

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 315 Highbrook Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pelham State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10803-2206

County Westchester County

Telephone (914) 738-2680 Fax (914) 738-8187

Web site/URL <https://colonial.pelhamschools.org> E-mail RGarcia@pelhamschools.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* Dr. Cheryl Champ E-mail cchamp@pelhamschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pelham Union Free School District Tel. (914) 738-3434

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 Dr. Michael Owen-Michaane
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	43
1	42
2	50
3	44
4	48
5	52
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	279

*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
 - 7 % Asian
 - 8 % Black or African American
 - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 68 % White
 - 5 % 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: ≤1%

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	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	287
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 8 %
Total number of students served 22

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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>12</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</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: 8

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

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.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 19:1

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	97%	99%	98%	98%	98%
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.

Colonial strives to create a nurturing and supportive environment that celebrates diversity, inclusion and emphasizes respect. We prepare our students to become life-long learners and responsible citizens, while enhancing their understanding of the world around them.

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

<https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/pufsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BEUPQP65894A#>

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

Colonial Elementary School is nestled within Pelham, New York. The original Colonial Elementary School once stood on the site of our present day school. Built in 1900, it originally stood as a two-story, unstable building with only four classrooms. It closed ten years later as a result of the opening of Siwanoy Elementary School. As enrollment grew within the community, a need arose for additional space. The Board of Education approved the new Colonial Elementary School which opened in 1927. Years later, Colonial's Site Based Council along with district administrators worked to expand the site even more and an extension was built where our library sits today.

Colonial Elementary School is the smallest of the four elementary schools within the Pelham Union Free School District. Currently with 279 students and 15 classrooms, we pride ourselves on being a close knit neighborhood school. Our vision for Colonial Elementary School states that we strive to create a nurturing and supportive environment that prepares children to be life-long learners and contributing members in a democratic society. The Colonial Elementary School Community includes administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students. We celebrate diversity and expect all members to respect one another, take responsibility for their actions, and make ethical choices. Our community will work together to encourage students to accept challenges, take risks and reach their potential.

All of our students and their families walk to school each day, gathering under our portico or upper playground until the bell rings at 8:15am. This is the most special time of the day because each student is greeted at the door by our greeter, a familiar teacher, the school principal, school psychologist or school nurse. It is during this time that we are able to connect with families informally, setting a positive tone for the day. All of our highly qualified teachers and staff have known our families for many years. They have taught older siblings, cousins, and friends. Teachers and staff have developed such strong relationships with families built on trust and respect. There is a sense of familiarity and family amongst this unique community. Teachers and staff know every student by name and understand the importance of knowing each student well. The superintendent and district administrators stop by regularly to visit with students and engage in various activities. Families here value their children's education and the work that is done at Colonial Elementary School. They are positively involved in many ways, have high expectations and support the school in every capacity. Colonial's connection with families, staff, the community and the school district is unbreakable and illuminates an unending commitment to the overall success of all students.

Known as the Colonial Cougars, students strive to be good citizens and lifelong learners. Each month a new Paws for Kindness word is adopted abided by and infused into daily practices. Students, staff, and faculty manifest these words for the purpose of positive intent. Colonial Elementary School students have multiple opportunities to explore interests and talents ranging from early morning orchestra to serving on The Colonial Times Newspaper. Students enjoy Colonial's Pizza Thursdays hosted by Pelham Pizza and the fourth and fifth grade students have the privilege of taking lunch and recess at Pelham Middle School's athletic field; only a five minute walk from school. Colonial Elementary School's dedicated teachers, staff and school principal volunteer their time to supervise lunch duty as a way of connecting with our students on a daily basis.

Colonial School's motto is "Where the Friends Are." We strive to connect the social-emotional needs of our students alongside the academic in every way. We are a school that believes in Morning Meeting. Making connections with students first thing in the morning sets a positive tone for the rest of the day. Students learn to greet each in a meaningful way, using eye-contact, strengthening listening skills, resolving conflict, and fostering empathy. They engage in games that bond the class which allows all students to feel connected, as well as, have fun. We have a social emotional curriculum, (SEL) which all students receive with lessons that meet the NYS Standards for SEL. Colonial Elementary School's dedicated school psychologist engages students one-on-one, in small groups, or as a need arises. The school psychologist can be found on the playground or in the lunchroom helping to support or sort out challenges that naturally arise during unstructured time. The Colonial Diversity Committee is committed to exposing our students to a variety of cultures and celebrations throughout the year. It is quite common to find a display to illustrate the traditions of Diwali or an Ofrenda set up in time for the Day of the Dead in our main hallway. Students

learn about these celebrations during the morning announcements where the school principal shares a fact each day about a particular culture, tradition or observed holiday. The Colonial Student Government, made up of fourth and fifth grade students, make decisions on student-led initiatives such as fundraisers, volunteering and school spirit days. The school principal has special treats for teachers, shares impromptu notes of appreciation, recognizes student and staff birthdays and deliberately fosters a community of support. Most importantly, students know that they matter, are cared for, and they enjoy coming to school each day.

One contributing factor that truly affords Colonial Elementary School the ability to stand out is our accessibility to innovative programs that encompass the whole child. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) in Spanish is built into daily schedules in the second through fifth grade. Every student is issued a 1:1 Chromebook for daily classwork, enrichment, and independent instruction. Teachers work closely with Teachers' College to develop a robust English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum in addition to incorporating The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum into daily lessons in kindergarten and first grade. All of our teachers have been trained in Science 21, a program aligned with the NYS P-12 Science Learning Standards. Through this approach to teaching, students engage in hands-on , project based learning. Our Special Communication Class utilizes the Edmark Reading Program coupled with adaptive technology as a pathway to learning success. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program is provided to all of our fifth grade students through The Village of Pelham Police Department.

Each day, there is one hour scheduled for the Intervention Block (I/E block). During this time, students receive services for specific needs. These services could include enrichment activities, small group instruction, Tier I and Tier II intervention with our reading and math intervention specialist, speech and language therapy, specialized programming with our resource room teacher, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, orchestra, and band. Our school guidance counselor delivers Social Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction to all students using a module known as The Fly Five. In recent years, Colonial has piloted flexible seating utilizing innovative furniture in kindergarten and fifth grade. The intent is to have this available across grades within our school building.

The Colonial Cultural Arts Committee work in collaboration with classroom teachers to provide cultural experiences at each grade level. These experiences can be in the form of class trips, workshops, guest speakers and performances that directly enhance the curriculum through the lens of cultural competence. Most recently, in honor of Black History Month, Alvin Ailey engaged our students in a percussion lecture demonstration as well as a family fun night where students and their families learned West African dances. In the spring, our kindergarten students participate in an architectural residency where they construct their own versions of the homes and buildings in their community while our third graders who are studying Brazil work with an instructor to learn Capoeira, a Brazilian fighting dance. Building Bridges is a program that aims to educate children about people with different abilities through experiential and interactive classroom activities, and special guest speakers. Depending on the grade level, students are immersed in experiences and content around hearing impairment, vision impairment, Autism, physical differences, learning differences and Down Syndrome. Parents are trained in this content and volunteer to deliver lessons.

Colonial's Outdoor Classroom was unveiled last year. This was a collective initiative set forth by district administration, teachers, staff, students, the school principal and parents as a way to effectively utilize the additional space behind Colonial Elementary School and provide a more inquiry based class experience outside of the classroom. Phase I of this project involved setting up the space. Community members volunteered their time and expertise contributing everything from tree stumps for seating to flower beds for gardening. Our fifth graders, with the help of our art teacher, gifted the classroom a Kindness Rock Garden and our first graders planted seedlings. We utilize this unique space for special projects, lessons, and celebrations. As we plan to enter Phase II this upcoming year, our Green Committee, comprised of parents, teachers, and the school principal, have partnered with The Greenburgh Nature Center to introduce programming such as apple cidering and gardening.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Colonial Elementary School currently utilizes the reading and writing workshop via the Teacher's College (TC) curriculum. In grades K-2, writing units include opinion, information, and narrative writing with increasing complexity. In the K-2 reading curriculum, the focus initially lies on the establishment of foundational skills. As the units progress, students are equipped with the tools to tackle increasingly complex texts with accuracy, fluency, and a deep understanding of their content. In grades 3-5, units include argument and advocacy, research based argument, personal narratives, response to literature and journalism. Such units reflect the NY State English Language Arts (ELA) standards. Reading and writing units run concurrently, with the intention of overlap. Pre-assessments are administered to determine entry points, and subsequent curriculum is organized into "bends." Each bend develops progressively, with lesson hallmarks including connection, teaching, active engagement, and link to independent practice. Utilization of rubrics, and checklists throughout each unit increases student's understanding of unit expectations, and promotes self-monitoring. The overall goal of the reading and writing workshop is to create lifelong readers and writers. Links for each lesson typically start with "Today and everyday..." to drive home that concept. Teachers often use authentic literature alongside the TC curriculum.

At Colonial Elementary School, we believe that a strong foundation in phonemic awareness and phonics is essential for developing proficient reading skills. Research on the science of reading has consistently shown that mastery of these fundamental components of language enables readers to decode and comprehend text with greater ease and accuracy, paving the way for lifelong reading success.

To support this approach, we use Foundations in grades K-3 for foundational instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, high frequency word study, fluency, vocabulary, handwriting and spelling. The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum is used in grades K-2 to provide daily phonemic and phonological instruction. Teachers provide instruction in a systematic, explicit, cumulative manner, utilizing a variety of multi-sensory tools to meet the needs of all learners. Both the Foundations and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum are designed to support the NYS ELA Reading Standards for Foundational Skills and are grounded in the science of reading.

Assessment is an integral part of our approach. Formative assessments of students' skills occur through direct teacher observation of daily work and independent application of skills throughout the day. Summative assessments in the form of unit tests take place at the end of each unit to measure student mastery of concepts taught in that unit. By harnessing the power of this data, teachers at Colonial School are able to gain a comprehensive understanding of their students' unique strengths and challenges. This enables them to craft personalized teaching strategies that cater to every learner's individual needs and abilities. Overall, our approach to reading instruction is evidence-based, data-driven, and focused on building a strong foundation for lifelong reading success.

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

Colonial Elementary School utilizes the Math in Focus curriculum. This Singapore-style math curriculum focuses on three dimensions- the concrete, the pictorial and the abstract. In the lower grades, this approach begins with hands-on, concrete experiences that allow students to explore mathematical concepts through physical manipulatives and real-world examples. From there, we progress to the pictorial stage, where students use visual models and representations to deepen their understanding and develop mental images of mathematical concepts. Finally, in the abstract stage, students are introduced to symbolic representations of mathematical concepts, allowing them to apply their understanding in more formal and abstract ways. By using this approach, we help students build a strong foundation in mathematics that prepares them for success in more advanced concepts and applications.

The goal of this program is to develop the abstract understanding of mathematical concepts alongside concrete algorithms. Therefore, its focus is the “why,” rather than emphasizing standard algorithms or rote memorization. Students are taken through Polya’s four step word problem process: understanding what the problem is asking, planning the operation(s) involved and determining if it is a multistep problem, carrying out the plan, and reflecting on the reasonableness of their answer. This cognitive process encourages students to think critically before computing. Lessons are scaffolded, with an initial engagement piece titled “Think”, a teaching point titled “Teach”, and a “Try”, in which they are encouraged to work in partnerships to solve problems. Lessons will involve multiple teaching points, so it often follows a Teach, Try, Teach, Try (etc) format. Only until there has been sufficient practice and problem solving in partnerships is the student released into independent practice. Math in Focus also offers key components for differentiation, including online games, a reteach lesson (remediation) and an enrichment piece.

At Colonial Elementary School, we use a variety of assessment methods to monitor our students' progress in math and ensure they are mastering key concepts. Along with traditional summative assessments, we also rely on informal observations and lesson exit tickets to gauge student understanding and identify areas that may require additional support.

Through these informal observations, our teachers are able to assess student progress in real-time, and adjust their instruction to meet each student's unique needs. Meanwhile, our lesson exit tickets provide valuable insights into each student's understanding of the material covered during class, and help us identify areas that may require further attention.

By utilizing a range of assessment methods, we are able to develop a comprehensive understanding of each student's strengths and challenges, and craft personalized strategies that support their ongoing growth and success.

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

Colonial Elementary School's curriculum is based upon the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) standards, as addressed by Science 21. Science 21 is a teacher developed, inquiry based, learner centered program. It focuses on conceptual development from grade to grade, often building upon understandings from the previous year. Science 21 employs a three dimensional approach. The first dimension is science practices, or behaviors that scientists engage in. For example, asking questions and defining problems, developing, and using models, planning investigations, collecting, and analyzing data, constructing explanations and communicating information are all regarded as “science practices.” The second dimension includes core ideas, or the important content within science and engineering disciplines. The third dimension includes cross cutting concepts, which are patterns that hold applications across all domains of science. Cross cutting concepts can include patterns, cause and effect, energy and matter, structure, and function, as well as stability and change. Other essential characteristics of Science 21 include science vocabulary that is integrated and expanded upon throughout the units. At the core of each lesson is an investigation that is inquiry based, and learner led. Technology is integrated through the use of phenomena videos. The program also offers differentiation and inclusion suggestions. Unit assessments are provided, with room for modification. On these assessments, the learner is often asked to explain the cause of phenomena, or identify patterns in phenomena. The assessment does not include questions that require rote memorization.

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

Colonial Elementary School's social studies curriculum revolves around the K-12 Social Studies Framework provided by New York State. Similar to science, there are several components to the social studies curriculum. These components include inquiry, identifying themes, common core literacy skills, key ideas and understandings and content specifications. To address the social studies framework, Colonial Elementary School uses multiple resources. IMPACT Social Studies, by McGraw Hill, teaches students to ask questions through the use of the inquiry journal. There are research components in which the learner has to analyze sources and consider multiple perspectives. In doing so, they become critical thinkers. Additional elements of the program include a research companion, which offers informational articles, excerpts from primary sources, and authentic literature. Also, there are available technology resources such as videos,

interactive maps, and infographics. After they have investigated, students are asked to report and/or take action. Teachers can incorporate multiple pathways as a means of assessing their students.

In conjunction with McGraw Hill, the integrated social studies/ELA curriculum created by Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES is used. This teacher-created curriculum is also based on the NYS K-12 Social Studies Framework, along with the English Language Arts learning standards. Lessons for the program include suggested teaching points, technology integration, various assessments, informational articles, and links to related videos. Project based learning opportunities are present in each unit.

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

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

At Colonial Elementary School, we believe that students express themselves through a variety of ways, each having a point of entry to success. Every student here engages in art class. They have the opportunity to create and visualize themselves as artists. Our art teacher works in collaboration with classroom teachers and Colonial's Diversity Committee to come up with projects that enhance the curriculum as well as captivate cultural celebrations. Students are exposed to a plethora of artists, their history and their work. They truly develop an appreciation for artistry and we find that students also discover personal talents that they never knew existed. Our art teacher utilizes a broad spectrum of drawing tools, texture tools, painting, collage techniques and always encourages our students to take risks trying new things.

Every student also has the opportunity to engage in music class. Here, students uncover their love of singing and playing instruments. Our music teacher provides lessons in various genres and always has a Spanish translation visible for the lesson being taught. In third through fifth grade our students have the opportunity to participate in orchestra, band and chorus. As a culminating trip, our fourth graders are invited to Carnegie Hall in the spring. All third through fifth grade students host multiple performances in school and some perform at the Pelham Music Festival.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Colonial Elementary School engages students in physical education lessons two days a cycle. K-2 students focus on movement education which teaches the foundations of movement. Third and fourth graders practice skill themes that use the concepts from movement education to learn correct techniques for sport skills. Fifth graders participate in sport education that provides students with opportunities for leadership, practicing organization, skill practice, and competition in a safe environment. Fitness is intertwined in each lesson, often using pedometers and heart rate monitors for authentic assessment. Students in 5th grade create fitness plans utilizing the Welnet Fitness Challenges that are assessed in the Spring of their 4th grade year. Cooperative activities are another focus of the 3rd-5th grade years, providing critical thinking skills and teamwork opportunities for all students. Students also participate in the Kids Heart Challenge supporting the American Heart Association, Bike Safety Day event, Hop-a-Thon supporting the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and field day events. Scooterville is a school-wide unit that occurs in the Spring and integrates math, social studies, science, reading, and movement as the gym is turned into a town complete with a bowling alley, rock club, car wash, restaurant, and more as students learn about how an economy works.

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

FLES is an acronym for Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools and our language of instruction will be Spanish. FLES is an academically challenging and engaging venture in which children will have the opportunity to immerse in the Spanish language. It is an introduction to Spanish language acquisition and embraces the pedagogical ideals of the Natural Language Approach and Total Physical Response (TPR) methods.

The FLES curriculum in the Pelham Public School District is aligned with the New York State Standards. Instruction is differentiated and content coordinated lessons are tied to the school community whenever possible. The curriculum is interdisciplinary and reinforces content being taught in other academic areas throughout the year. Instruction also helps to strengthen skills learned in other disciplines such as graphing, patterning, acute listening skills, geography skills, global awareness, etc. Lessons are highly communicative and dynamic. Instruction is age level appropriate, taking into consideration level of language experience, as well as student interest. Lessons are designed to address diverse learning styles and needs. Interactive activities, visuals, manipulatives, Total Physical Response (TPR), charades, singing and dancing are all integral components of lessons.

2d. Technology/library/media

Colonial Elementary School's library media program engages all students from kindergarten through fifth grade. Here, students learn how to research, gather information, share ideas, present thoughts, analyze and interpret information. Our library media specialist collaborates with classroom teachers to support and enhance the given curriculum through a project based approach. Students have the opportunity to check out books on a weekly basis and have access to online library resources such as myON. In the area of technology, we have 1:1 Chromebooks for all students to integrate technology into the daily curriculum.

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

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Colonial Elementary School is a public school that strives to meet the needs of all 279 diverse learners each day. For example, our MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) is utilized to ensure that at least 80 percent of our students are successful within the grade level curriculum. Colonial's skilled teachers reteach small groups of students as needed, using direct instruction and data collection to ensure learning is achieved. After six to eight weeks of data collection, the MTSS team meets to discuss if adequate progress has been made and/or if other interventions are needed.

For those who require more support, even after working alongside their teachers, Tier II interventions are offered. These interventions can include areas such as reading, math, speech and language, occupational therapy, and counseling. For those students performing below grade level, we offer Tier I (reteaching with the classroom teacher) and Tier II (small group instruction outside the classroom). Our district has a dedicated hour each day for each grade level called Intervention and Enrichment Block. This dedicated time allows teachers the opportunity to differentiate instruction based on the needs of each child in their classroom. This is also the time where our support team pulls students out of their classroom setting for a dedicated period of time to work on specific areas identified through our MTSS process. The team is composed of our school principal, school psychologist, special education teacher, interventionists, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, and the general education teacher. About fifteen percent of Colonial Elementary School receives Tier II interventions for a minimum of six weeks (currently 41 students out of 279).

The Pelham Central School District uses AIMSweb, a universal diagnostic administered three times per year to ensure all students are responding to the curriculum. Our district mandates that any student at or below the twentieth percentile, (nationally normed) will receive intervention in either reading or math based

on these assessments coupled with other formative and summative data points. These students are identified for Tier II intervention and work within a small group setting to close any learning gaps. The interventionists and classroom teachers track progress weekly or biweekly depending on the student.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Many Colonial Elementary School students are performing at or above grade level. These students have opportunities for enrichment in a variety of ways. We participate in a program called, “Perennial Math” which was created to offer students more venues to showcase their talents and math skills in a variety of ways. Students volunteer to work with our district elementary math staff developer who presents a variety of problem solving strategies in third through fifth grade. She enters our scores into a national competition and our students compete with peers from around the country. Awards are given out not only for participation but for progress and performance. In addition, our rigorous math program, Math in Focus, provides many enrichment opportunities for teachers to utilize. Colonial Elementary School uses adaptive online programs such as Dreambox and IXL which provide students with the opportunity to work above grade level standards in the area of math. In first and second grade a program called Math Puzzlers provides students with enrichment opportunities during lunch. During our Intervention and Enrichment Block, (I/E block) students engage in various enrichment activities designed by their classroom teacher. Within the classrooms, teachers use instructional strategies that differentiate for students performing above grade level or who show mastery of specific content standards. Students who are assessed as reading above grade level standard can choose higher level texts to apply to their independent work after the teacher presents the daily reading mini-lesson. Additionally, writing tasks are open ended for the most part which enable students to enhance their craft to their level. A variety of rubrics are used to assess the student and challenge their thinking.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Our self-contained communications class (8-1-2) uses the Remark Reading Program coupled with adaptive and assistive technology, which allows our students to learn, grow and communicate. The students in this class are integrated for all special area classes, recess, assemblies and even have a dedicated social play time with our first grade students. Our school has a “Buddy Program” at lunch with student volunteers to help integrate the language impaired students during recess. Our fourth and fifth grader general education students volunteer their time to play with and assist our non-verbal students and find it very rewarding to do so.

Students who require additional services to address their needs such as fine or gross motor delays, sensory, vision, hearing, orthopedic impairment, assistive technology, behavior, among others, are referred to specialists who can address, assess and propose an appropriate course of action to the IEP team. If additional individualized instruction is necessary, students receive resource room. Our resource room teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to plan the best possible plan of action based on the needs of the students.

3d. English Language Learners:

Colonial Elementary School is currently welcoming a more diverse population of students who are English Language Learners, (ELL). Upon arrival, students work with our speech and language pathologist on vocabulary and syntax. Our interventionist will work on letter names and sounds and decoding strategies. Additionally, daily instruction is given by a certified ELL teacher. We find that this plan of action of full instructional integration benefits our ELL student population and sets them up for success while acclimating to a new language. These students are supported through the integration of texts and materials in their native language. Classroom assignments and assessments are modified appropriately and scaffolded for individual student needs. Our curriculum is designed to close the achievement gap as it builds strong oral language skills which transfer to a student’s literacy development. Report cards, progress reports and parent communication is translated so that the concepts are easily understood. It is our goal for our ELL students to become fluent in both their native language and English

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Colonial Elementary School, we are dedicated to creating a supportive environment that nurtures academic, social, and emotional growth for all our students. Our teachers design interactive and captivating lessons that cater to various learning styles and incorporate student interests. Additionally, our teachers, administrators, and staff place great importance on building positive relationships with our students. As a small school, we pride ourselves on knowing each student by name, which fosters a familial atmosphere and strengthens personal connections. These connections provide students with a sense of recognition, enabling them to feel more confident and a greater sense of belonging within our school community.

Every morning, our principal and students lead a series of announcements that are delivered over the loudspeaker, bringing our school community together. This daily ritual is more than just a recitation of the pledge and sharing of our kindness word of the month; it serves as a powerful catalyst for cultivating a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose among our students. By celebrating achievements like birthdays and highlighting our collective successes, we create a deep and lasting connection to each other and our school as a whole. Starting each day with a morning meeting is an essential aspect of our community-building efforts at Colonial Elementary School. This approach creates a secure and welcoming environment, where students can freely express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, while also actively listening to and supporting their peers. Our teachers use responsive language and interactive modeling to establish a predictable and stable learning environment, which cultivates students' intrinsic motivation.

At our school, we place a high value on positive relationships between peers. To foster these relationships, we have implemented several buddy programs. For instance, our fifth grade students are paired with kindergarteners to form "buddy" relationships. Through this program, older students guide and support their younger peers as they navigate their new school experience. Buddies participate in various community-building activities, such as nature scavenger hunts, holiday crafts, and 100th day of school learning stations. They even help out during lunchtime. These activities promote a sense of belonging among all students. Beyond just fostering a sense of community, our buddy programs give students the opportunity to develop important leadership and mentoring skills. By taking on a leadership role and guiding their younger peers, older students develop skills such as communication, empathy, and responsibility. This approach has a significant impact on a child's social and emotional development.

At Colonial Elementary School, students have access to a range of programs that promote a love of learning and boost their confidence. For students in grades 3-5, the Perennial Math program helps to develop their problem-solving skills by enhancing their reading, reasoning, and logical skills. Meanwhile, the Math Puzzlers program is aimed at students in grades 1-2 and takes a game-based approach to problem-solving, creating a supportive and enjoyable environment for students to engage in mathematical discussions. Additionally, Colonial Elementary School offers other academic interest clubs, such as the 24 Club, The Colonial Times Newspaper Club and The Colonial Spelling Bee Club. In addition to academic programs, Colonial Elementary School also provides school-community building opportunities. For example, our annual Colonial Read-a-thon is a highly anticipated event that encourages literacy and promotes a love of reading in a fun and engaging way. Our students also partake in the "Bash the Trash" initiative, as it is important for us to teach our students about being "green". By participating in these activities, students can develop their social skills and form lasting relationships with their peers and teachers.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Colonial Elementary School, we believe that creating partnerships with families and members of the community is paramount to the overall success of our students. We view parents as partners in their child's educational experience, and we strive to keep them informed regularly through multiple channels.

Teachers communicate with parents regularly regarding upcoming events, curriculum, and reminders. They send weekly or monthly newsletters that detail the curriculum for that time period, important upcoming

events, and ways for parents to support learning at home. Lessons, resources, homework, and other relevant information are posted on each class's Google Classroom for parents and students to access easily.

On the school level, parents are sent a weekly newsletter titled, “The Growl”, in which the school’s principal discusses recent events, upcoming events, the calendar for the week, and other pertinent information. Parents are encouraged to attend monthly “Coffee and Conversation” meetings, in which they have an opportunity to meet with the school principal to discuss issues relevant to Colonial Elementary School.

Communication between home and school is established not only through teachers and administration, but also through various teacher-parent committees. Colonial's Diversity Committee regularly engages with teachers and administrators, to look for opportunities to enrich the curriculum, and celebrate diversity. The Colonial Diversity Committee is parent-led, and will often communicate with the parent population as well, looking for feedback and suggestions. Additionally, the Parent Teacher Association, (PTA) is an active body of administrators, teachers, parents, community members and administrators that meets monthly to discuss curriculum and events, while providing the body at large the opportunity to raise questions and promote positive, productive discourse.

Colonial Elementary School maintains several community partnerships. Students are exposed to technology, film and the arts through a partnership with a local theater, The Pelham Picture House. Students attend workshops in which they can create digital stories, produce stop motion animations, and even documentaries. Pelham Recreation offers several lunchtime and after school enrichment activities at Colonial Elementary School, in which many students participate. Teachers have discretion to establish relationships with community businesses as it relates to the curriculum. For example, for a unit of study on China, the third grade explores cultural food, as provided by Pelham Palace, a local Chinese restaurant. First grade teachers reach out to various community organizations, such as the police department, local businesses and the fire department for their unit on community helpers. Kindergarten classes collaborate with a renowned local architect to investigate the distinctive architecture of The Village of Pelham, utilizing sustainable materials to meticulously replicate the aesthetics of "Our Pelham Neighborhood."

Colonial's Student Government is an active and engaged group that strives to make a positive impact on the local community. The student representatives regularly come up with creative and innovative ideas to support and improve the community, and they work collaboratively to turn their ideas into action. Through their efforts, the Colonial Student Government serves as a valuable and effective force for positive change, both within the school and in the wider community. They actively initiate charity drives, visit our senior homes and facilitate story times with our younger students.

Each grade at Colonial Elementary School engages in a community service project that is organized by class parents and teachers. Examples of these service projects include Earth Day service projects in first grade where the students care for seedlings and then plant them in our garden beds, kindergarteners creating valentines for the residents of Wartburg nursing home and second graders hosting a Used Book Drive to benefit the non profit organization, 914 Cares. There are events held throughout the year that bring our community together. These events include our Kindergarten Playdate in August where new kindergartners and their families are given the opportunity to meet each other prior to the beginning of school, our Back to School Picnic, Fall Festival, Colonial's Masterchef Day and Fifth Grade Pasta Night, just to name a few. Additionally, many fundraising events are planned that are sponsored by local community businesses.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

As stakeholders in the educational success of our students, it is important for us to build and maintain our instructional core through cultivating a culture of learning. It is necessary for us to enhance teacher knowledge, student engagement and rigorous instruction. This is attained through actively listening and responding to student voices coupled with the ongoing support and development of our teachers and staff. Colonial’s professional development approach is multifaceted . Wednesdays are dedicated to professional development in the form of faculty meetings or grade team meetings. Faculty meeting professional development often centers around assessment, interpreting data across grades and how it relates to our school as a whole. It is the intention of these meetings to identify trends within student learning and

strategize the next steps for success. Grade team meetings are facilitated by the directors of math, science, ELA, social studies or technology. Calendar days with our staff developers from Teachers College alongside the school principal, teachers and the director of ELA, social studies are scheduled five times during the school year for grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Within these planning sessions curriculum is paced and adapted to meet the learning trends that have been identified, model lessons are conducted and assessments are analyzed. This is repeated within our Math in Focus curriculum. Teachers meet with our staff developer alongside the school principal and the director of math and science. Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) are scheduled five times a year also. They are designed to enhance best practices by enabling teachers and support staff to collaborate on a common area of focus that they feel would contribute to their professional growth. This work is tied to The Pelham Central School District's Strategic Plan.

Through these approaches to teaching and learning, progress monitoring is infused utilizing both formative and summative assessments. Teachers and staff interpret this data and hone in on the specific needs of students, tailor instruction and measure progress. Data meetings are conducted three times a year with the principal, interventionist and every classroom teacher. In these meetings students who are not meeting benchmarks are thoroughly discussed and a plan for success is made. This plan could include a recommendation for Tier I intervention inside of the classroom or Tier II intervention in a separate location with the interventionist. Additionally throughout the year, if students are not responding to instruction or there is an underlying issue with a student that is a cause of concern, the classroom teacher will refer to the Multi Tiered Student Support Team (MTSS). The team is made up of our interventionist, occupational therapist, school psychologist, resource room teacher, principal and the referring classroom teacher. During this time, a meeting is arranged where data is analyzed and discussed.

Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) meets monthly. This team of teachers and the school principal work together to brainstorm different solutions for the benefit of the school building. Teachers are called upon to join district committees, serve as speakers and presenters at faculty meetings, parent nights and Board of Education meetings, act as curriculum coaches and provide input on certain district initiatives. Surveys are often rendered that allow teachers to voice their opinions as their feedback is imperative for the overall success of the school and our district. Their expertise is respected and valued.

Aside from the instructional benefits of engaging in this work we also find that these collaborative opportunities for mutual growth, leadership and learning contribute to an increase in a teachers' sense of belonging and value, a lessened feeling of working in isolation and an ongoing contribution to a learning environment where students can and will reach their full potential.

4. School Leadership:

Colonial Elementary School thrives on a shared leadership approach. Being such a small school, there is only one administrator on site, the school principal. Therefore, leadership is distributed amongst the highly qualified faculty and staff. They assume leadership roles including instructional coaching, building wide scheduling, lunch supervision, facilitating faculty, data and parent meetings or workshops as well as leading professional development. The Teacher in Charge is a building level leadership position assumed by one classroom teacher. In the absence of the school principal, the Teacher in Charge is next in command. Colonial's Site Based Council, made up of teachers and parents meets monthly to set goals, provide input and feedback in order to enhance the school community. Everyone's voice matters and is always considered when making decisions about what is best for our students and school.

The school principal fosters a positive building culture built on transparency and trust. Each morning, faculty and staff access Colonial's Google Classroom to find the News and Notes for the day. This is created by the school principal. Included in the News and Notes are faculty and staff absences, class coverages, lunchtime enrichment for the day, changes in recess locations and special announcements, meetings, events, assemblies or visitors in the building. Faculty and staff appreciate this as it sets the tone for the day and everyone knows exactly what to expect. Additionally, the school principal sends out a Weekly Update every Sunday. The Weekly Update is an organization of the week ahead.

Staff morale is extremely important as it is believed that a positive school culture inspires success for

everyone. The school principal values and recognizes the hard work and dedication put forth each day by faculty, staff and students. Celebrations are recognized monthly whether it be in the form of a simple breakfast in the staff lounge or a special treat left in everyone's mailboxes. Student, faculty and staff birthdays are announced and celebrated, team victories are recognized, exemplary work is shared and when something really stands out, we have a parade in our hallways and playground. It is common practice for the school principal to visit every classroom throughout the day, checking in with students and teachers. Being visible and accessible is a priority at Colonial Elementary School as it helps to build and maintain powerful relationships.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Part of what makes Colonial Elementary School so unique is its commitment to culturally responsive teaching and learning. As a school, our work is grounded in The Pelham Central School District's Strategic Plan which focuses on the need to “cultivate an empathetic, inclusive and equitable school community that values and encourages respect, voice and agency for all students.” We achieve this by tailoring our planning and best practices to fit within the realms of Cultural Competence, Authentic Learning and Educating the Whole Child. Colonial Elementary School offers a broad spectrum of opportunities for our school community to embrace inclusivity, many of which are embedded into our daily routines and instruction. These opportunities are evidenced by our commitment to the implementation of a responsive classroom approach, our collaborative work and partnership with The Colonial Diversity Committee and the infusion of a social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum module taught by the school guidance counselor coupled with a variety of specialized programs.

At Colonial Elementary School, we take advantage of any opportunity to build and nurture relationships. One platform that has been essential to this is our Colonial Buddy Programs. Fifth graders are paired with a kindergarten buddy at the beginning of each year. Throughout the school year, they will engage in various activities with their buddies including One Hundredth Day projects,

Every member of the faculty and staff at Colonial Elementary School has been explicitly trained in responsive classroom management as it is our belief and the belief of our district that students learn best when they are supported both academically and socially. In addition to infusing this philosophy into pedagogy, our schedule is built with this in mind, intentionally giving time for Morning Meeting which is an integral part of this approach to social emotional teaching and learning. In addition to providing a consistent beginning to each day, we find that through the components of Morning Meeting our students have the opportunity to increase their self confidence, build positive relationships, share what is on their minds and problem solve. Moreover, our students engage in social emotional learning lessons developed through the Fly Five Curriculum modules. These lessons are taught by our school guidance counselor.

The Colonial Diversity Committee, made up of parents and the school principal work in collaboration with Colonial Elementary School to address the cultural needs of our families, staff and students in a variety of ways. The Colonial Cultural Arts Committee, which is an extension of The Colonial Diversity Committee, works in collaboration with teachers on each grade level to plan cultural enrichment activities and experiences to enhance awareness and exposure to celebrating differences. Our Diversity Book Bag Program focuses on introducing a range of topics that all address, in some way, the topic of diversity and inclusion. The hope is that families will use these books together and acquire a broader understanding about the growing diverse population in our ever-changing community, answering questions and dispelling myths. Colonial Celebrates is an initiative that started last year where students hear “fun facts” each day commemorating significant events, people and holidays that are recognized throughout the year. This year, our teachers were afforded the opportunity to choose more inclusive texts for classroom libraries, gifted by The Colonial Diversity Committee.

Pelham’s Special Education Parent-Teacher Association (SEPTA) is a district-wide organization made up of parents, administrators, and teaching staff. They strive to help promote inclusion at Colonial Elementary School and the Pelham Central School District. Each school has a SEPTA parent representative who is dedicated to supporting families of children with special needs. They host workshops and evening events, and work with parents, teachers, and administrators to help provide the best opportunities possible for all

students.

Building Bridges is a program that was originally initiated by parents and introduced to Colonial Elementary School. This program aims to educate children about people with different abilities through classroom activities and special guest speakers. During the classroom sessions students are broken up into groups and engage in interactive activities. Each grade focuses on a particular difference such as vision and hearing Autism, Down Syndrome, physical differences as well as learning differences.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that has made Colonial Elementary School so successful is our commitment to focusing on the whole child. We believe that every child has a point of entry to success and it is our responsibility to guide them to it. At Colonial Elementary School, we accomplish this in a multitude of ways as it is our goal for our students to develop the skills needed to succeed and adapt to our ever changing world.

We take the time to know our students as learners through observations, one to one conversations, small group lessons and by constantly providing them with choices. We encourage all of our students to own their learning. Through flexible seating, students have the ability to sit where they learn best. They often have choice over topics they wish to explore, how they present their work and explain their thinking. This practice affords us the opportunity to design, enhance and carry out programs that offer all of our students a robust educational experience that supports their academic, social and emotional needs. We are able to track their progress and fill in the learning gaps immediately as well as enrich their learning with more complex concepts.

We take the time to know our students as individuals. We understand the importance of nurturing their talents and interests. At Colonial Elementary School, we purposefully plan events that welcome families into our school so that they are a part of their child's educational journey. We firmly believe that family values and traditions play an important role in shaping each learner's outlook. Colonial Elementary School appreciates diversity and enjoys celebrating each other's customs and traditions. This revolutionizes our school into an inclusive environment where the school community appreciates and cultivates the personality of each child. Our goal is to make each student feel safe, comfortable, and valued as an individual. Connections that are made allow everyone to develop an appreciation and respect for each student's background and culture, ultimately empowering them to be successful, empathetic, well rounded individuals.