

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Girard Intermediate Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 702 East Prospect Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Girard State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44420-2330

County Trumbull County

Telephone (330) 545-5219 Fax _____

Web site/URL
<https://www.girardcityschools.org/intermediate-building> E-mail bryan.ohara@girardcityschools.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. Bryan O'Hara E-mail bryan.ohara@girardcityschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Girard City School District Tel. (330) 545-2596

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 Mark Zuppo
(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) 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)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

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	59	59	118
5	48	62	110
6	50	53	103
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	157	174	331

*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):
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 20 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 62 % White
 - 15 % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: 7%

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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	25
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	381
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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: 80 %

Total number students who qualify: 265

8. Students receiving special education services: 19 %
64 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>4</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>32</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>6</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
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.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
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 16:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	95%	92%	93%	93%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
 Yes No

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

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

We will develop responsible, critical thinkers who will make productive contributions to the community as lifelong learners. We will accomplish this through rigorous and relevant academics integrated with real-life discovery, awareness, and application.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Girard Intermediate School opened the 2020-2021 school year under a 100% remote model. Students had the option to choose instruction remotely with the classroom teachers or through an individualized and self-paced E-Learning model where they would be out of the school building for at least a semester. The learning models differed for our most vulnerable populations and our general population of students. While all students were offered online support, our most vulnerable students were offered in-person one-on-one and small group support in the 1st quarter. In the 2nd quarter, our vulnerable population came in two days a week for continued support. In the 3rd quarter, our vulnerable population came to school four days a week as the school district transitioned to being open for all students. During the 1st quarter, the general population of students were receiving instruction online via Google Classroom and Zoom with their classroom teachers. In the 2nd quarter, the school district transitioned to a hybrid learning model with students from the general population coming to the school one day a week for individualized interventions and enrichments. In the 3rd quarter, the general population of students came back to school for four days a week with a remote learning day on Fridays. Throughout the pandemic, we offered in-person and virtual Study Tables to students in need. As our students’ needs changed, the school hired additional personnel to provide multiple layers of support for our students. The E-Learning students made a semester commitment at the beginning of the year and again at the halfway point in the school year. Students who chose E-Learning were provided

multiple supports from our E-learning coordinators and tutors via Zoom meetings and virtual Study Tables.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

The community of Girard, Ohio can best be described as close-knit with a deep sense of pride. A majority of students come from low-income homes where many have experienced trauma both before and during the pandemic. Many students are in the custody of extended family or court-appointed guardians. Despite these conditions, most families are active members in the community and value the education of their students. It is not uncommon for this community to rally together to take care of one another. There is active community support of our schools through donations, partnerships, and service learning opportunities for students. The school motto of “We are Girard. Family. Taking Care of Each Other” is most aptly and proudly said in this community as it is something the constituents of the city truly believe and emulate.

Girard Intermediate School houses students in grades 4-6. Students are broken into six different homerooms per grade level and have their homeroom teacher for two core subjects and their “switch” teacher for the other two core subjects. They attend a variety of Specialist classes like art, music, band, choir, physical education, and Social Emotional Learning. During a typical year, students are in school from 8:25-3:05 every day as they attend their core classes, Specialist classes, and a lunch/recess period. Students enjoy coming to school, seeing their teachers, and socializing with their friends. They are provided with a rigorous curriculum to ensure they meet their academic goals. There are also a number of educational aides and Title 1 teachers who provide additional academic support to the students. The school is brightly decorated with student achievements, programming from our guidance department, and samples of student work. It is a welcoming place for all.

Outside of the classroom, students have opportunities to participate in class-and team-building activities with their peers. Students visit the Pittsburgh Zoo, Oh Wow! Science center, and Mill Creek Park. In 6th grade, they have the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. for three days. The community is active in supporting students to raise funds for trips they take through donations of money, food, and supplies. If a student wants to attend a trip that requires them to raise money, the community of Girard makes sure it happens.

The pandemic has made the social aspect of school more difficult; however, students have engaged in a variety of virtual meetings, family engagement nights for both literacy and STEM, and after school activities for different clubs.

In terms of academics, students’ individual needs are being met through a multi-tiered system of support. Teachers received intense technology training at the start of the school year to provide high-quality, virtual instruction for all students. Teachers completed a gap analysis at the beginning of the year and used it for short and long-term planning. GIS also participates in an after school program through Youngstown State University where a number of students from our vulnerable population have been receiving additional support virtually in both academics and Social Emotional Learning.

To address students’ emotional needs, Social Emotional Learning happened consistently through Zoom and then in-person when school resumed. All teachers were trained and provided SEL Check-Ins for students during virtual remote learning. Students have access to Youth Intensive Services for counseling and behavioral support in school and in the home.

To meet the physical needs of students, food was delivered to 200 families on a weekly basis. Weekly meals were also provided for all families in the community. The Physical Education department provided daily videos for students to participate in to meet their physical needs. Home visits were conducted to check on students’ physical and emotional well-being.

Students have opportunities to join in leadership and academic clubs like Student Council, Prep Bowl and LEGO League. Students who participate in Student Council help with fundraisers and school events. Prep Bowl and LEGO League participate in competitions across the state. There are also opportunities for students to interact with students in the elementary school.

To raise community morale during the quarantine period, the teachers in the district participated in a caravan-style parade throughout the community. Students and family members were able to go outside to see positive posters and messages from their teachers encouraging them to keep going and reminding them they are loved and appreciated, even from a distance.

The district procured enough computers to provide each student with a personal laptop, as well as with Wi-Fi hotspots for every family who needed one. Families were provided with Google Classroom training support over the summer. District leadership provided Town Hall meetings to keep stakeholders updated on changes and to answer any questions. Our building also provided three different learning models for students: hybrid, distance learning, and E-Learning.

As the health guidelines changed, we adapted the learning model for students. All decisions regarding education were made with the health and safety of students and staff as the number one priority. In order to ensure instruction was the main focus, high-quality training was provided to all staff in the areas of technology and Social Emotional Learning.

Teaching and learning virtually was prioritized with all lessons and assignment instructions recorded for all learners to access. Individualized support featured small group and individual Zoom sessions, recorded voice feedback, and one-on-one in-person support in the building. Families and students were provided with technology and technology support through Google Classroom training and through Town Halls. Educators focused on building relationships with students and families by being transparent with the learning and having continuous two-way communication to support the student learners.

Once we moved to a hybrid learning model with an early dismissal, all students started to receive breakfast, snacks, and lunches. Weekly lunches have been distributed since the beginning of the school year, but once students returned to the building in a more consistent manner, the district provided food to students throughout the day.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

The school's core curriculum and instructional practices are driven by state standards, best practices, and meeting the needs of unique learning communities. At the start of the school year, teacher teams planned horizontally and vertically to analyze gaps in learning due to the pandemic. Using that information, the teams planned and sequenced learning outcomes for short term and long term. Teachers have been working together throughout the year to collaborate and to adjust curriculum as needed.

The English language arts core curriculum consists of reading literary and informational texts. These texts include novels, biographies, memoirs, poems, speeches, etc. Students are engaged in whole-class texts, literature circles, and readings in the textbook. In addition, the students consistently write in class. This writing is in response to the text and or based on writing prompts. The teachers use an online writing program, MiWrite, so students can get instant feedback and improve their writing.

The mathematics core curriculum consists of mathematics instruction using Go Math! and Simple Solutions. The students engage in multi-step problems, discussions, and cyclical teaching to ensure students cycle back to past concepts and build upon them.

The social studies curriculum ensures that students are studying Ohio history, United States History, and World History. The students read and write using seminal text, textbooks, and Simple Solutions resources.

The science curriculum consists of understanding and applying the scientific process in a multitude of ways. The students engage in science labs and experiments using electricity, matter, etc. The teachers use online and textbook resources to support their students.

Teachers in all core classes use pre-assessment and post-assessment data to adjust curriculum pacing for the needs of students. Teachers meet in horizontal teams weekly to collaborate and plan instruction. Pacing guides are utilized by all core content teachers. Mathematics teachers use Go Math! curriculum to support classroom practices. Mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), and Social Studies teachers use Simple Solutions to supplement their curriculum. The English language arts teachers in the 6th grade use an online writing program called MiWrite to improve students' writing skills. Beginning in March, all Mathematics and English Language Arts teachers began administering STAR 360 Renaissance Learning tests in order to progress monitor students.

Students take ownership of their learning by understanding, graphing, and tracking their STAR 360 Renaissance Learning data. Students graph monthly and work to make growth each month. This data provides teachers and students with progress monitoring tools to continuously improve and grow.

To support gifted students, the school has teachers who hold a Gifted Intervention Specialist License and utilize the license to support gifted students. Gifted students are clustered and scheduled into classes that provide depth and complexity. Teachers write Written Education Plans for students and these students have mathematics and English language arts classes with a gifted teacher.

Instruction has been significantly adapted this year for online learning. At the end of last year, students who had computer and Internet access at home were able to use Google Classroom to complete assignments. Students without access were provided paper copies of assignments during three pick-up dates at the school. This year has looked significantly different as we were able to provide all students in need with a Chromebook and Internet hot-spot, making us a 1:1 district. Because students began the school year remotely, all curriculum was converted to be used in an online manner. Teachers and students utilized Google Classroom as the "hub" for assignments and communication, and instruction was supplemented with online learning tools. Classes were taught via Zoom during the remote learning model as well as into the hybrid learning model. Teachers recorded videos of lessons to be posted for students to watch online and to refer back to if needed. Assessments had to be conducted 100% online at the start of the year since students were remote. Teachers primarily utilized Google Forms, Docs, and Slides to assess student learning, but

sites like Edpuzzle, Simple Solutions, and MobyMax were also used. Once students returned to school, Renaissance Learning was used to monitor student progress in Math and ELA.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In order to best meet the needs of our grades 4-6 students during the 2020-2021 school year, our students engaged in specialist classes. The following curriculum areas were offered to students: visual arts, performing arts, choir, band, physical education, health, and social-emotional learning. While the school district was operating in a remote capacity at the beginning of the year, our specialist classes operated on Google Classroom with videoed lessons, instructions, and assignments. Live classes were hosted via Zoom on a weekly basis with students engaged in guided lessons and at-home activities. As students transitioned from remote learning to hybrid learning, they engaged in a variety of face-to-face and online learning for the aforementioned courses. Students engaged in courses once weekly. Now that students have returned to school for five days a week, they are attending their specialist classes according to their schedules. The specialist teachers are making accommodations to support students according to Covid protocols.

Traditionally, students were scheduled in the library on a bi-weekly basis; however, due to the pandemic, classroom teachers schedule students for library visits in order to maximize time and space. At this time, classroom teachers are able to go to the library on a weekly basis if they so choose. Students have access to a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction materials through trips to the library, and teachers are able to use resources to supplement student learning materials in class. The school librarian also visits classrooms to share in read-alouds with students and does book talks for students during their library days to showcase the latest releases in fiction and non-fiction books that are of high interest to students.

To support character development and social emotional learning all students engage in weekly lessons hosted by the school counselor. These lessons are hosted in person for students and via Zoom for those who have chosen the remote learning option. Staff have also been provided with the SEL standards and are incorporating them into daily lessons with the students.

3. Academic Supports:

The staff at Girard Intermediate School are able to tailor instruction, interventions, and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of student populations. For students performing below grade level, targeted interventions, Study Tables, and one-on-one tutoring sessions with licensed teachers have been utilized. For students performing above grade level, we offer a Gifted Program for ELA and Math. The gifted intervention specialists teach advanced mathematics and advanced English language arts to ensure depth and complexity. In addition, there are teachers who have their gifted certification in Social Studies and Science. Students identified gifted are cluster grouped to provide gifted Written Education Plans and services. Students performing above grade level are also provided opportunities to work with students in the K-3 building for tutoring and read-alouds.

Our special education population is provided intervention services, Study Tables, small group settings, and pull-out instruction and intervention with teacher aides. All components of students' IEP and 504 plans are met through our special education services. We also use the Building Level Assistance Team (BLAT) to identify students who may need additional academic support. Students identified as needing additional support, but who do not have academic 504 plans or IEPs, are

provided with targeted interventions and additional layers of support. Currently, we do not have any ELL students at the school. However, if we do have ELL students we share resources from the Trumbull County Educational Service Center. There is an ELL tutor available if needed and she rotates to other schools throughout the district.

Teachers, counselors, the school psychologist, parents, and the principal identified vulnerable populations of students to provide extra support while the school district was operating remotely and on a hybrid model. These academic supports for the vulnerable population consisted of individual and small group Zoom sessions, as well as Study Tables. Study Tables allowed the school to bring pockets of students into the building to work in small groups when the school was operating remotely and hybrid. This ensured the students were in the building more consistently getting the academic support necessary.

We are able to reach other populations of students through our BRAVE Youth-Intensive Services, Cadence Care, and our YSU Explore After School Program. These groups work with students who are economically disadvantaged, in need of free counseling services, or who need additional academic and social support.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

There are several ways Girard Intermediate School engages, motivates, and provides students with a positive environment that supports their academic, social, and emotional growth. Each morning, students listen to morning announcements where they recite the Pledge of Allegiance, listen to important school updates, hear about the National Holidays for that day, celebrate student birthdays, and learn about current events in the world from sports, entertainment, local news, and more. During the virtual learning model, students had access to a weekly Zoom meeting with the school counselor where they were provided with social emotional learning activities, study skills, coping skills, icebreakers, and opportunities to share concerns and celebrations. Now that students have returned to school, the social emotional learning Zooms have turned into a Specialist class so students have continued opportunities to grow in those areas. The school environment itself is welcoming to students: the building is clean, safe, and decorated with bulletin boards celebrating student achievements and acts of kindness. Students are currently following their Specialist schedules so they are able to socialize with classmates who are not in their homeroom which is important to their social emotional learning. There have been times throughout the year when students have been rewarded with pizza, ice cream, and gift cards for completing their work or winning classroom competitions through the Student Council. In terms of academic support, students are provided with ample resources. Whether it be small group instruction and intervention, Zooms with tutors, extended time to complete assignments, one-on-one tutoring, participating in Study Tables, or meeting with teachers and educational aides during Specials, students are given every opportunity to receive academic support.

Girard Intermediate School is also home to the longest-running Field Day in the state of Ohio. This event is looked forward to every year by students and community members as evidenced by the packed football stadium. Onlookers watch students participate in a day's worth of track and field events as staff members help run events, monitor the crowd, and tally points for each classroom. There is a celebration on the last day of school where the winning homeroom in grades 4-6 is presented with the 4-foot tall Field Day trophy which is housed outside that teacher's room for the following year.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

To engage families and communities, the school partners with companies and institutions to have multiple modes of support. Twice a year, we host a Family Engagement Night for literacy and for STEM. Students and families are invited to engage in activities. This year, our literacy and STEM nights were hosted virtually and families were provided kits for guided paintings, readings, and STEM projects. The school partnered with Oh Wow!, a children's science and technology museum to provide STEM kits.

Prior to the start of school this year, three evenings of Parent Education Nights were held to help parents navigate Google Suite as the school year began remotely. Parents were provided an overview of the platform, how to use it, and were provided an opportunity to practice using the G-Suite while teachers and administrators in the district were there to answer any questions. At the start of the second semester, we held an informational night for students who came back into the school from being strictly e-learners. Classroom teachers were involved in planning and presenting students and parents with the same information provided over the summer. In addition, there have been several virtual Town Hall meetings this year for parents to hear updates about the school, the learning models, and health and safety protocols. They are provided an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns.

Our school has a partnership with Youngstown State University for an after school program for students in grades 3-6. To qualify for the program, students must come from low-income families where support is needed. The program has students work in the areas of academics and social-emotional learning through tutoring, special programming, and field trips. It is a year-round program where students have the opportunity to participate over the summer.

The school also partners with local community members to come into the school and share stories for Read

Across America Day. Notable community members have included the mayor, the police chief, local business owners, former teachers, and administrators from other buildings. Local community members also provide donations to cover the cost of the 6th grade Washington D.C. trip to be used for food, travel, and hotel expenses.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

To support the transition from face-to-face instruction to completely remote teaching, teachers engaged in virtual professional learning throughout the summer months. At the start of the school year, teachers had 10 days of professional development that focused specifically on identifying gaps, gap closure, scope and sequence, and technology applications. The school district hosted an in-house technology conference where teachers had technology sessions to choose from and then application time to implement the new learning. The technology sessions were led by teachers and administrators in the district, along with members of the Trumbull County Educational Service Center. Because teachers and administrators from the district were presenters, capacity was increased in terms of teacher leadership. Those teachers have been resources for their colleagues throughout the school year, and teachers have had access to members of the TCESC as well.

Throughout the year, teachers have been provided common planning time after students are dismissed for the day. This time allows teachers to collaborate and create aligned curriculum in order to close learning gaps and propel student achievement. This time has also proved beneficial for implementing more technology into the classroom. Teachers have been able to review what they learned over the summer and expand upon their knowledge when creating digital resources for students.

Additional supports to staff have included remote days for teachers in order to collaborate, create videos, provide tiered instruction for students who had gaps in learning, and grades. Additional staff members were hired to provide support to students and serve as substitute teachers in the building. The staff has been provided with updated computers, document cameras, SMART Boards, and other digital learning tools like subscriptions to Screencastify, Remind, Simple Solutions, Loom, Nearpod, Edpuzzle, BrainPop, Study Island, and Edulastic.

4. School Leadership:

GIS has democratic and distributed leadership for decisions. Multiple layers are created to ensure that teachers have leadership opportunities and voice. School leadership works with individual teachers, teacher grade-level teams, the building leadership team, the building level assistance team, and the district leadership team. The district leadership works to ensure teachers and stakeholders have input in decisions by sending surveys and holding frequent Town Hall meetings.

The building principal ensures student and staff safety by staying updated on COVID changes. The district superintendent attends monthly meetings with the county health department to ensure that CDC regulations are followed and to stay current with the ever-changing regulations. The district administrative team meets regularly to ensure the health department and CDC regulations are implemented and those safety regulations are discussed at staff meetings and community Town Halls to ensure that all stakeholders are updated in a timely manner.

More focus this year has been placed on the social emotional support for students and staff with the administrative team providing professional development opportunities. To allocate resources that support students, school administration and leadership partner with outside organizations and programs in addition to hiring additional staff and personnel to support student achievement.

District administration collaborates daily through Zoom meetings in order to follow all local and federal COVID protocols, but also to ensure the schools are providing and allocating resources for student achievement. In order to follow strict guidelines to reduce traffic in the schools and engage families and community stakeholders, the school held Title I parent meetings and family engagements virtually, frequent Town Hall meetings via YouTube Live and recorded sessions, Google Training nights for families, and sent

out surveys.

The building and school administration has adapted to ensure all stakeholders are included in the constantly changing school learning models and health guidelines. The administration has provided more transparent and frequent communication. Curriculum and instructional practices have been realigned due to gap analysis and to support multiple modes of teacher delivery (i.e. face-to-face, online, hybrid, etc.). To follow safety guidelines, the school purchased additional thermometers, hand sanitizer, water bottle dispensers, masks for teachers and students, classroom cleaning supplies, fogging machines, and polymer disinfectant spray. The Robotics team designed and constructed student and teacher desk shields for the entire district. Building leadership stayed updated on the contact tracing algorithm, communicated that algorithm, and invested time in ensuring that contact tracing is clearly followed.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Girard Intermediate School offers a variety of supports to the diverse needs of students, families, and staff. Because Girard is a low-income community, the school implemented new student and family supports. The district was able to procure 1,000 Chromebooks which was enough for each student to have their own device, making us a 1:1 district. There were 100 WiFi hotspots provided to families in need, making access to technology equitable throughout families in the community. All students in the district have access to free breakfast, lunch, and snacks on a daily basis as well as over the weekend. At GIS, during a year when travel is permitted, any student who wants to attend the 6th Grade Washington D.C. trip is provided financial support if needed through fundraising, sponsors, and community donations. In order to help give back to the community, students participate in fundraisers throughout the year to make donations to the local food bank and to supply tie blankets for community members who live in nursing homes. Prior to winter break, staff members nominate students who would benefit from receiving gifts through a program called Gift of a Lifetime. Teachers and community members sponsor families to provide gifts for them for Christmas. In years past, this group has also been used to provide clothing and supplies to families who have lost their homes in house fires.

In terms of cultural awareness, students participate in current events projects in their Social Studies classes which cover local, state, and national news. At least three times per week, students watch CNN 10 to hear about current events in the world. The Social Studies curriculum in grades 4-6 also provides opportunities for students to learn about cultural diversity. In the 6th grade, for example, students learn about the five major world religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Social Studies teachers also celebrate Women's History Month, Black History Month, Constitution Day, Patriots Day, Veterans Day, and other national holidays to help expose students to different cultures and experiences.

To promote respect in the classroom and the school, all students review the Student Handbook at the beginning of the year and sign the school Code of Conduct. Students are able to recite the school motto of "Be Respectful, Responsible, and Do Your Personal Best." GIS has an anti-bullying program that all students participate in throughout the year. Students also participate in Mix It Up At Lunch Day on a yearly basis to sit by someone they are not friends with to make a new friend. Students also have opportunities to join clubs like Tie Blankets, Leadership, Student Council, and LEGO where the theme of respect is shared through different leadership opportunities.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In order to successfully educate and best support students, GIS implements consistent school-wide progress monitoring through STAR 360 Renaissance Learning. The progress monitoring data allows teachers to track student growth and achievement in both ELA and Mathematics. Teachers utilize the data to create flexible groups and provide tiered support and instruction. Targeted interventions are planned according to multiple data points, and the progress monitoring tool allows teachers to group and teach students accordingly. Additionally, this data is used by the Gifted and Special Education teachers when creating WEPs and IEPs. The data provides individualized snapshots of where each student's strengths and weaknesses lie. The data is also considered when creating groups of students who are eligible to receive an extended school year through summer school.

This strategy has changed over time. When GIS first began implementing STAR 360 Renaissance Learning four years ago, the tests were given to students three times per year. For the last three years, students have been given monthly tests in ELA and Mathematics to monitor their progress. To adopt this program, a school administrator had to undergo training with a representative from the company. There was initial training for classroom teachers and for students in how to operate the program and successfully complete the tests. Teachers were then trained in how to read and interpret the data in order for it to shift and enhance instructional practices. Students were trained to record and graph their data on a monthly basis to self-monitor their progress. This gives students ownership of their own learning and motivates them to have a growth mindset in regards to their progress in ELA and Mathematics.

The results of using data from STAR 360 Renaissance Learning continue to drive curriculum development in ELA and Mathematics. The data is used to look at pacing, scope and sequence, remediation, enrichments, and interventions in instructional practices and in the adoption of new course materials.

Due to the pandemic, the amount of tests that were conducted was reduced. We are currently utilizing the data we have collected to create a summer school program and extended school year for students showing gaps in their learning. The data will help influence how we group students together during summer school in order to maximize our time with them.