

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

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

School Mailing Address 4800 12th Street NW
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Canton State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44708-3418

County Stark

Telephone (330) 478-6177 Fax (330) 478-6179

Web site/URL https://www.perrylocal.org/8/home E-mail erica.mytinger@perrylocal.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. Scott Beatty E-mail scott.beatty@perrylocal.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Perry Local School District Tel. (330) 477-8121

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. Doug Brown
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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 | 37 | 44 | 81 |
| 1 | 35 | 32 | 67 |
| 2 | 32 | 41 | 73 |
| 3 | 37 | 35 | 72 |
| 4 | 29 | 34 | 63 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 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 | 170 | 186 | 356 |

*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):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 4.2 % Black or African American
 - 1.9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 85.4 % White
 - 7.9 % 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: 6%

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 | 11 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year | 10 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 21 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019 | 352 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.06 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 6 |

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

Spanish, Arabic

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
2 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45 %

Total number students who qualify: 161

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %

32 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>2</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</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: 2

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. | 15 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 11 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 2 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 3 |

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 | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 | 2015-2016 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 98% | 96% | 97% | 96% | 96% |
| 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.

To emphasize excellence in learning and provide opportunities for every child to realize his/her potential in a safe environment. To encourage students to become responsible productive citizens and lifelong learners.

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.

As part of a district plan, our building offers a virtual learning option for parents/guardians. Approximately 15% of our students have chosen to learn in our virtual academy and 85% of our students learn in a traditional setting.

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

Whipple Heights is located in Perry Township between Massillon and Canton in Northeast Ohio. Whipple Heights is one of five elementary schools within the Perry Local School District. Whipple services a diverse group of approximately 365 students in grades K-4 with 45% receiving free and/or reduced lunch.

Whipple Heights' staff is dedicated to providing the highest quality of education to the students. They believe in the mission statement of "To emphasize excellence in learning and provide opportunities for every child to realize his/her potential in a safe environment. To encourage students to become responsible, productive citizens and lifelong learners." Our teachers set high expectations for themselves as educators and high expectations for their students. They attend professional development to improve their craft and spend countless hours developing meaningful, engaging, and differentiated lessons to grow their students both academically and social-emotionally.

Whipple Heights earned the rating "Excellent" or "Excellent with Distinction" from 2003-2011. When the state report cards moved to overall ratings in 2017-2018, Whipple earned the overall ratings of "A" in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. These ratings indicate the hard work the teachers put into their daily lessons in order to meet state standards consistently.

There are many pieces and parts that come together to earn the ratings Whipple has earned. The following include what Whipple Heights does in order to help their students achieve:

Aligned Curriculum

The curriculum is aligned to the state standards. Our teachers' instruction includes the Gradual Release Model, MSTV (Making Students Thinking Visible), Marzano, etc. in order to effectively instruct and differentiate lessons to meet individual needs of the students.

Assessment

Assessment is ongoing at Whipple Heights. Diagnostics and state assessments are analyzed to drive instruction and intervention/enrichment.

Intervention

We implement various forms of intervention because we believe early intervention is a critical component of achievement. We have intervention time built into daily schedules in which no new instruction takes place. During this time, our Title I team works with Tier 3 students and the classroom teachers and intervention specialists work with Tiers 1 and 2.

Collaboration

Teachers meet weekly in their teacher-based grade level teams in order to discuss assessments, teaching practices, challenges, etc. We also have a building level team which meets regularly to discuss the building action plan put forth to move our building forward academically and climate/culturally.

Professional Development

Staff participates in district professional development in order to continue to grow. Our district offers a variety of district level and grade level professional development. We also tie professional development suggestions to individual teacher's professional growth or improvement plans.

Social-Emotional Support

Whipple Heights recognizes the importance of focusing on the social-emotional well-being of our students.

We focus on having a growth mindset and utilize the Second Step program to intentionally support the whole child and to teach coping skills to students that will help them throughout their lifelong journey of learning.

COVID-19 Challenges

Teachers quickly learned different virtual learning platforms and provided students with an education inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers followed the guidelines set out by the state and were creative in their lessons in order to provide a safe learning environment for the students. The staff and students did not miss a beat...they simply put on their masks and got to work!

Our building stands behind the district's saying of "Anything Humanly Possible." The staff work hard to intentionally implement everything outlined above. Our staff members are committed to the success of each and every student at Whipple Heights.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Whipple Heights Elementary’s curriculum is reflective of Ohio’s Learning Standards. Our district has adopted a Course of Study for each subject area and grade level, reflecting those standards. Curriculums for each subject and grade level are selected and paced by committees of teachers led by our Curriculum Department on a 7-year cycle to ensure that our resources are consistently aligned with our students’ needs and the Ohio Department of Education’s requirements. These committees look at research-based materials and the data trends showing our students’ current performance to determine the most impactful materials.

Assessment and using the assessment data to drive our instruction is an integral part of the instructional approach of Whipple Elementary. We use AIMSweb benchmark assessments three times a year to track the learning and growth of our K-2 students and the iReady benchmark assessments for our 3-4 students. In addition, we use BAS reading assessments, AIMSweb math and reading fluency assessments, and a variety of teacher- and district- created assessments to measure and track the specific needs of our students allowing for targeted instruction in any gaps in learning. This is all part of our Response to Intervention (RTI) program, which we implement consistently for all students. As we analyze our data, students are grouped for our Panther Time intervention -- a daily 40-minute block dedicated to addressing skill deficits and providing enrichment for students working at grade level. This is done with the instruction of our classroom teachers for each grade level and our Title 1 teachers.

English Language Arts

Our ELA curriculum is currently in a year of study, and we are looking carefully at revising our curriculum to what we have learned through professional development and research on phonics and literacy instruction. Our Kindergarten, 1st grade, and Reading Specialist teacher have recently been trained in LETRS, a brain-based phonics approach that emphasizes a systematic approach to phonics instruction. Additionally, Kindergarten teachers have been using Heggerty, a phonics program that begins with phonemic awareness and sets the foundation for successful application of phonics skills as students learn to read. In the upper elementary grades, we have implemented more morphemic awareness activities into our core instruction to build upon students’ foundational phonics knowledge and give them access to more words by intentionally building vocabulary through root words and affixes. Our reading curriculum also emphasizes Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and using context clues to give students strategies for making meaning from texts in a variety of real-world contexts. While our reading curriculum is currently under review and likely to be updated, our current instruction blends grade-level material with differentiated passages to teach students skills for comprehending a text. We also value high-quality picture and chapter books to get our students to the point where they not only can read -- but they fall in love with reading and become lifelong readers and thinkers.

Math

Whipple’s Math curriculum is also aligned to the Ohio Learning Standards. We are using the enVision Mathematics series in our 1st-4th grades and the Big Ideas Math series in Kindergarten. Through the enVision series, our teachers help students build stamina in problem solving as well as a deeper understanding of number sense and real-world mathematical applications. In Kindergarten, the focus is on helping students make real-world connections to math to build a foundation that will enable them to build up a solid understanding of mathematical processes and applications.

Social Studies and Science

Our Social Studies and Science curriculums in K-4 are aligned to Ohio’s Learning Standards for each grade level. Our Science takes a hands-on approach, with students getting to do everything from growing plants and observing the butterfly life cycle to researching crayfish while they’re living in the classroom and building battery-powered circuits. Each year, students learn about the scientific process and build knowledge of the world around them as they also learn to think critically. In Social Studies, students begin by learning about their community and the immediate environment around them. They then broaden their learning to

their county, state, and country. Through Social Studies, we help students understand their role in their class, community, and society. We have also integrated Social Studies at the lower levels with our Social-Emotional curriculum that helps students build empathy, understanding of their own emotions, and strategies for interacting with each other to build friendships and resolve conflicts. Our Science and Social Studies are also aligned with our ELA curriculum at the lower grades to give students additional practice applying the skills they are learning in Language Arts in another context.

Adapting to Covid 19

Like districts across the country, Whipple has worked to adapt to the pandemic and to overcome the myriad of obstacles in providing high quality education to our students. In the spring, teachers adapted our regular curriculum to online modalities with flexibility and persistence. While instruction was important, we continued our focus on interacting with students and families and focusing on relationships to keep students engaged. In August, families were offered a choice by our school district to enroll in a full-time Virtual Academy classroom or in full-time in person school. Some teachers are exclusively teaching the remote students, allowing others to focus exclusively on their in-person classes. Students are able to change their instructional placement at the ends of the grading periods, if family situations or needs arise. This flexibility in scheduling has allowed families to make the best decision for their situation and has allowed our teachers to continue providing high quality instruction, regardless of the delivery method.

Due to the many quarantines, uncertainty, and flexibility required during this time, our district has continued to purchase more technology and double-down on our commitment to teaching students how to use that technology. We have a Technology class once a week in our K-3rd grade classrooms and three times a week in 4th grade as well as regular technology integration into our subject-areas. Our district uses GoogleClassroom to host both our Virtual Academy and our traditional classroom work. Students are familiar with Google tools and use them to collaborate, gather information, and create meaningful products across their subjects. As students and teachers have been quarantined throughout this year, we have also used GoogleMeet to have students “join” for instruction, preventing them from falling behind or feeling disconnected. Students in our upper grades log in whenever possible and can participate in lessons and work with teachers and peers even when prevented from being in the classroom.

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:

Whipple Heights Elementary has continued to support our specials curriculum through the pandemic by taking extra precautions to still be able to offer our students these important academic areas. This year our specials teachers pushed into the classrooms for their lessons. Whipple chose to have the teachers teach in this manner to help avoid any extra contact or exposure with other students throughout the building. The teachers came to the classrooms with the materials needed for their lessons. These materials were always sanitized between each class to help prevent the possibility of spreading the disease. These teachers have made it a priority that the students still receive the same quality education as previous years, just within a different setting.

Whipple Heights specials classes include art, music, library, physical education, and technology. These classes are offered to all of our students, Kindergarten through fourth grade. Each of these classes offer lessons to the students that are appropriate and engaging for that specific age group. These classes are taught once a week for a 40 minute lesson.

Our art teacher has many goals within her curriculum to educate the students with exciting, hands on

lessons. One of the many goals is to teach the students about different famous artists and their styles of art. Each week she focuses on a specific artist through a story or show, which will then be followed by the students having the opportunity to create an art project in the same style of that artist. She also focuses on various children's authors and illustrators. During our Book Fair week, we have included an art show throughout the building, for the parents to enjoy. The art teacher chooses a different children's author and illustrator for each class to learn about. She reads several stories by these authors and illustrators and focuses on the art within the books. From her lesson, she allows the children to create art pieces that are similar to the styles that the illustrators used in the given stories. These are then displayed on the bulletin boards of that classroom for the parents to appreciate and enjoy. This year due to the pandemic, our fourth grade students will be videotaping each bulletin board and making a video and website to share with the parents.

Music classes are another opportunity we offer our students at Whipple Heights Elementary. Our music curriculum focuses on a variety of engaging and hands on lessons that build children's excitement, love, and knowledge of music. Not only does our music teacher focus on musicians and their musical styles, but she goes beyond that and teaches lessons that help the children understand the different aspects of creating music. She involves the students in lessons to help them feel and create music concentrating on things such as tempo, rhythm, and melody. In the upper grades, the students get to apply their musical background knowledge from the previous years and use it toward classroom lessons on how to play the recorder. This builds self-awareness, the ability to listen, and to work as a team.

Each week the students also have a forty minute library class. During this time the librarian comes into each class and teaches lessons that focus on different authors and illustrators as well as different awards that the authors and illustrators receive for their work. The librarian also creates lessons or book studies that engage the students in particular topics that are appropriate for each grade level and what they are learning about at that time. She will offer a variety of books that revolve around these topics to give the students an opportunity to broaden their knowledge in these subject areas.

Physical education is offered to our students two times a week for a forty minute period. This class has remained in the gym throughout the pandemic, in order for the students to receive the best quality education for this subject area. The physical education classes are structured lessons that engage the students in teamwork, skill building, and coordination. Our Physical Education teacher prepares lessons such as basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, aerobics, and golf to name a few. However, he also teaches them the importance of physical activity on their hearts through a month-long unit that entails different stations within the gym that are set up as a display of the heart. He also works with a group of third and fourth students with a team called the Hot Shots. These students try out for the team which is determined through hard work, skill, grades, and classroom behavior. The students that make the team come to school early twice a week to practice a well organized production of basketball handling skills choreographed to music. These students then perform for other elementary schools, halftime shows at High School games and even at places such as the civic center before basketball games. Our Physical Education teacher organizes a fundraiser with the Hot Shot program to then raise money for the American Heart Association. This year, the Hot Shot program was videoed to be able to share with other schools.

Our students are also offered technology classes for forty minutes once a week. Our technology curriculum builds students' knowledge of computers, including how to use various programs and even introductory coding. Students use these technology skills in a variety of ways, including creating slideshows, spreadsheets, movies, and websites. They also learn how to research and be safe online.

Lastly, Whipple Heights has adopted a new Social Emotional Learning curriculum that focuses on character building and life skills for our students. This program starts in Kindergarten and the skills are built upon in each grade. The students learn how to deal with different situations through songs, games and stories. Each week the curriculum focuses on particular situations ranging from having empathy toward others, handling disappointment, or how to handle personal feelings of frustration or other strong emotions.

3. Academic Supports:

Whipple Heights consistently makes data-informed decisions in order to close achievement gaps for the students. Everyone is involved in data discussions to ensure students get the interventions they need to grow. Twice a year (beginning and middle), students are benchmarked using district diagnostics (Aimsweb+ and iReady). The data is all compiled into an RtI tracking spreadsheet and grade levels meet and dissect the data. Included in the benchmarking meetings are the following: grade level teachers, Title One teachers, Intervention Specialists, Curriculum department representative (this past year this has been our Curriculum Director), and the principal. Students are grouped based on their needs. From there, interventions are determined, who will be doing the intervention, and progress monitoring is scheduled.

After benchmarking occurs, data check-ins occur every 5-6 weeks. At data check-ins, the team members, along with our RtI coaches and/or school psychologist, go through each students' data, one by one, to see if growth is occurring and if the students are on track as determined by national norms. Changes in interventions are made if necessary at this time. Everything is documented on intervention tracking sheets.

Panther Time is a building wide "no new instruction" time in which ALL students are receiving their interventions. Panther Time occurs daily and is 40 minutes long. At Whipple, it is an "all hands on deck" approach. If you are available, you are providing intervention.

Three Response to Intervention Coaches at Whipple work closely with teachers who have expressed and documented concerns in a district wide coaching document. When the coaching referral form is completed, one of the coaches meets with the teacher to go through the "Five Why's". Monitoring occurs and they continue to meet. All data is documented throughout to assist with data-driven decision making. RtI Coaches, the school psychologist, and the principal meet periodically to look at the data and to make data-driven decisions.

Whipple has three Title One teachers who are truly reading specialists. They are trained in multiple different reading interventions. They do a push-in model for kindergarten and a pull-out model for grades 1-4. Grade 1 also has a double dose time where the Title teachers go into the classroom and run guided reading groups based on students' skill levels.

There are two Intervention Specialists at Whipple who work with our students with disabilities. They either pull the students into their resource room for small group instruction or go into the general education classroom and co-teach with the general education teacher. Our intervention specialists work closely with the general education teachers in order to provide students instruction that is aligned with grade level standards. The Intervention Specialists collect data on their students' individualized education goals and meet yearly to go over the goals with parents and to write a new plan that meets their needs.

Whipple has one Gifted Intervention Specialist that works with students identified as gifted. She primarily works on reading and math with the students for half the day. She services students in grades 2-4 from Whipple Heights and Watson Elementary. Oftentimes, students are involved in problem-based learning in her classroom. She monitors their growth and reports out to parents.

Whipple also has an ELL teacher that comes to the school to work with students who are learning English as their second language. The ELL works one on one with the students in order to help them close the language barrier. The ELL also provides the classroom teacher with strategies to help the students grow and assists in translating materials for parents/guardians.

As stated earlier, it is an "all in" approach for the students at Whipple Heights. When there is a

need that stands out, we do everything in our power to provide the support to the students. For example, our school librarian reads with students outside of library time in order to work on reading and comprehension. One of the lunch monitors works on oral reading fluency with materials provided by classroom teachers. Our secretary works with students on letters and letter sounds. If there is time in the schedule where someone is able to work with students, we take advantage of it! The students love having that special time with Whipple staff members, are making meaningful relationships, and they are growing academically all at the same time!

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Every staff member at Whipple Heights is dedicated to creating a positive school climate and culture. Engaging and motivating students in a positive environment is a team approach from the moment the students enter the building until they leave in the afternoon.

All teachers in the building greet the students outside of their classroom doors every morning. The teachers have different greetings to gauge how the students are feeling every morning when they arrive to school. From elbow bumps to rating scales, the teachers are there to begin every day as positive as possible. After morning announcements, which always include something to talk about with the students, students circle it up in the classrooms. Circling up is a way to begin each day positively. At this time, the teachers continue to gauge where their students are social-emotionally, revisit their classroom respect agreements and let them know the agenda for the day. Some teachers do morning yoga, while others have positive sayings they read together. As with everything else this year, circle time had to be adapted with safety procedures due to the pandemic, but just like with everything else Whipple teachers encounter, the procedures were adapted in a positive manner as they know it is what is best for the students. Circle time is part of restorative practices. Whipple Heights is in the beginning stages of implementing restorative practices throughout the building. This is the first year we have moved away from the behavior wheel and replaced the behavior wheel with meaningful conversations with students to get to the root cause of the behavior. As with every new initiative, there is room for improvement. As we participate in more professional development, we will improve and grow as a building.

At the beginning of every grading period, our building's behavior matrix is reviewed. The behavior matrix is separated into expected behaviors for different areas of the building. We always reinforce the big three: Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful. Along with reviewing our behavior matrix, every classroom develops a Respect Agreement. The Respect Agreement is broken into four parts: Teacher to Student, Student to Student, Student to Teacher, and Student to Classroom. The Respect Agreement is signed by everyone in the classroom and revisited/revised as often as necessary. Also, we have 20 manners that Whipple Heights students should know and they are reviewed and discussed every Monday morning on announcements.

Due to the pandemic and safety precautions put into place, we have replaced our end of the grading period "Celebration of Learning" activities with "Classroom Celebrations". In the past, students had to earn the celebrations, but through restorative practices, we work on the behaviors immediately and move on from the incidents. As a building, we were excited to celebrate every students' learning by having activities in the classroom. When the safety restrictions are lifted, we will move back to building-wide "Celebration of Learning" activities sponsored by our PTO.

In order to actively engage students when learning throughout the day, our teachers take pride in implementing the district initiative of Making Students Thinking Visible (MSTV). MSTV allows the students to engage with each other in discussions that show the teachers what they are thinking. MSTV includes 24 operating principles that provide students a safe place to share what they are thinking and to actively listen to discussions in order to contribute. This district initiative was a two year process, introducing principles slowly in order for teachers and students to fully understand them and implement them with fidelity. As we continue to move forward, the principles are reflected on through classroom walkthrough feedback and TBT discussions.

As you walk through the halls of Whipple, you will see positive interactions between the staff and students. The cafeteria staff take the time to draw faces on the bananas to make the students smile and when the students are eating breakfast or lunch, they take the time to engage in conversations with the students. The custodian and school psychologist always greet the students in the mornings and wave good-bye in the afternoons. EVERY staff member is always willing to go above and beyond to make Whipple a positive environment for everyone who walks through the doors.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Whipple Heights embraces family and community involvement whenever possible. Prior to the pandemic, our active PTO was always seen in the building volunteering for different events. The parents volunteered for picture day, cafeteria assistance, book fairs, learning celebrations, classroom parties, etc. The PTO meets once a month to brainstorm ideas to get the parents actively involved in their child's education. The PTO hosts after school events including talent shows, mother/son and father/daughter nights, fundraiser nights at restaurants. Their goal is to host activities that bring family and school together. The PTO is always ready to chip in at any minute to help out the students and staff of the school. When schools went remote in the spring of 2020 and the fourth grade graduation was canceled, they immediately started brainstorming how to still honor the graduates. They were able to put together a graduation parade very quickly which brought many smiles to the students and staff of Whipple!

When the safety regulations are lifted for the schools, we look forward to bringing our grandparents/special guests for an afternoon of visiting and entertainment at Whipple. Our second graders perform for the guests and our students enjoy the time spent with their grandparent/special guest.

Whipple welcomes community involvement. The church members next door are always volunteering to bring kindness to our school. From greeting students on the first day of school, offering their parking lot for additional parking, agreeing to bake sales, and surprising staff members with coffee and donuts, it is all so very appreciated. Whipple has also partnered with the Legacy Project. The Legacy Project brings in community members that serve as mentors for some of our fourth grade students. They build relationships that promote resilience, emotional well-being, and social skills that students need to thrive in today's society. The mentors come in once a week, eat lunch with the students, and follow a curriculum that encourages smart decisions, responsible academic performance, and positive behavior modifications. The students and mentors look forward to this every week.

Whipple is fortunate to have a very active Family Support Specialist (FSS) that helps our families get the supports they need for their children, home, etc. Our Family Support Specialist has taken a hands-on approach and works very closely with the community, family, school staff members, etc. in order to make sure basic needs are met for the students and families of Whipple Heights. Our FSS goes above and beyond and is at Whipple well beyond her required hours working to support those in need.

Due to COVID-19, all after school programs/events, volunteers, etc. have been canceled. We continue to meet with our WHPTO virtually once a month in order to keep communication open. The principal sends out monthly newsletters to the parents and uses the Remind app to communicate as well. Whipple teachers are creative in keeping parents informed. They use the Remind app, send emails, keep their teacher websites updated, and call parents whenever needed. We promote school and family collaboration. The more we work together, the better.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Whipple teachers are among the most dedicated staff members around. They thrive on growing professionally and are always looking for professional development in order to do so. Not only do they attend professional development, they share what they have learned with their colleagues and implement it in the classroom.

The Curriculum Department is always looking for professional development that will enhance student learning with research-based methods. Not only do they seek out professional development, they are actively involved throughout. For two years, the district provided professional development in the area of Making Student Thinking Visible. This professional development was a team approach that started from the Central Office, to building administrators, to the teachers. The Curriculum Department provided professional development to the administrators and then in turn the administrators provided professional development to the teachers. Whipple teachers implemented the different operating principles of MSTV and hold themselves accountable to continue to reflect and refine their practice in order to consistently improve in using the principles during classroom instruction and discussions.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, Whipple teachers were offered professional development in technology. With not knowing from one day to the next if we would go remote, the district knew it was important to give the teachers time to prepare and learn the different types of technology that would benefit their students and their teaching. The district has a technology coach, and Whipple teachers have taken the opportunity to reach out to the coach whenever they had questions or needed assistance with different technology. The coach has sent out tech tips which the teachers implement when they are able. Although we have been in the traditional setting every day (except for two days before winter break), the teachers take what they have learned and use technology throughout the day to help prepare themselves and the students in the event we would be forced to go remote again. This year has been challenging juggling safety, technology, daily teaching, etc. but the teachers have risen to the challenge, knowing there is support available whenever needed.

Whipple staff has been provided ample professional development throughout this school year, including: MSTV, technology, LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling), DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion), Restorative Practices, Zones of Regulation, Trauma and Resiliency, and various book studies. During individual teacher and administrator conferences, we discuss professional development and areas for growth. If there is an area a teacher would like to continue to grow in and there is an opportunity for professional development we will look for a way to make it happen. Our district has a technology coach, literacy coach, and special education coach that is always willing to help out as well. With professional development, our teachers grow, and most importantly our students grow.

4. School Leadership:

Shared leadership is a goal of Whipple Heights. The building principal values the expertise of the staff members and involves them in decision making as often as possible. There are different leadership teams that all come together to help Whipple run smoothly. Every team has an important role at Whipple and together all of the teams make Whipple Heights the building it is.

Whipple has two lead teachers. The lead teachers work with the principal throughout the school year to help carry out professional development and to represent Whipple Heights on different committees. The lead teachers help run staff meetings, assist with a building book study, attend county lead teacher meetings, assist the principal in building leadership, and are role models for other teachers in the building.

The Perry Local School District is highly involved in the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) with the principal and a teacher from Whipple serving on the District Leadership Team (DLT). The DLT meets throughout the year to work on the District Action Plan. After the DLT meets, Whipple's Building Leadership Team (BLT), which consists of a representative from each grade level, a Title One Teacher, and an Intervention Specialist, meets to implement the DLT plans and to focus on the Building Action Plan. The Building Action Plan is specific to Whipple Heights and it helps focus and direct the work of the Teacher Based Teams (TBTS). Teacher Based Teams are by grade level and they meet weekly to implement specific tasks of the BLT. All meetings are documented for monitoring and accountability.

We also have a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team that meets regularly. The PBIS team focuses on the various behavior interventions and supports that are necessary to meet the needs of the students in a positive manner. This team looks at the discipline data for trends and brainstorms how to assist the teachers and students throughout the school year. The PBIS team also creates videos to help teach the students the behavior expectations of Whipple Heights. Recently, the PBIS team updated all documents to reflect the implementation of Restorative Practice. This is an ongoing process that will be revisited and tweaked as often as necessary.

Whipple has three Response to Intervention (RtI) instructional coaches who meet with teachers to assist with students who are identified as having an academic/behavioral need. The RtI Instructional coaches have all gone through a training of a process called the Five Why's. The RtI coaches attend all of the data meetings and work with the ultimate goal of digging deeper to assist in determining a root cause and an intervention/strategy that can be implemented to help support the students. The RtI instructional coaches

collaborate with their colleagues to provide support for teachers during the school day. The RtI instructional coaches, school psychologist, and the building principal also meet to discuss the progress of the students who have been coached. These meetings keep everyone abreast of the progress of the students, provide a collaborative time to discuss other options available to help move students forward in a positive manner, and to digest data presented by the coaches.

The principal holds monthly staff meetings to keep the staff up-to-date on any district news that has not been communicated out through the various committees. The staff meetings are a time for teachers to ask questions, collaborate with colleagues, and to build on the positive culture at Whipple Heights. It is the goal of the principal to communicate as much as possible with the staff in order for the staff to be prepared for any changes that may occur. This past year all meetings have been virtual. COVID-19 might make things different, but Whipple embraces it and makes the most of it at all times.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Whipple Heights Elementary encompasses the diverse needs and backgrounds of our students, family and staff in a variety of ways. This year, our district has initiated a committee called the Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) committee. The goals of this committee are to equip educators with a working knowledge of race, social and cultural identity, to apply the learnings to ensure a culturally diverse and inclusive curriculum and also to apply the learnings in all daily interactions in order to create a positive school climate that is welcoming to all. Through many meetings, the staff will be addressed with difficult and uncomfortable questions and topics to encourage courageous conversations that challenge and motivate them toward inclusivity for our students and families.

To help ensure respect within our school, a school wide matrix is used for the students to understand the expectations of responsibility, safety, and respect within the different school settings. The matrices are posted in different areas of the building, such as the classrooms, cafeteria, hallways, etc. and are referred to throughout the year to remind the students of these expectations. Within the classrooms, you will also find manners posters that are discussed every Monday on the announcements as Monday Manners. One manner each week is focused on and practiced by the teachers and students to also encourage respect and safety within our building. The teachers and students also create a Respect Agreement in the beginning of the school year. This entails multiple discussions with the class as to what it looks like and feels like to show respect to the teachers, students, and classroom, as well as how the teacher should show respect to them. These are made into four posters to be signed by each student and hung inside the classrooms to be referred back to as needed.

Teachers ensure cultural awareness within the classroom through a variety of lessons that address topics such as Black History and Women's Rights. Our Curriculum Department created cross curricular lessons for the different grade levels to teach, that engaged the students in creative ways to help develop their knowledge and understanding of these very important topics. The students were engaged in the lessons through songs, shows and stories. These topics were addressed through a variety of learning styles that helped the students better understand the importance of these subjects in our history, current lives, and our future.

In the upper grades at Whipple Heights, the students are taught through a social studies curriculum that addresses the current events and happenings in today's society. Our third graders learn about real-world economics by creating an "Economics Carnival" in which they create a product, gather the resources for their products, and sell their product to the other classes using a ticket system. This example of supply and demand, opportunity cost, and being both producers and consumers is then related to examples from their community that they understand. In 4th grade, our students

learn about voting and elections through a Class President campaign. They read about both the electoral process and current leaders and get the chance to reflect on examples of leadership in the news as they consider what qualities are important to them in leadership. The curriculum also helps the students develop an understanding of our government and how it can directly affect them as well as the bigger picture of how it affects our community.

Whipple Heights supports our English Language Learners and their families with a specialized teacher that creates lessons specifically to the needs of each ELL student. She takes the students individually or in small groups each week to help improve their vocabulary and understanding of the English language. She also communicates with the families to provide resources and act as a liaison between school and home.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Whipple is dedicated to social-emotional teaching and learning. As a building, the staff works together to ensure the students are able to have social awareness, self-management, grit, and emotion regulation. We believe it is imperative to take time out of the day to work on different strategies, relationship building, etc. with the students. We want our students to know it is okay to make mistakes, it helps us grow and shapes us into well-rounded individuals.

In the beginning, a building-wide book study was conducted at Whipple focusing on having a growth mindset as part of their building action plan. Teachers worked through knowing the difference between having a growth vs. fixed mindset and having a growth mindset themselves. Then, they worked with their students to teach them to believe they can learn to complete tasks, solve complex problems, or grow their intelligence, rather than assuming they can or cannot do something based on their abilities. Teachers didn't simply teach their students about a growth mindset, they modeled it for their students through daily activities.

Whipple then transitioned into the implementation of an SEL Curriculum. It started in kindergarten, then moved up a grade level at a time until it was building-wide.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, every staff member of Whipple Heights participated in the TANF Town Poverty Simulation at their before school professional development day. This simulation put the staff in different roles in order to experience the challenges of those dealing with hardships and poverty. The staff's understanding of what some of the students and their families are experiencing grew and their understanding of the importance of continuing to provide SEL lessons to our students was apparent.

Also, when revisiting the climate and culture portion of our building action plan, there was a concern that we needed to create a pacing guide in order to bring SEL and Growth Mindset into the lessons and to be consistent amongst grade levels. Planning days were provided and teachers worked diligently to bring all of the lessons together, properly pacing them out throughout the school year. A lot of time and effort went into the pacing guides, but the outcome was remarkable. We continue to utilize the pacing guides this year. The teachers have become more comfortable with the material and the lessons are flowing very smoothly. The students enjoy the lessons and are able to verbalize what they are learning and its importance.

Whipple administers the Panorama Survey twice a year in order to measure student perceptions of the climate and culture of the building. We look at the data collected and individual questions in order to focus on areas where growth is needed. For example, Whipple has always had data to support that we have high teacher-student relationships, but emotion regulation fell a small percentage from last year. This gives teachers an idea of where more support and teaching is needed during their SEL lessons.

When Whipple went remote in March 2020, teachers continued their SEL lessons, they just looked a little bit different. Teachers knew it was more important than ever to connect with their students and support them academically and emotionally. Teachers were creative with their lessons and worked hard to get everyone involved. The school psychologist/counselor provided additional lessons/support to students throughout the remote months by providing online lessons and live GoogleMeets for students to join. The principal sent out the same daily activities to students in order to keep up with their daily school routines and jumped onto GoogleMeets with classrooms whenever possible to let the students know she was available if needed. Everyone at Whipple took "Miss You" pictures to be put together for a video for the students to let them know they were missed and the principal gathered messages from the students and made a special video for their teachers. At all weekly "optional" staff check-ins, the principal did activities to bring the staff together and to let them know their work was appreciated. This was a tremendously challenging time, but we all got through it together, one day at a time.

Being intentional about teaching SEL lessons and following the pacing guides established is valued at Whipple. We focus on the whole child and are here to help them grow every step of the way. It is an all-in approach where everyone is involved.

