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 Mr. Brian Loving
          (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)
Official School Name New Hope-Solebury Middle School
          (As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 184 West Bridge Street
          (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City New Hope   State PA   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 18938-1392

County Bucks

Telephone (215) 862-0608   Fax

Web site/URL https://www.nhsd.org/Domain/9   E-mail epedersen@nhsd.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. Charles Lentz_____E-mail clentz@nhsd.org_____
          (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name New Hope-Solebury School District   Tel. (215) 862-2552

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. Judeth Finn
          (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   2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   1 Middle/Junior high schools
                                         1 High schools
                                         0 K-12 schools

                                         4 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not 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)
   [X] 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	60	54	114
7	54	60	114
8	60	57	117
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	174	171	345

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate):   5.6 % Asian
                                     0.4 % Black or African American
                                     7 % Hispanic or Latino
                                     0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                     80.8 % White
                                     6 % 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: 3%

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

    This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	9
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	331
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

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

                                                             6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10 %

                    Total number students who qualify: 33

8. Students receiving special education services   <u>14</u> %
    with an IEP or 504:   <u>47</u> 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>8</u> Autism	<u>29</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>40</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>30</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>4</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</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: <u>4</u>

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.	16
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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   <u>14:1</u>

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	97%	97%	98%	98%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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.

The New Hope-Solebury School District inspires and empowers all students to become passionate, confident, and innovative learners with the ability to adapt to a diverse and global society. Our middle school focuses on meeting the needs of each student and strategically meeting their needs through a holistic approach.

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

https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/newh/Board.nsf/Public#

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

The New Hope-Solebury Middle School is located in Bucks County near two highly visited tourist destinations. Peddler's Village and the town of New Hope are only minutes away from our campus. The school borders the Delaware River and is only a short walk/drive from Lambertville, NJ. The students and families value the school and education as our rankings in many publications are very high. Our community values education, diversity, inclusion, and giving back to the local and extended community.

Our middle school has long embraced the middle school philosophy of being the academic, social, and emotional bridge between elementary and secondary education. We have strategically carved out time to focus on the whole child through the use of an advisory period that focuses on mental health, student exploration, discovery, and building a robust and inclusive culture.

The New Hope-Solebury Middle School has instituted various programs that have accentuated our academic programming, including our distinguished involvement in No Place for Hate, our Vex Robotics teams that have been state champions, our participation in Mikayla's Voice, and countless other programs that allow our students to explore their interests in ways that give back tot he community. Another such program is our annual Day of Giving, which helps our students be dispersed around the community to pay it forward. During Day of Giving, our students volunteer at a local foodbank, serve food at a homeless shelter, perform music at various nursing homes, gather hygiene bags for our troops, and various other initiatives to help students understand the value of giving back to the community. Throughout COVID-19, our district has attempted to manage the hybrid model of online learning with the in-person model. Our school has gone above and beyond to ensure that all students access the online delivery model by setting up hotspots for those in need.

Our school focuses on the PA Standards as a starting point for curricular development in all content areas. Our RELA curriculum and standards are woven into all of our curricular areas, with particular attention to our English and social studies classes. Our departments have worked extremely hard at designing a curriculum that aligns with the preceding courses and the subsequent courses that the students will take. Once the content has been decided, our staff utilizes a Backward Design approach to sequencing the content and understanding the end goal. Once the sequencing and content have been determined, our curriculum is written through the lens of a Universal Design for Learning as often as possible, which may include a project-based learning approach for parts of the curriculum. We have often discussed cross-curricular connections with specific standards. For example, our English and social studies teachers work collaboratively on the Text Dependent Analysis standard. Both departments have tackled that standard. We also have worked in cross-curricular teams to touch on specific topics that may not be in the grade-level content for social studies. Still, we want to address in our middle school such as the Holocaust and other equity-based topics.

Our middle school has been revamping our MTSS process to be data-driven to implement informed decisions about interventions. The use of formative, summative, benchmark and curricular-based assessments has provided the data we need to properly intervene when students have a gap in their understanding.

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:

In New Hope-Solebury School District, we believe data-driven instruction is at the heart of instructional best practices. Quantifiable assessments are used to identify growth areas and target areas of need, which drives progress in student learning and continuous improvement in our teaching practices. Assessments come in various forms but are classified primarily as:

Universal Screeners: Universal Screening uses a systematic process for identifying students who may be at risk and/or need support in academic and/or behavioral/social/emotional areas.

Formative-assessments: Formative assessment is a planned process in which teachers use assessment-elicited evidence of student status to adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to change their current learning tactics (ASCD, 2008).

Summative-assessments: The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark (Carnegie Mellon University, 2015).

Benchmark-assessments: Benchmark assessments are short tests administered throughout the school year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards. Regular use of benchmark assessments is seen by many as a tool to measure student growth and design curriculum to meet individual learning needs (Learnnc.org).

Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA): CBAs are Benchmark Assessments given to measure student growth in particular subject areas throughout the school year. Information derived from these assessments allows teachers to make curricular decisions and adjust teaching practices.

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

The New Hope-Solebury Middle School Reading and English Language Arts core curriculum aims to foster the linguistic skills necessary to become future-ready, effective readers, writers, communicators, and thinkers through literacy instruction. Therefore, the 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade curricula are articulated to ensure the developmentally-appropriate acquisition of these requisite skills and concepts. In alignment with Pennsylvania state standards, students evaluate and analyze a variety of literature and informational texts and the vocabulary and grammar therein to develop an understanding of craft and structure and become proficient writers and orators. With a focus on critical reading, substantive discussion, and purposeful writing, students demonstrate language development through tiered, formative, and summative assessments.

Students in all grades receive instruction in traditional or co-taught classrooms with an ELA content teacher and a Special Education or Gifted Education teacher. Additionally, students are grouped by ability in 8th grade. Starting with the district's scope and sequence, the developmental plan for student achievement is further calibrated based on the results of two types of formative assessments: a series of three benchmark assessments that measure grade-level aptitude and are administered throughout the year; and formative assessments that specifically correlate to content-related instruction. Therefore, in response to the results from these assessments, whole-group, small-group, and individual educational experiences are further tailored to meet the specific needs of students in-class and during Academic period, a time in which students can receive additional supports and interventions.

Students move through the curriculum through varied instructional approaches such as tiered, differentiated, gradual release instruction, and problem-based learning in English Language Arts classes. Students engage in various educational experiences such as Socratic Seminars, book circles, and debates that are looped

across grade levels to ensure the use of shared language and continued growth. Students are further supported with the cross-grade-level use of various online, interactive learning platforms such as Membean, Study Island, and NoRedInk. Summative assessments vary and include performance-based, culminating products requiring developmentally appropriate use of skills, strategies, and concepts to demonstrate appropriate development and mastery. These authentic and real-world products aim to solve student-selected, real-world, and community problems that can result in a variety of products such as persuasive writing and speeches, advertisements, elevator pitches, TV or book series content, websites, and online platforms, and beyond.

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

Learning standards are aligned with the PA Common Core based on the grade level and course content. Standards are incorporated throughout the year as they align with the specific course. For example, we have two options for students entering 6th grade: a Math 6 course whose content mirrors the PA Standards and a Pre-algebra course. Students are exposed to the PA Standards in both courses but at different times, and the depth and breadth of coverage may be different. Although some PA standards may not be addressed in a year, they should be addressed at some point throughout the continuum from 6th – 8th grade. The math department is currently going through its curriculum renewal cycle and re-writing and mapping. Resources are being incorporated or updated to improve content coverage and instructional effectiveness. Spiraling of instruction allows for repetition and review of grade-level standards.

A review of PSSA data and Study Island Benchmarks help us identify students in need of remediation and support. Numerous strategies and technology-based supports are incorporated throughout the math continuum from 6th to 8th grade. For example, Study Island is used to identify students needing additional support in the Academic Standards. Study Island provides the students with real-time feedback and explanations as they work through a formative assignment. Based on the learners, math teachers differentiate their instruction. This is done through explicit instruction, graphic organizers, small group instruction, project-based learning, scaffolding, math centers, math journals, math games, etc. Go Formative is another technology-based support that teachers have utilized over the past few years. This platform allows teachers to see student work in real-time, give feedback, track student success, and differentiate on the spot. Projects are crafted with academic rigor and a desire to connect math to real-world experiences. Technology is integrated into these approaches.

Formative instruction is an integral part of our math instruction from 6-8. The Math Department and the English and Science departments use Study Island to administer three benchmarks throughout the year. The data collected is analyzed and used to target instruction. Teachers incorporate technology for formative assessment. For example, they use the quiz feature in Canvas, Study Island, Go Formative, and Delta Math, to name a few. Teachers also use tickets in and tickets out to assess student learning throughout a unit of instruction. Formatives are used to evaluate learning and instructional effectiveness and guide future instruction. Summative assessments are given after a unit has been completed and instruction has been modified and measured based upon formative data.

As a result of the Covid interruption to the instruction, we implemented new support this year. PSSA results were analyzed at the beginning of the year. Students with significant gaps were selected to receive small group instruction twice a week during the Academic Period at the end of the day. This is a new intervention that was implemented this year.

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

The middle school science curriculum is based upon the Pennsylvania anchors and the NGSS recommendations. Each standard was analyzed, and its place in the curriculum was determined. If the current curriculum is missing a key concept, teachers create activities to supplement the curriculum. The classes are heterogeneously grouped, so students of all abilities are in each class. Needless to say, teachers differentiate activities and assessments to meet the various student needs at their level. All students are challenged to think critically and solve problems. Students each have a Chromebook and interactive screens are in each room.

The pandemic required a change in the instructional platform, requiring teachers and students to master Canvas. Instructional materials, rubrics, and assessments are available through this platform. Other forms of electronic assessment were explored and continue to be utilized. Paper assessments continue to be used, however, and are still considered to be the most genuine form of assessment. They use a variety of questioning forms, including analysis of charts, diagrams, and graphs. Frequent small check-in formative assessments are used throughout the unit, with summative assessments used at the end. Assessment take many forms, including projects, technology applications, and laboratory explorations. Most teachers are not relying on all of the strategies that were needed during the pandemic. In addition, teacher created curriculum based assessments are administered three times a year to determine progress toward curricular goals.

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

At New Hope-Solebury Middle School, our social studies curriculum adheres to the SAS standards, and from grades 6-8 spans from ancient civilizations, to European exploration and history, then life in early America. We believe this provides the perfect platform for students to get a taste for U.S. and global studies before high school. All three grades incorporate a universal design for learning, differentiation, project-based instruction, online resources, and scaffolding in our inclusive environments. As part of a larger secondary curriculum endeavor, we are embarking on a curriculum renewal cycle - something each department participates in every few years. This will provide exciting opportunities to ensure our students are privy to the most up-to-date, effective, and evidence-based resources available.

On a regular basis, all of our social studies classes rely on formative assessments like bellringers, journals, class discussions, small and large group tasks, and quick checks in systems like Canvas to gauge our instructional pacing. Using the History Alive series by TCI, we are able to back our teaching with bountiful online resources for students. Summative data like TDA samples, unit exams, and course projects helps teachers to track student growth and acceleration, and in data analysis like SPMs and benchmarks, we are able to share individual and class-wide student progress with administrators.

When the pandemic hit, our staff confidently led the transition to virtual, then hybrid, then traditional learning once again. Now, we are more equipped than ever to navigate any new environments or schedules that come our way. While some may look back over the past two years as a time of loss, we see it as a window of opportunity where we were each able to expand our toolkit regarding the best practices, tools, techniques, assessments, and supports to help our students become successful.

1f. For secondary schools:

As a middle school, we begin the college and career readiness process through the use of career fairs, teaching and participating in community-based projects, and exploring various career standards through our BizTown project. Each student is required to upload evidence to their College and Career Canvas page throughout the school year. Each piece of evidence is tied to a College and Career 339 PA state standard. After uploading evidence, every student is also given the task to provide a brief reflection on what they learned from the activity. These artifacts follow the students throughout middle school and into high school. Some of the College and Career tasks are drawn from the curriculum. Our yearly tasks for sixth grade include a career interest survey, virtual career fair, and Biztown as previously mentioned. Seventh grade coordinates a career fair, a panel discussion with experts in the legal field which ties directly to their studies of 12 Angry Men and a future visit to Finance Park as a continuation of their Biztown work in sixth grade. Our eighth grade students utilize many tools that are embedded within the PA Career Zone website. They work on developing a resume, career plan template and reflect on their results from the career interest profiler.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

We have strong and diverse curricular options for students outside of the core content areas. Our extensive list covers a plethora of content areas such as STEAM, art, music, and world languages. Our full list of courses include: Robotics (1,2, & 3), Health (1,2,& 3), STEAM (1 & 2), French, Spanish, Art & Film, Music Explorations, PE, Art, Band, Orchestra, and Choir. This list provides a rich and diverse set of offerings for our students to explore their interests.

Sixty-five percent of our students are enrolled in a music class of their choosing. The classes run throughout the whole year on an every-other-day rotation. The students have a chance to select from Choir, Orchestra, Band, or General Music. General Music is a course that integrates technology and audio editing into their music creation. Ninety-three percent of our students take a language, and of that percentage, 85% leave the middle school with a level one language completed. All of our students are cycled through electives that change by grade level that include: robotics, health, STEAM, Art & Film, World Language, and Music Exploration.

As a middle school, we emphasize character building through our SWPBIS program as we teach students how to behave, how to interact with others - including the adults in their life. We have assemblies where we introduce the staff that students would normally not engage with as much. The bus drivers, the custodians, the lunch aids, and everyone affiliated with the school at all levels are introduced by name and as a member of the school community.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Our middle school has been revamping our MTSS process to be data-driven to implement informed decisions about interventions. The use of formative, summative, benchmark, and curricular-based assessments have provided the data we need to properly intervene when students have a gap in their understanding. We use the data to offer interventions that are targeted at the needs of each child in order to close the gap. We have a targeted MTSS team that analyzes data, brainstorms solutions, and meets with grade-level teams. Our middle school is set up into teams that meet weekly to discuss student concerns and to provide appropriate support.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We have a targeted MTSS team, which includes our teacher of the gifted, that analyzes data, brainstorms solutions, and meets with grade-level teams. We have a rich gifted program that offers a replacement curriculum as opposed to an "in addition to" philosophy. The gifted teacher focuses on goals in 6th grade that are RELA and math-focused. As the students demonstrate a need, we target interventions and extensions to support the need. For example, we have pull-out opportunities as well as replacement classes to meet the above grade level needs. For example, a student can test out of a language class, or a math class, and take advanced courses both in the building as well as in our high school.

3c. Special education:

In the Learning Support Classroom, you will find a variety of students receiving additional instruction and reinforcement in all content areas. Although emphasis is placed on improved writing skills and increased reading comprehension across content areas, students in support classes have the opportunity to work on student-specific literacy and/or math skills.

Additional support is available to students during Academic Period. During this time students may have the opportunity to work on classroom projects, prepare for upcoming tests and begin homework assignments. Instruction in math, reading, and written expression is offered in the Resource Room, based upon individual student need and meeting the Least Restrictive Environment mandate in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). In all cases, the instruction parallels the regular 6/7/8 curriculum with a specific focus on the needs of the individual student as addressed in his or her IEP.

In the intensive learning center class, you will see a great variation of activities and curriculums being used. Students are engaged daily in academics, job skills, socialization skills, different cooking routines, community-based training, and different integrated therapies. Students are able to have different instruction from the teacher throughout various parts of the day and the programs are individualized in order to meet each student's unique needs. Students are engaged in techniques which include cognitive, social, independence building, and communication skills.

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

Through a close relationship with our ELL teacher and our MTSS program, we have developed a strong ELL program that continues to evolve based on student needs, enrollment, and staffing. Our ELL instructor closely monitors the progress of our ELL students and offers curricular adaptations to meet the needs of the students. Our MTSS team also provides interventions and services based on teacher feedback, student performance, and collaboration with the ELL instructor. Our ELL students are evaluated using the WIDA assessment. Depending on the assessment results, the student will be placed in the appropriate number of periods of support.

In conjunction with our school social worker, we engage families through various means utilizing language line Talking Points to help bridge the connection of the families to our school. Our ELL support team created a community outreach program that brought families into the school to better understand the school setting. Many of our ELL families were offered and given basic support of needs such as school supplies and mobile hotspots.

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

Our social worker is in constant contact with our families who may have unique needs. Our social worker has been quite active in offering the basic services needed so students can access their education in a more equitable manner. This population has been mostly our ELL population discussed previously.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. **Engaging Students:**

School culture and having the students feel connected to their school is a foundational pillar for our middle school. We attempt to offer a variety of clubs, classes, and extra-curricular activities for our students to be involved in, including Robotics, Reading Olympics, Art Club, athletics, and much more. We also have several teams that offer support and interventions to promote a positive and holistic approach to the learning environment. Our school is fortunate to have a MTSS team, a SAP team, and a SWPBIS team that promotes a positive and supportive school culture. We have an active student council compromised of students from all three grade levels. They coordinate and assist with various school based and community based programs. Our student council has embedded yearly traditions such as our annual turkey bowl which collects canned goods and various food items for a local food pantry. Grade level teams compete for points by donating as many items as possible and the event culminates with a grade level and teacher team football tournament before the Thanksgiving break. The student council also partners with a local community member and former parent to help run school-wide events for St. Baldricks - a program that raises money to help fund research for childhood cancer. The student council, sprit club and our SWPBIS team join forces to enrich school climate by establishing spirit weeks throughout the school year and coordinated a Blue/Gold pep rally and competition as a final year end close out event.

2. **Engaging Families and Community**:

We offer a robust communication plan that includes district and building-based communications through email, website, and other formats to keep the outside community and families of students engaged. As stated previously, the school has formed community connections with our Day of Giving project as well as through our work in bringing local stakeholders into our school to promote career and community awareness. Our annual Day of Giving involves many communities and school-based programs that provide unique opportunities for our students to give back. Our sixth and seventh grade students remain in-house and work on various projects for outside agencies and non-profits. In the past, our sixth graders have spent the morning making blankets for Project Linus which are then donated to those in need. Our seventh-grade team created stations where students rotated and worked on a variety of projects for Project Linus. They made stay cozy bags, snack buster bags, kindness kits, and cards. Our eighth-grade students have the honor of traveling off campus to volunteer in-person at various sites. The majority of our eighth graders travel to Philabundance to prepare and pack boxes of food items for those in need. Other students sign up to sing/preform musical numbers at a local nursing home, provide and serve lunch at a community kitchen, and even lead a silver sneakers to exercise class and host brunch afterward.

Strategies we have found to help orchestrate many if these community partnerships have been direct communication between our staff and local agencies. We also started to provide a form via Family ID where parents can indicate whether or not they would be interested in taking part in many of these events, such as career days, etc.

3. **Creating Professional Culture:**

Throughout the pandemic, the district, and our school, were focused on ensuring the staff needs were met. New initiatives were halted as we honed in on perfecting our craft as we deliver content in a very different way. We were conscious of not beginning new initiatives as well as providing a schedule that met both the teachers' needs as well as the students' and families' needs. The district provided several wellness activities and times during the pandemic and offered a few surveys to gauge where the staff was in terms of well-being. Our school counselor and principal delivered signs to each teacher's home to recognize their value and importance to the school community.

4. **School Leadership:**

In a small school, school leadership is a collective endeavor that does not have defined roles. Organizionaly, the middle school principal is the lone administrator in the school and the only leadership position that has a leadership title. The principal is the tip of the leadership pyramid, but as such, cannot lead in all areas. The shared leadership within the school is alive and well. There is a sense of trust and understanding as teachers and other staff are free to take risks and own the decisions that are made. Grade-level teams naturally develop their own leadership characteristics, as well as share the roles and responsibilities of leadership. The district is also organized in such a way that we only have one of every position. For example, we only have one leader in charge of special education issues. All questions that cannot be handled at the building level go to her. The principal's philosophy is a student-centered approach that values student engagement above all else. Student engagement should be the priority in all aspects ot the school process. This includes student discipline, student learning, extra-curricular activities, and the overall management of the school. If we have engaged students, the teaching and learning will follow.

5. **Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Three years ago we began working with the No Place for Hate organization and our district recently received a distinction from the Anti-Defamation League for this work. We have developed an equity committee that has focused on various equitable practices including racial, neurodiversity, and sexual identity, and economic topics. Through our support teams, we have tried to address the diverse needs of our students and our community. Our projects for No Place for Hate have enabled students to be heavily involved in our equity topics, as well as to proactive in ensuring a safe environment for all students. Our guidance counselor and social worker have been instrumental in developing a website and other promotional materials so the school community has an understanding of what resources are available to support their families. Our social studies teacher have taken on current events in their classrooms to provide a safe learning environment so students can understand what is happening in the world around them. Our staff will not allow a teachable moment to pass them by.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

As a middle school, our one practice would be the socio-emotional practices we have in place that make us so successful. Without having a strong socio-emotional lens, all of the other successes we have would not be possible. Although we are constantly looking to improve our practices, our current model affords our teachers the ability to home in on building relationships with students so that their socio-emotional needs are met. In sixth grade, we have a strong set of teachers that focus on the decision-making and self-management components of SEL. In seventh and eighth grade, the teachers focus more on being self- and socially aware as we build on relationship skills.

Our grade-level teams meet weekly to discuss student concerns and can then turn to our MTSS, SAP, or SWPBIS team for more support with student concerns. In addition to the support offered for SEL, the middle school is staffed with teachers who accept and embrace the challenges that middle school students face. When our students feel safe, equipped, and welcomed, the academic and assessment portions of our educational success follow. We are also very active in bringing outside consultants and vendors in to discuss topics that are influential in the socio-emotional learning process. We have free resources that we take advantage of that discuss teen issues to help students say no to negative behavior while promoting positive behavior. The work of organizing this much support can be exhausting, but the reward is shown in how our students feel about school and our community.