

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Daryl Woods

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

Official School Name Drakes Creek Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 704 Cypress Wood Lane

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

City Bowling Green

State KY

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 42104-0301

County Warren County

Telephone (270) 843-0165

Fax (270) 782-6138

Web site/URL

https://www.warrencountyschools.org/5/Home

E-mail daryl.woods@warren.kyschools.us

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Rob Clayton E-mail rob.clayton@warren.kyschools.us

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Warren County

Tel. (270) 781-5150

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Garry Chaffin

(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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 (2022-2023) 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):
- 15 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 24 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	0
K	0
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	0
6	0
7	376
8	353
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	729

*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):
- 0.5 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 14.5 % Asian
 - 5.7 % Black or African American
 - 7.8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1.7 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 64.6 % White
 - 5.2 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 14%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	62
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	37
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	99
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	711
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.14
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14

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

Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Hakha Chin, Tedim Chin, Gujarati, Japanese, Karen, Karenni, Kinyarwanda, Marshallese, Napali, Pohnpeipan, Rundi, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Turkish, Vietnamese, Zo, and Zomi

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 15 %

106 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 49 %

Total number students who qualify: 356

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 9 %
Total number of students served 64

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>13</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>13</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>5</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 3 %
Total number of students served: 25

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 10

11. 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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

12. 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 27:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	95%	88%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

15. 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.

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Drakes Creek Middle School will Engage and Connect for Success.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

The school's nondiscrimination policy is listed on page 3 of our student handbook located at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RDt7qpiK3W_-sDRU60gyxAA1_cbokcuL85vIQj7qLYQ/edit?usp=sharing.

18. **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

Drakes Creek Middle School (DCMS) is a 7th-8th Grade center housing approximately 730 students. Situated in a high-growth area of our community, DCMS has shown a steady increase in student body numbers over the past ten years, growing from 550 students to 730 students. Specifically, DCMS has seen an increase in the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students who now make up over 10% of our population. These students bring varied cultures to our school and speak over 20 different languages, yet they integrate seamlessly into what we refer to as the Gator Nation. Additionally, the school has seen an increase in the number of students participating in the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch Program, moving us from targeted assistance to a schoolwide Title 1 program. Our school goal is for every student to leave Drakes Creek Middle School at or above grade level in all subject areas. Some students require a little extra assistance to meet this goal. Over the past few years, DCMS has worked to fully implement a Response to Intervention (RtI) system in order to address the specific learning needs of our underperforming students.

In addition to the other special populations, our school has nearly 33% of its students identified as Gifted and Talented (GT) in one or more specific areas. Six years ago, DCMS created "The Academy at The Creek," a Gifted and Talented program that creates unique learning and extension opportunities for our GT students. The Academy is an ungraded course which moves students along the spectrum from teacher-directed problem-solving to student-created projects that aim to solve real-world problems. These student projects range from cleaning water pollution, designing urban vertical gardens, to methods for eliminating space junk left behind by satellites. At the end of the year, the community is invited to our Academy Showcase where stakeholders can view student projects and presentations. Over the last few years, our Academy has received over \$6,000 in grant funding to support innovative student learning. Having nearly one-third of our students identified as GT, one-tenth of our students identified as LEP, and nearly one-fourth of our students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention creates an environment that is both diverse and exciting as well as posing a unique challenge of Drakes Creek Middle School.

To fulfill our mission to Engage and Connect for Success, DCMS has implemented a classroom walkthrough schedule, professional learning communities, and new teacher onboarding processes that focus on seven engaging qualities of instruction. The goal of each administrator is to visit a group of classrooms each week and provide digital feedback regarding the engaging qualities of instruction found in the task and delivery. In addition, our school has worked over the past three years to learn and implement Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures that enhance student engagement. The principal, assistant principal, curriculum coordinator and two teacher leaders have been trained as Kagan Coaches and work with teachers as they implement cooperative learning in their classrooms. When new teachers are hired, their first introduction to DCMS is an onboarding course which teaches the twelve brain rules of students and provides an understanding of how the environment, the teacher and the assigned task work together to contribute to higher rigor and learning opportunities for students. Our professional learning communities (PLC) work weekly to review unit design and lesson planning for student engagement as well as analyze common formative assessment data and make intervention plans.

In addition to promoting academic success, our teachers work to make genuine connections with students and to foster positive relationships between students. To check our progress, DCMS administers a connectedness survey twice annually to check on students' emotional health and ensure each child has a trusted adult in the building. Each student also participates in a 36-week social and emotional learning curriculum, Second Step. This curriculum helps students build positive relationships with their peers. These positive relationships are also cultivated through a myriad of extracurricular activities and athletic opportunities. Our student athletes consistently perform at the highest levels in the district, region and state. Our coaches are thoroughly trained and emphasize the importance of maintaining the highest academic standards as they represent our school on the playing field or court. Likewise, students who have talents outside athletics also have opportunities to showcase their talents in clubs and activities including chess, orchestra, choir, band, art and many more. These opportunities give our students a chance to use their talents to contribute to maintaining the high expectations of Drakes Creek. All of these positive relationships and high levels of success contribute to the family culture here at DCMS.

All of the factors described above lead to student success. Particularly, our school has moved up in ranking from 124th out of 314 middle schools in Kentucky according to Kentucky Summary Assessment (KSA) scores to 6th out of 314 middle schools in Kentucky. To that end, we must remain focused and continue to Engage and Connect for Success!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Drakes Creek Middle School, English/Language Arts teachers follow the unit maps and pacing guides established by the Warren County Middle School English/Language Arts Standards Committee. For the 2021-2022 school year, the eighth grade ELA teachers used EL Open Up Resources as their curriculum. This allowed for the Kentucky Core Standards to be addressed utilizing grade level complex novels. There are 4 total units and each unit culminates in a writing piece. Our 8th grade ELA chose this curriculum as a direct result of searching for a highly engaging curriculum that provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning. EL Open Up Resources help teachers facilitate active interaction by building student capacity to read, think, talk and write about complex texts. Using the Warren County ELA Pacing Guide and Unit Maps, our seventh grade ELA teachers use a curriculum they have carefully developed through years of planning. Teachers at Drakes Creek Middle School were given the option to select a curriculum or continue developing their own. With the district pacing guides and unit maps in mind, lessons were prepared using a variety of grade-level texts that address the ELA Kentucky Core Standards. There are four Units within the seventh grade curriculum with each culminating in a writing piece. Embedded within these lessons are avenues for students to deepen their understanding of texts by providing enrichment or intervention support. Grade level texts accompanied with instructionally rigorous tasks allow students and teachers to see their level of success through formative and summative assessments.

Our seventh and eighth grade teachers utilize formative assessments to drive unit instruction. All ELA teachers have completed Kagan Training which offers various ways to ensure engagement is occurring in class which allows for deeper learning and connecting with the material. Multiple opportunities for formative assessments are utilized through informal classroom discussions, activities involving Kagan Structures, exit tickets, etc. Formative assessments are used to address gaps in student understanding prior to unit assessment. Both seventh and eighth grade teachers have four unit exams that allow for students to demonstrate mastery of the priority standards. Upon the completion of unit assessments, students are provided with enrichment or intervention opportunities to help close any gaps in learning. Writing is embedded in each unit through short response answers, extended responses, on demand writing as well as essays. Students are provided with fast, actionable, and timely feedback on each of their writing pieces through conferences. Teacher/Student conferences provide valuable feedback for immediate corrections/improvement to their writing piece.

Teachers meet weekly in Professional Learning Communities to examine formative data from the previous week. This data help to guide teachers to intentionally plan lessons that account for gaps in students' learning as well as students who are ready for additional learning opportunities. Our curriculum, assessments, and teacher experience result in high student success in mastering the ELA content.

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

Drakes Creek Middle School students are active mathematicians. In addition to regular seventh and eighth grade math courses, DCMS also offers seventh grade accelerated math, eighth grade advanced math, high school algebra and high school geometry. It is our mission to appropriately challenge each student and promote individual growth for all ability levels.

Teachers facilitate math instruction using Desmos curriculum which is aligned to standards, encourages individual progress and celebrates progress and mastery. Desmos is a hybrid model combining a digital platform with paper based materials. Mathematics activities within Desmos are thought provoking and prompt rich student conversations. Assessments are standards focused and concise. Teachers consistently provide immediate feedback.

Teachers meet weekly in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to analyze data from previous quizzes

and assessments to guide instruction going forward. Intentional plans are designed to address areas in which students need additional support and opportunities are created for students who need academic challenge. Upcoming units are previewed along with standards to ensure all standards are adequately embedded in the curriculum and rigor is present.

The mission for all subject areas at DCMS is student engagement and connection. Through the guidance of John Antonetti, engagement qualities are a core component of lesson development. All math teachers regularly incorporate Kagan Structures into lessons to enhance student engagement. Several math teachers have embraced Liljedahl's Thinking Classroom in which students are consistently collaborating with classmates and thinking deeply together to achieve skill mastery. Upon entering a Thinking Classroom in action, the students are the individuals in the spotlight guided by the teacher as facilitator. Students rise to the high expectations set before them and are aware of the responsibilities placed upon them for their own learning and success.

Students are constantly assessed within the classroom through formative and summative assessments. Teachers understand that a classroom assessment is not the finish line. When a student does not demonstrate mastery of a standard, additional strategies are implemented into instruction to support success. In addition to classroom assessments, students take universal math screeners three times annually to monitor progress. Students who are at risk receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

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

Students at Drakes Creek Middle School experience Science through the guidance of Next Generation Science Standards. Using this three dimensional approach, students use science and engineering practices to learn disciplinary core ideas that crosscut through concepts of science, engineering, and technology of the natural world. Our teachers use the Amplify Science curriculum to guide their lesson planning, while incorporating hands-on experiences, labs, and activities that promote critical thinking and problem solving. Teachers use pre-assessments and formative assessments to tap into student thinking and learning connections as the units progress. Our 7th grade students continue building connections from elementary school and learn more in-depth processes from the following concept areas: Forms of Energy, Light Waves, Magnetism, Force and Motion, Chemical Reactions, Metabolism, Body Systems, and Energy & Matter in Ecosystems before moving on to 8th grade. Once in 8th grade, students continue making scientific connections and learning about new higher level topics such as: Human Impact on Ecosystems, Global Climate Change, Plate Motion, Traits & Reproduction, Heredity, Natural Selection, and Evolution. At the end of each unit previously mentioned, students demonstrate mastery of learning by analyzing evidence and participating in a student-led discussion known as Socratic Seminar. Following the two day enriching seminar, students complete a multiple choice assessment and a culminating writing piece in the style of Argumentative Writing or through an Extended Response Question. Through the use of scientific inquiry, creative problem solving, and a supportive hands-on learning atmosphere, our students are lucky to experience an intentional approach to learning science - just like a true scientist.

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

The primary goal of the social studies department at Drakes Creek is to help students become informed citizens who understand the functions of government and how history has impacted the development of the world and the United States. Teachers focus on how major historical events have impacted relationships among diverse populations and our relationships with other countries. Seventh grade content focuses on Medieval World History through the discovery of the Americas. Eighth grade instruction includes U.S History, from Colonization through the Reconstruction period that followed The Civil War. Teachers in this department imbed Social-Emotional Learning regularly into their curriculum by providing lessons that encourage students to utilize social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making skills.

Social studies teachers meet weekly in PLCs to create units and assessments that help push students to mastery of the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. The content is taught by engaging the students in the material using Kagan Strategies, which encourage students to communicate and work cooperatively with peers from a diverse student body. Social Studies teachers at Drakes Creek do not rely on

a rigid curriculum or textbook for instruction. Instead, the focus is placed on the use of engaging resources that include primary sources, inquiry-based activities, and the document-based question (DBQ) project as resources. The department attends the National Conference for Social Studies most years to learn about the newest resources available for their content area and to learn information on updated historical findings. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the standards through projects and formative assessments prior to completing a summative assessment at the end of each unit that includes a written component. Teachers in the social studies department are committed to developing cultural competence in students when learning about divisive periods in our history.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

Drakes Creek provides many opportunities to support college/career readiness. Family Consumer Science (FCS) at Drakes Creek Middle School encompasses many aspects. The course teaches food preparation, safety and nutrition. Students learn the science of addiction to substances and refusal techniques. Our School Resource Officer discusses the dangers of vaping and using tobacco products. The local police department brings a Fatal Vision Goggles (drunk goggles) lab to simulate the difficulty of performing tasks under the influence. Students learn essential skills of leadership, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and flexibility while learning about college, career and technical options after high school.

In FCCLA, students learn leadership skills and complete community service. FCCLA members organized and hosted the first ever Dance Middle Red, a dance fundraising event for Norton Children's Hospital. Members tracked donations by our students, organized morning meetings, and hosted the main dance event. Nearly \$5,000 was raised for pediatric care and research!

Gator Cater is a unique opportunity that students have at DCMS. Students apply as employees, advertise, organize, and manage a store. Students take and fill orders and provide customer service. Students count revenue and complete inventory paperwork. Money earned is used to fund FCCLA events and is donated to our community. Gator Cater donated \$600 to tornado relief!

Eighth grade students can enroll in JROTC - a program offered by our feeder high school. Students participate in physical fitness exercises, drills, color guard and learn the history of the military.

Students can participate in coding through CS Discoveries. Students learn the benefits of coding which allows them to develop 21st century skills through problem solving, programming, web development, animation and games. Coding allows students to develop computer science skills as they move through the units using Code.org.

At DCMS, we encourage students to think about their future by completing a yearly Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). Students research careers they are interested in learning more about and set learning goals for themselves.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Arts education is highly celebrated at Drakes Creek. Students are challenged to create, perform and grow through the arts.

Many essential skills are acquired through our arts programs. Students become creative thinkers in art by applying fine motor skills through a variety of media. Students learn history through the lens of the arts

which enables them to make connections to changes in art with changes in history.

Through music, orchestra, and band, students build teamwork, multitasking, and memorization skills. Music memorization provides brain training that fosters content retention in other academic areas as well. Our music program provides an environment of mutual support in which collaboration occurs to promote growth for all.

Our music program helps to build student confidence and improve stage presence through community performances. Students have several opportunities to perform throughout the year. Students participate in winter and spring concerts at school and also perform for our local community at special events.

The best part of our arts program is acceptance. Students that are involved in arts education are able to find creative, like-minded friends.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

At Drakes Creek Middle School, we have a comprehensive physical education (PE)/health/nutrition program. Our overall goal is to encourage students to make healthy decisions related to all aspects of health. Throughout the semester, students participate in fitness testing which provides an opportunity for students to evaluate their fitness levels and set short term and long term fitness goals. These goals are monitored throughout the semester and progress is celebrated throughout the physical education course.

In addition to daily peer led exercise routines in PE, students engage in a wide variety of individual, team, and lifetime sports. Training in activities ranging from volleyball and pickleball to flag football and soccer provides the opportunity to discover a new skill set and passion. The PE program also encompasses social, emotional, and mental health as well as physical well being. Nutrition and healthy food choices are emphasized through both our PE program and school cafeteria nutrition program.

Second Step, our SEL curriculum, guides students through weekly lessons on topics such as respect, self-confidence, acceptance, and perseverance. Student and parent presentations focused on health concerns related to digital safety/cyber concerns and the risks of drug experimentation have been facilitated by guest speakers.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

Students at Drakes Creek Middle School are offered the opportunity to learn a foreign language. Students take Chinese during their related arts rotation in either seventh or eighth grade. In class, students learn the history and traditions of Chinese culture. Students study geography, customs, and agriculture focusing on the mushroom industry and bamboo farming techniques.

Students learn the basics of the language such as greetings, dates, numbers, and characters so they may more easily write later in the curriculum. They are also taught vocabulary and definitions of commonly spoken words in order to have simple conversations with the teacher and each other.

Students learn the strokes of Chinese calligraphy as an art form. Students begin with pencils and as they become more confident in each stroke, they write with a calligraphy style pen. Students create Peking opera masks and study the significance of art in Chinese culture.

Our Chinese teacher uses many multimedia tools and videos to help students grasp the language. Students use Blooket to take interactive quizzes and gamify learning. Students are also taught how to change their computer keyboard settings so they can type in the Chinese language while looking at an English keyboard.

2d. Technology/library/media

The library at Drakes Creek Middle School is genre based so students can easily access materials of interest. Our nonfiction collection recently received a face-lift and has up-to-date materials that revolve around

student interest. We have 3D printers for student use as well as cameras, ring lights and green screens to check out for video production. Each student is provided a Chromebook to use at school. Students needing technology at home can check out a Chromebook or hot spot.

The Drakes Creek News Show is student produced. This gives students an understanding of news broadcasting including writing stories, videography and editing. Students develop writing and editing skills by creating story ideas and writing anchor scripts. Students do their best work because the show is viewed by their peers and community. Our parents and community can stay up to date on school news by accessing the link on our school home page.

The Student Technology Leadership Team (STLP) is our technology club at Drakes Creek Middle School. Students work on interest based technology products with options to work individually or in small groups. Students create infographics, public service announcements, and book trailers and they also build and program robots.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

Within the mission to serve each student lies the challenge to provide engaging educational experiences for gifted and talented students. A growth mindset requires that opportunities be created that provide an environment of rigor and exploration. Academy at the Creek was born from research, the clear need for differentiated instruction, and review of gifted and talented curriculum models.

Academy at the Creek is an opportunity for students who are identified as gifted in the areas of mathematics and science and/or general intellectual ability. Students participate daily in group learning, high-level problems, and problem-based learning as one of their scheduled classes guided by teacher mentors. Students participate in experimental design, independent and cooperative investigations and research during this enrichment class.

In addition to our choral, orchestra, and band classes, our general music courses have been transformed into guitar classes funded by the Creative Kids Grant. Guitars are provided for each student and music mastery is demonstrated through concert performance.

Students have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of interests through elective classes at DCMS. From Sports Business class to The Art of Patterns, DCMS encourages students to investigate interests beyond their core classes. Classes such as Socratic Seminar, News Show, Yearbook and Gator Gazette provide students a platform to find their voice and express themselves. Students think critically and use their design skills in Urban Gardening, Rocket Club, and Engineering.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Drakes Creek Middle School strives to provide academic support so that all students exit eighth grade at or above grade level. Ongoing analysis of numerous data points identifies students who are performing below grade level. Classroom performance, state testing scores, and universal screener scores are the primary indicators.

For students who are performing below grade level, a variety of supports are provided. Within a student's core classes, modifications are implemented to ensure a child can access grade level material and experience success. Equity components are embedded in our science and English/Language Arts curricula and our focus on student engagement qualities and Kagan Structures promote equitable learning opportunities and continuous progress for all learners.

In addition to support within core classes, Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention supports are provided in the areas of reading, writing, and math as a separate daily class. Comprehension and written expression strategies and foundational math skills/reasoning that connect with a student's current unit of core study are the focus of

intervention support. For students who do not demonstrate progress with an added layer of intervention support, a referral for a special education evaluation is initiated.

On Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, we serve students after school through Extended School Services. Certified teachers work with students in small groups to support academic success in all subjects. Students are referred by parents or teachers or can request to stay based on the areas where they need support. Summer School is offered to students whose grades do not reflect mastery of core academic subjects. Similar to our after school program, during the summer program students work in small groups with teachers facilitating instruction.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The charge to support continuous progress for all learners certainly encompasses our students performing above grade level. Providing educational experiences for students who are performing above grade level takes intentional planning. In conjunction with differentiation offered within regular classes, course options are an important part of serving our high academic performing students.

Students who are performing above grade level in the area of language arts are scheduled for Advanced Language Arts where the content is compacted. In the area of Mathematics, students who are performing above grade level in seventh grade may be scheduled for Accelerated Mathematics or Algebra 1 for High School Credit depending on their mastery of critical mathematics concepts. At the eighth grade level, math offerings include Algebra 1 for High School Credit, Geometry for High School Credit, or Advanced Mathematics.

Students who excel in both math and science at the 96th percentile and above are eligible for our STEM program, Academy at the Creek. Students participate daily in group learning, high-level problems, and problem-based learning as one of their scheduled classes guided by teacher mentors. Students participate in experimental design, independent and cooperative investigations and research during this enrichment class.

Students who excel in the arts have advanced course offerings as well. Advanced Art serves students who are identified as GT in the area of visual arts. Guitar 2 provides instruction to students who excelled in Guitar 1, and Jazz Band is offered as an elective for students who have demonstrated exceptional skills in band.

Engagement strategies and Kagan structures enhance equitable learning opportunities and continuous progress for all learners in all subject areas. Our teachers readily embrace these strategies and structures realizing that they increase student achievement for all levels of learners. Lesson design includes differentiation and Professional Learning Community discussions focus on needs of students who need additional rigor and challenge.

3c. Students with disabilities:

At Drakes Creek Middle School, approximately eight percent of our student population receives special education services. We are fortunate to have highly trained, experienced, and dedicated special education teachers and assistants to help with services needed for students with disabilities. We have resource reading and math classes taught by our special education teachers that focus specifically on modifications and support to the schoolwide curricula. These classes provide access to the same curriculum just at a pace that accommodates students with disabilities.

For students who need less support but still individualized learning, we have co-taught math and language arts classes. We pair experienced content teachers with our special education teachers to implement best practices through co-teaching. Our teachers receive extensive training on how to reach students using a variety of teaching strategies in a collaborative setting. In science and social studies, there are instructional assistants who work specifically alongside students with disabilities to ensure that modifications and accommodations are being met to help them succeed. When the 2021-2022 KSA scores were released, we were not identified as a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school for students with disabilities.

While this population of students did not show as much success compared to students who do not have disabilities, by utilizing research based co-teaching strategies and through the implementation of Kagan Strategies in each classroom to deepen learning, we were able to show growth and anticipate this will continue for the 2022-2023 school year.

3d. English Language Learners:

At Drakes Creek Middle School, we serve a large population of English Language Learners. Our goal is to ensure that our students show significant growth from the time they enter Drakes Creek Middle School until they exit. We create a growth goal for each individual ELL student for the upcoming school year and our teachers are equipped with strategies to reach that growth. Our ELL teachers use Ellevation, a program monitoring and teacher tool website to help reach our language learners. Both our content and ELL teachers have been trained extensively.

For the 2021-2022 school year, we had one ESL teacher who taught beginning level ELL students in language arts. We had a second language arts teacher who taught higher level ELL students in a collaborative setting alongside English speaking students. That flexibility in grouping allowed us to tailor instruction and intervention for our ELL population. We have instructional assistants placed in math, science, and social studies to ensure our ELL students receive the support needed. While our ELL population scores still have room to improve, we did not qualify as a TSI school in this area. Teachers are trained in Kagan Structures, co-teaching strategies to help close the achievement gap.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

DCMS supports students with social, emotional, and leadership opportunities. Social and emotional needs are monitored by mySAEBRS universal screener, the DCMS Connectedness Survey, Infinite Campus' Early Warning Tool, SWIS behavior data, and teacher referral. Based on needs, opportunities are created to support students. DCMS also has a trauma-plan to address students who are or have experienced trauma and need help meeting their social, emotional, or academic needs.

PBIS is implemented throughout the building to provide behavioral support and reward positive student behavior. Students can earn "Gator Gold", a school currency, that they spend at the monthly store during lunch. Students can also earn a quarterly reward and an end of year trip. There is a Tier 2/Tier 3 Behavioral team that meets monthly to provide support and interventions for students who need more extensive support in reaching their behavioral goals. Check and Connect is a program that serves students who are at risk academically and/or socially. A teacher meets regularly with students to monitor progress and develop strategies to promote success. We offer a Girls Self Esteem Group and Boys to Men to foster self confidence and self worth within our students.

We have multiple community partnerships including Junior Achievement, WKU Talent Search, and Team Focus, that allows us to utilize stakeholders to help students through mentoring, leadership opportunities, and planning for post-secondary pursuits. Student Ambassadors are selected to represent our school primarily when new students transition to DCMS. They welcome new students and provide tours. They also assist with 6th Grade Orientation and other leadership responsibilities. Several students serve as GatorAides supporting students with disabilities as peer tutors. Our librarian utilizes student leaders who are instrumental in the smooth operation of our media center. Leadership opportunities allow our students to develop in areas beyond academics.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Student engagement is at the foundation of DCMS's values, as proven in our mission statement, Engage and Connect for Success. Drakes Creek engages students in their education by helping students see the relevancy between their middle school experience and their goals for the future. Each fall, students participate in a career day that is in partnership with our area Chamber of Commerce and local businesses. This opportunity allows students to gain first-hand knowledge about both professional and vocational career choices that they may be interested in pursuing. Students also learn about the education requirements to achieve their desired careers. The guidance department schedules regular visits from KHEAA (Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority), where students learn about the costs of paying for college and how their choices in school can assist in reaching their postsecondary goals. Students are able to research costs associated with higher education, which inspires them to do their best in their classroom endeavors. Students are able to culminate these experiences each spring in their ILP (Individual Learning Portfolio).

In addition to these organizational programs, DCMS students are engaged in the classroom because of each teacher's commitment to active learning. By implementing lessons that are hands-on, relevant to student lives, and meaningful, our students' experiences move beyond the sit-and-get teaching style and therefore students feel invested in their education. Students are engaged to make connections through a variety of extracurricular activities as well. Teachers and staff are committed to offering a variety of clubs and extracurricular programs that help build a sense of community amongst our students. Another factor that allows successful student engagement is our school's approach to discipline and behavior. Students who are not experiencing frequent and intense behavioral issues are also able to be engaged in their learning. To promote acceptable behavior and maximize learning, Drakes Creek Middle School is a PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Systems) school. We strive to encourage students to have positive behavior rather than to punish for misbehavior, by recognizing students who follow expectations. We reward our students in a variety of ways monthly and quarterly. At the end of the year students qualify for an annual reward if they have followed expectations throughout the school year. Because of the positive culture of our school and the success of our programs such as PBIS, a majority of our student body qualifies each year for the reward. Students have the opportunity to feel successful in and outside of the classroom and because of this we are able to engage our students in their learning and inspire them to reach their full potential.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Drakes Creek Middle Youth Services Center serves as the school's link to community service providers including government agencies, private organizations, civic clubs, charitable organizations and individuals. Community collaboration is vital in identifying and coordinating existing resources in order to remove barriers for students and families. Community collaboration is important to the enhancement of students' abilities to succeed in school by engaging families, developing and sustaining partnerships. This approach promotes academic achievement, graduation, and transition into adulthood. Drakes Creek Middle School is vested in the community with high impact partnerships; Community Education, DCBS, Med Center Health, Warren County Sheriff's Office, WKU, SKYCTC, Cyber Safety, Barren River District Health Department, School Smiles and Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce.

The South Central Kentucky (SCK) Launch is one of the community partnerships that enhances growth and future career opportunities for the eighth grade students at Drakes Creek Middle School. This partnership is between the Bowling Green Area Chamber Foundation, the Bowling Green Independent School District, Warren County Public Schools and local businesses. The SCK Launch experience is a hands-on career expo that allows students to explore many of the careers available in South Central Kentucky. By providing this early outreach to students and families we are increasing the ability for students to thrive in early adulthood. The students have a choice between 7 career pathways for South Central Kentucky; Healthcare, Professional Services, Public Services, Construction, Manufacturing, Distribution and Logistics. These important pathways help students and families focus on the labor market in the area of increasing growth to determine their future career opportunities. By looking at the data shared from the Bowling Green Independent School

District and Warren County Public Schools, seniors graduating in the spring of 2019 had a graduation rate between 95.5%-98.9%. The senior class of 2019 graduated 16% of students with an industry career pathway. By engaging students, families, and community service providers we are making vital connections that will last a lifetime.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The faculty and staff at Drakes Creek Middle School have a shared commitment to serve the students that attend our school. Drakes Creek faculty and staff are supported personally and professionally by the principal which leads to a positive work environment. There are high expectations for both faculty and students; however, the culture within the school is nurturing and accepting of our different values and belief systems. While teachers feel a strong commitment to the school due to the climate of the school, they are always encouraged to put their own family and physical/mental health above their professional commitments. The school's formal mission statement, Engage and Connect for Success, is implemented in all classrooms as teachers form meaningful relationships with their students and colleagues.

Each year teachers are given autonomy in their content area to attend professional development opportunities that improve their teaching and increase their access to resources. Teachers have attended the national conferences for their speciality areas, in addition to working regularly in both school and district-wide PLCs with colleagues to collaborate on best practices. The leadership team trusts teachers to make the decisions that best impact their students. As a result of the confidence that is placed in teachers, the morale of teachers and staff in the building is consistently high and the school has a lower turnover rate than many schools in our district. The principal encourages self-growth in teachers by supporting their goals of continuing their own education, attending professional development opportunities, and encouraging staff who would like to pursue leadership opportunities. Accomplishments of colleagues are regularly celebrated by staff, with many of our teachers earning local, regional, and state recognition in their area of expertise. Teachers are supported in the classroom by having evaluations and informal observations completed, and often invite members of the instructional leadership team into their classrooms to help them evaluate their teaching and to provide feedback on how to improve a lesson. The principal voluntarily participates in self-evaluation by asking for feedback from his staff on his leadership skills and areas of growth for the school year. Based on their commitment to the relationships formed within our school community, teachers at Drakes are passionate about their profession and giving their best efforts in their classroom. The positive culture of Drakes Creek and the leadership team's encouragement of a healthy work-life balance greatly impacts the success for both teachers and students.

4. School Leadership:

The principal is the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for setting the vision and mission. The faculty and staff work together to ensure that the traditions of the school meet the future needs of the students of DCMS. Thus, DCMS exists to engage and connect for success. Everything that happens at Drakes Creek must support student engagement, build positive relationships, and lead to student success.

The school has set a goal for every student to leave DCMS at or above grade level in all academic areas. This goal guides our instruction and intervention programming. The principal enlisted the help of John Antonetti and his company, Colleagues on Call, to train the entire staff on the seven engaging qualities of instruction. The principal then created a digital walkthrough system and our teaching and learning coach implements coaching cycles where each teacher receives feedback on the engaging qualities of instruction present in their lessons and activities. To ensure that all future hires have the same opportunity to learn, the school leadership team worked with Mr. Antonetti to create an onboarding "course" for teachers new to the school. This course was delivered for the first time by the principal and curriculum coordinator in August of 2022 for a small group of new teachers and their assigned mentors. The curriculum coordinator and teaching and learning coach continually monitor these goals by leading weekly PLC meetings with teachers.

The intervention/GT coordinator oversees our Academy at The Creek, a program created six years ago to address the needs of our most gifted students. The Academy is an ungraded program devoted to student-led investigations into topics that expand their current coursework and/or solve real-world problems. Our

coordinator also oversees our reading and math intervention programs. We studied Renzuli's project-based research and revamped our reading intervention program. We created a series of interest-based reading intervention classes.

The assistant principal leads the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system here at DCMS. He leads monthly meetings with teacher representatives to review discipline data and plan for interventions and rewards. Students get a voice in planning quarterly reward sessions. The school also offers a year-end trip for students who consistently meet expectations each quarter. For students who do not meet behavioral expectations, the assistant principal uses restorative practices to teach appropriate behavior. In addition, our intervention coordinator oversees a 36-week social and emotional learning curriculum, Second Step.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Warren County's diverse student population continues to grow each year. In 2011, Warren County Public Schools created an Equity Council with the initial purpose to ensure equitable and consistent discipline across the district, identify/remove barriers to student learning, achievement, opportunities, and ensure an equipped culturally responsive staff. The success of the committee and our school's mission to engage and connect with all students, primarily depends on appropriate curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, organizational culture, family outreach, and support.

Since 2011, our school has prioritized the achievement of our English-language learners and minority students. Our school has been committed to adopting and implementing a common curriculum in Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Kagan Structures and Ellevation strategies supplement an equitable curriculum to promote highly engaged learners, meeting students where they are and supporting them at grade-level or promoting them beyond grade-level. Drakes Creek uses evidence and research-based tiered interventions to promote differentiation of instruction to meet individual needs of students. Students are assessed and monitored through a variety of nationally known assessments (WIDA) that support English language proficiency and also general intelligence based upon national norms. Teachers implementing equitable curricula (Amplify Science, Desmos Math, Active Classroom - Social Studies) have completed professional learning focused on routines that support all learners, but have especially supported our English language learners, gifted and talented, special education students, and students of color. Recently, our school added a school-based teaching and learning coach to better support teachers to successfully engage with our ever changing student population.

Students and families are supported outside the classroom through social outreach programs that include ESS services, mental health services, and Family Resource and Youth Service Center supports. Students of varying backgrounds with hardships and adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on their student connectedness surveys or mySAEBRS are monitored and supported through other efforts such as Boys to Men, JA Leading Ladies and specialized small group sessions with our student support counselor. These students build lasting relationships with mentors in and out of the building to guide and support them through the upcoming years of their lives. Students have access to opportunity through this group that they may not access on their own. Family engagement opportunities that target at-risk students and students of color supplement their academic success. Drakes Creek does a tremendous job of intentionally focusing on the quality and equitable education through academic, social, and emotional learning for all students and capitalize on the uniqueness of each student's diverse background and home life.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Our motto, engage and connect for success, ripples through the Drakes Creek community. This motto and a sense of culture does not stop with our students, it transcends to teachers, parents, and other support figures in our community. Drakes Creek proudly implements Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) routinely during the school week. The movement from tracking what teachers are teaching to monitoring what our students are learning is indicative of our commitment to excellence.

Our school meets weekly in content PLCs to discuss three foundational pieces: what we want each student to learn, how we will know when each student has learned it, and how we will respond when a student experiences difficulty learning it or demonstrates mastery of it. These three key points facilitate teacher discussion through intentional planning of lessons, ways to provide effective feedback, and building quality assessments that assess student growth. PLCs include teachers, curriculum coordinator, the teaching and learning coach, and the school interventionist. This time together allows teachers to identify in a timely manner students who need a quick and direct intervention with specific support in place rather than needing remediation in the future.

PLCs allow research-based instruction and effective teaching practices to be built into the lesson plans. The culture of our school shines through professional learning communities, simply by teachers working collaboratively for one specific purpose of engaging all students, building relationships, and fostering growth. Teachers share effective teaching practices from their classrooms so other teachers can try new approaches to promote success. Our curriculum coordinator and teaching and learning coach share John Antionette's engagement strategies, Ellevation ELL strategies, and demonstrate Kagan Structures that would easily translate into any content area.

Our positive, motivating, and inclusive culture diffuses from our PLCs into how our teachers, students, and families interact. Teachers send home weekly postcards to students and parents that share the positive moments of the students' time at school. These postcards open the doorway for communication between families and teachers and solidifies the deep root of pride and love in our school community. The connection and bond between teacher, student, and family transcends all barriers and fosters the message that everyone in a student's life holds a part in molding the child into a happy, healthy, and equipped adult to be successful in our ever-changing world.