

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Emily A. Weidner

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

Official School Name White Heath Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 300 W. High St

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

City White Heath    State IL    Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 61884-9500

County Piatt    State School Code Number\* 390740250262005

Telephone 217-762-8511    Fax 217-762-8333

Web site/URL http://www.sages.us    E-mail weiem@sages.us

Facebook Page  
Twitter Handle www.facebook.com/pages/White-  
WHSages    Heath-Elementary-School    Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_    Blog \_\_\_\_\_    Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Victor Zimmerman    E-mail: zimvi@sages.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Monticello Community Unit School District #25    Tel. 217-762-8511

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Dr. Jim Dahl  
(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 that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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**Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.**

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, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
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. 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.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	55	42	97
3	55	49	104
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	110	91	201

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 96 % White
  - 1 % 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.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 5%

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	12
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	235
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.051
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%  
4 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 4  
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish, Haitian-Creole, Crujarelti, and Amharic
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 30%  
 Total number students who qualify: 61

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 17 %  
35 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 Autism                | 0 Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| 0 Deafness              | 1 Other Health Impaired                 |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness        | 15 Specific Learning Disability         |
| 0 Emotional Disturbance | 20 Speech or Language Impairment        |
| 0 Hearing Impairment    | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| 0 Mental Retardation    | 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 0 Multiple Disabilities | 0 Developmentally Delayed               |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	10
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	4
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

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

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

Yes                      No X

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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White Heath School is located in Monticello Community Unit School District #25, the Home of the Sages. Our unique nickname is a tribute to Thomas Jefferson, the Sage of Monticello, and is a reminder to our students of the value of wisdom. Our mission is to provide a comfortable, challenging environment for growth and learning while building a foundation that enables students to become productive and responsible citizens. Our motto is "It's a Great Day to Be a Sage."

MCUSD #25 is located in rural Piatt Co. between Champaign and Decatur, IL and is made up of three elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. White Heath School was home to all of the K-8 students from the town of White Heath and the surrounding rural areas until the 1990's when it was reduced to K-6 and then to PreK-4. In 2008, the district transitioned to attendance centers so that class sizes would be more equitable. Today, White Heath School is home to all of the 2nd and 3rd graders.

The Monticello area represents everything that is great about small town America. Many families have lived here for generations and educators who are hired into the district generally plan to retire here. New families are attracted to the area because of the quaint small town feel, the great schools, and the proximity to many professional opportunities in the neighboring larger cities through places like the University of Illinois, ADM, Caterpillar, and State Farm.

White Heath School has a longstanding history of academic success. In 2009, the school was honored by the Illinois State Board of Education with an Academic Excellence Award. A strong emphasis is placed on Reading, Writing, and Math in the early grades and intense interventions begin in Pre-K in the district. Science and Social Studies are studied weekly through fun and engaging activities like experiments and presentations. The school board is committed to maintaining small class sizes and providing a variety of enrichment opportunities for students within the school day. WHS students have Art, Music, P.E., Music, and Library class with highly qualified specialists each week. WHS also has a gifted program called Project Challenge.

Over the last six years, WHS has implemented a highly effective Response to Intervention (RtI) model, restructured our gifted program, adopted guided reading and The Daily Five, implemented Math Stations, participated in the mapping of the K-12 curriculum, realigned to the CCSS, added Second Step character lessons, adopted a new teacher evaluation model, and added a significant amount of technology. Since 2008, we have added projectors, document cameras, Smartboards, student laptops, and iPads to the classrooms. The district is piloting one to one technology in several classrooms next school year.

One of the key factors in the success of WHS is that we strive to meet all of the needs of our students, starting with their basic needs. We often provide clothes, shoes, snacks, books and school supplies for students. The school participates in the Central Illinois Foodbank Backpack program, which provides bags of food to 25 students every week. During the holidays, our Sage Tree allows families to request holiday items for students. Staff members, parents, and community members then fulfill the requests. Special fundraisers in support of our students and staff when they are in need are a regular occurrence from year to year. This year alone, the staff has raised money for a student with leukemia, a student's mother who is fighting lung cancer, a local family with two young boys fighting a rare disease, and for the building custodian as he fights lymphoma. These fundraisers are a perfect example of the sense of community in our building.

After the basic needs, the WHS staff strives to meet the students' individual educational needs. We have developed an RtI program that allows us to systematically monitor the progress of students and strive to meet their needs at the appropriate level. We have developed an assessment procedure that includes the whole staff, a format for sharing and analyzing data, a problem solving protocol, research based interventions, enrichment opportunities, and differentiated learning in the general education classroom through guided reading, guided math, and the use of technology.

WHS parents work with students at home and also enroll them in a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Parent teacher conferences and IEP meetings consistently have more than 95% of parents attend, and parents volunteer in our building on a daily basis. WHS benefits from an active PTO and the Monticello Area Education Foundation, which raise more than \$50,000 each year for teacher grants, field trips, and scholarships.

In our community, we say, "It's a Great Day to Be a Sage" because we are fortunate to work in a district with a strong tradition and a dedication to providing a well-rounded education for our students.

## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results:**

Elementary school students in Illinois take the Illinois Standards Achievement Test each year in March. At White Heath School, state testing begins in third grade and includes tests in Reading and Mathematics.

After the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Illinois established criteria for schools to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress based on attendance rates, percentage of students tested, and percentage of students who met and exceeded standards. The required attendance rate has increased from 90% in 2009 to 92% in 2013. The state standard for percentage of students tested has remained steady at 95%. The state AYP targets for the percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards started at 70% in 2009, increased to 77.5% in 2010, raised to 85% in 2011 and 2012, and then jumped to 92.5% in 2013. Also in 2013, the cut scores for the ISAT test were raised, requiring students to score much higher in order to meet or exceed standards in both subject areas. The change was designed to better align test results at the elementary level to those at the high school level. The increase resulted in the state average for Reading dropping by 20 percentage points and the Math average dropping by 27 percentage points.

At White Heath School, we strive to identify students who are not meeting grade level standards and intervene early so that all students have the opportunity to succeed in the curriculum and on the standardized assessments. While our goal is always for all students to meet or exceed standards, we consider 80% or higher to be a successful outcome based on the new 2013 cut scores.

White Heath School has met AYP and performed above the state average for Reading and Math every year that NCLB has been in place. While the required attendance rate is 90% for the state, White Heath has had a rate of 95% or higher every year. White Heath has also consistently exceeded the requirement for the percentage of students tested, with the lowest percentage being 99.2% in 2013 when one student enrolled during the second week of ISAT and was sick.

In Reading, the percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards at WHS has been above 90% in three of the last five years. The credit for these high scores lies in the dedication of time to Reading throughout the K-3 curriculum as well as differentiation in the classrooms and early and systematic intervention. Low points for Reading scores were 82% in 2010 and 83% in 2013. In 2010, 10 out of 18 students who had individual education plans did not meet or exceed. As a result, the staff evaluated ways to maximize exposure to grade level curriculum for students with IEPs while also providing the necessary specialized instruction at the appropriate level. The lower score in 2013 is due to the change in cut scores. WHS scores dropped 8% from the previous year, while the state's average score dropped by 20%.

Math scores at White Heath School have been consistently outstanding. The average percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards over the past five years is 93.5%. Prior to the 2013 change in cut scores, the average was 96.6%. These outstanding scores can be attributed to systematic instruction throughout the elementary grades with an emphasis on differentiation and early intervention.

Low income students show a trend of performing lower on standardized tests. There are multiple programs and interventions in place to support these students and their achievement. White Heath has a food backpack program and participates in the free and reduced lunch program to help meet the basic needs of students. Tutoring is often offered for free by teachers, and summer tutoring scholarships are readily available. Mentoring programs and social work are offered to all students in need. Most importantly, regardless of subgroup, intervention in targeted areas is provided for any student who is identified through assessment or observation.

White Heath School has been actively preparing for the transition to the PARCC assessment during the 2014-2015 school year and will participate in the Math field test next month. Based on our implementation of the CCSS, we feel that our students will continue to perform at or above state standards and achieve above the state average.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

White Heath School systematically uses data to drive instruction, gauge student progress, and assess the effectiveness of our curriculum.

Over the past six years, the staff has developed a highly effective RtI process. In the Fall of each year, all students are assessed with the AIMSweb universal screener in the areas of reading fluency, reading comprehension, spelling, writing, math computation, and math concepts and applications. Additionally, classroom teachers determine each student's reading level using the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Kit. Substitutes are hired so that the classroom teachers have the time to sit and listen to every single student read and carry on comprehension conversations. This one on one time early in the school year is invaluable. The reading interventionist completes the fluency assessment with every student in the building. This allows her to note which students show signs of dyslexia or potential speech and language difficulties as well as students who read and think well above grade level. Students with noted difficulties are then given various diagnostic tests by the reading interventionist, the speech pathologist, and/or the school psychologist. These tests might include the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP), the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF), and more. Students who show signs of reading and thinking above grade level may be tested using the Slosson Intelligence Test Revised (SIT-R) and/or the Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary Students (SAGES).

After data has been collected, it is compiled and analyzed. Students who fall below the 25th percentile are identified as possible targets for intervention and those who score at or above the 85th percentile in multiple areas are identified as candidates for gifted assessment. Substitutes are hired for classroom teachers so that they can meet with the Data Team. This team consists of the principal, special education teacher, speech pathologist, psychologist, reading interventionist, special education administrator, and social worker. Classroom teachers discuss each student with the team and develop plans to meet their individual needs in the classroom. The team determines which students require enrichment, intervention, referral for special education services, or testing for the gifted program.

After Data Day, the students are sorted into intervention and enrichment groups for a daily 30 minute RtI block. Intervention students are progress monitored weekly. If the student does not show adequate progress after six assessments, the intervention is intensified or changed completely.

Benchmarking scores are used to assess the quality of tier one instruction. Adjustments in curriculum and instruction are recommended based on class growth. ISAT scores are also scrutinized each year to identify deficits in Math or Reading curricula.

Informing stakeholders of academic achievement is vital to our process. Parents and students receive reports of benchmarking scores with trend lines dating back to kindergarten. Progress monitoring reports are sent home weekly, and ISAT scores are sent home as soon as they are received. School assessment information is shared with the community on the school website in the School Improvement Plan and in the local newspaper.

## **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

White Heath teachers value collaboration with other educators and participation in professional learning communities.

A prime example of this can be illustrated by the work of the reading interventionist. During the last several years, the reading interventionist/dyslexia consultant provided professional development to all buildings (preK-12) in the district in the area of strategies for working with students identified as or showing signs of being dyslexic. She has advocated for state congressional sponsorship of a bill that would legislate early dyslexia screening and implementation of appropriate interventions in schools. This year she shared the school's process for identifying and providing for at-risk students with the governor's office, the house education committee, Decoding Dyslexia Illinois, and Everyone Reading Illinois. As a result, the school is

in the process of being nominated for the It Takes a Village of Readers Award, sponsored by Everyone Reading Illinois. This award is given to schools that are using best practices and are implementing exemplary programs. Award winners are considered among the leaders in the state for school districts who want to model their programs after them.

Reciprocal school visits were arranged with two other elementary schools in the state during the 2013-2014 school year. In October, five White Heath teachers and the principal visited Arcola Elementary School to observe and collaborate with educators from a district similar to Monticello CUSD #25. WHS shared information about our curriculum and instruction, including Guided Reading, Math Stations, P.E. and RtI, and gained valuable information and ideas in return, especially in regard to the implementation of Go Math. The P.E. teacher from Arcola was also able to visit our school to learn more about a Health unit of study on muscles and bones.

In November, four teachers and the principal visited Betsy Ross School in Forest Park, IL in order to observe a school in a more urban/suburban setting. WHS staff members learned new ideas for a PBIS approach that could be implemented immediately. Betsy Ross educators visited WHS to learn about and observe the RtI block and use of the Daily Five and Guided Reading in December.

Additionally, the computer teacher presented "Technology in Reading" at the Illinois Reading Council Conference and the special education teacher presented on Response to Intervention to the Education Department at Millikin University last year.

Within our own district, that WHS staff has also shared what we have learned about Go Math and Six Trait Writing with other buildings in order maintain good vertical alignment and share what has worked at our school.

#### **4. Engaging Families and Community:**

White Heath School families and staff embrace the notion that it takes a village to raise a child. This was perfectly illustrated this year after a student was diagnosed with leukemia and was not able to start the school year with her classmates. On her birthday in August, her teacher, classmates, and parents organized a special surprise for her. They set up a lemonade stand in the school and raised over \$2,000 in two hours. A videographer volunteered to record the lemonade stand and students' get well and happy birthday messages and send it to the student. The video also included a special picture taken from the roof of the school in which all of the students and staff stood in formation to spell out her name. This picture will be the cover photo on the school's Facebook page until she comes back to school.

Not only does the community rally around families in their time of need, the school consistently has more than 150 volunteer applications per year with a student enrollment around 200. At the beginning of the school year, volunteers are invited to help in various ways in our school. They give Rocket Math assessments, read to students, and help with class projects. They mentor, print copies, make bulletin boards, take inventory in the library, fix books, and collect box tops and soup labels. Families are invited in for special events like Parent Night, Sages Strut, Parent Conferences, the Veterans Day Assembly, Grandparents Breakfast, book fairs, class plays, the 3rd Grade concert, Jump Rope for Heart, the Volunteer Appreciation Assembly, Muffins with Mom, Doughnuts with Dad, field trips, WHS Fun Day, and the end of the year picture slideshow. This spring, parents will also be invited to participate on the school improvement committee to provide feedback to the staff and participate in goal setting for next year.

WHS benefits from an active PTO and the Monticello Area Education Foundation. Both of these organizations raise money and provide volunteers to support the district. Educators and parents work side by side in both groups on fundraising events like the Sages Strut and the MAEF Gala. Funds from these groups go toward teacher innovation grants, technology purchases, and student scholarships.

White Heath staff members keep families informed through a district website, school and classroom Facebook, Twitter, and Shutterfly pages, weekly newsletters, email, phone calls, and two-way communication folders.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

All White Heath School students receive instruction in Reading, English Language Arts, Spelling, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Handwriting, Music, Art, Computers/Technology, P.E., Library, and Character Education each week.

White Heath School has implemented the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Reading instruction is differentiated through The Daily 5 and guided reading groups. Students are assessed at the beginning of the year using AIMSweb universal screeners and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment kits. Students are taught to pick books that are at appropriate levels and are challenged within their zones of proximal development during their small group time with the teacher. Choice is recognized as a key to fostering a lifelong joy for reading. WHS has a leveled library of books and each classroom has its own leveled library as well.

In Language Arts, writing and grammar are taught through a Writer's Workshop approach based on Lucy Calkins' Units of Study and combined with the Six Traits of Writing. Students study spelling with a focus on phonics and rules in 2nd grade and then transition to more vocabulary, root words, prefixes, and suffixes in 3rd grade.

Math instruction focuses on differentiation, rigor, and fluency. WHS adopted Go Math this year and uses guided math and math stations so that students can work at their own levels. All students also participate in Rocket Math timed tests at their own pace in order to increase their math facts fluency. Math journals are used in 3rd grade for practice with writing about problem solving.

The WHS Science curriculum will be based on the Next Generation Science Standards next year. Students currently enjoy special projects including embryology, butterflies, ant farms, the human body, chemistry, rocks and minerals and cross-curricular units on biomes. Science is also included in Reading. This year WHS will also host Camp Invention, a STEM based summer camp.

Social Studies at WHS involves the study of history, geography, civics, and economics. Special projects include biography reports, touring the courthouse, mock elections, national monuments and symbols, and a cross-curricular Adopt-a-Medic unit. In this unit, students learn about safety personnel in their community, staying healthy. They enjoy a visit from the police, EMS, firefighters, and the airlift helicopter. Social Studies is also taught in Reading and Writing.

In Handwriting, second graders practice manuscript and are introduced to cursive. Third graders practice cursive and are introduced to basic keyboarding.

WHS students benefit from a variety of highly qualified specialists. In Art, students focus on the elements of principle and design using a variety of methods and media to express their creativity through block printing, drawing, painting, sculpting and more. In Music, students learn the basics of composition, singing, dancing, and recognizing and playing instruments. Both grade levels perform at the Veterans Day Assembly and third grade performs a concert each spring. The P.E. program focuses on recreational games while also promoting health, fitness, and nutrition. In Library, students research, study various genres, participate in interactive read alouds, and find books for pleasure. In Computers, students learn to use applications, programs, software, and websites. They research on the internet safely, produce and report information, and practice keyboarding.

White Heath also offers intervention outside of the core curriculum. Students identified as below grade level in Reading, Writing, or Math work in small groups during the daily RtI block using research based materials. Those students who are most at risk are also pulled out with the reading specialist or other content area teachers for tier 3 interventions. Students who are at grade level participate in enrichment classes like Spanish, Science Experiments, Creative Writing, Health/Nutrition, and Character Education

during the RtI Block. Students who are identified as potentially gifted/talented participate in Project Challenge. This program involves creative projects and units of study designed for students who are thinking and working above grade and/or age level.

The special education system at WHS is designed to meet the needs of students in the least restrictive environment. Students who have individualized education plans participate in classes in which the special education teacher and teacher's aide push in and support instruction and learning within the classroom. The teacher also brings students to her classroom for specialized instruction. Speech follows the RtI process as well.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Reading is a top priority at White Heath School and its instruction is based on three key ideas. Reading must be differentiated so that students are learning within their zones of proximal development, all students must be exposed to a variety of complex text including non-fiction, and students must be given choice in their reading in order to foster a lifelong love of reading.

In August, classroom teachers sit and listen to each student read during the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments. This allows the teachers to get to know their students as readers and to assess their independent and instructional reading levels. Teachers use this information along with AIMSweb scores to determine reading groups. The teachers also help students identify books that are appropriate to read independently.

White Heath has a collection of leveled books and each classroom has a leveled library. Teachers use the Daily 5 and The Daily Cafe as a framework during the reading block. Students read to themselves, read to a partner, listen to reading, practice word work, and write. Student choice is implemented during the read to self and read to partner rotations. Each student has a book bin filled with "good fit" books that they have selected from the classroom or school library. Word work involves games with partners, iPad applications, or work on a website. The teachers meet with guided reading groups while students are working through the Daily 5. Groups are flexible and may change according to student progress or the specific skills being taught. The Daily Cafe menu of reading strategies is taught through mini-lessons and the strategies are posted on the wall for students to reference throughout the year. Teachers pull many resources for Reading instruction including, but not limited to the Comprehension Toolkit, Sundance Kits, Houghton Mifflin Journeys, and Time for Kids.

Students reading below and above grade level work from different levels of text throughout the school day. Intervention is provided during RTI and with the reading specialist. Reading incentives for reading Monarch Award and Blue Stem Award nominated books are also included at both grade levels. Third graders enjoy Blue Stem lunch book talks with staff and second graders have a celebration assembly each year after reading all of the Monarch Books. We also do school incentives like earning a brick for every book and then having a Read-a-Thon when the hallways are full of bricks.

## **3. Mathematics:**

Mathematics at White Heath School is based on the idea that instruction must be systematic and differentiated for the needs of each learner and students must develop both problem solving skills and math facts fluency.

WHS adopted Go Math at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year after researching a variety of texts and programs in order to meet the shifts of the Common Core State Standards. The instructional approach involves mini-lessons, math stations, small group instruction, guided practice, and independent practice. Generally students participate in a large group mini-lesson and then begin Math stations.

During Math Stations, the teacher will pull a small group of students to work with at the horseshoe table. She may provide guided practice with the group, reteach the ideas from the mini-lesson, or extend the skills

from the mini-lesson to challenge high achieving students.

Math Stations include paper practice of the skills just taught, partner games that reinforce previously learned concepts, iPad applications, and math related websites. Third grade students also use this time to solve a weekly problem in their Math journals. The journals emphasize problem solving skills and teaching students how to write about their mathematical thinking. This helps them to prepare for the kind of writing they are required to do on the state assessments.

As the shift to CCCS was made, the staff was concerned about the change from multiplication starting in the middle of third grade to the beginning and the emphasis of fact fluency at all levels. Therefore, WHS implemented Rocket Math at both grade levels. Rocket Math involves timed tests of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Parent volunteers give the tests several times a week and students progress through the levels of the tests at their own pace.

Students who are achieving below grade level in Math are identified for intervention during the daily RTI block and may also be pulled out of class for additional one on one or small group intervention work. Special education students receive help within the classroom from the special education teacher.

Students who are achieving above grade level are challenged in the top Math groups and at times have worked out of the text doing upper grade level math.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

White Heath School has a very strong Physical Education program with classes that provide the essential components of fitness and movement for all students. Within the P.E. curriculum, students learn a variety of sport related content as well as health and fitness components. Good sportsmanship and positive character development are an important focus as well.

The sport related content of the curriculum includes but is not limited to: frisbee, soccer, parachute games, manipulative games, basketball, volleyball, speed stacking, and line dancing. White Heath Elementary second graders are required to learn the correct name and anatomical location of nineteen bones in the human body. Third graders are required to learn the correct name and anatomical location of twelve major muscles in the human body. Students play games and sing songs that help with the learning process of the bones/muscles and these anatomical terms are used when teaching exercises and movement.

Fitness and health components are taught through a Fitness Day each week. Fitness Days focus on implementing healthy activities and encouraging lifelong fitness. Along with the Fitness Days, students' fitness levels are assessed twice a year using the Fitness Gram fitness test. Fitness areas that are assessed are cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and muscular endurance. A pacer test is done to test cardiovascular endurance. A push-up test measures muscular strength and a crunches test assesses muscular endurance. Students strive to improve between these assessments. The fitness and health components of the P.E. curriculum work in tandem with the Healthy Plate and Human Body studies that 2nd grade students study each year in their classrooms. Additionally, students who are in enrichment groups for RtI participate in a Health unit that supplements this curriculum.

The number one goal of the physical education program is to teach the students the importance of being healthy and participating in lifelong fitness activities. The instructor also emphasizes the importance of good character and the impact that positive behavior has on other students. Students are expected to treat each other with respect and demonstrate sportsmanship whether they are winning or losing.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

White Heath School determines the individual learning needs of students, provides a variety of options for students to demonstrate learning, and reaches students at every level.

Differentiation begins with assessment. In August students are assessed in a variety of ways. Students with poor test scores are given additional diagnostic testing. Students who excel may be referred for gifted/talented screening.

Teachers base classroom instruction on initial assessment data as well as continued assessment throughout the year. They develop reading groups based on student assessment and performance. All students may be learning about one reading strategy, but reading abilities vary widely within the classes. Groups are flexible and allow for struggling readers to work with basic text while advanced readers work with challenging material. Students who are having difficulty with a skill can be moved into skill groups for specific units. This process works similarly for Math. Students work in small groups with the teacher throughout the Math block. Those who need a challenge are pushed with extended concepts or more complex problems. Students who are below grade level can have the material retaught or be taught simplified strategies. All students work on Math facts at their own pace through the Rocket Math program as well.

Technology is used daily to provide variety of options for self-paced learning through applications and programs like Spelling City, IXL Math, Rocket Math, Fry Words, Study Island, iMovie, Tellagami, Pizza Fractions, Google Earth and BrainPop. Students with disabilities also use Dragon Dictation for written projects and iSpeech for reading webpages.

Struggling learners receive targeted, research based interventions during the Daily RtI block, some also receive pull out services from a reading specialist or interventionist, assignments and assessments may be modified, and they may receive tutoring outside of school. Students with disabilities benefit from the special education teacher and/or aide pushing into the classroom to help them gain access to the core curriculum. They also work on specific skills in the resource classroom. Speech and language are offered in small groups or individually.

Students achieving above grade level are challenged within the classroom and through the gifted program. This program meets daily and gives the students time to work on projects involving STEM concepts, History, Biology, and more.

For those who are working at grade level, enrichment opportunities are offered. They rotate between groups learning Spanish, Character Education, Health/Nutrition, Creative Writing, Science Experiments and Technology.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Each year White Heath staff members participate in setting the goals for the school for the following year. These goals are part of the School Improvement plan and are based on student performance, current trends and research in education, and government mandates. After these goals have been established, professional development is planned for the year. A team approach with consensus building as a key component is employed.

In MCUSD #25, there is an early dismissal for school improvement scheduled once each month and there are three full days for in-service throughout the school year. Each day is planned based on the goals of the school and the district for the year.

For this school year, the staff goals involved implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the improved usage of technology to engage students. Mathematics had been a primary focus during the 2012-2013 school year, so ELA was the major focus for 2013-2014. Based on these goals, the staff had one in-service day dedicated to Mathematics. Three school improvement days were dedicated to the shifts in ELA. On one of those days, teachers had the opportunity to watch a model lesson with our students at each grade level followed by instruction and discussion from a consultant. The staff also had technology training on using iMovie in the classroom and using reflector software to link iPads to the projectors. Other time has been dedicated to mandatory trainings and the transition to the Danielson Model for teacher evaluation.

In addition to professional development provided by the school district, White Heath teachers benefit from having various opportunities to attend professional conferences. This year staff traveled to the Illinois Computing Educators Conference, Smekens Literacy Conference, Course Mason training, the Google Summit, Everyone Reading Illinois Conference, and Illinois Math Model Curriculum training.

Teachers are also encouraged to visit other schools. Staff members visited two schools for the purpose of observation and collaboration this year. Additionally, two teachers visited two other schools as part of the one to one technology planning committee for the district.

Teachers at White Heath also engage in professional development through social media like Facebook and Twitter, professional organizations, working on master's degree programs, teaching at local universities, and networking with other teachers in our area.

## **7. School Leadership**

The White Heath principal's three core beliefs include building strong relationships, collaboration, and reflective practice. These ideas are present in actions, planning, and policymaking.

"Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care" is a quote that serves as a reminder to everyone on staff that students must feel safe, respected, and valued before they can learn. Building relationships with students is a focus at WHS. The principal greets students by name, asks about their lives, visits classrooms, and talks with students. She posts her list of children's books in the hallway to spark conversations about reading. Student artwork is posted in her office. She has also implemented Karaoke Fridays as a fun recess activity. Teachers use morning meetings, responsive classrooms, and Star Student of the Week to build relationships with students. The whole school follows the philosophy of being bucket fillers, or people who have a positive impact on others through their words and actions. Strong relationships are also emphasized within the staff. Two monthly awards recognize staff for their efforts and allow them to recognize each other.

The principal has a firm belief in the value of collaboration and shared leadership. The building leadership team, including staff leaders and the principal, meets monthly to discuss plans and issues of concern. The principal has a monthly meeting with the teachers' union representative. When hiring new teachers, a committee approach is used and planning for individual students also involves a team approach. The Data Team meets after each benchmarking period to make decisions for instruction, intervention, and enrichment. The Problem Solving Team discusses students who begin struggling between benchmarking periods or who continue to struggle after repeated interventions. As an instructional leader, the principal seeks to have teachers as active planners and contributors to curriculum planning.

The principal promotes being a reflective practitioner. She completes a self-assessment each year in order to evaluate progress toward her goals and asks the staff to complete an annual survey regarding her performance. The principal has an open door policy and staff routinely come in to talk about ideas they would like to try or to brainstorm solutions to issues in the classroom. The White Heath staff reflects on the efficiency and effectiveness of the schedule, the RtI process, staff meetings, and curriculum and instruction routinely.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Illinois Standards Achievement Test

**All Students Tested/Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2013

**Publisher:** Pearson

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	81	98	96	94	99
% Exceeds	23	59	56	50	60
Number of students tested	128	135	107	113	109
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	2	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	2	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	61	96	95	86	75
% Exceeds	7	32	68	29	38
Number of students tested	28	25	19	28	16
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	52	96	94	67	57
% Exceeds	43	64	47	44	36
Number of students tested	23	25	17	18	14
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or</b>					

<b>Alaska Native Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	81	98	97	93	92
% Exceeds	24	58	56	50	59
Number of students tested	120	130	106	110	106
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:** Illinois changed the cut scores for the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) prior to the 2012-2013 administration of the (ISAT). The change in cut scores was intended to better align the elementary test results with the secondary test results. The result was that ISAT scores across the entire state were significantly lower.

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**All Students Tested/Grade:** 3  
**Publisher:** Pearson

**Test:** Illinois Standards Achievement Test  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	84	91	95	82	91
% Exceeds	39	39	42	43	45
Number of students tested	127	135	106	113	109
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	2	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	2	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	68	84	94	61	69
% Exceeds	11	20	26	18	19
Number of students tested	28	25	19	28	16
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	48	76	94	44	71
% Exceeds	13	16	29	11	21
Number of students tested	23	25	17	18	14
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					

Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	83	91	96	82	92
% Exceeds	41	39	42	39	45
Number of students tested	120	130	106	110	106
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**