

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

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

School Mailing Address 714 East Vine Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Mount Vernon State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 43050-3651

County Knox

Telephone (740) 393-5985 Fax (740) 393-5987

Web site/URL https://www.mt-vernon.k12.oh.us/eastelementary_home.aspx E-mail kwatterson@mvcasd.us

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Bill Seder E-mail bseder@mvcasd.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Mount Vernon City Tel. (740) 393-5985

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. Margie Bennett
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	38
1	43
2	34
3	41
4	34
5	39
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	229

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1.2 % Black or African American
 - 5.6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87.5 % White
 - 5.7 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 15%

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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	33
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	225
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
9 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 38 %

Total number students who qualify: 87

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 25 %
Total number of students served 57

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>28</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 1 %
Total number of students served: 3

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.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
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	94%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2022.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2014

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

East Elementary, in cooperation with our community, is committed to meeting the total educational needs of students, providing the skills and foundation for the 21st century learning throughout their school and life experiences.

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

<https://filecabinet5.eschoolview.com/18FCBAA4-0500-41F3-9945-D4D04644860D/8ede06f4-075e-4471-a5ab-abe0f421ac67.pdf>

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

East Elementary can be found near the center of Mount Vernon, one of Ohio's best home towns. Mount Vernon is a unique place to live, work and raise a family. We are the heart of our community, with 82% of our student body living within walking distance of our school. When you step onto the sidewalk of East Vine Street and see our school, our students know they're entering someplace exceptional, a place where they can belong, feel loved and valued and be a part of a family.

Our school has a rich history. It may have been founded in 1908, but our teaching practices follow current research of what's best for our students. It is our mission, in cooperation with our community, to meet the total educational needs of our students and to provide them with the skills and foundation for future learning throughout their school and life experiences. As a team, the staff works towards a common goal of excellence. Each year we create engaging, educational experiences for our students like our Open House, Summer Reading, ABC Bootcamp, STEAM Club and Camp East to name a few.

As one of Ohio's 2019 Momentum Schools, we exemplify what can happen when educators, parents and the community come together to help all students succeed. East Elementary partners with various community entities including United Way, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College and others to enrich and support our staff and students. The connections to East Elementary are strong. Retired teachers, parents and community members read with students, volunteer and provide enrichment and extension opportunities.

There are four things that guide us: E - Exhibit Respect; A - Aim For Excellence; S - Safety First; T - Treat Others Kindly. These are our pillars and they lead us in the programs we bring to our students, the way we solve conflicts and how we interact with one another. One way we model these expectations is through our Student Leadership Team. Students in our fourth and fifth grades apply each year to be on our Student Leadership Team. The team takes on a number of projects ranging from assisting in the lunchroom and playground to helping plan assemblies and celebrations. These students take a leadership role when we are teaching and reviewing our PBIS matrices and building expectations.

Second Step, a social-emotional learning program used in classrooms, focuses on empathy, communication skills, bully prevention, and problem-solving. Our social worker encourages students to develop to their fullest potential emotionally by checking in with students on a daily basis, having conversations with students and parents, as well as leading group discussions, activities and lessons. To better understand how our students' academics are impacted by their lives outside of school, our staff furthered their education by reading books about trauma. East staff meets monthly to learn and grow together.

East is fortunate to have two reading intervention specialists that serve our K-3 students. Our reading intervention specialists are able to provide intervention for 64 kindergarten, first, second and third grade students on a daily basis. This in turn helps close the gap. Other innovative initiatives implemented at East include team teaching and flex grouping. While we may place an emphasis on our lowest 20%, we keep a focus on all students to develop their full potential academically. We even utilize our gifted intervention specialist to assist in team teaching and flex grouping.

A program that we created and developed to help struggling students reach their full potential is Eagles' Nest. Eagles' Nest is an after-school program that helps students with homework and provides an enrichment activity four days a week. We were the first school in our community to approach the United Way with this idea. They were excited to team with us and fund this program. The program supports our students' academic needs by giving them a teacher or college student to help them with their homework and then also provides them with social and emotional enrichment. The enrichment activities are different every day and have included topics related to STEAM, personal growth, environmental studies, and making healthy choices. Eagles' Nest also supports our families by providing a snack and homework help for their children. This program has been extremely successful and a model for surrounding schools.

Being a previous recipient of the National Blue Ribbon School award is such an honor. East Elementary was the first in our county to earn National Blue Ribbon Status. This brought awareness to the community and

district and had other administrators strive for the award, too. Enrollment at East increased as a result of this award and students knew they were part of something special when the mayor and state representative attended a celebratory event at the school. In our society we celebrate the successes of our high school and college students often, but to celebrate the successes of our youngest students was something new. The pride our students, staff, and families had in 2014 was something very, very special. The Blue Ribbon theme was carried through celebrations throughout the year. Memories were created and the goal to reach this goal again someday was set! This recognition has prompted East to encourage other schools to work toward the goal of being a National Blue Ribbon School. Additionally, we have been challenged to continue to prove to ourselves that this accolade was not a one-time award. We believe that continuing to strive towards excellence everyday made us worthy of being a National Blue Ribbon for a second time.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

East Elementary uses a structured literacy approach to teach Reading/English Language Arts. This perspective focuses on the five pillars of reading which are phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These elements are taught in a systematic and cumulative manner through explicit instruction using The Phonics Dance in kindergarten and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum in kindergarten and first grade. We have developed specific scope and sequences to make sure that phonics rules are directly taught and practiced in a very systematic way. Rich text can be found in the books in our book room as well as our classroom and school libraries to reinforce what students are learning in their structured literacy lessons. Data is collected through both formal and informal assessments and analyzed to determine future instruction to meet each student's particular needs. Flexible grouping is used to teach the specific skills our students need. This flexible grouping is not isolated to one classroom, but this strategy carries over to teachers' classrooms and across grade levels. This allows students the opportunity to learn from other teachers with other students to meet their individual needs. Our school also uses assessment data from NWEA MAP which is a benchmark evaluation administered three times per year, DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment), KRA (Kindergarten Readiness Assessment) which is given at the beginning of the year, and OST (Ohio State Tests) to determine flexible grouping as well as interventions. NWEA MAP data is analyzed by the building leadership team as well as teacher based teams. Once completed, goal setting and action plans are put in place. They are reexamined after each administration of the assessment. The above strategies allow the building to see the numbers as actual, current students and drive us to examine our practices that will result in gap closure.

The writing curriculum used at East Elementary is Lucy Calkins Units of Study. This is a workshop curriculum that teaches opinion, informational and narrative writing. Each unit starts with explicit instruction that uses examples from texts students are reading to set high expectations. Students are then given time to write and conference with their peers and teacher. Editing follows, based on the feedback students have received. Once students have successfully completed their final version, they are encouraged to share their writing. This is student-led and has happened in a wide variety of ways; ranging from reading to their classmates, reading to older or younger students, or at times inviting their parents in for cookies and an author celebration. Seeing themselves as real writers is central to this curriculum. On demand writing occurs before each unit of study and is evaluated based on a rubric specific to that unit of study. Lessons and rubrics focus on the craft of writing, but also on writing conventions. Both are taught explicitly.

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

Within the past several years, we have changed our math curriculum from GO Math! to Eureka Math (from Engage NY). While GO Math! uses the 5E instructional model and has some great built-in assessments, the district decided to move to Eureka Math because the scope and sequence layers key concepts over time and uses the same models and problem-solving methods across grade levels. This curriculum is taught using explicit instruction and allows for teachers to start teaching with a fluency check, also known as a sprint. Next, they review previous lessons, which ties in with the day's lesson. The core lesson is taught using visuals from their website as well as manipulatives to assist in making abstract concepts more concrete. Once the core lesson is taught, teachers will break their classes into smaller flexible groups to target the students' needs. Grade levels have utilized the structure of these lessons to team teach and provide a lower teacher to student ratio to work with students in small groups. Assessments used for math include the module pre-assessment and post-assessments, teacher created check points, NWEA MAP, and OST (Ohio State Tests). Cumulatively, these provide current data which in turn determines the next steps in teaching and learning. The teacher-created check points provide a quick way for teachers to determine the flexible groups, while NWEA MAP provides benchmark data used to set a goal. We offer advanced math classes in fourth and fifth grades for students who are identified as gifted in math as well as our high achieving math students. These classes are taught by a gifted intervention specialist.

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

Common core state standards drive the science instruction at East Elementary. Our building uses Scott-Foresman textbooks as well as Mystery Science as curriculum, which is delivered in a whole group using explicit instruction in grades 3-5. In the primary grades, science is integrated into the reading and writing instruction using Scott-Foresman textbooks, Mystery Science, and read alouds. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade are further engaged in the science lessons with hands-on science experiments. Mystery Science has dozens of science experiments that are specifically focused to grade level standards and are tied to engaging scientific videos that are appropriate for each grade level. If the experiment is not able to take place in the classroom, teachers use Mystery Science or Gizmo, both online resources, to simulate an experiment so students can still test their hypothesis. STEAM lessons are also incorporated in each of our grade levels. Additionally, teachers enrich the science curriculum through field trips to the local Brown Family Environmental Center and lead their class on walks around our building and playground.

Assessments used in science include OST (Ohio State Tests), as well as teacher-created assessments, observations, and student projects. For our fourth and fifth grade students, East offers an after school program called STEAM Club which fosters inquiry-based learning through projects and extension activities.

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

As with the science curriculum, social studies instruction follows the common core state standards and is taught explicitly. Materials used to create each grade level's curriculum are Scholastic News, Ohio Studies Weekly, and Social Studies Weekly. Our third grade uses a teacher-created curriculum that has a unit focused on the history of Mount Vernon and includes a walking field trip downtown. This instruction is integrated into reading and writing instruction in grades K-2, and is delivered in a whole group setting in grades 3-5. Assessments include teacher-created assessments, projects and presentations. Developing citizenship is important at East and we've developed a school-wide Election Day Program that allows all of our learners to vote on their favorite book character while taking part in the voting process. Each year, we celebrate and honor our Veterans at a school-wide assembly. We also highlight family members of our students that have served or are currently serving which encourages patriotism.

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)

The Performing Arts at East Elementary is an opportunity in which all students, kindergarten through fifth grade, participate. Each child performs in a musical production; with kindergarten, first and second presenting in the spring and third, fourth and fifth grade in the winter. These performances focus on music and movement as well as enriching experiences with various types of music, languages and instruments.

Kindergarten through fifth grade also take part in the visual arts and learn about many types of art and also specific artists. Students have the opportunity to participate in a local art show, where their art is on display in the community. The hands-on approach and freedom to express themselves through various modes of art provide students with a deeper appreciation for artists and works of art.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Physical education and health/nutrition instruction is taught to all East Elementary students once each week for 45 minutes. All lessons are created using Ohio's New Learning Standards. These standards focus on student's development of locomotor and non-locomotor skills, manipulative skills, as well as demonstrating cardio, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility while following safety procedures. A positive growth mindset lesson also accompanies each P.E. and health lesson. Good sportsmanship is modeled and expected and upbeat music is used to motivate even the most reluctant students. Conflict resolution is also woven into every unit to ensure that students are promoting respect in cooperative and competitive physical activities. Field day is scheduled for the end of every year, which showcases all of the fun and movements learned throughout the year using games and other equipment. Students take part in 'Crunch Out Obesity' and 'Jump Rope for Heart' each year through partnerships with our local United Way and the American Heart Association.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Teachers use technology and technology standards on a daily basis through their Google Classroom, their SMART boards, Elmo projectors, chromebooks and iPads. East Elementary is a one to one school, meaning that every student has a chromebook. Just this past year, we have not only been able to provide a chromebook for each student at school, but students are also able to have a chromebook at home in grades two through five. Our students in kindergarten through grade 5 go to the school library once a week for 45 minutes to enjoy a read aloud, a library lesson, and check out books for the week. Lessons include learning about the different sections of the library, the dewey decimal system, reference materials, using the online card catalog, discovering Newbery and Caldecott Award winning books, and empowering students to nominate and vote for the Buckeye Children's Book Award winners. Our school library has a collection of current and diverse titles that address cultural and social emotional needs. East encourages a love of literature by hosting author visits biennially. Each spring, we promote a summer reading program that highlights great titles that can be found in our library. Our librarian leads a team of East students each year to compete in a Battle of the Books competition in the county.

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

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

East Elementary meets the diverse and individual needs of students performing below grade level through a variety of interventions. Classroom teachers provide reteaching opportunities in smaller groups based on the student's progress and quick checks for understanding. Intense leveled literacy interventions (LLI) in groups of three or less, instructed by one of our three reading specialists, are held 5 days a week for thirty minutes per session. Students performing below grade level are also utilizing other computer-based interventions. Zearn, Reflex, Lexia, Reading Assistant, and Fast ForWord are frequently utilized both at school and at home. Intervention specialists use the Wilson Foundations curriculum to close gaps with students performing below grade level in reading and push into the classroom to assist with small groups during math. Parent volunteers are also utilized to work with students on sight words and math facts as well as listen to students read. Students are assessed in a variety of ways to determine their level of achievement as well as the effectiveness of tiered instruction using NWEA MAP, Readiness Assessments, DRA, module assessments, on-demand writing samples, and teacher-created assessments. This data is closely analyzed during our MTSS meetings which are held every four to six weeks.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Our kindergarten through fifth grade teachers are always extending and enriching our student's thinking in all subject areas. The expertise of our gifted intervention specialist is always available for our teachers to meet the needs of our students performing above grade level. Our gifted intervention specialist assists in developing lessons and gathering resources with the classroom teacher for these students. In addition to this, our gifted intervention specialist not only works with students who are identified as gifted, but also works with high performing students who are not currently identified. This practice sets a high standard for students not yet identified and more often than not, they meet those standards. Depending on the subject, teachers will collaborate to group students based on their data rather than their classroom teacher or grade. Depending on assessment data and consultation with parents and teachers, students also have the opportunity to be accelerated in a single subject or whole grade. Progress is monitored for students who are performing above grade level during our MTSS meetings.

3c. Students with disabilities:

On the 2021-2022 state report card, there is an achievement gap of more than 10 percentage points between the test scores of all students and the test scores of students with disabilities. To close this gap, East Elementary utilizes the inclusion model when educating students with disabilities and focuses on building relationships and trust with students. Our intervention specialists push into the classrooms when appropriate and pull students in a small group outside of the classroom when needed to keep learner-engagement thriving. Students' academic goals are at the forefront of all instruction and our intervention specialists make sure that all students know what they are working to achieve. Extended standards are used to guide lessons and expectations and numerous assessments are used including NWEA MAP, DRA, OST, module assessments in math, and teacher-created assessments. Wilson Foundations and Eureka math are used to instruct students with disabilities.

3d. English Language Learners:

East Elementary has always supported our ELL language learners. We make sure that communication is strong, translators are made available for families and we work collaboratively with our district's TESOL instructor. Inviting parents after school to learn about our communication tools in a small group setting facilitates and builds relationships and trust between home and school. The TESOL instructor uses data from the OELPA to determine the level and type of intervention each student needs. This information is then shared with the classroom teacher, the parents and the student.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Engaging and motivating our students and providing a positive environment which supports their academic, social and emotional growth and development is such a critical part of what we do at East Elementary. It is an integral part of who we are and how we believe that school should be. East celebrates the big moments as well as the small ones. East builds a positive school culture beginning on the first day of school by welcoming our families and students with a red carpet! Teachers greet their students each morning as they enter the building to begin their day; it's nice knowing that the staff at East cares about them! Throughout the year, we continue this momentum by creating other school-wide events that help students develop a sense of belonging. Students are recognized daily on our morning announcements as E.A.S.T. Achievers using our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports where E-Exhibit Respect, A-Aim for Excellence, S-Safety First, T-Treat Others Kindly. Our students are recognized quarterly for their academic success in Merit Roll, Academic Excellence, Honor Roll and grade level E.A.S.T. Awards. Whether it's our new playground, our school's 115th birthday or a testing pep rally, our school loves to celebrate our East family together.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Developing and fostering relationships and partnerships within our school and community is our backbone. We showcase the amazing things East is doing. This is why we use multiple communication platforms such as newsletters, school emails, and our building's social media. Our district uses Thought Exchange, a digital survey platform used to create alignment and gain perspectives of our families and community members. Using Thought Exchange allows us to assess our stakeholders to know and address our students and families needs. Information gathered through this platform helps the school to know if parents feel welcome, if parents/guardians understand the standards and report cards and test scores, how best to send out information, as well as successes and challenges. The second component is partnerships. East Elementary partners with various community entities including United Way, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College, Taco Bell, Dominos, Walmart and others to enrich and support our staff and students. United Way has provided funding for our after school program for six years, which has supported students that need additional academic assistance. Kenyon College invites our EAST Award Winners each quarter to visit their campus for a luncheon and an enrichment activity for our students ranging from student athlete sports demonstrations to an art gallery walk to an A Capella performance. Taco Bell and Dominos provides gift certificates for our Students of the Week, and Walmart provides funding through grants to our teachers. Mount Vernon Nazarene University works closely with East to place student teachers and provides volunteers for classrooms and events hosted in the building. Our long-standing relationships run deep. Retired teachers volunteer and substitute, current and past parents of East students come in and read with students and help in classrooms, and community members provide enrichment and extension opportunities on a regular basis.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Professional culture is strongly encouraged through our yearly book studies, our teacher-based teams, flexible schedules and the motivation from our administration to visit other classrooms in our school. Our staff has recently studied the books, *Shifting the Balance: 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom* and *What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience and Healing*. While examining the Science of Reading Text, staff members shared personal lessons learned and ways to modify language arts lessons in their own classrooms. Discussions continued in all of our grade level's teacher-based teams. Shifts in our professional thinking, as well as shifts in our classroom instruction occurred as a result of this study. While exploring *What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience and Healing*, our school developed a partnership with another building. Staff members shared and discussed knowledge gained from individual and group experiences. This professional development was led by both school's counselors. Many of our students have been impacted by trauma. This book gave us additional tools to help guide students through the trauma they have experienced. We were further validated

to learn that the most effective tool in helping our students through trauma is to build relationships with them, something we have always done well!

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at East Elementary would best be described as democratic. The principal provides our staff with the tools and supports that they need and motivates everyone to perform at their highest levels. The principal asks for and considers the thoughts and opinions of everyone involved. The principal is keenly aware that the team knows what is best for the school and will give guidance when requested. This transformational leadership approach uses goal-setting to improve the team's performance. One example of this was when we began conversations around the Science of Reading. There were numerous questions surrounding this shift in thinking and teaching. In an attempt to answer questions, the principal purchased the book *Shifting the Balance: 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom* for every staff member. Later, staff members met each month to discuss the shifts one chapter at a time. Teachers would also share blogs and experts on various social media platforms with the principal. Conversations between the principal and teachers happened regularly about the Science of Reading. The book study and the online resources have helped the staff, as a team, determine what additional supplies should be ordered to strengthen classroom libraries and the book room.

The principal has also encouraged the PTO officers to utilize East Elementary as a hub for the community and plan occasions that bring families together. This further strengthens school and community relationships. Activities such as movie nights, tie-dye on the playground, donuts with a grown up, book fairs, family fun nights, food truck extravaganzas, open houses, conferences, music programs, Veterans Day programs, costume parades and fifth grade graduations are just some of the many events that occur at East. These gatherings are designed in collaboration with PTO and East staff and build strong relationships and encourage families to feel both engaged and welcome.

As the district began emphasizing Bill Dagget's Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Rubric, the principal has led the staff to center their attention on one rubric element at a time. The principal has created an environment where teachers are inspired and feel welcome to observe in another teacher's classroom. Discussions and feedback between co-workers about the rubric element observed has been powerful in advancing the teaching and learning that occurs at East.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

East Elementary addresses the diverse needs and backgrounds of all students, families, and staff by forming relationships and having open communication through newsletters, Class Dojo, phone calls, emails, and the willingness to meet in person. For the past three years, we have had a full time social worker in our building. She provides resource options for families and assists in teaching lessons to classrooms about appropriate social and political issues. She leads groups on topics that are currently impacting our students. East Elementary also utilizes PBIS and one of the expectations is Exhibit Respect. This is taught and reviewed many times throughout the school year by matrix training, videos created by our student leadership team, and modeling. We encourage networking with our families to share their experiences and their areas of expertise with their student's classes. This is such an engaging and enriching experience for our students. Other supports include volunteers in the classroom, student teachers, and our after-school program. This after-school program (Eagles' Nest), combines homework help, an enrichment activity, and a snack four days a week.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Relationships first is the most instrumental practice that has contributed to East Elementary's continued success. Relationships with our students, their families, our staff and the community has been the foundation of who we are and what we do. Rigor and relevance can not begin without relationships. Positive teacher-student relationships promote academic successes like better grades and test scores, but it also promotes better teaching, learning, trust, and empathy. Those teacher-student relationships foster communication between staff and parents/families which builds support and a family-like environment.

Teachers employ many strategies to build relationships. One way is to have morning meeting once the school day has started and encourage students to share something with the class. This is a great way to learn a little bit about what happened since the class was together last. Other teachers have incorporated this thought into journal writing by having students write 4 words to describe their week, 3 things they learned, 2 things they would like to try and 1 thing they want to tell their teacher. This format gives students a place to privately let their teacher know something they may not want to verbalize. Building relationships with parents and guardians is critical throughout the school year whether through a messaging app, emails, phone calls, parent-teacher conferences or many of our community building events. Another way East staff builds and strengthens relationships is to choose 3-5 students each week to have lunch with them in their classroom. During this time, teachers and students can learn more about each person in the group and build connections. Recess is another great time to build relationships, staff members will play games with students, push them on the swings, or just walk around the playground with them to learn more about their students. The knowledge gained may lead teachers to either attend students after school games, concerts or performances or ask about these things the next day making students feel important.

Our staff has a positive and respectful rapport with one another. This is evident when you consider that our staff members have been at East for nearly their entire career. There is a great deal of trust among the staff. We celebrate the successes, big and small. We genuinely care about each and every person. Those relationships have reached our community. It takes a village to create a safe and healthy environment where our students can develop and flourish. In cooperation with our community, we are committed to meeting the total educational needs of our students. It takes all of us to develop these relationships in order to work toward excellence together.