

U.S. Department of Education
2019 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 Mr. Anthony Morse

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

Official School Name Boulan Park Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3570 Northfield Parkway

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Troy MI 48084-1422
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Oakland County

Telephone (248) 823-4900

Fax

Web site/URL https://boulan.troy.k12.mi.us

E-mail amorse@troy.k12.mi.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.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Richard Machesky

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail rmachesky@troy.k12.mi.us

District Name Troy School District Tel. (248) 823-4000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Karl Schmidt

(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 2019 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 2013 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: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	165	143	308
7	135	138	273
8	136	147	283
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	436	428	864

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 55 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 39 % White
 - 0 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: 8%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	21
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	42
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	63
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	828
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 12 %
104 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Tamil, Portuguese, Marathi, Albanian, Telugu, Hindi, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Bengali, French, Kannada, Bosnian, Konkani, Arabic, Romanian, Urdu, Panjabi, Tagalog, Ukranian

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7 %
Total number students who qualify: 64

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
49 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>10</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>18</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to 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.	39
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
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 22:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	98%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

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.

Boulan Park Middle School will be an exemplary learning community supporting creativity, personal responsibility, and innovation while fostering a caring and collaborative community.

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

Boulan Park Middle School is located in the western portion of Troy, Michigan, a suburban city north of Detroit. Troy boasts a strong business community and many families move to Troy because of its superb school district and proximity to the automotive industry. Boulan Park Middle School was named after H. H. (Dutch) Boulan, a local resident who donated land that was used to develop a community park and Boulan Park Middle School, both named after him.

Boulan Park Middle School, built in 1973, is located across a small street from one of our three feeder Elementary Schools and, as stated previously, near a city park. The vast majority of our graduating 8th graders will attend Troy High School. Boulan Park currently enrolls 870 students in grades 6, 7, and 8. The school is very diverse, with more than 30 different languages spoken amongst our students.

The curriculum at Boulan Park Middle School supports students academically. We have a 1:1 iPad program and use a software platform extensively to support online learning. The general education curriculum consists of math, English/Language Arts, science, and social studies courses. Electives include health, physical education, Spanish, French, applied engineering, video tech, yearbook, life skills, and an online learning digital applications class. We also have a renowned fine arts program consisting of art, drawing, and ceramics classes and a music program with choir, band and orchestra classes. There is a yearly musical in the spring and Variety Show in the fall. Boulan Park houses an Autism program and students from the general education population support their peers by working as LINKS with these students. Special education and English language learner teachers enable all students to strive for academic success and our support staff consists of counselors, a psychologist, social worker, speech pathologist, and occupational therapist. We also have a literacy coach and instructional coaches.

The teaching staff is passionate about providing opportunities for deep learning for our students. A perfect example is the annual 8th Grade trip to Washington DC. The English/Language Arts teachers center their lessons on Lucy Calkins' Readers and Writers Workshop models, the science teachers structure many hands-on lab opportunities, especially the annual 6th grade heart dissection at one of our feeder elementary schools. Our 6th graders practice service learning and work in tandem with the 5th grade elementary students to dissect a cow's heart and learn about leadership, as well. Mathematics teachers structure lessons around the 8 principles of mathematics practice, and the Social Studies teachers provide extended learning opportunities and National History Day project creation.

Athletic opportunities are available in both intramural and interscholastic teams for boys and girls in the fall, winter, and spring. We offer many clubs for students, as well.

Our Media Center is staffed with a Teacher Librarian and before-school student aides. Lessons in the Media Center support positive classroom research projects and positive digital citizenship. The Troybery reading program is one of the most comprehensive reading programs in the area—the school community reads newly-released books every year and votes in a bracket format in order to choose the winner. The Troy Public Library and the community at large strongly believe in this endeavor.

Parental support is very strong. Boulan Park Middle School has a vibrant Parent Teacher Organization. These parents enhance the learning environment at Boulan Park in many ways. Parents volunteer by shelving books in the media center, with running the two book fairs, as chaperones on the annual 8th grade Civil War field trip to the Troy Historical Museum, and by selling spirit wear at parent conferences and the Welcome Back Ice Cream Social/Club Fair at the start of the school year.

Connectedness is at the heart of our Character Education program. Students are encouraged to take part in clubs and athletics. There are pep rallies to boost participation in after-school activities and we have seen growth in participation in this area. Counselors provide seminars in resilience, easing anxiety, test-taking strategies and happiness/gratitude for students at each grade level. These seminars were created in response to student survey data.

Boulan Park Middle School is a warm, welcoming, diverse, and high-achieving school. The school community works well together, and this synergy enables us to continue to strive for excellence.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The English Language Arts curriculum is aimed toward creating life-long readers and writers by immersing them in Lucy Calkins' workshop model. Through the use of read-alouds, mentor texts, minilessons, and conferring, students are taught a variety of reading and writing skills that are then applied directly into their own reading and writing experiences, both inside the classroom and beyond. As the Troy School District has partnered with the Teacher's College Reading and Writing Institute (an affiliate of Columbia University in New York City), many Boulton Park Middle School English Language Arts teachers have received professional training in the workshop methodology. Through this implementation, the reading and writing instruction become more powerful for each student as the thinking, talking, and reflection on their reading and writing becomes more complex. To begin the year, students focus on closely studying character development in fiction. Following that, each grade level focuses on different literary genres throughout the year (including fantasy, adventure, and prose in sixth grade, mystery and realistic fiction in seventh grade, and historical fiction and social issues in eighth grade). The writing curriculum throughout all grade levels is based on writing progressions and is composed of narrative, informational, and argumentative pieces. Various formative and summative assessments are implemented to monitor students' progress. These assessments include on-demand writing samples, pre- and post-reading and writing reflections, individual and small-group conferences with a teacher and student(s), student note-taking during a unit, collaborative presentations, published writing pieces, student-created text sets to accompany a book study, etc. These continuous assessments enable teachers to individualize minilessons and small-group work to meet the needs of all students, allowing each reader and writer an opportunity for individualized instruction.

1b. Mathematics:

Lesson plans are developed using Common Core Standards for Mathematics. These lessons integrate research-based strategies such as the 8 Mathematical Practices to ensure that all students learn. Many approaches are used throughout all three grade levels. Students are grouped according to ability, not grade level, as many Math classes are comprised of students at different grade levels. Math placement is based on state standardized testing, districts assessments, grades and teacher recommendations in 6th grade. New flexible furniture enables the math classroom to be a dynamic environment and allows for student choice, even whether to stand or sit in more traditional configurations.

Common assessments and learning targets, along with formative and summative assessments, provide math instructors with data to decipher and analyze. These results become the new basis for new learning opportunities and second opportunities for students to master objectives and standards.

1c. Science:

The science curriculum is designed to expose students to the true nature of science by immersing them in experiences that help them think and act like scientists. They are exposed to real-world problems in the classroom and use critical thinking techniques to not only answer questions but generate questions in order to design their own investigations. Through this active, curious, inquiry-based approach, students rely on collecting extensive evidence to support or deny claims and explain their findings through deductive reasoning. The instructional approach is geared towards engaging in activities before learning core concepts. Students are encouraged to see the scientific process through a lens which highlights observations and analysis of data as the learning tools to explain phenomena in the world around them and that predictions can and should be challenged and revised. As students navigate the curriculum, the classroom focus is centered around a balance of oral and written expression, with an emphasis on learning through productive discourse among peers. All lessons are designed to fulfill the appropriate grade-level expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and enhance learning by exercising the Science and

Engineering Practices (SEP's) within that framework. In order to provide students with the most fruitful learning opportunity, each science teacher is piloting at least two new curricula this year, which the district will vote on by the end of the school year. Implementation of the new curriculum will begin during the next school year. Through a series of formative and summative assessments, student growth and learning are monitored for progress. Assessments vary in format such as: pre- and post-tests, performance tasks, lab reports, and oral presentations. Assessments also serve as reflective tools for teachers to improve, change, or revisit lessons, and provide students with the support they need to achieve their learning goals.

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

The social studies curriculum is centered around learning through rigorous activities and discussion. Activities include developing claims and backing them with evidence and reasoning, researching questions using databases in order to find primary sources to support their answers, practicing map skills, analyzing current events, and learning social studies in terms of historical context and multiple perspectives. Debates, simulations, group projects, Culture of Thinking routines, and guest speakers help to make the curriculum come alive for students and enable them to see how social studies relates to their everyday lives and the world around them.

Student-centered learning opportunities in social studies occur through completion of an extended-learning project in 6th grade and a National History Day project in 8th Grade. These projects enable all learners to more deeply investigate a topic that interests them, research this topic in-depth with the assistance of our media specialist, social studies teachers, and language arts teachers, and create a meaningful final product that is shared within the school and district. The social studies curriculum adheres to the Michigan State Social Studies Standards. Teachers use formative and summative data to align lessons and activities to strengthen learning for all students. Teachers collaborate within the department to plan events and lessons for students.

1e. For secondary schools:

We support career and college readiness by giving students' academic knowledge and skills to be prepared for high school, college, and any career program. Seventh grade English Language Arts students explore careers and interview someone in a field of interest. Students develop portfolios highlighting their work during their 6th, 7th, and 8th grade years, which includes writing a proper resume, and present these portfolios in a culminating activity called Apt to Succeed. Participants showcase their portfolios to members of the Troy Chamber of Commerce in a 15-20-minute interview to reflect on their growth in achievement skills, teamwork skills, and personal managements skills while developing relationships with members of the professional community.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Art (visual or performing): Arts and Ceramics are semester-long electives offered to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The state art standards used are based on the elements and principles of design. Daily objectives center around modeling and demonstrations. A written step-by-step guide is provided for students, video demonstrations are also available on Schoology. These modalities allow for differentiation and student choice, as well as the opportunity to create projects based on student ability and interest.

Physical Education/Health/Nutrition: The physical education department teaches 6th graders in an every-other-day, year-long format, 7th grade PE is a quarter-long class. There are also 8th grade optional semester-long PE classes. Physical education ensures learning standards are addressed while emphasizing that students are physically active and have fun while learning. We want our students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to lead healthy active lives and have fun being active. Besides teaching physical and fitness skills, we want the students to learn life skills and social skills. This allows for a holistic approach to

the students' physical, cognitive and affective growth. Examples of skills that we want the students to acquire are personal responsibility such as: self-control, self-motivation, and self-effort. In addition, we want students to acquire social responsibility such as: respecting others needs and interests, cooperation, and contributing to the well-being of both individuals and others.

Health and Nutrition is a quarter-long class that all 7th graders take. Students learn about proper nutrition and topics such as positive mental health. Health and nutrition classes are based on state standards and are differentiated.

Foreign Languages: We offer year-long Spanish 1 and French 1 at Boulan Park Middle School. Students also have the option to take year-long Chinese 1 or Japanese 1 at Troy High School as a first hour of their day. All language classes are high school level courses and receive high school credit as well as counting towards a student's high school grade point average. To study a new language is to re-learn your own. Students gain broader knowledge of how language functions, how meaning is created, how parts of speech fit together, and how languages and cultures with common roots evolve.

Technology/Library/Media: The Boulan Park Middle School library is large and spacious, allowing all students easy access to all areas. Laptops are available to use at any of the tables which are at varying heights. Help is available to reach high bookshelves when the media center is open. Students can access the library catalog through the Discover app on their district-provided iPads as well as online databases through the media center app both in and out of school. The media specialist accommodates all learners, whether they are from our populations of English Language Learners, general education, or special education, through guiding them to be goal-directed in their research so they can create purposeful, authentic projects based on personal interest to become resourceful, knowledgeable, motivated lifelong learners. All learners participate in the media center through differentiated lessons in many classes including ELA and social studies and through checking out books just right for their wants and needs that the media specialist assists them in finding.

Applied Engineering is a project-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) class for both 7th and 8th graders. Students apply their knowledge in Math and Science to design, build, test, and analyze real world problems. For example, students build wind turbines and solar cars to learn about different types of sustainable energy. Students use algebra to calculate turbine efficiency and trigonometry to find out the launch distance of their bottle rockets. The purpose of this class is to give students opportunities to apply their knowledge in problem solving of the field of STEM.

Digital Applications is a 7th grade semester-long class. All 7th graders take it, and this fulfills the State requirement for online secondary learning. Video Technology classes are a semester-long elective offered to 8th graders. Both of these classes enable students to learn 21st century digital citizenship in a real-world setting.

Life Skills is a semester-long 7th and 8th grade elective. Students in Life Skills learn how to budget for and prepare meals, as well as learn beginning sewing skills. The class is also based on modeling and differentiated, hands-on activities.

3. Special Populations:

Boulan Park Middle School has a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). This includes the special education teachers, Autism Spectrum Disorder teacher, support staff, the English Language Development staff, and reading specialist. We also have math support classes that are co-taught. The first level of intervention occurs in the classroom with the classroom teacher. For students that need extra academic support in reading students receive services from our reading specialist. They may also qualify to be pulled out of general education classrooms for special services. The hours and times vary based on the students' Individualized Education Plan. In math, the first level of intervention is also in the classroom with the general education teacher. If additional support is needed the student is recommended for a Math Connections class where a team-taught approach between a general and special education teacher is utilized to help fill in the gaps. These interventions support the learning in the general education classroom and vary

based on student needs. The end goal for students is to return to the general education classroom after intensive instruction without support.

Our school has a high English Language Learner (ELL) population. Students receive support from EL (English Language) teachers either as a pull-out or push-in service. This program also supports the general education classroom by frontloading important vocabulary for upcoming units, reviewing key concepts, and providing basic English instruction.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Boulan Park Middle School provides many opportunities for students to be involved and engaged. We have many academic clubs for students to participate in. Forensics, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, and Model UN are just some of the clubs that enable our students to engage academically in a social setting after school. Social-emotional based clubs like the Connectors Club, Club Green, and STAND (Students Taking A New Direction) give our students the chance to give back to their school and community. We provide intramural and interscholastic sports programs for boys and girls at all grade levels and offer a variety show and a spring musical, along with a strong fine arts program consisting of art, choir, orchestra, and band.

We have pep rallies to build community and recognize student participation in seasonal activities, sports, and clubs. Activity Days after school give students the opportunity to play table tennis, board games, and dance to music. Boulan Park Middle School planned two tailgates this year, one during the fall and one during the winter sports season, where students, parents, and staff could interact and have fun as a community.

Teachers feel supported due to the efforts of both school and district administration and the highly-collaborative environment here. There is an open-door policy and administrators are visible in the building. Staff members are part of the interview panels for new hires and our viewpoints are sought out. The majority of teachers that work at Boulan Park Middle School stay here. That is a testament to the culture of the building.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

An integral part of the success of our school is our ability to foster positive and meaningful relationships with our families and community. Just as we take into consideration the whole student, we also consider the whole family. Staff members at every level in this school work diligently to keep lines of communication open to ensure that families are up-to-date on important information inside and outside of the classroom, whether through communication through Schoology, an online platform that students and parents can access to view grades and course materials, or through other means. The Bronco Bulletin, a weekly digital update using Adobe Spark software, is sent out to parents and includes important information about calendar events, schoolwide accomplishments, district updates, and helpful links, among other things. The school has a Twitter account (@bpbroncos) which highlights exciting lessons and events that occur within our school. Many teachers also have their own professional Twitter accounts to share their daily work and classroom experiences. These avenues for communication allow families to connect with teachers and staff at their own convenience.

Every September, the school hosts an Open House which is one of the first community-building events of the year. Teachers welcome parents and family members in their classrooms to provide them with an overview of the year, establish relationships with new parents and foster relationships with familiar parents, and showcase the learning environment. A club fair and ice cream social are also hosted in the fall to encourage students to participate in extra-curricular activities while creating a welcoming atmosphere for new families to develop relationships with other families and staff members.

Parents, grandparents, school board members, and other community members attend an evening celebration to view National History Day projects. The Special Services Parent Advisory Council (SSPAC) is a group of parents that hosts workshops for parents with special needs. The Troy Police Department School Liaison Office also visits our Digital Apps classes to inform students on the dangers of cyber bullying. Throughout the school year, many events such as the book fair and, fall and winter tailgates are supported through strong parent and community involvement.

One unique aspect about our school is the number of English Language Learners. Our English Language

Department (ELD) has a strong outreach program which communicates with parents on a regular basis in addition to hosting a parent luncheon, welcome back night for the whole district to assist with placements, iPad usage, and registering for PowerSchool. In addition, our ELD outreach extends tutoring services and works with the Troy Public Library to aid in providing resources. There is a Boulan Park coffee hour for newcomer parents as well as multiple opportunities for students to engage in the outside community (churches, museums, etc.).

3. Professional Development:

Professional Development is designed to meet the needs of the teachers as they work towards achieving their teaching and learning goals. There are many opportunities for whole-group, grade-level, and departmental development. We have participated in all-staff book clubs on books such as *Creating Cultures of Thinking* by Ron Ritchhart and *Mindset* by Carole Dweck. Discussions of these books benefit students and teachers directly as they provide insight to nurturing flourishing and productive classroom cultures. Through these book clubs, teachers are able to reflect on their own teaching practices while collaborating with members across all departments to explore new teaching methods and learning strategies.

Professional development at Boulan Park Middle School has also been embedded in Instructional Rounds which gives staff the chance to step inside each other's classrooms and learn through observation and reflection. Teachers exchange feedback and learn about other methodologies through this experience. Furthermore, professional development at the building level exists through teacher-facilitated learning sessions that are related to the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students.

Content Area Teams (known as CAT Teams) provide teachers the means to enhance our curriculum and work together to ensure deep learning for all of our students. CAT work centers around developing and honing Ambitious Learning Outcomes and enables us to enhance our daily lessons to provide learning for all students.

4. School Leadership:

Our school's leadership approach is highly encouraging and collaborative. Teachers and staff are provided with many opportunities to showcase their leadership skills to collectively bring the building vision to life. The School Improvement team, which consists of two teachers, two administrators, and one counselor, has expanded to include other members of the staff, such as our two Innovation Coaches. Together, the two teams have worked together to assist at-risk students feel more connected to their school by kickstarting the Boulan Outreach program. This program is a collaboration between Boulan Park Middle School and all of the preschools in the Troy School District. Our principal and assistant principal have shown strong support for such initiatives, which empowers teachers and staff members to pursue further endeavors, ambitious goals for the betterment of our students, staff, and community.

The leadership philosophy in our building is also a reflection of the district-level leadership philosophy, which aims to provide all teachers and staff members with opportunities to make teaching and learning more impactful. All teachers at Boulan Park Middle School serve on Content Area Teams (CAT Teams) which meet with CAT teams from the other middle schools to identify ambitious learning outcomes, develop curriculum, design assessments, and reflect on the year's progress. While there was previously only one CAT team leader per department, every member currently attends CAT meetings which allow every person to play an active role in making appropriate grade-level curriculum decisions for their building.

Each department in the building is led by one or more department heads. Department heads meet with their teams regularly to ensure that needs, expectations, and learning goals are met. Other leadership roles within our building include our PTO, literacy coaches, and counselors.

Boulan Park also has a very involved Student Government that is involved in many aspects of the school day. Students are elected officials that meet with two adult sponsors to plan student body activities such as pep assemblies, community service projects and peer mentoring.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Boulan Park Middle School (BPMS) staff has made a concerted effort to establish connectedness between students and school. School connectedness is proven to be a protective factor, positive self-concept as well as strengthen academic performance. School connectedness initiatives this year have been: Club Fair, Involvement Pep Rally, “Make Your Mark” Banner, Caring Survey, Counseling Survey, New Student Group, Informal Staff/Student Mentoring, 6th Grade Minute Meetings, Middle School Parenting 101 presentation, and ACT card presentations. Many are new initiatives this year.

Our rationale for the BPMS connectedness goal was that BPMS has seen a dramatic increase in students diagnosed with depression and anxiety. School connectedness increases academic achievement and investment in school.

Connectedness is a proactive, strength and research-based approach that we’ve found reaches students. We have focused on different strategies at BPMS to promote connectedness including an expanded Counseling Survey that includes questions with a deeper focus on connectedness and identify trends. We also made a concerted effort to build relationships with at-risk students identified by the survey. Teachers signed up to cultivate a positive relationship with an at-risk student. Counselors also met with at-risk students. We have expanded our approach to include personalized notes written to each student in the building by a “caring adult.” We have also identified students that were flagged as disconnected on our survey to be a part of our “Boulan Outreach” group. This group of students has been partnered with Troy School District pre-school programs to take part in activities to attempt to “connect” kids to school in a way that they have not been in the past. Students were able to read to students during March is Reading Month, lead science activities involving a planting unit and begin collaborating on plans for an outdoor garden at our new district preschool building.

Other connectedness interventions include last year’s Principal Advisory Council of fourth hour students to discuss with the Principal what they like and what they would like to change, a return to Pep Rallies, student-organized Student Council events, a door decorating contest, staff encouraged students to promote more involvement in extra-curriculars through a Club Fair during the start-of-the-year Ice Cream Social which was run by students. Boulan Park Middle School also empowered students by creating a symposium to propose changes to dress code with the Principal and counselors. These strategies helped to increase the feelings of connectedness among our students at all three grade levels.