

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

Official School Name Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 430 West Jefferson Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pewamo State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 48873-9787

County Clinton

Telephone (989) 593-3488 Fax (989) 593-4118

Web site/URL https://www.pwschools.org E-mail julie.farmer@pwschools.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mrs. Jennifer Goodman E-mail jennifer.goodman@pwschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools Tel. (989) 587-5100

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. Jason Hafner
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	24
K	81
1	19
2	26
3	24
4	22
5	18
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	214

*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 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 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: 2%

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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	189
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Spanish

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

4 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 36 %

Total number students who qualify: 77

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 9 %
Total number of students served 20

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>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>1</u> Developmental Delay	<u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 0

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 6

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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 20:1

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	93%	97%	96%	95%	95%
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.

Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School will promote the academic, social and personal development of all students. We will foster a joy of learning in a safe and nurturing environment where student achievements are recognized and celebrated. We will provide a compassionate culture with high expectations and unlimited possibilities for all.

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

<http://go.boarddocs.com/mi/pwwp/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CGHNUJ619E6A>

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

Pewamo-Westphalia (P-W) Elementary School is a special place where our students, staff and families feel like they belong. The school is located in a rural area in Michigan and students attend from three small towns. The teaching staff is consistent and caring and they build authentic relationships with the students and their families. Staff and families work together as teammates in helping to raise kind and considerate citizens who are able to meaningfully contribute to society. The students, families, and staff all feel that they matter, they belong and that they all contribute to the success of the building.

Our school houses preschool through fifth grade and typically has one section at each grade level. Our preschool is a half-day, tuition-based program that we began four years ago. This has been a wonderful addition to our school, and also a help to the community since there were no preschool options in the district before that. We also offer a begindergarten (BK) program for students who need another year of development before entering kindergarten. BK is all day, five days a week and focuses on the whole child which helps them grow and progress in many ways. We see a difference in our kindergarten students who have participated in BK because they are much more prepared for the new rigor of kindergarten the following year. P-W Elementary believes that early intervention and exposure has a dramatic positive effect on student growth and achievement.

We have worked hard to embed service into our school culture in such a way that it is a natural occurrence, and to teach students that it is our duty to help our fellow humans. Our school organizes multiple giving opportunities throughout the year, including Adopt a Family program at the winter holidays, a Sock-tober event to donate footwear for the local homeless population, and Change for Christmas where students donate coins to purchase items for Toys for Tots. Through teaching students about service to others, they learn both to give and to accept with grace, and that by doing so they will reach their full potential.

Our school offers multiple ways for students to develop their leadership skills while practicing service learning. Students in fourth and fifth grade are encouraged to run for a position on the Student Council. This group holds monthly meetings to help brainstorm ways to raise money for community giving, to develop service projects to help others in our communities and to encourage relationships within our student body. One example of an annual service project is raking leaves for the elderly members in our local community. Our students spend several hours after school going door to door to offer their services to people who may not be physically capable of doing the work themselves. The students learn that there is joy in service, and that we improve our own lives by helping others.

Another opportunity for leadership is our Big Pirate-Little Pirates program, which is based on our district mascot. Each lower elementary student is paired with an upper elementary student to build a friendship and to facilitate a feeling of community and belonging. Our big pirates students thrive with being role models and setting a positive example, and our little pirates love hanging out with the older students. Regular activities are held offering opportunities for connection such as reading together, creating art projects together, and having lunch and recess together. They also walk through the community singing carols at the winter holidays and collaborate on writing thank you letters to members of the military. Giving to others is simply a way of life at P-W Elementary School.

P-W Elementary has strived to put its staff members in positions to optimize student growth and development. We have early childhood specialists teaching in our preschool, begindergarten and kindergarten programs. We have departmentalized our upper elementary to provide specialists for three years in math, science, and social studies. This ensures that all students in the building are receiving instruction from educators who are highly qualified in their subject area throughout their elementary careers, which sets the students up for educational success as they move on to the next level of schooling. Every decision that is made is to generate the best possible outcome for our students.

Each member of the school community is valued and appreciated. Our larger school district supports the elementary school initiatives and is integral to its success as well. From our bus drivers to our superintendent, each person who encounters our students truly holds a deep feeling of conviction that this is

the very best school for our students. We have learned that by holding high expectations, supporting students and staff with their needs, giving to others in need and encouraging creativity and positivity, we make great things happen!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

P-W Elementary School is committed to developing our students' literacy skills and helping them become proficient readers and writers. We believe that all children can progress in their reading level, and we work tirelessly as a team to ensure that. Our reading and English language arts instruction focuses on developing foundational reading skills such as phonics, fluency, and comprehension. Our curriculum is designed to gradually introduce more complex text structures, vocabulary, and literacy elements as students progress through the grade levels. There is a strong focus on phonemic awareness and phonics in the early childhood program because the ability to manipulate sounds and letters is essential in becoming a strong reader and writer. Their school day is filled with different activities to promote the development of rhyming, segmenting, and blending sounds. Students are explicitly taught phonics to help them decode and write words.

Each classroom teacher is responsible for their students' language arts core instruction. Students receive a ninety-minute uninterrupted reading block which focuses on strategies to advance reading and writing skills. Instruction during these times is a combination of whole group, small group, and individualized activities that are differentiated based on the students' abilities. Teachers spend a lot of time getting to know their students as readers so that they can enrich, motivate, and intervene each individual learner. Reading and writing is an essential piece of our school. We use Accelerated Reader to motivate and celebrate students who are working on their fluency and comprehension skills. Staff works together as a team to problem solve when students are not progressing in their reading abilities. We know that everyone in the building must be committed to helping students grow as readers and writers.

We use many different assessments to gather information regarding our students' performance levels, as well as their progress in response to our interventions. Students are given benchmark assessments three times a year using NWEA and DIBELS. These results are then analyzed by a team of staff members to determine which students need more enrichment or interventions in reading. The team will decide on small groupings of students based on skill level, and then use instructional strategies based on the data. We will progress monitor our students every few weeks using DIBELS to analyze the effectiveness of our interventions. Our staff uses formative assessments daily to guide their instruction, along with gathering information about student understanding.

An early literacy coach comes alongside our staff to build instructional skills and problem solve in the different areas of literacy. This year our focus has been on read alouds and creating robust classroom libraries. Our staff members are committed to setting aside daily time for reading aloud which helps promote comprehension and vocabulary development while modeling strong reading. Our classroom libraries are important because students need access to books that are at the correct reading level and motivating.

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

We believe that at Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School we are building the foundation of our students' math education. We know that developing strong math thinkers is imperative in today's world for many college and career students. We feel it is imperative that all students develop math fluency in their skills, calculations, and problem solving. Mathematics instruction takes place utilizing the GoMath! and Big Ideas series, introducing students to innovative thinking skills and scaffolded instructional practices. At Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School, students are encouraged to develop a growth mindset and to identify both strengths and weaknesses in their skillset so they are better prepared to expand their learning.

At the lower elementary level, students engage in real life math activities by utilizing games, manipulatives, and kinesthetic activities. Students are encouraged to mentally visualize and conceptualize math strategies while working to develop a common, consistent vocabulary that helps to advance their understanding and

ability to communicate their learning to others. Manipulatives and movement are combined to help students construct meaning and number sense. The students build skills utilizing a variety of concepts regarding calendar, weather, ordinal numbers, and number sense.

For our upper elementary group, our students all receive daily math instruction for three years from the same staff member, who is highly qualified in Mathematics and innovative with her teaching. Using games and manipulatives, students are challenged to think creatively and critically about math, problem solving and the integration of math skills into their daily lives. The students are encouraged to think aloud and communicate about their process for attacking problems. Multiple strategies are explained, examined, and encouraged so students learn their own best methods for solving mathematical equations and problems.

Staff members use data from a variety of sources to celebrate strengths and identify weaknesses so that students can engage in small group learning activities and practice time in the areas most likely to help them grow individually. Our students are assessed three times a year using NWEA Map benchmark to demonstrate their math skills and growth over time. Our math interventionist uses Bridges Intervention to pinpoint skills that need to be focused on and tailors instruction to the individual student.

All these strategies combine to produce students with a multitude of skills who are high achieving in mathematics. When our students advance to the next level, they are confident, not only about their preparedness for higher level mathematics in middle and high school, but also in their ability to think critically about using numbers and math to make sense of their world. The foundation that is built at P-W Elementary School will help carry them throughout their schooling.

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

P-W Elementary School introduces science in the lower elementary grades in basic concepts such as life science, physical science, and earth/space science. Students are exploring and experimenting using hands-on activities as well as direct instruction. Our science curriculum is also embedded in literacy, math, and social studies at the lower levels. We encourage students to be curious about the world around them and wonder how things work and connect in the field of science. All students have weekly STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) lessons where they are further experimenting and understanding the field of science.

At the upper elementary grade levels (grades three through five), students have daily science instruction from a highly qualified science teacher who is passionate about the field and incorporates hands-on activities for students to learn. Students are exploring different topics throughout their three years of upper elementary school and the instruction is vertically aligned for students to receive a comprehensive science curriculum before they move on to the middle school. Many years ago, there was a trend to embed science instruction within the English language arts and mathematics curriculum, yet P-W Elementary School was dedicated to continuing direct, daily instruction in science. This decision has helped our students experience a robust curriculum where they develop science skills that are needed throughout their schooling. Our science curriculum uses problem-based and hands-on learning experiments to test out and further deepen their understanding of the science learning target. Our students can be seen in the gym using materials to study motion, creating their own flashlights as they learn about electricity or dissecting cow eyes to learn biology. It is engaging and challenging and our upper elementary students dive deep into the science content.

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

P-W Elementary School is committed to teaching social studies as an independent subject, rather than integrating it into ELA and math. We believe that social studies instruction at this level is critical to developing well-rounded, informed, and engaged citizens. Our social studies curriculum encompasses a wide range of subjects essential for understanding our world. Students learn important historical events, such as the impact of French and Indian War on Michigan's past, or the American Revolution and the creation of the Constitution. Current events are discussed and analyzed. Elementary social studies lays a strong foundation for lifelong learning and civic engagement.

At the lower grades, students learn the concepts of community, family, and basic needs, such as food,

shelter, and clothing. Instruction is taught with hands-on activities, discussion and reading materials that are age-appropriate and engaging. Teachers incorporate visual aids such as pictures and videos to help students gain understanding. Students discuss current events in a meaningful way so they see how they have a role to play and that everyone belongs.

Students in upper elementary receive instruction from a highly qualified teacher who has a deep passion for what it means to be a citizen of the United States. Instruction begins with Michigan studies and moves to US Studies and US History. Students learn about indigenous peoples, the arrival of European explorers and the creation of the Bill of Rights. The Core Democratic Values are examined, explained, and rewritten by students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts that formed our country. Interactive, online textbooks are utilized, as are maps, books, and online sources. Making connections to our history, students learn current events and the way we are connected to the past while venturing into the future. Our students demonstrate critical thinking about their world as they advance to middle school.

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

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

Our school recently opened a tuition-based preschool for four-year olds which provides a service to our community and prepares more students to be ready for kindergarten. This program has thrived in the past four years of operation, and we fill our spots quickly.

Our Little Pirates Preschool focuses on the development of the whole child which includes academic, social, physical, and cognitive growth. We believe that students learn many valuable things through play-based learning and hands-on experiences. We have a highly qualified educator who is passionate about literacy and introduces the foundational skills of literacy and math through songs, crafts, and play. The curriculum is designed with age-appropriate materials and activities that engage the students and challenge them to grow in all areas.

Since our preschool is housed in our elementary school, our curriculum is vertically aligned with our beginndergarten and kindergarten educators to ensure that students are academically prepared for the following year. There is a strong emphasis on social and emotional development with students interacting with each other and building positive relationships. Little Pirates Preschool is creating a safe and fun environment where students can begin to fall in love with learning and coming to school.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Our visual arts program at P-W Elementary is structured to provide a wide range of benefits to students. Our students have weekly lessons with our art instructor, and classroom teachers also include art into their lessons. By exploring different art mediums, students express and improve their creativity, confidence, and self-esteem. By studying different artists and their work, they recreate and practice different styles of art and how to use different tools. Students are encouraged to develop their own unique style of artistic expression, often with the background of classical music as an additional inspiration. We proudly display student artwork throughout the building and showcase it on our social media sites.

Our students are exposed to performance arts, as well. Our students have weekly lessons with our music teacher, where students experiment with a multitude of different musical instruments and expand their cultural awareness. There are several yearly opportunities for students to appear in performances, often singing and even acting. With these opportunities, students demonstrate their skill in front of peers, families,

and community, boosting their confidence and self-esteem. One of our favorite performances is Grandparents Day in the fall where students show off their singing and artistic talents.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary believes that physical activity plays an essential role in developing students who are well rounded. We know that our students will improve their focus and motivation for learning when they are healthy and have outlets for physical activity. This commitment is demonstrated by our weekly schedule which includes all students receiving 120 minutes of physical education (PE) instruction and 175 minutes of recess.

Our physical education program focuses on building students' physical fitness and health, while also promoting social and emotional learning. The program includes activities that build teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills, while also encouraging students to lead active and healthy lifestyles. Our certified teacher emphasizes the importance of physical activity and encourages students to participate in a wide range of activities, including building individual skills and team sports. Our school has the Lu Playground which is an interactive projector on the wall where students can practice skills like throwing or kicking. The projector is highly motivating, and students are building skills while having fun. Our PE program also includes lessons on sportsmanship, teamwork, inclusion, nutrition, and leadership. Health instruction is integrated in our science instruction and students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks every day.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

P-W Elementary School has a library of over 7,000 titles for its 215 students, equaling 33 books per student. Our library staff works to ensure that the books available to students are high quality and motivating, and that they support the classroom instruction. Students visit the library weekly as a class and engage in storytelling, imaginative play, and skill review. Older students have the opportunity to learn about authors, illustrators and genres, and then use that knowledge to develop their own reading skills and lifelong reading habits.

Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary is a 1:1 device school. Our students in beginning kindergarten and kindergarten each have an iPad to use while students in first through fifth grade are assigned a Chromebook. Our students learn from a young age to be good digital citizens, to limit the information they share online and to learn about the world around them. Our teaching staff integrates technology into their daily instruction to help students learn, explore, and engage in the curriculum. No one knows what the future of technology will look like, but by helping our students navigate the digital world, we are creating citizens who are progressive, innovative, and resourceful.

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

P-W Elementary offers weekly STEM lessons to all students. These lessons provide students with foundational knowledge and skills that are essential for success in the 21st century. Students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills which are necessary to be successful learners. By introducing students to STEM, we can inspire them to pursue careers in STEM fields and contribute to the development of new technologies and scientific breakthroughs. We believe prioritizing the development of strong STEM skills can provide our students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the future.

Utilizing a curriculum that integrates picture books with STEM topics, students are encouraged to wonder, question, hypothesize and test their ideas across a variety of topics. Students build, experiment, and design their products which are then tested and revised. Students in first through fifth grades use code.org to learn about computer coding. Together, they work through puzzles and problems and then apply those skills to

their real life experiences. We are preparing students for careers that haven't been invented yet; our goal is to help create community-minded, forward thinking young adults who are able to identify problems and work collaboratively to solve them.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School begins all curriculum and instructional decisions with the whole class as a focus. We believe that all students should be in the classroom for the teacher's first instruction and that the more students are engaged and progressing with the general curriculum, the more successful they will become as learners. Yet we know that not all students will perform at grade level, even with extra supports in the classroom setting. When this occurs, our students will move into our intervention program.

P-W Elementary School has a robust intervention program for students who are struggling in reading and math. Throughout the year, teams of staff members meet to analyze the data from formative and summative assessments to determine which students need extra support to progress in reading and math. These students are then placed into intervention groups where they will work on deficits in order to progress in the general education curriculum.

We have a full-time, highly qualified math educator who works with students to increase their knowledge and skills in math. Bridges Intervention is our main math intervention program, but supplemental math games and activities are used to increase number sense, math calculation, and problem solving.

Our reading intervention program is run by a highly qualified reading instructor who uses data to drive instructional decisions. We have a wide variety of research-based programs and students are placed into these interventions based on their specific needs. Alongside our teacher, we have qualified paraprofessionals who work with small groups of students using our interventions. Students are progress monitored every few weeks to see how they are responding to the interventions. The progress monitoring data are then reviewed by the classroom teachers and intervention staff in order to make instructional decisions for both the classroom and the reading groups.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

When it comes to helping students who perform above grade level, Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School utilizes several key effective strategies. One approach is to provide these students with more challenging and complex material that is above their grade level. This can keep them engaged and motivated, while also helping them to continue to grow and learn at a rapid pace. One example of this is when our young developing readers become ready to tackle books independently, they are entered into an Accelerated Reader program, which helps to motivate them to read books at a level just above their current skill. Students can focus on fluency and comprehension with high interest books, and they are paired with a welcoming adult listener and one-on-one reading time. This challenge introduces new vocabulary, sentence structure, and life experiences to the students, and is vital to student achievement in reading.

A benefit to the smaller size of our building is that we get to know our students and understand which students need to be further challenged inside and outside of the classroom. Our commitment to our students and families is that all students will demonstrate a full year's worth of growth, and so we provide enrichment activities for students performing above grade level. Our educators identify high-achieving students and are able to support their interests with the structure of the regular instruction by providing lesson extensions, research, and literature opportunities.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Our students with special needs can participate in all of our programs at the building, including general education interventions and enrichment opportunities. We use a team approach to maximize the student's progress on the goals and objectives that are in the individualized education plan. Pewamo-Westphalia has a

full-time special education teacher who has a resource room in the building, and works closely with the classroom teachers to ensure growth on the student's goals and objectives. Our three full-time special education paraprofessionals assist students throughout the day with various tasks and help foster independence within those tasks.

The curriculum may be modified, or accommodations are provided for students to successfully progress through the grade level standards. We offer itinerant services through Clinton County Regional Educational Services Agency, so our students can receive speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work services in our building. We use a school psychologist throughout the year to evaluate students, analyze data, and problem solve for students who are demonstrating challenges either academically, socially, or emotionally. By focusing on the whole child and making sure that all students are growing and achieving their goals, P-W Elementary School provides a safe and welcoming environment for students with disabilities. We have whole group lessons within our building to discuss the differences in children and how students grow, learn, and progress in different ways. We know that when you include students with disabilities in the classroom, all students are learning from each other.

3d. English Language Learners:

At Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School, we welcome English Learners (ELs) every year and have seen tremendous growth in their level of proficiency in a short amount of time. Our EL students receive instruction via push-in and pull-out service models. Service time depends on the student's level of English language proficiency as based on the WIDA Model. Students who are identified as English Learners or are brand new to our school are given the WIDA Screener within the first ten school days. With results from the screener, we can identify their level of proficiency and program the proper amount of service time in order to help them learn and progress in their acquisition of the English language.

Our EL students receive direct instruction one to five days a week based on need. We have a certified teacher who is trained in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model which helps design and deliver lessons that address the academic and linguistic needs of ELs. The focus of our EL program is to increase the speaking, reading, writing, and listening abilities of our students. Every spring our students are given a comprehensive assessment in those four domains using the WIDA Model, and the results from the assessment are analyzed to improve our instruction. Each year we have students who exit our EL program due to the amount of growth in their language skills. We celebrate our students who come from a different culture and are committed to increasing their academic skills in English.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The students at Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary are welcomed into the building every morning by dedicated staff members who create a culture where students are valued while also being held to high standards. It is a place where individuals are respected and connected to one another, and where everyone is committed to working towards common goals. Our staff is what sets us apart as a high achieving school and engages students to come every day and give their best effort in order to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. The staff is committed to making our students prepared to move on to the next level.

To promote students who are reaching their fullest potential and making good choices throughout the building, we use a positive behavior intervention system (PBIS). Pewamo-Westphalia's mascot is the pirates, and so students earn Pirate Gold throughout the day when they demonstrate being Giving, On Task, Leaders, or Dependable. Students write their names on the circle piece of paper and come down to the office to place them in our treasure chest, all while getting praise from the office staff for earning Pirate Gold. Every week the principal pulls names out of the treasure chest and those Big Pirates and Little Pirates of the Week can come down to the office and pick out a prize. Throughout the school year we have schoolwide Pirate Gold challenges where the entire building is working together to earn a set number of gold coins in order to earn a special day, like a Pajama Day or Popcorn Day. This program is highly motivating because students look forward to hearing the principal announce their names over the school intercom. This recognition is motivation for students to continue to earn Pirate Gold which in turn creates a positive environment for all students.

P-W Elementary has a full-time licensed school social worker who is dedicated to helping our students with their social and emotional needs. This position is a huge asset to our building. Our social worker goes into each classroom weekly to provide social-emotional lessons geared towards problem solving, empathy, bullying prevention, and child protection. She also counsels students individually and in small, focused groups. Teachers can refer their students if they are seeing potential issues around the school. The social work office is a warm and inviting place for everyone and that spills out into the hallways and classrooms.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our families and communities place a high value on education and support our school's efforts to provide a positive learning environment that stresses high expectations for students. Parents partner with our staff in order to create a team approach to helping all students learn. We encourage parents to volunteer in our classrooms and building in various ways. It is common to see a parent in our classrooms helping with an art project or reading a book aloud to the students. At P-W Elementary we know that working with our families and communities will only strengthen our entire school and create high achieving students.

Throughout the year we have many different activities to promote our school and increase our community partnerships. In the fall we begin the year with our annual Fall Fest in downtown Pewamo. We run this event simultaneously with the City of Pewamo and their annual block party. This has been a wonderful partnership and the event is widely attended by the community and P-W Elementary School families. Our fall fest includes things like inflatables, games, prizes, and a dunk tank where students can try to soak different staff members. It is a wonderful event that kicks off our school year and helps create positive relationships with our families and community. In the spring we run our annual Pirate Pete's Adventure Challenge, which is an obstacle course for students to go through and celebrate a successful school year. We run this event as a fundraiser and ask community businesses to partner with our school financially. We set a goal amount and a tangible item that the school will purchase through the fundraiser, such as a bigger playground item or books for individual classroom libraries. Students are also encouraged to raise money by asking their friends and families to help support our school financially. On the day of our Pirate Pete's Adventure Challenge, the Pewamo Fire Department joins us and makes one of our obstacles a huge slip and slide by using the fire hose to soak us. It is a wonderful way to build community partnerships, as well as end the year with a fun event.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School has worked to develop a professional culture that promotes collaboration, continuous improvement, and respect among all staff members. We strive to be a school where staff members look forward to showing up every day because of the culture and the relationships that have been built. We acknowledge that teaching children can be challenging at times, so working together and creating a true team is paramount to the success of our school. We have a shared mission and vision for our work and the staff collaborates daily in an effort to help all students grow and achieve.

Our professional development frequently involves dialogue and planning between grade levels so that the curriculum and instruction is vertically aligned. Staff meetings are designed for our credentialed staff to come together and engage in dialogues which help to develop team building, while analyzing data, problem solving, and reviewing best instructional practices. A focus of our professional development over the past few years has been the Essential Instructional Practices of Literacy which were designed for Michigan teachers. Our building has access to an early literacy coach from Clinton County Regional Educational Services Agency and every week she comes alongside our educators to provide support and guidance within the essential practices.

Teachers are encouraged to attend outside conferences or trainings and to come back and share their new learnings with the staff. Teachers are also encouraged to take risks and try new ways of presenting information to their students. One of the main reasons why P-W Elementary is being recognized as a high achieving school is because of the dedicated staff. Every single staff member, from our bus drivers, to kitchen staff, to support staff and teachers believe in our school and make decisions on what is best for our students.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary values the input and contributions of all stakeholders and encourages collaboration among the staff. By focusing on what is best for students, our only building administrator works to develop leadership and innovation in the staff. Utilizing a collaborative leadership approach, committees and groups are formed to tackle the issues facing our school. This has improved the school's culture and climate by unifying the staff in its mission of helping students succeed.

Our school has a School Improvement Team that focuses on building goals that pertain to different areas of student growth. By analyzing data provided to us through assessment and observation, staff members are encouraged to lead and are empowered to make decisions. Each member of the team is responsible for connecting with other staff to both gather and share information, to help create action plans for goals. Those decisions and action plans are then disseminated to other staff members, who work to put them in place. By approaching each situation in this manner, every staff member has a voice in the decision-making process and in implementing strategies and plans for improvement.

While our staff leaders work closely with their peers on instructional initiatives, our principal is able to look at the organizational procedures that keep the building running smoothly. She worked to realign the daily schedule to optimize student learning with a 90-minute literacy block and common planning time. During the first full year of learning after the COVID shut down, she focused on providing what the teachers needed, so that the teachers could focus on what the students needed. She rearranged the daily schedule multiple times as state restrictions were instituted and then relaxed over the course of the year. P-W Elementary managed to stay fully in person, providing face-to-face instruction for the year, which further cemented the relationship of the team.

By listening to the concerns and ideas of the staff, updated curriculum and tools have been implemented. The building now has access to a math interventionist and a full-time school social worker for our students because the principal advocated for these positions. Staff members are encouraged to seek out professional learning opportunities, and new ideas are supported.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Culturally responsive teaching and learning emphasizes the use of student experience to leverage a strong connection to grade level curriculum. Our staff makes it a priority to know our students and families and to understand their different needs and backgrounds. Many teachers ask parents to complete a form at the beginning of the year which asks questions about their child. This helps the teacher understand students through the eyes of their parents. This information helps teachers plan their lessons, because they know that student learning should be connected to the cultures, languages, and life experiences of the students. Another way that P-W Elementary School shows students that they are valued members of the learning community is by ensuring that all students are represented in classroom libraries. We spent time reviewing and creating an inventory of classroom books to uncover and fill gaps and create a balanced representation of different cultures and experiences. When we discovered that classrooms did not have a representative sample of different backgrounds and cultures, we purchased books to fill in those areas. We want students to read books and see students that look like them and have similar experiences as they do.

Our school social worker spends time during her weekly lessons addressing how to respect each other inside and outside of the school building. Her lessons include dialogue between the students which helps guide them to ensure equity and awareness of different cultures within the classroom. She is promoting trust between classmates and recognizing and respecting the differences between each other. Through these lessons we are working to lower student anxiety and create a positive and safe environment for learning and risk taking.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The success of Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School can be attributed in large part to the daily structure of our upper elementary school and how we run our third, fourth and fifth grade classes. We typically have one section of each grade level, which allows the teachers to get to know their students very well and create relationships that are conducive to high achievement. Each teacher in the upper elementary school is the homeroom teacher for their grade level and is responsible for teaching reading and language arts to that class. After those responsibilities within each grade level, the rest of the core content areas are departmentalized within the three educators. Our third-grade homeroom teacher is a highly qualified math educator, so she teaches math to our third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students. Our fourth-grade homeroom teacher is a highly qualified science educator, so she teaches science to our third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students. Our fifth-grade homeroom teacher is a highly qualified social studies educator, so he teaches social studies to our third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students.

Several years ago, an emphasis in elementary education was to focus solely on math and ELA and to embed science and social studies into those areas. We remained committed to teaching all four content areas daily and this has not only increased the knowledge base and competencies of our students in these areas, but it has also created a unique opportunity for these three teachers to be with our students for three academic years. By the end of fifth grade, our students have had a comprehensive, vertically aligned program in all four content areas, as well as knowing three teachers who have invested in them and feel personally responsible for the growth that they have demonstrated. Our upper elementary teachers understand their students and what motivates them to learn. They have built strong working relationships with their families and work as a team in order to promote success with the students. They are understanding of the students' unique differences and cultures and respond favorably to the students because of this background knowledge. Our data show that our students are high achieving because they receive a high-quality foundation in our lower elementary school, and then delve deep into the four content areas during their upper elementary years.