wide Science Fair showcases results of experiments, informational reports and posters, designed models and projects. During the city-wide Robotics competition, student teams are scored on floor design, robot function, display, research, and oral presentation. Over the past seven years, our robotics teams have secured 37 trophies.

Informal data is obtained by way of class discussions, collaborative team activities, exit tickets, and quizzes. Project Presentations demonstrating students' connections to standards and evidence of critical learning is one example of cumulative assessment.

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

Evanston Academy provides cross-curricular activities and engaging lessons in Social Studies and Civics. Social Studies standards are analyzed by each teacher and merged with English, Math and Science standards. For example, Language Arts teachers may select realistic fiction that parallels a historical event. A Math teacher may make a connection between positive and negative integers on a number line using AD and BC. A Science teacher may reference farming and early civilizations when teaching landforms and weather.

Daily instructional approaches include problem-based learning with technology. Teachers differentiate instruction using technology to enhance and modify the assignments as needed. Sixth graders may complete a multimedia presentation inclusive of slides, music and other digital representation to examine technology of the past, the present, and what it may look like in the future. At PreK, students are learning how to use technology to demonstrate learning experiences and share their knowledge of our world.

Additionally, our students participate in civic engagement by completing a community service project. In life skills, students discuss and learn about global concerns and issues surrounding our community, the elderly, the homeless, the environment, and at-risk youth. Classrooms develop a service learning project and visit a place in the community, such as a nursing home or animal shelter, where students provide their service.

Formative assessments, such as writing activities, collaborative team assignments, quizzes, give insight to the degree in which students have grasped the major concepts and what needs to be retaught. Summative assessments, including final projects and presentations, demonstrate how well students have been able to master the concepts and also apply learning to real-life problem-solving situations. We strive to bring learning alive and have it relate to the students and their daily lives so they are equipped with knowledge for success in this competitive global society.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Numerous studies, such as the Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Pre-Kindergarten Effects (2014), show and support the importance of young children being exposed early to the culture of education. Evanston Academy believes in this philosophy and houses a public multi-age pre-kindergarten classroom. In this classroom of three and four-year olds, not only does tremendous instructional growth occur, but also enormous growth in the non-academic areas of the student, thus the whole child. Ongoing assessment data is gathered and monitored in order to address the individual needs of the students. Both formative and summative style assessments are aligned with Early Learning Standards which are precursors to the Ohio Learning Standards for Kindergarten. Our five star rated pre-school incorporates The Creative Curriculum that explores all content areas including fine arts, technology, and physical education. This curriculum offers creative ways for students to master literacy and numeracy and gives opportunities to activate self-learning through exploration, thus also addressing the various learning modalities of all early childhood learners. Additionally, supplemental curriculums to address literacy such as Heggerty Phonemic Awareness are used to strengthen and extend foundational literacy skills.

Interventions are executed within the classroom through small group and one-on-one strategies. Age-appropriate technologies, applications and programs are strategically used to activate general principles of learning that can be applied around all content areas. Additionally, in efforts to provide ongoing enrichment and an individualized instructional program, students performing above grade level are challenged with deeper learning experiences, through being exposed to rigorous activities in the kindergarten classroom. For example, students showing accelerated growth in literacy will participate in appropriate engaging kindergarten literacy groups, focused on becoming more fluent in reading and comprehension. Evanston Academy promotes giving students an early start in education, which has implications of life-long academic success for all learners.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The instructional component of the technology lab includes content standards from English Language Arts, Writing and Mathematics. For English Language Arts and Mathematics, the technology lab supports online instructional software such as Raz Kids, Epic, Mathletics and Zearn. These programs give students the opportunity to practice skills on content taught within the classroom, thus providing immediate feedback to students and instructor for reteach, additional practice and enrichment. For example, students were challenged to compose a persuasive letter to their principal discussing the healthier food options. After students read 2 articles for background support, they were expected to compose their letter in the Vermont Painted Essay format, which is taught school wide. The technology lab supports core subjects and gives students additional opportunities to show mastery of content grade level skills.

According to data, children who exercise regularly or play sports tend to have increased concentration and focus in the classroom. Physical education class always involves locomotor movements which keep students focused and alert. We also support math and reading content being taught in the classrooms throughout the school year. There is always a math component connected to exercise in which students have to skip count in different increments while doing various movements. Additionally, there is a geometry component which involves angles. In flag football lessons, students have to be creative and draw their own football routes that show various angles and directions. Reading activities in physical education class include students learning the rules of different sports by reading and answering questions about the particular sport. This gives students the opportunity for extended practice in reading comprehension.

Music class supports cross-curricular learning. Students learn to analyze, describe and create. Connections are made with science as students explore the physics of sound; identifying the various pitch, mood, and tone in a musical composition. As students learn about musical genres, connections are made to historical events. Musical applications such as learning to count, subdivide and write correct rhythms using specific formulas strengthen skills taught in the mathematics classroom. For example, fractions can be a difficult concept for elementary students to understand. During music lessons on teaching time signatures, students

grasp the connection with fractions; four quarter beats equal one whole note, etc. The visual representation of quarter notes along with the kinesthetic and auditory components of clapping or tapping out the beats enhances students' understanding.

In the art studio, students are constantly engaged in discovery learning through interaction with materials and contemporary methods of creating artwork. This type of learning supports the students' ability to be independently creative through the intentional planning of exploration time. Students work on individualized projects and student-directed activities. Students plan and monitor their own progress based on a set of guiding principles or "habits," as well as the state and national standards. The art studio is also a place for structured writing prompts related to art analysis, or reading a visual text. The art studio exposes students to contemporary and historical artworks and holds the expectation that through structured writing activities, students will be able to build comprehension and write using details to support claims.

Students at Evanston participate in a Career Awareness and Exploration Program to fully prepare them for college and career. The program is designed to increase their awareness of different career pathways, develop project-based learning opportunities, and encourage initiative, leadership skills, and community responsibility.

The Career Program enhances the school curriculum by helping students identify their interest and skills, giving them real world experiences, and making the connection between academic performance and their future endeavors. This is accomplished by exposing students to three learning standards: Life and Work Readiness, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration. The Career Program uses career related math concepts, reading passages, and writing prompts to support academic core subject areas. The use of online programs like Virginia CareerView gives students additional support in utilizing technology. It is our goal that Evanston Academy students, with assistance, will transition to high school with the information necessary to make informed decisions about whether to go college, or seek special training that will lead to a future career.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Weekly administrative meetings are held with teams composed of grade level teachers, intervention specialists, reading specialist, lead teacher, and administration. Teams dissect data from the previous week's assessments as well as state diagnostics. Teams develop action plans assigning students performing below grade level to skills specific groups where strategies and interventions are tailored to academic deficits. Groupings are fluid; allowing movement from one group to the next as needed.

If there is an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points between test scores of all students and the test scores of any sub group, Evanston has incorporated numerous school-wide initiatives. Our ELA Mini Labs and our Math Labs allow below grade level students the opportunity to have their specific needs addressed in a one-on-one or small group setting. Students are presented multiple avenues to bridge the gaps in their academic schema.

Data Talks and Data Logs are also effective tools in our toolbox. Students actively participate in their academic growth through one-on-one dialogue. This one-on-one discussion is insightful, empowering students to actively participate in reviewing and recording their own data and making decisions about their own academic goal-setting. Students have the opportunity to monitor and record their progress monthly. Parents are also invited to participate in these Data Talks with students at least quarterly.

Study tables, an after-school initiative, provides students additional academic support. Students who require extended learning time are referred by teachers and work with tutors on key learning concepts. Weekly reports are shared with administration to monitor progress.

Tutors are an integral component of our instructional program. Xavier University and the University of

Cincinnati provide tutors to work one-on-one with our students during the instructional day who are performing below grade level. Tutors support the learner in the classroom during real-time instruction.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Our goal at Evanston Academy is that ALL students make academic gains throughout the school year. Instruction is tailored through lesson delivery that ties into all modes of learning. For students that are performing above grade level, instruction is purposefully designed to challenge them; especially as thinkers and problem-solvers.

Teachers provide higher-performing students with multiple ways to demonstrate learning; welcoming their creativity. Students engage in project-based learning opportunities that require research using a variety of media and websites. Students are challenged with working through real-life problem scenarios for solutions; integrating technology to enhance their learning experiences. Inherent in this learning growing community, a key skill such as working with others toward a unified end is being nurtured. This is the ultimate in skill-building for real-life application, problem-solving, social, and emotional growth.

Opportunities for students to work in a variety of learning venues provide occasions to share ideas and consider other points of view, such as during literature circles. Students who are performing above grade level expectations may have leadership roles, such as facilitating small math lab groups with younger students, or managing the Evanston Academy Students' Store.

Authentic assessments that are aligned with students' learning experiences are designed to promote the highest level of thinking, extend learning in creative ways, and demonstrate student growth. Additionally, teachers encourage self-assessment. They provide students with opportunities to set goals, holding students accountable for their own learning. Goals are discussed with each student and placed in their data folders for student and parent referencing. Additionally, students develop plans for meeting their goals, including resources that will help them meet their individual goals, and date that goals will be met.

Lastly, teachers at Evanston Academy participate in Professional Development opportunities in support of higher performing students and gifted education.

3c. Special education

Evanston Academy is deeply committed to moving each student forward academically and emotionally. Careful examination and coordination of data from a variety of assessment tools allow instructional teams to plan and deliver deliberate instruction to students based on their individual strengths and needs.

For example, in addition to whole group instruction, targeted small group instruction for reading and math takes place in labs on a weekly basis. All students, including those with identified special needs, participate in hands-on learning activities that allow them to practice and apply skills they have learned in their classrooms. Students are met at their current instructional level and moved forward from there. Other school-wide initiatives include small group stations, co-teaching between general education teachers and intervention specialists, and tutors who assist our students in the classroom and in fluid small groups.

We also take great care in tailoring instruction for individual students who are significantly struggling with performance on grade level expectations. Evanston Academy provides a wide variety of leveled, small group forums to meet the individual student needs of these children in addition to those described above. These include ongoing specially designed instruction and intervention as well as after school Study Tables for students with disabilities or to reteach skills with which students are struggling. We also use many of our volunteers and tutors to provide small group and individual support for these children. It is not uncommon for temporary instructional groups to be created and continued as necessary, according to a demonstrated need. Teams collaborate weekly to determine the needs of our children and then act accordingly.

All of our students demonstrate continual growth. Students with disabilities are no exception, showing

progress toward their IEP goals and objectives, on classroom activities and assessments, on district assessments and on state measurements.

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

The community of Evanston is similar to most other communities in that there are diverse ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds. To add to the list of diversities, although not a large group, Evanston Academy proudly educates students that are English Language Learners (ELLs). This population of students receives high-quality, differentiated instruction for every assignment across the academic curriculum. Specifically, the English Language Learner Intervention Specialist is tasked with ensuring all ELLs have equitable access to the curriculum, sharing and implementing strategies that will strengthen the capacity of the language barrier, differentiating lessons to close the achievement gap, and serving as a liaison in order meet the needs and be the voice of the ELL families. Evanston Academy tailors the instructional process for ELLs by implementing technology which assists and supports the students in their language deficiency. District approved applications used with content teacher instruction concurrently work together to meet the needs of all English Language Learners thus providing a product for teacher feedback and evidence for student progress and mastery.

Teachers not only teach the content, but also and most importantly, they teach the language of the content. Here, ELLs learn the foundation of the language and begin making the instructional connections that will propel them to academic achievement. For example, ELLs coming into the country in grade 5 may not know the meaning and mathematical reasoning of various symbols and phrases in the mathematic content. It is critical to teach the meaning of add, subtract, multiply, and divide prior to assigning lessons. This example of a mini-lesson is taught and learned in small groups-which is a critical lesson delivery strategy for ELLs. On-going supports address the diverse needs of this student population, thus achieving academic success for all, and further, promoting a system of academic community and acceptance.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The staff at Evanston Academy knows that our students want to learn and are eager to engage with the content being taught. Our teachers work very hard to create engaging activities that pique the interest of our students.

For example, all grade levels use project based-learning in Science to make the content interesting and engaging. In 5th grade Science, after learning about the parts of plant and animal cells and the jobs that they do, students are challenged to create a metaphor for how a plant or animal cell works (e.g. a factory) and present their metaphor to their classmates. Students are more engaged when they are able to connect with their learning in this way. The use of problem solving in Math helps students to interact with the content. Students work through a routine called “notice and wonder” before engaging in solving a problem. When students journal about what they notice and wonder about the context of a Math problem, they are able to make connections to the problem. In Language Arts, students are often asked to write about themselves. Additionally, students’ writing is often incorporated into Science and Social Studies projects. When students write about themselves or about a topic of interest, they tend to have more to say and have a higher level of engagement with the assignment.

To encourage and support students’ social growth, Evanston students work collaboratively in every content area. Students work on projects in small groups, solve problems together, and read their writing to each other. Students engage in friendly competition during Mathematics Super Bowl. Students are also able to participate in a wide variety of after-school activities that support social growth. Some activities include ballet, Girls on the Run, College Mentors, Student Council, Handicrafts, basketball, and cooking class. All after-school activities help Evanston students to develop and grow socially while developing life skills and participating in activities they love.

The staff of Evanston Academy works as a team to motivate students to do their best. When classroom teachers find it difficult to reach certain students, other staff members - paraprofessionals, specialists, intervention specialists - are quick to step in. It is important that every student at Evanston Academy is able to make a connection with a staff member. In this way, every Evanston student feels loved, valued, and connected at school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Since 2002, Evanston Academy has followed the district’s vision and implemented a Community Learning Center (CLC). The overall goal of the CLC is to support student achievement while revitalizing neighborhoods and maximizing the community’s return on its investment in public schools. A resource coordinator manages the CLC and recruits partnerships to meet the academic and non-academic needs, along with the social emotional development of our students.

Our families are actively engaged in supporting student success and school improvement. One example is the Beautification Initiative in which parents and volunteers decorated the hallways with motivational phrases and growth mindset slogans to encourage students as they travel around the school campus. In addition to volunteering in the CLC and classrooms, family members participate in events such as the Math Super Bowl, School Family Cookout, and Family nights where they simply come to enjoy a movie after school hours with their children.

A parent liaison is appointed to the Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC) where parents have input in the decision-making process, assist with implementing the vision of the school, and maintaining positive community relationships.

Parents are informed of students’ academic progress and challenges by way of phone calls, conferences, and progress reports. Additionally, quarterly parent involvement activities hosted by teacher teams inform

families of instructional practices, learning goals, and provide tips for extending learning in the home.

Due in large part to the recruitment efforts of our administrator and community resource coordinator, we have maintained long-term relationships with several community partners. Our longest standing partner is with Western/Southern Life Insurance. They have supported our instructional program in numerous ways and currently provide a mentoring program for our students. General Electric, a 12-year partnership, provides one to one tutoring on a weekly basis. Based on academic assessment data, school leadership determines the grade level in which these professionals can best use their skills to increase academic performance.

Lighthouse Youth Services provides mental health and wellness counseling. The on-site counselor collaborates with school staff and families to develop treatment goals and interventions for students. Additionally, the counselor provides professional development for school staff in de-escalation and behavior management.

After school programs include Student Council, Girls on the Run, Boys to Men, Handicrafts, Princess Ballet, Cooking Club, Young Ladies at the Top, Boys and Girls Basketball. These programs, which develop social and life skills, are facilitated by staff, local universities, and community volunteers.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Evanston is a great school where the administration, teacher leaders, and fellow staff members all support and help each other grow. The climate is conducive for making each staff member feel valued, appreciated, and accomplished. The leadership team, comprised of principal, lead teacher, and team leaders, have built a strong building community; a school family, with positive leadership and communication.

The Scoop, our weekly newsletter, includes a shout-out to a different staff member every Friday. It not only highlights what teachers are doing in their classroom, but also acknowledges the hard work and innovation of the Evanston staff.

Evanston is a team-based school. Our teacher leaders are approachable, friendly, understanding, and knowledgeable. They are the “go-to” for the answers and support that we need on a daily basis. Teacher leaders provide coaching for the staff and collaborate to solve problem areas.

Our principal believes in helping each staff member reach full potential and has devoted the bi-monthly staff meetings for professional development sessions with two primary goals. First, the Leadership Team coordinates training sessions to support the needs of our staff as it relates to instructional methods and best practice. Some areas of focus include: Providing Modifications and Accommodations for Students with Special Needs, Backwards Mapping, Effective Strategies for Teaching ELA, Math, Science; and How to Identify and Address Students’ Non-Academic Needs. For the past several years, our staff has received extensive training on two primary focus areas; Writing and Technology in the Classroom.

Secondly, regular opportunities for all certificated staff are scheduled during the year to nurture and develop new leaders and allow staff to share the wealth of knowledge among us. During staff meetings and team meetings, teachers and support staff share their expertise in the use of technology, a teaching strategy, and other instructional or non-instructional methods. Our staff members flourish in this environment where they are valued, encouraged, and supported. As a result of our on-going professional development practice in-house, several of our teachers have been utilized to conduct professional development sessions districtwide. Additionally, our principal has opened the doors of Evanston to numerous principals and their staff to confer with our leadership team on our various school initiatives and to see them in action.

The impact of our thriving school community has yielded measurable gains for our students.

4. School Leadership:

In 1970, Robert Greenleaf coined the theory, Servant Leadership. In his philosophy, this leadership style stresses increased service to others, promotes a sense of community, and models the belief of shared decision making. Evanston Academy has had consistent leadership from its administration for over 20 years. Throughout these 20 years, the leadership from the principal of Evanston Academy has proven to be a model of best practice to follow, from a school leader that has led a school into academic achievement. The principal has strategically implemented a hierarchy to activate built-in team supports, as well as promote trust and shared decision making. The infrastructure of the school is designed and operates under a team-based model. With a team leader at the helm, each division, Primary, Elementary, Intermediate, and Fine Arts all strategically move the mission and vision of the school, which promotes individualized success for every student in every seat. All team leaders report to the school-wide lead teacher who is directly responsible for school-wide academic achievement, ongoing professional development of staff, and daily instructional support for all staff.

Beyond the daily leadership, the principal ensures the complete seating and make-up of the Local School Decision Making Committee, which is made up of partners, community members, school staff, and administration. The main goals of this committee are to be the governing body of the school, promote transparency between school and community, promote the yearly goals of the school, support the vision of the principal, and moreover remain a believer in academic achievement, making sound decisions that will shape the future of all students.

The importance of this committee and governing body was demonstrated when the school's neighborhood boundary lines were redrawn by the school district, thus affecting the overall student population, student diversity, and staff allocation. With the principal's leadership of following district protocol and policies, this committee advocated on behalf of the community of Evanston, to return the original school neighborhood boundary in its entirety, in order for all students in the Evanston community to have access to a high-achieving and quality education. From a global lens, this is a strong example of how the school leadership focuses on the policies, programs, relationships, and resources needed to sustain student achievement.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One practice that has been instrumental to our success here at Evanston Academy is administrative meetings, aka “Admins.” Each grade level team, at grades three – six, comprised of teachers, intervention specialists, and reading specialist meet with the principal and school-wide lead teacher on a weekly basis. Grade level teams review student performance, assessment data, student attendance, and any other concerns or issues that may impact student achievement. The meetings are a great way to communicate clearly and effectively with administration about what is going well and what needs improvement. Administrative meetings provide a way to monitor student progress on a regular basis, adjust instructional plans as needed, and shout out any awesome achievements in the classroom. The administrators assist teams with strategic planning, goal setting, and pulling in resources such as mentors for students.

Administrative meetings provide a structure for teams to collaborate, strategize and develop plans that provide individual support for every student based on current assessment data. As noted in the data below, Evanston Academy students have demonstrated consistent academic growth over the past three years, outperforming district and state averages.

This methodical approach of strategizing instruction has led the charge for Evanston Academy, an inner-city neighborhood school, to become the only elementary school in our school district to achieve an overall ‘A’ on the Ohio State Report Card in 2019.