

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Redwood Elementary School West
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 75 Redwood Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City West Orange State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07052-3623

County Essex County

Telephone (973) 669-5457 Fax (973) 324-9224

Web site/URL https://www.woboe.org/redwood E-mail kjackson@westorangeschools.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* Dr. C. Lauren Schoen E-mail lschoen@westorangeschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name West Orange School District Tel. (973) 669-5400

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 Ms. Jennifer Tunncliffe
(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 signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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	33	36	69
1	26	34	60
2	42	20	62
3	53	38	91
4	40	41	81
5	46	41	87
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	240	210	450

*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):
- 0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 6 % Asian
 - 32 % Black or African American
 - 28.6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.5 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 24.1 % White
 - 8.7 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 16%

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

Due to the current pandemic many families have moved from New York and surrounding areas to the Redwood section of West Orange, New Jersey.

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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	43
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	74
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	467
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.16
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish Castilian, Portuguese, Gujarat, Chinese, Ukrainian, Creoles and Pidgins French-based, Turkish, Greek Modern, French, Twi, Romanian Moldovan, Filipino Pilipino.

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
21 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %
 Total number students who qualify: 97

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 16 %
70 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 with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>9</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>20</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>7</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.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	22
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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 17:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	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 2021.

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.

At Redwood, our guiding light is Dr. King's famous maxim that the true goal of education is to build students' "intelligence and character." We firmly believe that both intelligence and character are not fixed commodities, but rather that both can be developed. To that end, our academic programs are designed to grow our students' abilities in each of the core subjects of English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, along with enhancing their creativity through the Arts and Music, their health and wellness through Physical Education and Health, their language skills and cultural understandings through World Languages, and their facility with technology and research through Library & Media Arts. Redwood also places a premium on character development. Redwood is "The School That Cares," and with this theme in mind we teach our students to care about themselves, each other, our staff, and our school itself. Through our R.O.C.K.E.T. character initiative, our students build the character traits of Respect, Open-Mindedness, Caring, Kindness, Encouragement, and Trustworthiness. We aim to give our students the tools that they need to be responsible, productive, and civic-minded citizens.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/DistrictPolicy.aspx?policyid=0178&id=a7a97fcf66544e448096629d390f899a>

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Redwood Elementary School, at the top of the hill in the woodland forest of West Orange, was established as the home of the Rockets in 1956 when the population was truly homogenous. Class sizes were small and the students lived within walking distance of the school. Over time the population has grown and has become the epitome of diversity. Our diversity ranges from ability, race, language, culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Academic Performance

The Redwood School community is devoted to academic excellence and consistently demonstrates notable growth toward mastery of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards as evidenced by meeting and/or exceeding performance measures in English language arts (ELA) and Math. We consistently performed above the state level on the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) in 2018-2019, our proficiency in math was 23% above the state average and our proficiency in reading/language arts was 14% about the state average. Specifically, as illustrated on the graph below, Redwood's median student growth percentile exceeded that of the State's by 13.5 in 2018-2019, increasing from 59.5 to 63.5 in ELA. Similarly, Redwood's median student growth percentile exceeded that of the State's for three consecutive years by up to 12.5, to include an upward growth trend from 54.5 to 62.5 in 2018-2019.

During the 2021-2022 school year, teachers and administrators utilized previous year's data in order to develop meaningful units and lessons meeting the academic needs of its students. Professional development opportunities focused specifically on identifying learning gaps across core content areas, standards, and units in which those gaps would be addressed, and integrating instructional strategies and resources to support accelerated learning.

In collaboration with content area supervisors, academic support teachers, interventionists and reading specialists, grade level teams were leveraged to address specific student needs and tiered intervention strategies. Through the use of data mining, progress monitoring, collaborative planning, and vertical articulation, staff identified specific areas of concern in reading, language arts and math. Patterns and areas of focus were identified by grade level, specifically, geometry for grades K-2; and, measurement and data for grades 3-5. Instructional strategies (6-8 per unit) to support lessons that aid in closing gaps were developed. Formative assessment data, such as MAP, Fountas and Pinnell, and standards based report cards illustrate how students continue to demonstrate growth over time in these content areas.

Social Emotional Learning

The Redwood community is committed to recognizing the importance of mental health through a carefully developed social and emotional learning initiative. As a school, opportunities for reflection, reimagining and refocusing encompass daily practice. Through the use of The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), staff members created two schoolwide days dedicated to mindfulness activities, affirmation creation, meditation moments and useful techniques to diffuse challenging situations.

Our goal at Redwood Elementary School is to mold academically, socially, and culturally inclined students who are ready to exceed the highest expectations. To ensure continued success beyond district offered professional development and student enrichment programs, Redwood offers the Rocket Academy where our faculty share their talents in afterschool professional development opportunities for staff and they are able to earn credit hours (How to Create a Virtual Classroom Using Google Slides, How to Organize and Freshen Up Your Google Drive, and Helping Sight Words Stick and Using Everyday Math for Math Intervention and Small Group Instruction). Our students have the opportunity to join free afterschool programs facilitated by our staff, such as the Kindergarten Garden Club, Challenge 24 (Math for grades 4 & 5), Fifth Grade Signature Club, Art Club, Band and Chorus Club. To involve our community we organized and facilitated EdCamps spotlighting Implementing Amistad and Know the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Although our kindergarten to fifth grade elementary school is considered large within our district, the community makes it feel like a close knit extended family. On a yearly basis, we welcome new families. Our families moved to the Redwood School community from as close as New York to as far as Korea to become members of “The School That Cares.” Currently, we embrace and educate students identifying as Black (32%), Hispanic (28.6%), White (24.1%), Two or more races (8.7%), Asian (6%), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (.5%) and Indigenous American (.1%) who are linguistically diverse with over twenty-five home spoken languages. We embrace our diverse population by ensuring all students are celebrated, appreciated and respected. With our newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Access Committee (DEAC) we not only celebrate diversity during themed months but to also encourage a high level of accountability in regards to adhering to the Amistad, Holocaust Education, and AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) legislation implementation. We integrate diversity through the use of a wide range of text and utilize culturally sensitive materials. To address teacher’s growth in this area, Redwood’s DEAC has partnered with Montclair State University to offer professional development training addressing History Through a Different Lens, Facing History and Ourselves. Teaching the Holocaust was offered by Kean University and Why AAPI Curriculum Matters was facilitated by The Asian American Education Project. The Amistad Commission provided teaching strategies to weave multicultural diversity through all subject areas. These training have assisted with implementation, aligned to the district curriculum for our kindergarten to fifth graders.

Redwood’s mission is to educate all students to the highest level of academic achievement to enable them to reach and expand their potential, and to prepare them to become productive, responsible, ethical, creative and compassionate members of society. With the implementation of our Caught with Character program our students and staff are recognized on a monthly basis, at our whole school meeting for upholding our mission, epitomizing our acronym R.O.C.K.E.T. (Respect, Open-Mindedness, Caring, Kindness, Encouragement/Empathy, Trustworthy) and living up to vision to actively pursue a lifetime love of learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:

Overall, student performances drive instruction here at Redwood. Our staff uses the differentiated instructional approach aligned to a workshop model while addressing the New Jersey Common Core Curriculum Standards. We use culturally responsive practices which form a connection between students and staff. The use of these practices have been beneficial in narrowing achievement and cultural gaps. In all subject areas our teachers utilize district adopted curriculum resources to reference while teaching the curriculum.

Our reading/ELA curriculum consists of Lucy Calkins Units of Study and Wilson’s Foundations and Word Study. Each classroom is provided with leveled readers for Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop, as well as Independent Daily Reading.

In math we use the University of Chicago’s Everyday Math program because it spirals concepts through the course of the year in addition to revisiting standard concepts throughout their kindergarten through fifth grade career. The spiraling curriculum tool is used to ensure mastery of skills by the time students enter middle school.

Along with adhering to the New Jersey Holocaust, Amistad and Asian American Pacific Islander legislation, we utilize Pearson’s My World materials as a guide to support our student making real world connections and decisions. This helps our students build a community among their peers and sense of pride in themselves.

Lastly, the Next Generation Science Standards are addressed using the National Geographic Learning tool which allows the students to engage, explore, explain, elaborate and evaluate concepts.

Students have the opportunity to display their learning of all subjects through informal and formal project based learning activities and assessments. Providing these resources gives our students an active role in their education.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Redwood School uses a balanced approach to literacy instruction to address the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Students become skillful readers and writers by engaging in a variety of literacy experiences throughout the school day. These include interactive read alouds, shared reading, independent reading, guided reading, shared writing, and interactive writing.

Interactive read alouds allow all of our students access to grade level material and provides students the opportunity for accountable talk with their peers. It is truly a highlight of the school day and not only strengthens reading skills but also fosters a sense of community.

Phonics and word study instruction teaches our readers how to “break the code”. At Redwood School, our primary students use Foundations, a multisensory structured language program which focuses on phonics, high frequency words, and vocabulary. Our upper grade students engage in word study instruction tailored to their developmental stage of spelling. Students explore words through sorts, games, and other hands-on activities.

Shared reading is a joyful part of our day when students gather together to experience a big book, poem, or other enlarged text with a focus on fluency. Our youngest readers especially enjoy using all of our shared reading “tools” - pointers, fly swatters, highlighting tape, and wiki sticks.

Daily independent practice is essential, and each student at Redwood School has their own bag of self-selected books from our extensive and diverse classroom libraries. Students spread out around the room and practice reading, jotting, and sharing ideas with peers. Simultaneously, our teachers are either conducting individual conferences or meeting with guided reading or strategy groups.

At Redwood School, our children write on a daily basis for a variety of purposes. Teachers use a scaffolded approach to guide our writers. Teachers model the writing process and collaboratively construct text with their students using both a shared writing and interactive writing approach. Students progress through the writing process and proudly celebrate their exemplary work from each genre.

Data, both formative and summative, is collected and analyzed on an ongoing basis to inform instruction. The unit assessments, performance based assessments, NWEA MAP Growth Assessment and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment are administered multiple times a year to track student's overall growth and proficiency in reading and language. Fountas and Pinnell data revealed 87% of our students have progressed at least one reading level between September and December. This information also enables teachers to select materials, form groups, and tailor instruction. We collect data on our writers throughout each unit beginning with a baseline writing sample and concluding with an on demand writing piece scored using the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project rubric. Additionally, ongoing running records, conference notes, and anecdotal records provide up to the minute information on student progress.

At Redwood School, we have a tiered system in place to support students who need additional assistance in the area of literacy. Services include in-class small group instruction, pull-out basic skills instruction, Leveled Literacy Intervention, and the Orton-Gillingham Approach. Additionally, we have a reading specialist/literacy coach on staff to continually help teachers improve their craft as they address each student's needs.

As a result of the COVID 19 Pandemic, our students and teachers at all grade levels have become more confident and proficient with technology. Our children read on virtual platforms such as RAZ-Kids, use technology to demonstrate their learning, and access instructional materials through Google Classroom. At Redwood School we are equipped for a seamless transition to virtual or hybrid learning should the need arise.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The curricular philosophy of the West Orange K-5 Mathematics program is to systematically develop students' comprehension and application of mathematical concepts, skills and processes so that students will coherently advance their problem-solving and critical thinking and reasoning skills. The curriculum is focused, rigorous, diverse, and inclusive. It is designed to support student growth and achievement in mathematics so that all students are empowered to be effective thinkers and efficient and accurate problem-solvers. We want our students to know, use and enjoy math!

The standards-aligned, research-based curriculum, is designed to invest teachers with resources and pathways to guide their instruction to support student growth and achievement in mathematics. This includes providing: organization, direction and tools to further effective classroom instruction, differentiation resources to create equitable learning situations for all students, authentic and meaningful assessment, and the use of technology to capitalize on learning opportunities.

To accomplish this, the curriculum includes real-world applications and connections that focus on students' active engagement in the learning process. This is measured by our students ability to demonstrate academic growth and independently in the following areas: modeling and applying mathematical skills, making connections between previous knowledge and new content, persevering in making sense of and finding solutions to problems using math, and demonstrating critical thinking and reasoning skills to levels of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. Our curricular focus on active learning supports not only students' academic goals but is the basis for acquiring successful life and career goals.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The K-5 science curriculum is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). An inquiry-based approach fosters curiosity and creativity. The mission of our science work is to prepare students to succeed in a global information economy fueled by advances and innovation in science, engineering, and technology. Our science curriculum takes into account that elementary students are likely to have jobs that don't yet exist. Therefore, the focus is on science and engineering skills that can be applied to new situations.

Students at each grade level explore disciplinary core ideas in life, physical, and earth and space science. Grade level NGSS Performance Expectations are the pillars of the transfer goal for each curricular unit. Students' progress toward the district's curriculum transfer goal is captured in their science notebooks and summatively evaluated using a performance based assessment. Performance based assessments are tasks that students must independently complete to demonstrate a deep understanding of content. They are written at Webb's Depth of Knowledge Level 3, Strategic Thinking, or Level 4, Extended Thinking.

The curriculum equally addresses all three dimensions of the Next Generation Science Standards: Disciplinary Core Ideas, Science and Engineering Practices, and Crosscutting Concepts. Teachers use the Cengage/National Geographic Exploring Science Program to guide student learning which incorporates Rodger Bybee's 5E lesson format (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate). All elementary students have access to the National Geographic program both online and hardcover. The program is differentiated to reach all students, including special education, English language learners, and struggling readers. Through the program's lessons, all K-5 students regularly engage in the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices. Students can be observed defining and solving a problem, arguing from evidence, analyzing and interpreting data, constructing an explanation, and collaborating and communicating information. These skills help students make informed decisions and develop lifelong leadership skills.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Emphasis in the social studies curriculum is placed not only on content, but on the understanding and development of concepts that enable students to think critically. This enables learners to systematically make connections to real world experiences.

To accomplish this, the social studies curriculum is aligned to the 2022 NJ Social Studies Standards based on the Career, Civic and College Readiness (C3) framework. A comprehensive program is provided that meets the needs of our diverse learners and fosters meaningful ways in which students can personally connect with the content. Non-fiction and historical fiction texts are incorporated to further enhance the learning of diverse perspectives. Cross curricular opportunities are provided to introduce a multidisciplinary approach across other content areas. Students are provided opportunities to employ democratic dispositions, values, and attitudes needed for civic engagement.

In the area of assessment, the social studies curriculum includes a comprehensive integration of performance based assessments which allow the learners to develop their content knowledge, literacy, social studies and communication skills. Learned social studies skills are applied (map reading, geography, primary/secondary source analysis) to other disciplines both in and out of the classroom.

In the area of instruction, through direct and indirect methodologies, social studies instruction focuses upon engaging students in the critical analysis of historical and contemporary issues to foster the development and growth of caring as well as interested citizens. An added emphasis is placed on engaging students in authentic learning experiences that will prepare them for the worlds of professional, college, and civil life.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

1. Art Education and Exploration at Redwood

The Art program presents a dynamic and rich experience that scaffolds a variety of opportunities for each student to learn, apply and synthesize the Elements and Principles of Design throughout their years at Redwood.

Redwood artists are also inspired by a variety of culturally diverse artists such as Claude Monet, Vincent VanGogh, Henri Matisse, Vassily Kandinsky, Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringold, and Keith Haring to name a few. Students are exposed to a wide range of mediums including: different paints, metal, wood, clay and much more. This combination provides a well rounded experience for the students to be able to create unique works of art.

Creativity and individuality are encouraged in the safe haven of the Art Room.

2. Physical Education/Health

Our comprehensive and cohesive Health and Physical Education program promotes a physically active lifestyle, practices mental health awareness, and emphasizes social/emotional development and support. Physical Education meets two times per week for kindergarten through fifth grade. To directly meet the varying physical needs of our students with disabilities, two additional Physical Education classes per week. These classes have been adapted to meet each student's particular needs, to include curriculum and resources that support the direct aim of this work.

The goal of the physical education and health curriculum is to provide knowledge and skills through active participation in movement and sport that will develop an appreciation for both health-related and skill-related fitness standards. For grades one through five, students meet for health education one day per week. The focus of the health curriculum is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage current health concerns through various stages of development. Lessons are designed to connect content with real-life situations in order to help students understand the impact of personal choices and to be aware of external factors that can influence one's health.

3. West Orange Elementary World Language Program

The objective of the elementary World Language program is to develop students' appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity by introducing them to the Spanish language and the cultures that speak it. Students explore and engage with the Spanish language and culture through a series of real world thematic units, to include storytelling. Students identify frequently used vocabulary and expressions by viewing and listening to familiar stories with cultural components such as: celebrations, music, family and school life in various Latin American countries, expressions of endearment and courtesy, and traditional foods and music.

Students also make cultural and linguistic comparisons across the cultures represented across the ELL and school community to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences. Students identify and produce vocabulary and expressions through the use of videos, audio and visuals embedded in a series of scaffolded games and learning activities addressing unit themes. Students also engage in activities and tasks that strengthen their interpretive viewing and listening comprehension skills. Students who began their Spanish language learning in Kindergarten are expected to demonstrate novice-mid proficiency by the end of their 5th grade school year.

4. Library

The main goals of the Redwood library program are to cultivate the joy of reading and learning in every child, enhancing their thirst for knowledge, while also establishing the habit of reading for pure pleasure.

The library is a rich, multi-faceted learning environment where many different educational activities take place every day. All Redwood students benefit from weekly lessons on information literacy skills, technology, and book genres. Our Makerspace program provides opportunities where students can collaborate with their peers to explore, build, create, and tinker. Our web presence enables our community to have access 24/7, so that students and teachers can access many of our resources at any time. Our collection is carefully developed to provide diverse/multicultural books and digital resources that support and enrich the curricula in all areas and provide students with windows and mirrors to enhance their social-emotional development and growth. Our Library Media Specialist seeks to serve teachers as an active collaborator, curator and guide and to empower students to become critical thinkers, good digital citizens, and lifelong learners.

5. N/A

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

While proficiency levels in both ELA and Math exceed those of the State, a team of Academic Support teachers, including reading specialists and interventionists, implement a consistent and comprehensive approach to analyzing student data across multiple measures to identify students who are performing below grade level and greater levels of support to demonstrate academic gains.

A systematic approach to gathering and analyzing student performance data is used to identify specific content area strengths and weaknesses, and patterns that cross content areas. Staff identify, research-based intervention strategies, and correlate tiered intervention services to formulate individualized student educational plans. Some of these data points include, but are not limited to, formative and summative assessment data, conferencing, student grades and products, and teacher and parent observations.

A multi-tiered approach to intervention is delivered by trained certified teachers for students in K-5 who are performing below grade level. Student participation considers a process that includes results from district and standardized assessments, state NJ ASK assessments, informal inventories, formative assessments, report card grades, performance in the regular class program, and teacher recommendation. Instruction may consist of in-class small group support, team teaching, intensive intervention in an alternate setting, and/or inclusion depending on the individual needs of the students. Teachers differentiate instruction based on the most current assessment data and learning-profiles that work best for at-risk learners.

A systematic and effective component of the multi-tiered intervention programs is the Leveled Literacy Intervention System (LLI). LLI is designed to help teachers provide powerful, daily small group instruction for the lowest achieving children. Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) is a small group, short-term supplemental intervention designed for children who find reading and writing difficult and are not receiving another intervention. The goal of the intervention is to bring the children to grade level achievement. With the support of instruction, children stretch themselves to read more complex texts with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension and to write more complex messages. Children are involved in the reading and writing process everyday.

LLI focuses on: phonological awareness and phonics, fluency, comprehension and the expansion of oral language skills, including vocabulary. Staff use fast-paced highly engaging lessons of high-quality, Fountas and Pinnell texts, comprehension of the text, early writing strategies, a strong home connection, assessments, and progress-monitoring.

Students in grades K-5 may be eligible for LLI if they are an ELA Basic Skills Instruction (BSI) student and receive LLI outside of the literacy block. Students are evaluated at the end of a 14-week period. If additional time is needed, students may remain in the LLI program for the full 18-week period when students are reevaluated. At 18 weeks, if progress is minimal or none, the student will be referred to the Reading Specialist for more extensive testing and a more intensive 1:1 support program. Once a student

exits, a recommendation will be made for re-immersion back into the regular literacy class program or additional support during the literacy block with a BSI teacher.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The West Orange Public Schools is committed to addressing the educational needs of its students and the identification of its gifted learners. We believe in the philosophy of gifted education and recognize that students' unique and exceptional abilities are to be nurtured in order to ensure they reach their potential. Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude, competence and task commitment. Giftedness occurs in different disciplines, in cultures and in all socioeconomic levels.

Through a research-based curriculum, gifted students are provided with advanced academic experiences that are challenging, hands-on, relevant to real-world problems, and encourage students to develop projects that are innovative. It encourages the development of higher level thinking processes, research, problem-solving and communication skills that utilize technology, and creativity in English Language Arts, Math and STEM. The Identification of gifted students is based on multiple measures of success, including aptitude and achievement assessments, teacher parent referrals, and student portfolios. The guiding principles that influence the Gifted Program in its design, development, and implementation ensure that gifted students are provided educational services commensurate with their exceptional abilities and achievement.

3c. Special education:

Redwood Elementary School provides instruction and related services to students with a wide array of special education needs. The school psychologist, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDT-C), special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service instructors all collaborate to design individualized instruction according to the students' Individualized Education Program(IEP) goals.

Our school offers whole-group, small-group, and 1:1 interventions that include speech, occupational, and physical therapies. The district Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BCBA) consults on behavior goals and individual plans on an as-needed basis. Teachers and staff meet with parents regularly to discuss student goals, objectives, and progress.

Redwood School houses a variety of special education settings in order to meet each student's least restrictive environment. These include in-class support (In-class Resource (ICR), pull-out resource (POR), and two intellectual disabilities (ID) classes. Additionally, Redwood is the only elementary school in our district to offer an Emotional Regulation Impairment (ERI) class for students across the district in Grades 3-5. This program utilizes a structured environment to meet the academic and emotional needs of its students. The ERI class includes specialized supports and interventions to enable those students to work towards successfully transitioning back to the general education setting.

Redwood's approach leads to meaningful and effective lessons that are driven by standards and data. Student goals and objectives are based on the NJSLs. Teachers incorporate differentiation techniques, modifications, learning tools, and lessons that enable students to succeed. Progress reports are sent home quarterly indicating student progress on IEP goals and objectives. Formative and summative assessments gather data that is used to target specific learning needs at the individual, class, and whole-school levels. The Measure of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessment is administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year to target specific learning needs and overall trends to help close the achievement gap between students in special education compared to their general-education peers.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

English Language Learners participate in a High Intensity & Sheltered English Instruction ESL Program. In this program our students whose language proficiency levels are L1 and L2 (newcomers and beginners) receive a double period of English as a Second Language (ESL) provided by a certified ESL teacher. Our intermediate and advanced ELLs receive one period of ESL instruction. In addition to this small group targeted instruction, our students return to their mainstream classrooms in which their teachers have been

trained in Sheltered English Instruction. Once our ELLs begin to increase their language proficiency skills and through formal and informal assessments demonstrate a need for additional services, these services are provided to ensure their academic and social success. The services include: BSI, after and before school enrichment, homework club, etc. The students are assessed for growth using the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 assessments. Redwood students have consistently met our English Language Arts growth every year. Along the way, guardians are kept informed of their child's progress through the use of apps that translate (Class Dojo), ESL report cards, and parent/teacher conferences.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Redwood conducts student morale and climate surveys at least three times a year to glean students' needs from their input. As a result, our coterie has been able to ensure our environment is positive and students, as well as staff, are motivated to be a part of the Redwood community. A response from a student in regards to the climate of Redwood was "Everyone is helpful here and everyone respects their teachers because they can learn." A fifth grader stated, "Our school is a positive environment because everyone here is nice to each other. A lot of people here, adults included, help each other. Sometimes they help people with their work and anything that's hard." Another fifth grader shared, "I believe that the climate is very positive because all the teachers and the principal and everyone who participates in the school has a positive attitude and are just nice in general. The blue tickets given when we accomplish something beyond expectation motivates students to have a lot more positive attitude."

While affected by school closures, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the students had active office hours with all of their teachers beyond the school day. During these office hours students were able to log in to review work, engage in conversations and participate in restorative circles where they had the opportunity to share their experiences related to the pandemic while both learning virtually and in a hybrid environment. When re-engaging as a full school to build morale, the students experienced two SEL Days to learn how to manage their feelings, and participated in weather permitted outdoor learning pods. Students had buddy class experiences where they created Kindness Kits for our addressless neighbors, shared the meaning of friendship with friendship links, and paired together for Community Field Day. Before and during the pandemic we have continued to provide a space where all feel and know that they are welcome.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Redwood has had a long standing relationship with organizations and businesses in our community. Our Caught with Character program has gained interest from local businesses. Over the years our local orthodontist, and Mexican and Italian restaurants have donated school supplies and meals to students who have been caught living up to the Redwood R.O.C.K.E.T. (Respect, Open-mindedness, Caring, Kindness, Encouragement/Empathy, Trustworthy) acronym. On an annual basis the West Orange Rotary Club partners with our third grade and donates dictionaries, as well as backpacks containing school supplies to our students in need. Non-profit organizations such as Senior Corps enrich our Kindergarten to second grade reading experiences by conducting read alouds paired with open-ended comprehension discussions. Our partnership with our award winning Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has provided our students with curriculum-based virtual and in-school assemblies, a STEM Fair provided by Bayer, and community engagement activities, such as food truck festivals spotlighting local vendors during movie night all free of charge so our entire school population has access to enjoyable affairs. They have also modernized our school library with the purchase of new furniture and flooring to create a more engaging space with Maker Space tall tables and ergonomic chairs for comfort. They added environmentally friendly water fountains with a filtration system that offers cleaner water to our school community. Lastly, the partnership with Operation Grow, a local non-profit, has been instrumental in organizing our EdCamps for educators and community members.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Redwood Elementary School educators and staff embody our motto here at "The School That Cares." Professionally, we care about ourselves by constantly staying involved with learning and turnkeying our knowledge throughout our school community and beyond. We care about our students and community by being culturally responsive and sensitive to their needs to enable opportunities for them to excel academically, socially and emotionally.

The 2020-2021 school year was a challenge to most. Moving from virtual to hybrid learning, staff morale had the opportunity to decrease; however, through Social Emotional Learning professional development

opportunities offered by the district with the use of Teacher Coach, the staff was able to experience on-the-job self-care, as well as gain knowledge of self-care strategies to use at home. Within our school we had a virtual yoga session for staff and a building-based Relax, Relate, Release website created by school administrators for staff use. The website included SEL podcasts, Music and Meditation, and free Mindfulness Webinars.

We were not only affected by COVID-19 during the 2020-2021 school year, but in our culturally, ethnically and racially diverse school, we felt the impact of our nation's Human Rights issues which were seen on various news and social media platforms. Many of our members of the Redwood community participated in protests voicing their pain and thoughts against hate. In school, both students and staff shared their feelings through writing and restorative circles regarding the unjust situations plaguing our country. In response to the outcries for justice, our school and greater community participated in microaggression and identity professional development offered by Redwood and the district. In addition to the district-led professional development, within our school we found teachers and staff wanted to know more about the histories of marginalized populations in America. We partnered with Montclair State University to offer a series of professional development sessions entitled "History Through A Different Lens" to deliver a refresher in American History. Along with the series, to address our students and community, we conducted a voluntary schoolwide book club to acknowledge differences in culture between our teaching staff and students.

4. School Leadership:

We believe in and promote the philosophy of servant leadership. Our focus, as staff and administrators, is on creating relationships that foster learning and exploration. We strive to create and maintain a safe environment for sharing ideas, exchanging experiences and learning through doing. Most importantly, we lead by example. Authority, for example, is grounded in the authenticity demonstrated with every interaction among staff, the students and their families. Administrators are attuned to empowering staff with opportunities to lead and to be creative in developing their approach to classroom management. Staff are also encouraged to develop and promote opportunities for deeper levels of parental engagement and family participation in the child's learning.

Every operational and programmatic initiative is geared towards improving student achievement. We have also incorporated mechanisms to garner and integrate feedback from our families as we develop and implement new strategies. One of our most impactful strategies to date is the integration of the restorative justice model. We are employing Restorative Justice to resolve conflict between and among students, staff and administrators. As opposed to the "Zero Tolerance" model which leaves little room for context or flexibility, Restorative Justice provides us with a means to hear both sides of a story and weigh other intangible dynamics where appropriate. This practice also leaves all parties involved feeling heard and their perspectives valued.

We have also made great strides in how we work with information. Our entire staff participates in generating and analyzing data. In addition to tracking the traditional statistics around attendance, participation and assessment, teachers are also practicing vertical articulation. Vertical articulation gives teachers the opportunity to create strategic plans across grade levels K-5 to close academic gaps.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Culturally responsive teaching and learning at Redwood school requires our commitment to promoting diversity, equity, social awareness, inclusivity, and respect for all. This responsibility we embrace as a school, a community, and a family. Ensuring this responsibility takes time, patience, and reflection and a staff that demonstrates an on-going willingness to learn, and maintain continued compassion and empathy.

Redwood School welcomes students from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

At Redwood, our motto is "The School That Cares," and students and faculty take this message to heart. These values are taught consistently throughout the year in both whole-school meetings, and ongoing classroom discussions. A monthly award ceremony is conducted for all students to witness those who have

demonstrated character beyond their typical expectations. This event has become a hallmark of who we are as a school. This fosters on-going random acts of kindness throughout the year and encourages students to think of others. Acts of bullying or discrimination of any kind are not tolerated at Redwood School.

Visual works of art and bulletin boards throughout the school exhibit cultural diversity, encouraging positive sentiments among the student population for monthly themes. These include Black History Month, Women's History Month, Indigenous People's Day, and Chinese New Year. Students with intellectual disabilities classrooms have been a part of our school for many years, and as a result of nurturing and education, our students have developed a sense of understanding and empathy.

Including students' families of diverse backgrounds, including single-parent households, multi-racial households, and the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) community is an important aspect of our Redwood Community and allows for a rich partnership. Throughout the COVID pandemic, Redwood never lost touch with families and we kept our spirits together and uplifted through those difficult times of separation. Community games such as virtual Bingo and virtual music and talent shows continued.

For staff, our administration continues to model kindness and fosters an inclusive and nurturing environment through committees such as Diversity, Equity and Access. Ongoing professional development courses specifically focused on diversity and inclusion, cultural awareness are encouraged by our school district. Information concerning ongoing seminars are provided on an ongoing basis for faculty to attend at little or no cost.

Current events and social movements throughout the country and around the world, are approached with respect across the curriculum.

Resources are provided to families and staff from the principal's office, and Social Emotional Learning opportunities provide safe spaces in which to discuss events.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In 2019 Redwood Elementary School made the decision to employ Restorative Justice practices aligned to the restorative circles inspired by the teachings at the International Institute of Restorative Practices. During our 2019-2020 Back to School meeting we focused on punishment versus logical consequences to address student behavior as opposed to Zero Tolerance and other exclusionary practices. In the classroom, teachers are encouraged to begin and end their day with restorative circles. Conducting restorative circles using a speaker piece has enabled our students the ability to take turns, exhibit patience, and share in a brave and safe space. At the kindergarten level circles are started with sentence starters and children can choose to participate or listen in a respectful manner. Over the grade levels topics change, however still focus on their feelings. At the fifth grade level we have a Restorative Justice Ambassador who conducts weekly restorative discussion surrounding real world topics, such as how to be kind to our "addressless" neighbors, what it means to be a friend, and what are the ups and downs of families, just to name a few. Outside of the classroom our lunch aides, office staff, and school counselor participate in the use of restorative activity reports when there is a conflict during unstructured time such as lunch and recess.

The use of restorative practices have decreased bullying, suspensions, and, most of all has lessened repeat unfavorable behaviors. When a student was asked about the practices he shared, "I think it's better than suspension because I have been learning how to be a better person." The students are learning conflict resolution, having fair hearings, and a level of accountability. For these reasons, we continue to implement these practices. Subsequently, both teachers and students have been able to focus more on instruction.