

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 [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Conemaugh Township Area Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1516 Tire Hill Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Johnstown State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 15905-7822

County Somerset County

Telephone (814) 479-4080 Fax (814) 479-7497

Web site/URL <https://elem.ctasd.org/> E-mail nicole.dull@ctasd.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. Thomas Kakabar E-mail thomas.kakabar@ctasd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Conemaugh Township Area School District Tel. (814) 479-3700

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 Mrs. Christine Troxell
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	27	37	64
1	28	24	52
2	34	33	67
3	36	28	64
4	30	35	65
5	36	29	65
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	191	186	377

*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
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 96 % White
 - 1 % 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: 3%

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	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	377
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 115 %

Total number students who qualify: 432

8. Students receiving special education services: 46 %

172 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>17</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>35</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>61</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>33</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>15</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 19:1

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	95%	95%	96%	94%	95%
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. 2010

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

The Conemaugh Township Area School District and community are committed to a student-focused environment that promotes responsibility, respect, and develops lifelong learning skills.

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

Neighboring the industrialized community of Johnstown, the Conemaugh Township Elementary School, located in Davidsville, Pennsylvania serves 377 students in grades K-5. Our student population is 96% white ethnicity and approximately 48% of the students take part in the free or reduced lunch program. The students and families are deeply involved in academics, arts and athletic endeavors to cultivate well-rounded students that are encouraged to give back to their community. The Conemaugh Township Area School District is committed to adhering to our mission statement by promoting a student-focused environment that promotes responsibility, respect, kindness, while providing students with a rigorous curriculum through qualified teachers and staff. The district is the central focus of the community and the hub of many of the activities and programs. Longstanding traditions, overall success, a strong work ethic, and high expectations create a nurturing environment yielding growth in the students that come into our buildings every day.

The Elementary School uses a character education program (based on monthly character education words/themes), weekly classroom meetings, and the use of WIN time (what I need) to focus on replacing negative behaviors/choices with positive alternatives. When students make a poor choice (break a rule), we have an intervention specialist that works with them over lunch and recess to identify the problem behavior, better ways to handle the issue or respond, then complete a learning activity online or write a letter or apology. Problem solving skills are also a focus, as we look at ways to empower students to identify the problem, brainstorm possible solutions, and take action on their own behalf whenever possible. Emotional needs are at the forefront and we routinely offer our teachers professional development to meet those needs with our ever-changing population. A sensory room, calming toolbox materials, and gross motor sensory pathways are available to any student in our school that may need to release anxiety, find a sense of calm, or release extra energy.

The parent/teacher partnership in our school is alive and well. Teachers utilize email, phone calls, postcards, face to face interactions and the Remind message system with parents daily. Our goal is for each teacher to make at least one positive parent contact per week. When students are struggling with academics, behavior, or attendance, we refer them to the IST (Instructional Support Team) Program. This program allows a team of teachers, parents, and the guidance counselor to meet together to develop goals and supports for the student in need. The PTA supports our school by serving as copy moms, classroom volunteers and activity coordinators. It pays for 100% of the field trips that our students attend each year as well. Had we been able to hold our annual PTA Reading Night, you would see the entire school adorned with ocean-themed decorations that matched our annual PTA Reading Night theme. This yearly event encourages our students to enjoy the benefits of reading, with an average of 75% of our elementary students and teachers participating.

Conemaugh Township Elementary (G3-G5 ELA) has grown from 75% proficient in 2014-15 to 84% in 2018-19. In addition, we have reduced the percent of students scoring below basic from 5% to 1% over that 5 year span. Conemaugh Township (G3-G5 Math) has grown from 69% proficient in 2014-15 to 84% in 2018-19 while reducing the percent of students scoring below basic from 9% to 3% over the same time frame. The trends are consistent in Science. Conemaugh Township Elementary (G4 Science) has grown from 88% proficient in 2014-15 to 97% in 2018-19 and reduced the percent below basic from 3% to 0%. This achievement can only occur through the diligent work of our teachers and staff, ensuring that our curriculum is aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. Various resources, instructional delivery practices and intervention programs are utilized to meet the needs of our diverse learners. The administration collaborates with teachers frequently to review benchmark assessments and progress towards meeting assessment anchors and standards.

In November of 2010, the Conemaugh Township Elementary School was a recipient of a National Blue Ribbon School Award. This accolade has been used on school signage, letterhead, its website, etc. to signify our ability to rise to high academic standards through student and family support. As a result of this award, our teachers and staff have validated curriculum choices, methods of instruction and parent engagement. Our status has been utilized to market the district/school to potential home buyers and businesses. A significant outcome of this award is the resulting collaboration between our school and other schools in our

area. They have been eager to observe our classrooms, collaborate with our teachers, and share ideas. While they may have reached out to learn from us, we have also learned from them. New approaches to scheduling and student grouping have been the fruits of these visits. In addition to this award, the Pennsylvania Department of Education awarded us the honor of a Distinguished Title 1 School Award during the 2019-2020 school year. This was achieved through high levels of student engagement, improvement and overall achievement.

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 Conemaugh Township Elementary School’s overall approach to curriculum, instruction and assessment can be described as a fluid program based upon the needs of our students, grounded in Pennsylvania Core Standards. Starting in April of the current school year, we look at student enrollment, student needs, staff certifications, assessments, and curriculum to determine the best methods of delivery and content of instruction. Over the summer, administrators review the results of the Pennsylvania State Assessments to determine which categories need to become priority focus areas for the upcoming school year. When teachers return prior to the start of the school year, the results are shared with them and curriculum adjustments are made. Students that do not score in the ranges of proficient or advanced are offered tutoring services through our Americorps members as well. As the new school year is underway, we utilize formative assessments, summative assessments and benchmark assessments to monitor student progress. Formative assessments are done several times a week to determine which students may need additional instruction. Summative assessments are administered at the end of each unit of study. Three times per year, Benchmark assessments are given all grade levels in both math and ELA. This provides our staff with information to make data informed decisions about the progress of their students in meeting academic standards. Most importantly, time is provided for grade level teachers to review this data with administration and plan for instructional changes.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Over the past five years, the primary level has made a series of changes to the curriculum and delivery of ELA instruction. The adoption of Wonders in grades K-2 included a year-long review of several different programs, including visits to several other schools, and discussions about the pros and needs of the program and our students. Particular emphasis was placed on the non-fiction passages, coupled with the strong development of foundational reading skills. At the intermediate level, Reading Street was adopted because of its focus on close reading and text dependent analysis. Our teachers infused a significant amount of grammar skill development with the newly adopted series, coupled with student exposure to rich literature and non-fiction text.

Within the past three years, a number of assessments have been added to our core curriculum to help make data driven decisions. The reading specialists and reading teachers in grades K-2 administer DRA2 to all students three times per year, including progress monitoring on a bi-weekly basis. Kindergarten and first grade use a beginning decoding survey, coupled with an advanced decoding survey in second grade. At least twice per year, DIBELS testing is administered to students in grades K-3. Linkit! benchmark testing is administered to students in grades 2-5 three times a year to guide instruction and determine student groupings. Conemaugh Township Elementary (G3-G5 ELA) has grown from 75% proficient in 2014-15 to 84% in 2018-19. In addition, we have reduced the percent of students scoring below basic from 5% to 1% over that 5 year span.

Various instructional approaches have been utilized to meet the needs of our students. An RTII program exists to support all students in grades K-2. In order to maintain a robust program, we have at least 12 staff members servicing the 52-63 students in each grade. This includes the grade level teachers, reading specialists, aides, and special area teachers in our “all hands on deck” approach. Using various assessments, students are grouped according to need, and receive intensive, skill-based ELA instruction for 25 minutes per day. Students are re-assessed after 10 weeks, and new groups are formed. If students are at benchmark, they spend this time working on extension and enrichment activities to challenge them and encourage additional higher order thinking and questioning. The resources we have to deliver these lessons have grown exponentially over the past three years. A book room has been added to our building that hosts multiples levels and genres of books that help to review phonics skills, grade level vocabulary, and spelling patterns.

Team teaching and content specific teaching assignments utilized in grades 2-5 allow staff to specialize their instruction with concentration in either math or reading. Collaboration exists between and among grade levels, through weekly and monthly meetings. Google sheets have been created and shared between teachers to track student progress, curriculum resource usage and academic vocabulary. Preparation for the PSSA is an ongoing practice using various resources and teachers utilize tracking methods to ensure all standards are covered effectively by the end of the school year.

1c. Mathematics

The Conemaugh Township Elementary School's math program may be considered one of the strongest tested areas of the district. Conemaugh Township is highly regarded by our peers for our outstanding achievement in mathematics demonstrated through some of the highest proficiency levels in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Conemaugh Township (G3-G5 Math) has grown from 69% proficient in 2014-15 to 84% in 2018-19 while reducing the percent of students scoring below basic from 9% to 3% over the same time frame. Fifth grade math scores were 90% proficient and advanced in the spring of 2019, which ranked ninth in the entire state of Pennsylvania.

The building uses the Everyday Math series for grades K-5. This curriculum has been in place for over ten years, with a recent upgrade to Everyday Math 4 after a rigorous curriculum review and approval process. Teachers add supplemental resources to the textbook series to ensure all of the standards are covered.

The math department meets to review assessments and ensure that the students are progressing in their mastery of the standards. A block schedule is in place with for additional math instruction time during the school day. Use of LinkIt! assessments and Study Island further compliments classroom instruction and is used for additional math practice for students.

Knights of the Math Table, peer tutoring, Math 24, First in Math, successful integration of technology into the classrooms, and our breakfast club further success in mathematics. Through these programs, we shift the focus from individual competition to individual improvement, recording strides made in increasing proficiency and accomplishment for all students, not just a select few. Homeroom teachers are not assigned a morning duty, which allows them to be in their classrooms to offer 1:1 or small group assistance when needed.

Home-school connections are enhanced by having teacher lesson plans online, with attachments made available to strengthen the bond between all partners. Through routine positive parent contacts, lines of communication are established to encourage parents to reach out with questions and/or comments about their child's education. Teachers have quick access to email and voicemail if parents need to gain assistance. A computer basis class has been offered in the evenings to parents so that they are equipped to navigate the technology resources their children are using in school and at home.

Staff members are also able to teach math concepts in other curricular areas throughout the day. Common planning times help facilitate this communication, which has improved student achievement. Through the use of six early dismissal days, teachers have three hour blocks of time to work amongst grade levels, collaborating on curriculum and assessments.

STEAM has infused our traditional art curriculum with activities that highlight science, technology, engineering and math. Students do everything from basket weaving and clay making to dash and dot robotics and squishy circuits.

1d. Science

Our performance on the fourth grade science state assessment has remained consistent with proficiency rates in the mid to high 90's since 2015. In addition, not one of our students has scored below basic during that time span. Other local districts have visited our school to observe and hold dialogue about our curriculum and methods of instructional delivery.

At the primary level, we call the core subject Social Living, which encompasses science and social studies concepts together. The curriculum is based upon themes, where students are exposed to activities that reinforce the concepts presented. At the intermediate level, we have adopted Interactive Science, after a rigorous review cycle. We felt this program provided our students with a balance of hands-on, textbook and online activities. The materials include non-fiction text that reinforces the reading skills students are covering in their respective grade levels.

As a supplement to the science curriculum, grade level field trips are carefully planned out so that real-world applications to content are provided for students. Kindergarten students travel to a local dairy farm, first grade students explore nature at a local camp, third grade students learn about the life cycle at the Pittsburgh Zoo, fourth graders enjoy exploring natural caves, and fifth graders dig deeper into science through Carnegie Science Center's interactive presentations. Student complete before, during and after activities to further reinforce concepts. All of these activities provide enrichment for lessons taught within the classroom.

A newly constructed outdoor classroom has been erected on school grounds, taking the learning outside in its natural element. Through horticulture lessons, planting projects and cultivating activities, students are utilizing hands-on methods to interact with our environment. Our teachers felt this new learning space was vital to our school and conducted various fund raising activities to bring this dream to reality.

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

Our social studies curriculum is taught across numerous educational platforms. At the primary, the core is called Social Living with both science and social studies standards covered together. These are thematic units aligned with grade level ELA and math standards. At the intermediate level, we recently adopted myWorld after a rigorous review process. This new program is a balanced program that includes reading skills, online activities that allow the students to interact with non-fiction while meeting the academic standards.

As a building, we focus on character education, which supports the citizenship component of social studies. We highlight one character word per month and engage students in weekly classroom meetings to talk about examples and application of that word in real-life terms. Problem solving is a constant focus, with students being recognized on a weekly basis for working together for a common good.

Career education and entrepreneurship are taught in tandem with social studies through units of study and Junior Achievement. Our guidance counselor and high school students present the material to students which has proven to be quite engaging and successful. Students learn how to collaborate and work with other others in a hierarchy to produce products and understand marketing strategies. This is the building block for the sixth grade program called Biz World, which allows students to create and execute a business plan for third and fourth grade customers to become consumers in.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At the Conemaugh Township Elementary School, students have the opportunity to grow through an enriching and rigorous curriculum taught through a variety of subject areas. STEAM, library, computers, music, and physical education are delivered to students at least once every six days in every grade level, K-5. In fourth grade, students are offered recorders, and in fifth grade, band is offered to all students once per six day cycle. Our guidance counselor team-teaches lessons with the computer teacher one day per week. These lessons are offered to students in both first and third grade.

Students can enjoy a multitude of activities in their physical education classes. Roller blading, and all of the appropriate safety equipment and techniques, have been used and taught for almost 20 years. The building has a rock wall, speed stacking kits, archery equipment, rail system, and all necessary equipment to teach

students the basic athletic games such as basketball, football, baseball, and volleyball. New this year is the addition of 24 bicycles that will be introduced to fourth graders as we focus on bike safety, the positive environmental impacts of bicycling vs. driving, and the health benefits incurred. Lessons on healthy food choices and anti-drug initiatives are also included throughout the school year for all students. The goal of our physical education program is to focus on overall wellness through healthy choices and life-long activities to keep students on the move as they progress into adulthood and beyond.

As you walk down the hallway near the back of the building, you may hear ukuleles and Djembe drums making music. Students also enjoy learning keyboarding basics through the use of our mallet program. These outlets empower our students to tap into their creative side while learning about rhythm, patterns, tone and pitch. The recorder program for all fourth grade students is the precursor to our pre-band program, in which we make sure every student has an instrument, regardless of financial ability. Spring concerts for all students in grades K-5 round out the school year with packed houses on each night of the performances.

Our STEAM program was created eight years ago to combine science, technology, engineering, math and art into a cohesive discipline. While students learn about artists, art mediums and techniques on a regular basis, they also learn about the science behind color, and the engineering behind beautiful structures such as the Golden Gate Bridge and Falling Water. Our STEAM teacher collaborates with grade level teachers to support the content they are delivering, allowing us to team teach in some instances. Student work is also displayed and judged at the annual Dressler Arts Center Show in Somerset, PA. Various ribbons have been awarded to our students based upon their successful entries.

Conemaugh Township boasts a computer lab and classes for all students, as well as evening technology classes for adults in the district. While there, classes hone their technology skills with word processing, excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, and Google documents. Internet searches, social media appropriateness, and safety are continual practices. The use of Study Island in the lab also supports our core curriculum areas for remediation and extra practice.

With our library curriculum, we are continuing the facility's transformation into a true media center with additional experiences in computing and the infusion of other technologies for our classes. Cross-curricular activities with the language arts teachers have allowed the students to become "critics" of books from various genres. Accelerated Reader programming is also an important piece of our library instruction. The décor of the library received a face lift two years ago when a creative parent transformed it into Neverland, with silhouettes of Peter Pan and his crew adorning the walls, and the check-out counter transformed into a pirate ship.

Our guidance counselor is team teaching with the computer teacher and servicing students in first and third grade with career lessons, as well as a unit on mindfulness. Guest speakers from various vocations have visited with our students, talking about their job duties and educational background. Through the mindfulness lessons, we have seen students learn how to self-regulate, improve focus, and increase socialization skills.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

In an effort to support students in our school that are currently working below grade level, we utilize a number of programs and supports to meet their needs. Once benchmark data is collected, students are homogeneously grouped for reading and math instruction so that the teacher can focus his/her teaching on the specific levels and deficits. Differentiated instruction is utilized to meet the needs of our learners, and the groupings are very fluid. Students can move between instructional groups throughout the year, as their needs change. We also utilize the LinkIt! Benchmarking program to determine the growth of our students in math and reading three times per year. This information is utilized to design instruction to meet the varying needs of our students. In grades K-2, a robust RTII program is utilized to offer intensive reading instruction in small groups so that building block skills can be solidified and the approaches are individualized as much as possible. In each of our reading classes in grades K-3, guided reading is conducted with the help of a

certified reading specialist and an instructional aide. Before and after school tutoring services compliment these aforementioned programs so that students also receive skill review and homework support. Our school is one of very few that also runs an Instructional Support Program, made up of the guidance counselor, teachers and the parent. We meet as a team and identify the needs of the struggling learner, as well as interventions the team feels would benefit him/her. Meetings are held every thirty days to determine if the interventions are appropriate or not. If we are not seeing the growth we feel is beneficial for the child, we refer them to an evaluation through our school psychologist.

3b. Students performing above grade level

In an effort to support students in our school that are currently working above grade level, we utilize a number of programs and supports to meet their needs. Once benchmark data is collected, students are homogeneously grouped for reading and math instruction so that the teacher can focus his/her teaching on the specific levels and strengths. Differentiated instruction is utilized to meet the needs of our learners, and the groupings are very fluid. Students can move between instructional groups throughout the year, as their needs change. We also utilize the LinkIt! Benchmarking program to determine the growth of our students in math and reading three times per year. This information is utilized to design instruction to meet the varying needs of our students. In grades K-2, a robust RTII program is utilized to offer above level reading instruction in small groups so that students can be challenged and the approaches are individualized as much as possible. The OLSAT is administered to students in grades 2 and 5 each year. Once that assessment data is received, we identify students with an IQ above 130 and utilize the SAGES testing program as a pre-qualifier for extensive gifted testing. If a student is found to be exceptional, we refer them to the school psychologist for a full panel of testing. Gifted support services are offered to qualifying students in grades K-5 so that their gifted and talented needs can be met. In an effort to grow their leadership skills, we also run a buddy club in the mornings, allowing our gifted fifth grade students to work with first grade students in need of extra reinforcement and review.

3c. Special education

The Conemaugh Township Area School District tailors instruction, interventions, and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of various student populations. Students' and parents' rights under Pennsylvania Special Education law and regulations, found in Chapters 14 (the Pennsylvania School Code) are followed, and the Federal Individuals Disabilities Education Act amendments of 2004, commonly referred to as IDEA 2004, as reauthorized, are always considerations when planning for student programming.

Upon identifying any student who qualifies for special education services, the IEP Team attempts to include the student in the regular school and classroom environment to the maximum extent possible. The district's commitment to L.R.E. (Least Restrictive Environment) is on-going; meaning that placement outside of the regular education environment for any portion of the day is made only after input and consideration from all of the IEP Team including the student's parents or guardians. Supplementary aids and services that are provided at Conemaugh Township are unique to each student's needs and identified by the IEP team. Examples may include the following, based on each child's individual needs and team agreement:

- Consultation between regular educators and service providers such as occupational therapists, speech/language therapist, or physical therapists.
- Collaboration with PaTTAN for direct support with the Autism Initiative.
- Collaboration with the special education coordinator at the local career and technology center
- Specialized transportation to meet the physical needs of identified students
- Counseling supports and social skills instruction (via the guidance counselor, school social worker, or emotional support teacher, as specified in the student's IEP)

- Positive behavior support plans as part of individualized education programs
- Use of "check-in, check-out" methodology as provided by special education teachers and support staff
- Consultation between the regular educators and special education teachers supporting the child's learning, including those special education teachers who serve in a co-teaching model.

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

At the present time, we do not have any ELL students in our building. In the event that we would enroll an ELL student, we have two teachers on staff that are certified and experienced with ELL programming. In addition to our own staffing, there are also supports available through the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 that we would engage if necessary. During the scheduling process, we keep in mind that ELL needs may arise and therefore, we make room in schedules to allow for such services.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The Conemaugh Township Elementary School uses a multi-layer team approach to create a warm and welcoming environment. As soon as students enter the building, positive mindset posters and messages greet them. Students are encouraged to make encouraging choices through a school-wide positive behavior theme. This year's theme centered on developing students with strong moral character and problem-solving skills. Each month, classroom meetings focused on one of nine different areas: anti-bullying, problem solving, communication, acts of kindness, growth mindset, metacognition, citizenship, respect and responsibility. Our teachers and staff are encouraged to display student work and provide positive feedback on a frequent basis. The emotional growth of students is supported through mindfulness lessons and interventions from both our school social worker and guidance counselor. A lunch bunch program allows students to eat lunch with the guidance counselor and work on friendship skills, personal interactions and ways to cope with parent divorce, moving to a new school and/or the birth of a new sibling. We realize that basic needs of our students must be met so that learning can be maximized. These include the need to be seen, heard, respected, safe, belonging and nourishment. When we see a student that is struggling with one of these needs, we refer them to our Student Assistance Program so that we can work towards offering support. A weekend backpack food program exists to ensure meals are provided at home over the weekends as well. Students also have opportunities to explore their talents in various on-campus and after school activities. Our elementary music program allows them to play an instrument in grades 4 and 5, while also attending local music festivals and concerts. The reading team allows our students to compete with others academically through enriching literature. Students with a talent in art are showcased at the Philip Dressler Arts Center show every February. Our PTA is a strong group that provides opportunities for students to visit local museums and establishments to learn more about local history and to provide them with many career-based experiences. They also host an annual reading night to encourage a love of books through hands-on activities. In addition, there are many community based activities for students such as girl and boy scouts, AYSO soccer, little league, youth football, cheering, and Good News Club. We encourage community involvement that engages students in volunteer opportunities and citizenship.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Conemaugh Township Elementary School believes that the education of children is a joint responsibility, one it shares with the parents of the school community. To ensure that the best interests of the child are served in this process, a strong program of communication between home and school must be maintained. We utilize our school district website, Facebook page and automated phone messaging system to keep open lines of communication. In addition, each teacher has their own classroom webpage in which they can conduct routine collaboration between the classroom and the home.

The Conemaugh Township Elementary School promotes that the following activities be implemented to encourage parent-school cooperation:

- Parent-teacher conferences to permit two-way communication between home and school.
- "Meet the Teacher Night" to provide parents with the opportunity to see the school facilities, meet the faculty and sample the program on a first-hand basis.
- The Conemaugh Township Elementary School shall hold an open house at least annually.
- School-Parent Compact in which parents are given an opportunity to update the compact that is currently in place.
- Meetings of parents and staff members to explain and discuss matters of general interest with regard to child-school, child-home, or child-home-school relationships.

- Parents have access to Power School, which will give them a daily update of their child's academic progress, daily assignments, attendance, and current lunch balance.

For the benefit of children, the Conemaugh Township Elementary School believes that parents have a responsibility to encourage their child's career in school by:

- Supporting the school in requiring that children observe all school rules and regulations, and by accepting responsibility for their children's willful in-school behavior.
- Sending children to school with proper attention to their health, personal cleanliness and dress.
- Maintaining an active interest in the student's daily work and making it possible for the student to complete assigned homework by providing suitable conditions for study.
- Reading all communications from the school, and signing and returning them promptly when required.
- Cooperating with the school in attending conferences to set up for the exchange of information on the child's progress in school.
- Participating in school activities and special functions.

The community plays a number of roles in the education of our students. Various community members serve as volunteers, providing support through copy assistance, classroom helpers and presenters during special learning activities. In turn, we recognize the contributions of our community members through our annual Veterans Day Program and Luncheon, visits to the area nursing homes and informational trips to the various service organizations located within our community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The superintendent's philosophy is steeped in developing a sense of trust, ownership, and self-worth throughout the organization. This goal can be reached through sharing the decision making process with the stakeholders and valuing the input from teachers and staff. Monthly meetings are conducted to solicit teacher needs and determine resources that can support their needs both in and outside of the classroom. The group discusses best practices with a focus on consistent and continual improvement of the instruction delivered in the school. Through this process, we have found that teachers are empowered to become true educational leaders who help guide schedules, curriculum and the learning processes in the school. Activities to promote the social and emotional needs of our teachers and staff are abundant, everything from soup club, an exercise challenge to staff shout outs help to recognize positive contributions. Weddings and births are recognized through our social club as a means to celebrate these important milestones. Professional development needs are identified through the use of a yearly professional development survey. This gives our teachers the opportunity to identify the areas where they would like to focus on and grow as professionals. We encourage collaboration between our teachers and often share teaching techniques at faculty meetings which have contributed to a positive impact on students. Over the last several years, due to our academic success, neighboring school districts have visited our classrooms, which has given our teachers the ability to share instructional strategies that they have developed that have led to our success. When new teachers are onboarded, they are assigned a mentor that will offer support throughout the year in their new position. This induction program partners with the Appalachia Intermediate Unit through bi-monthly workshops and activities that focus on classroom management, instructional delivery and professional responsibilities. New teachers also meet with district administration to answer questions and confirm effective classroom practices. Common planning periods, grade level and department meetings, an effective curriculum cycle and administrative support create a workplace of collaboration, which secures effective instruction and achievement in each of our classrooms.

4. School Leadership:

The principal at Conemaugh Township Elementary School for the past thirteen years credits the school's success to the foundation of a shared vision built upon communication and consistency. These ideals are exemplified by, and partnered with, parents, students, staff and administration.

Communication between all partners helps everyone involved in the learning process to know what the expectations are, and how we can all work together to meet and exceed them. Teachers make and record at least one positive parent contact per week. Assessment schedules and test scores are shared with and explained to parents. The administration regularly meets with specific curricular and grade level teacher groups to discuss best practices and focus on consistent and continual improvement of the instruction delivered at the school. When communication is involved, it not only matters what you say, but how you say it.

Consistency further supports the success of the building. Students know what is expected of them from day 1 to day 180. We have a school-wide program of positive behavior supports that identifies the expectations, rewards and interventions. There is no question regarding how they should act and how they adults will respond. Teamwork is encouraged and expected, by not only students, but also our teachers and staff. Staff members are consistent with the curriculum they deliver, and when they teach specific skills. Administrators visit multiple classrooms on a daily basis to support the work that is being done. They are there to provide the support and encouragement necessary for all the students and adults in the building.

The principal's personal leadership style encompasses the importance of shared leadership amongst her staff and encouraging teacher leaders. While she utilizes a hands-on approach to running the building and making curriculum decisions, she relies heavily on the input of her teachers and encourages them to take a leadership role on various projects. Through this approach, teacher buy-in is maximized and they see the value first-hand. Over the past year, Mrs. Dull has entered into a Superintendent Eligibility Program through Gannon University. This program has allowed her to see the impact her school programs have on the middle/high school, as well as learn about the leadership styles and curriculum programs in which other participants engage.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

We at Conemaugh Township view ourselves as a community with a shared vision. It all centers on acting as a cohesive team, individualizing the education to meet the needs of the students. Our team, EVERYONE—students, parents, teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, community members—works together to a united goal of supporting needs and growth of all students. It was important to solicit the thoughts of our stakeholders to complete this portion of our application. Overwhelmingly, all responded community values are reflected in the teamwork of everyone involved.

Our Title I designation invites our faculty to work together to provide the best, most integrated, and cross-curricular instruction for each student. Working together not only promotes the best learning opportunities for students, but also lends itself to professional development of skills within our own learning and individual growth. We collaborate to approach learning through development of the whole child at Conemaugh Township. Willingness of teachers to unite and share ideas within and between grade levels sets us apart. Our teachers are always communicating, going the extra mile to do the best for our students. They discuss what has worked, what hasn't, and what needs more attention as students move to the next grade. In addition, the administration strives to keep staff morale high through staff support and appreciation. This creates a positive school learning environment, which promotes high academic achievement and students feel safe and supported.

The team is more than the teachers and principal. It extends to include bus drivers, cafeteria workers, secretaries, custodians, teachers, aides and administrators. Since students know they are genuinely cared for by all, they strive to meet high expectations.

At Conemaugh Township, we realize that equity does not mean equality. We individualize approaches with children, taking into account abilities, socio-economic needs, emotional needs, and other facets that make students individuals. Our therapies, RTII, lunch bunch, Tribe Time program, backpack food program, music programs, instructional groupings, character education quests, and classroom meetings support the individual needs of students. Our teachers go beyond differentiating instruction; through flexible grouping and personalized student support, they meet our learners' needs. Daily, formative assessments are used in the classroom to guide instructional delivery to meet our diverse learners. Three times year, we review cohort and individual student growth to make data-informed decisions. What works for one student may not work for others, and we think outside of the box to meet student needs.

Our teachers, staff and students do not function as separate entities. We are all important pieces to a puzzle. Each individual is blessed with many gifts that complement the next. Each piece fits together to make one beautifully created masterpiece. #TeamTownship, #PrideintheTribe