

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr Thomas R Olson

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

Official School Name Madeira Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6612 Miami Avenue

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

City Madeira State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 45243-3143

County Hamilton County

Telephone (513) 561-5555 Fax (513) 272-4145

Web site/URL http://www.madeiracityschools.org E-mail tolson@madeiracityschools.org

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ 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, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Stephen Kramer E-mail skramer@madeiracityschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Madeira City Schools Tel. (513) 985-6070

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.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Pat Shea
(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.

Date _____

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

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, write N/A in the space.*

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. 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 public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) 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 2010 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: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 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	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	77	49	126
6	54	45	99
7	62	48	110
8	51	54	105
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	244	196	440

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 89 % White
 - 3 % 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 2014 – 2015 school year: 5%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	440
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.052
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
2 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Arabic

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %
Total number students who qualify: 48

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
55 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 conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>14</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>24</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	10
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 16:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **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 2015.

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%

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.

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

Madeira Middle School is a school community where learning is personalized and success ensured.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Madeira Middle School is located near the heart of Madeira on a 2.5 mile tract of land just north of downtown Cincinnati. The city of Madeira is home to more than 7,000 people with about 70% of those residents being empty nesters; 57% of the residents have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. Since the 1920's Madeira City Schools has been educating students in an academically rigorous environment where the school district is the primary community focus.

Madeira City Schools serves 1,500 students in grades K-12, and we educate 440 students in grades 5-8 at the middle school. Our school and district has a long history of academic excellence serving a population of 10% minorities, 8% economically disadvantaged, and 11% students with disabilities. We have been rated as one of the top public school districts in Ohio for over 12 years and have received national recognition from publications like Forbes, Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report as well as local recognition from Cincinnati Magazine. Madeira City Schools has been rated as a top place to work in the city of Cincinnati two years in a row. Funding for our school district comes primarily from resident taxpayer dollars, with the last operating levy being supported by 65% of the voters. Madeira City Schools also has the support of the Madeira Parent-Teacher Organization (active in all three buildings), the Madeira Schools Foundation, Madeira Athletic Boosters, Madeira Theater Arts, and the Madeira Music Boosters. Parents support our schools throughout the year at various activities including, homecoming (fall and winter); our annual middle school magazine sale (sponsored by the MS PTO); field trips to the University of Cincinnati (college and career readiness); iSpace (STEM); Courage Retreat (school culture); Day of Service, Empty Bowls, and Magnified Giving (service learning); March Madness (college and career readiness); Summer on Stage (theater arts); and May Fest (celebration of the arts). Our students are active, engaged learners who are exposed to real-world scenarios (predictable and unpredictable) to prepare them to engage in life after school. Over 85% of Madeira students participate in sports, theater arts, and other leadership opportunities making Madeira City Schools a very strong district.

Our building was constructed in 2006 and sits on the ground originally occupied by Sellman Middle School, which in the early days of the school district also served as the high school. The current middle school (a two-story building) is a great model for how "middle school" works and should operate. Each grade level has its own set of lockers, restrooms, a team room, as well as classrooms for each content area teacher and a room for an intervention specialist. Grade levels are contained to one area to maximize time with the students, allow for easy transition time to other classes, and provide a way for 8th graders to not be involved with 5th and 6th graders, which is a concern for parents. The building's layout allows for easy access to common spaces with a stairwell in the center of the building and stairwells at either end of the building. The media center is located on the second floor between the 7th and 8th grade hallways, with the music, art, gym, and cafeteria spaces being located on the other side of the building a short walk for students, but far enough away to segregate the sound from the grade level areas. Teachers utilize team rooms to work with small groups of students, and use their scheduled time (team time that may be blocked) to offer what makes the best sense for students instead of being tied to a 45-50 minute increment of time for each class. There is a bell system in the building, but it is not turned on, which allows teams to operate on their own schedule without interruption. Each classroom is equipped with a SmartBoard, overhead projector (mounted in the ceiling), and many classrooms also utilize a document camera. All of this is designed to put teachers in the best position to access learning tools such as primary source documents, maps, pictures, graphs, and use student work (as mentor texts) to instruct the rest of the class.

The mission of Madeira Middle School is aligned with the district's mission, and that is to "personalize learning and ensure success" for each student. This means our grade level teams look at each child to decide how to differentiate and individualize instruction to help each child move as far as he or she can in the four years of middle school. Each teacher in the middle school has an individual plan time and each team of teachers has a team time to collaborate on student issues, curricular connections, or school culture. The grade level teams understand we receive upper elementary students who ride bicycles and skateboards (5th grade). and send forth teen-agers who are thinking of getting their "temps" soon (8th grade). This means each grade-level team works on transitions of academic, social, emotional, physical, and moral skill sets from one grade to the next. Our average grade level size of 110-115 students and our average

student:teacher ratio of 16:1 allows for personalized education to occur, each student to be known, and issues to be quickly addressed.

Learning extends beyond the classroom through Power of the Pen, Robotics Club, Math Counts, Art Club, Girls on the Run, and Student Council. Each grade level has a service learning component to promote students' growth beyond the community of Madeira. Activities such as our Veteran's Day assembly (5th grade), Pay It Forward (6th grade), Empty Bowls (7th grade) and Magnified Giving (8th grade) provide opportunities for students to understand current community, national, and world issues, do research to educate themselves, and explore leadership opportunities beyond the classroom. Student Council has been instrumental in helping to shape the school climate through the creation of the LIGHT initiative. LIGHT stands for: Leadership, Integrity, Generosity, Honesty, and Teamwork. Teachers send home LIGHT cards to recognize students for having those qualities that spread LIGHT at Madeira Middle School and serve as an example to others of how we should treat one another. Three LIGHT assemblies are held each year with students speaking at each assembly. In addition, quarterly LIGHT breakfasts are hosted for all students who received a LIGHT card during the quarter.

The clubs, activities, and leadership opportunities, coupled with the service learning aspects of our school give our school a well-rounded education to offer each student. Teachers work collaboratively with each other, parents, and administration to help each child realize what he or she can become. At Madeira Middle School we like to say, "It is a great day to shine your LIGHT" which truly shows how we can brighten each life intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and morally. This is the Madeira Middle School way and a sense of well-being that promotes strong thinking and a real heart-beat in the school and community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Madeira Middle School, we have a rigorous core curriculum in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in grades 5-8; teachers work closely together within departments and grade levels to ensure the acquisition of foundational skills while enriching the curriculum for all students. Based on the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts, and the Ohio state standards for social studies and science, our standards are supported by district goals and increased rigor to meet learners' needs.

Curriculum revision is ongoing, with a formal review of each core area's standards, curriculum maps, assessments, and resources annually. Currently, the science, math, and social studies departments are undergoing a vertical articulation process to align standards and concepts among the grade levels. The alignment challenge encourages interdisciplinary learning and allows students to collaborate and solve authentic, relevant and complex problems. At the center of this alignment is our literacy initiative to make certain all content area teachers view themselves as reading and writing practitioners.

We use teacher observations as well as formative, summative, classroom, standardized, AIMSWeb, and MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) screeners and assessment data to provide differentiated instruction and flexible Tier 1 interventions within content-area classes. In English language arts and math, we offer additional Tier 2 and Tier 3 courses for students who need an enriched, accelerated curriculum as well as those who need skill remediation in areas such as fluency, comprehension and math concepts. We also offer an academic assistance course during our Intervention and Enrichment Time (IET) that provides organizational, executive functioning, and academic skill instruction to students who are struggling with classroom academic success.

Our language arts instruction focuses on integrating reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and speaking/listening skills into a 90-minute language arts block. Students practice close reading and analysis of literary and instructional texts in a reader's workshop structure; student texts are often differentiated based on both Lexile and student interest. Students are exposed to a variety of time period, genres, and cultures in classroom and literature circle novels. Vocabulary study is varied, with the use of both contextual vocabulary instruction and a standardized vocabulary program.

Our writing curriculum shows a commitment to developing thoughtful, highly skilled, and reflective writers. Students participate in the writing process through workshops, writer's notebooks, and mentor text evaluation, and they write in various genres, including narrative, informative, argumentative, and poetry. Students often choose the content of their writing and they receive timely, high-quality teacher and peer feedback regarding the six essential writing traits. Language arts teachers collaborate and co-teach with the media specialist to instruct students in the research process, with varied products at each grade level. Grammar instruction is embedded into writing practice, and teachers develop mini-lessons related to mechanics, usage, grammar, and spelling based on student needs. Additionally, writing across the curriculum is emphasized with our content-area teachers utilizing common language and rubrics with informative writing instruction.

In mathematics, we offer an accelerated program based on student readiness that focuses on a discovery-based instructional approach that values process over product. In order to allow students to access accelerated math concepts, our curriculum is compacted to focus on the key concepts necessary to transition students into the next instructional level. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively to solve problems in multiple ways and to make connections to the real world. Often, problems require students to state a claim and provide evidence that supports that claim. In order to help students of all learning styles gain a solid understanding of mathematical concepts, we often use concrete models and manipulatives during lessons. We offer differentiated levels of math courses to students in all grade levels, including high school algebra and geometry. Student math placements are informed by quantitative and qualitative data and teacher recommendations; placements may change from one year to another based on student readiness.

Our science instruction is project-based with an emphasis on real-world application and hands-on,

interactive content including life, earth, space, and physical science. Science lessons are rigorous and relevant, and employ characteristics of high level Bloom's instruction. In addition to the implementation of the scientific method, students use reading, writing, and research skills to articulate their learning. New for the 2015-16 school year was the "Fusion" series which allows science students to practice close reading and critically annotate their text as in a language arts class.

In social studies, our curriculum is committed to promoting cultural awareness, volunteerism, and citizenship through content-driven instruction that ranges from the student of ancient civilizations to current global issues. We use an interdisciplinary instructional approach to link instruction to grade-level informational reading, research and writing skills. Technology integration is a key component in social studies lesson delivery, allowing students to demonstrate their learning through a variety of presentation platforms. Additionally, social studies teachers are reinforcing reading standards through analyzing primary and secondary source documents.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

We at Madeira Middle School are committed to a whole child approach to teaching and learning that gives our students a well-rounded education through classes in the visual and performing arts, physical education, health, foreign language, and information and digital literacy. Our Intervention and Enrichment Time (IET), Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (MTSS), Gifted Programs, content support, and academic assistance classes all help to remediate, enrich and expand students' knowledge and skills.

Art education is project-based and differentiated with an emphasis on reflection and critique. Grades five through seven have art in a three-week rotation each quarter. Eighth grade art is an elective rotation. In addition, there is an Art club after school for grades 5-8. Learners are exposed to many different media, from textiles to photography. During the course of the year, technology is regularly a part of the teaching and learning process.

Our artists have the opportunity to exhibit their artwork throughout the school and the district. Student also compete in the Scholastic Art Competition; last year, two students submitted work that was recognized at the regional level. This year, six students submitted work that was recognized at the regional level. The Scholastic Art Competition is the largest, and longest running national art competition for students in grades 7-12 in the United States.

The art education program helps our students develop critical thinking skills and creative problem solving through inquiry based lessons. These lessons focus on the impact of art in present and past societies, principles of design, relationships between the visual arts and other disciplines, and how to interpret, analyze and evaluate their artwork.

Through our encore/elective classes, the performing arts provide our students with an outlet for self-expression and creativity, while helping them develop keener listening skills and concentration. As performers, our students problem-solve, think critically, and innovate. All students in grade five through seven have music three times per week and eighth grade students take music as an elective throughout the school year. They may choose from band or choir. Students in seventh and eighth grades also have an option for music media class. Our musicians perform three concerts per year, and at school district functions and community events.

Physical Education is a differentiated, student-centered, growth-minded program with a focus on wellness. Students are provided a variety of activities that focus on muscular strength, flexibility, and coordination with a special emphasis on cardiovascular endurance. Our physical education classes promote positive self-image and self-esteem as well as the benefits of physical activity and life-long fitness. Students learn team-building and acquire a solid foundation of skills, which support our extracurricular sports teams.

Health class is a project-based, technology-infused, growth-minded course with a wellness focus. All eighth graders take health every other day for the entire school year, which allows for an in-depth look at topics from social media to a variety of student-centered issues. Experts in these areas are often brought in to connect students to their community. In health class, students take part in an influential person program by creating a speech or written document to honor someone who positively impacted their lives.

We offer three foreign language courses to our eighth graders: Latin, Spanish, and French. Approximately 85% of our students enroll in a foreign language course. These daily classes are experience-based and encourage our students to think critically, divergently, and creatively while broadening their knowledge of a foreign language and the cultures from which they originate. Students develop their listening and speaking skills in the classroom and with others globally. Technology is regularly utilized in the learning process. Students in these classes often participate in extracurricular clubs or competitions where they further their cultural studies in a fun environment. Students completing one year of foreign language in eighth grade may earn high school credit.

In addition to these courses, our media-technology specialist teaches three week rotations of information and technology literacy classes to fifth through seventh grades. There is also a coding class offered to eighth graders. The class employs a flexible schedule that involves all grade levels with an emphasis on the research process and digital citizenship. A well-stocked library with books and databases provides students with rich opportunities for choice reading and research. In all grade levels, our media specialist co-teaches the research process with classroom teachers. The media specialist assists in integrating technology across all content areas, with many multimedia projects allowing students to create, think critically, and collaborate with others so that projects can be shared or published locally and globally.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Madeira Middle School emphasizes excellence in developing the whole child. In order to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement, we use a variety of instructional approaches across all grade levels and subject matters. Every class is a rich blend of problem-based learning and explicit instruction, as well as group projects and individual student presentations. Teachers use a multi-tiered approach to differentiate instruction and flexibly incorporate a variety of methods, as students needs and class content dictate. Students may participate in debates and simulations in social studies class, then Skype with authors and dramatize events in language arts. Their math class may include technology-based inquiry lessons or a “flipped” classroom approach. Language arts teachers use a mix of reading and writing workshops, conferencing individually to gauge student progress. Tier 1 differentiation occurs with the use of flexible cluster groups, tiered assignments, and choice in student reading and writing; these lessons are often designed and delivered by an additional language arts curriculum support teacher to small groups of students.

We offer gifted and Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports classes that are data-driven and available to our fifth through eighth grade classes based on whether the student needs remediation, enrichment, or extension of knowledge and skills. Tier 2 and 3 interventions utilize the MTSS model that provides additional support to students who are struggling academically or identified as having special needs. Every grade level administers universal screeners three times per year to assess reading and math process. Results of state assessments, grade level curriculum tests, and teacher recommendations are used to assess student progress and determine whether closer monitoring or intervention is needed. Classroom support for language arts, math labs, and academic assistance is available for students who continue to struggle; research-based programs, such as AIMSweb, Achieve 3000, and Adapted Mind, are used to support student achievement. Academic progress is regularly communicated to parents.

Gifted services are provided through language arts in sixth through eighth grade and through a pull-out program with a gifted specialist in fifth grade. These students use an inquiry and project-based approach incorporating technology with an emphasis on speaking and presentation skills. In seventh and eighth grade, we offer accelerated math programs and student and Tier 1 gifted interventions in all content-area classes.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Through 2014, the state of Ohio required every student in grade 3-8 to take the Ohio Achievement Assessment (OAA) in reading and math each year. Additionally, fifth and eighth grade students also took a science OAA. When reviewing this standardized test data at Madeira Middle School, it is apparent that every student matters. We have consistently achieved an 84% or higher in each assessed area over the past five years with a vast majority of students scoring “accelerated” or higher. The success rate allowed Madeira Middle School to achieve the highest Performance Index (PI) in school history in 2014-2015, which was also the highest PI in the state for any school considering itself a comprehensive public middle school or junior high.

During the 2014-2015 school year, Ohio students were required to take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) to assess mastery of the Common Core State Standards. Students in grades 5-8 took the PARCC for reading and math. Additionally, students in sixth grade took the American Institute for Research (AIR) assessment in social studies. Fifth and eighth grade students took the science AIR as well. For the 2015-2016 school year, the middle school achieved a performance index of 106 points out of a possible 120 on these state performance indicators.

Factors that led to the high passage rate include a renewed emphasis on the writing portion of each assessment. Students were explicitly taught writing strategies that prepared them to meet or exceed the writing expectations on the PARCC. Another factor that led to our high success rate was an emphasis on data-informed decisions. Grade level meetings occur at least once a semester where universal screener data is used to anchor discussions. A well-developed Response to Intervention (now MTSS) and Gifted program are in place to meet the individual needs of learners. We use screeners to assess the needs and strengths of new students to develop an academic schedule that leads to increased student achievement.

Madeira Middle School also believes we are a community where “learning is personalized and success is ensured.” We employ a positive behavior support model that explicitly teaches expectations and provides reminders to students when necessary through activities at the beginning of the school year, quarterly class meetings, announcements, and individual meetings with students. This system allows for a level playing field for all students at Madeira Middle School. We reinforce positive behavior through the theme of Live with LIGHT (Leadership Integrity Generosity Honesty and Teamwork) with LIGHT donut breakfasts based on LIGHT card nominations that are sent home to parents and quarterly rewards for positive behavior.

We work each day to eliminate the achievement gap between subgroups. We emphasize Tier 1 support through curriculum support positions and employ five interventions specialists and five instructionals assistants. We offer academic assistance, intervention classrooms, content support, a summer reading program, and the After School Program to meet the needs of individual learners to work to eliminate the achievement gaps at Madeira Middle School.

At Madeira Middle School, we use many data points to improve student performance. For the past three years, we have used universal screeners to develop baseline data along with state assessments. We have developed common formative and summative assessments in many grade level subject areas. Collaborative discussions occur before and after assessments are given to discuss areas of strength and improvement. Every time a new student enters Madeira Middle School, he or she is assessed in both reading and math. These assessments allow the counselor to place the student in intervention, enrichment, or extension classes. We use diagnostics to progress monitor in intervention classes. We also give sixth grade students an algebra readiness assessment to determine proper placement in seventh grade math. We also use a placement test to determine students who may be eligible for grade level acceleration in mathematics. Student grades are also used as key data points. In addition, all students in grade 5-8 take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in math and reading every fall, winter, and spring to track student growth and identify trends in those specific content areas. These scores are shared with our grade-level teams as a way of horizontally aligning our curriculum.

Data is shared at semester staff data meetings, which allow teachers to discuss class trends and individual student progress. Often, students are selected for further assessments to determine if intervention is necessary either in the classroom or in an intervention setting. If the anecdotal evidence and other data points indicate a need for further discussion, Madeira Middle School has an MTSS team process. Data includes teacher perception, grades, universal screeners, and parent input. Parents are always part of the Child Study Team. During this process, we develop a needs assessment that may include Tier 1 supports, adjustments to schedule, accommodations, specific intervention time in the student's day, and/or individualized counseling.

Parents and students are informed through an online grading program, school website, team emails, principal email updates, individual emails, and parent conferences. Each year, state assessment data is mailed to parents as well. District-wide parent meetings, open houses, and parent conferences allow for parent input and communication throughout the school year. At the end of year school year the principal solicits community feedback through a survey that reflects on topics such as students' academic, social, emotional, and physical well being as well school culture, climate, safety, and communication. District-wide emails, newsletters, social media posts, and the Quality Profile inform parents about school/district success and other key initiatives.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Madeira Middle School, our positive and productive school climate is evident in all that we do. We encourage and motivate our students academically with a rigorous and multi-faceted curriculum. Students work collaboratively on authentic, relevant, and complex design challenges focused on creative problem solving. Teachers incorporate technology into each unit when appropriate. Each grade level participates in a variety of field trips, ranging from a Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra performance to onsite environmental studies. Outside of class, many clubs such as Mathcounts and Power of the Pen enrich the core academic subjects. Our After School Program provides additional intervention and support for those who need targeted academic success.

To further students' social and emotional engagement, teachers nominate individuals to attend a quarterly LIGHT donut breakfast event to recognize good citizenship. Each quarter, every grade level has a class meeting to celebrate success and encourage growth. Additionally, fifth and sixth graders enjoy socials sponsored by the PTO and seventh and eighth grade students have the option to attend dances during the year (also sponsored by the PTO), and all students attend periodic pep rallies and assemblies featuring music, games, and teacher/student created videos. We value students' artwork and display it in the hallways.

Feeling safe, connected, and supported at school helps to foster student success. Students complete a bi-annual survey in which more than 88% of them have reported feeling safe at school and connected to staff members, who are accessible in many ways. Faculty members offer many class-based incentives and have designed a LIGHT program that creates a positive tone for the year and sets standards and expectations. Teachers give frequent feedback in all areas, encouraging social, emotional, and academic growth. Students know that we are partners with their parents, and meet as a team when needed. The reciprocal school-home relationship supports development of the whole child. Teachers are also well versed on ALiCE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training in order to instill a sense of safety in the event of a worse-case-scenario conflict at MMS.

As professionals, our voices are heard in a variety of ways, from our Building Leadership Team to monthly faculty meetings, individual meetings with administrators, and the District Communication Team. We participate in site-based decisions when possible and lead curriculum planning and development, enjoying a high level of trust and academic freedom. Not only are we competitively compensated, but we receive tuition reimbursement and have access to professional growth funds to further our development. Our calendar includes in-service days, used for team collaboration and discussions and teacher-led presentations of current best practice.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Madeira Middle School has a mission to be completely engaged with the families and community of Madeira. The school and the community are intrinsically linked with the mutual interests and goals of student success and school improvement; the success of our school can be measured by the level of community involvement, and the success of the Madeira community at-large is a direct result of the quality of our schools. We are engaged with the Madeira families and communities through several organizations.

Every year, the Madeira Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) donates countless hours of volunteer time to our school and thousands of dollars through fundraising initiatives. Some programs to which PTO has contributed include the purchase of new playground facilities and equipment, technology resources, field trips, and a teacher appreciation breakfast and luncheon. PTO also recruits parent volunteers and oversees classroom and grade level activities.

The Madeira School Foundation's primary purpose is to raise money to support our school district's excellence in education. This organization has contributed to our school's academic enrichment programs, curriculum innovations, field trips, service learning opportunities, teacher training, leading edge technology and equipment, and international educational experiences.

By providing funding, volunteers, and publicity, the Madeira Music Boosters supports our school's music programs in the enrichment of every student's musical experience. This group works with our students and staff by supporting an environment of musical excellence that is a magnet for student participation and creates a lifelong love of musical arts. This group has partnered with our school by funding scholarships for camps, instrument purchases and repairs, and classroom musical accompaniments.

The Madeira Athletic Boosters provide support through fundraising events and volunteerism for middle school athletic programs. Additionally, the group maintains social media outlets to celebrate the success of our student athletes and teams. The boosters provide parent volunteers as well as funds for uniforms and equipment, officiating fees, and facility maintenance. The boosters, in conjunction with the Madeira Schools Foundation, is set to break ground in the summer of 2016 on a new physical fitness and weight room facility to take our athletes through the 21st Century.

In addition to the formal groups described above, our school encourages community interaction and engagement through regularly scheduled open houses, conferences, and school board meetings. Art shows, musicals, service learning events, sporting events, and theatrical productions are also well-attended. Our school also provides an open forum for discussion and engagement through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and our Blue and Gold Parent Digest emails/newsletters. We also have a partnership with Cerkl, which allows us to connect with the community through regular updates and posts from school teachers and administrators that is sent directly to parents and community members as a way to connect regarding projects and partnerships between the MMS classrooms and community.

Madeira is uniquely a non-union school. Instead of a union, we have District Communication Team (DCT) that meets once a month to discuss the relationship between the teachers and the administration. Each of the three building in Madeira City Schools has two volunteers who sit on the committee. We also have a Madeira Planning Commission that is made up of parents, community members, administrators, board members, and teachers who conduct research each year to better our schools. For example, they survey neighboring school districts in regard to technology use, salary and benefits, global education, building renovations, and other important aspects of a school district to make sure we are constantly reflecting and staying up to date with the happenings in education. This way, we are proactive and prepared to meet the needs of our students. Each planning commission committee reports findings to the board in order to make recommendations and keep members informed. Many other districts request to see these reports and use them to gauge their progress and planning as well, making Madeira a leader in the Cincinnati area.

3. Professional Development:

Madeira City Schools prides itself on encouraging lifelong learning for our students as well as our staff. We feel that our professional development enhances student achievement by focusing on making data-informed decisions to extend and enrich our curriculum. Professional growth in Madeira City Schools is consistently targeted to our district goals and strategic planning. For the past few years, we have focused on creativity and innovation, creating opportunities for our teachers to learn more about literacy studies and technology integration. We have worked closely with the Ohio Writing Project to foster literacy in all content areas and build a consistent thread of understanding and vocabulary in our courses and classrooms. The staff is utilizing the creative ideas they develop in our learning sessions to launch classroom projects, including literature circles that are centered on metacognitive strategies, math problems that have multiple answers that require creative thinking and collaboration, and social studies projects that are based on using primary sources to draw a conclusion to solve a problem. Next year, we plan on going one-to-one in grades five through eight, meaning that all students will have daily access to a Chromebook. We will be working closely with our technology liaison at Hamilton County Education Services Center to support teachers in their technological endeavors while they learn how to enable students to continue to be critical thinkers and problem solvers through the use of technology and connecting with the world through their device.

At the district level, Madeira has been working through John Hattie's Visible Learning. This district-wide program allowed for teachers to study best teaching practices that are rooted in factual evidence. This strengthened our philosophy and allowed for a dialogue between teachers that renewed a passion for student-centered teaching and learning. Instructional leaders were then able to continue this study by attending Visible Learning Workshops hosted by Hamilton County throughout the year and bring feedback to their departments.

Throughout the school year, we host regular professional development opportunities for teachers and building leaders. This school year, three professional development days were built into the school calendar. For each professional day, we gathered data and feedback from staff members and use it to carefully develop the next learning opportunity. We collaborate with outside organizations, including High AIMS, the Ohio Writing Project, and Hamilton County Educational Service Center to bring experts to our community who are knowledgeable about topics such as project-based learning, literacy across the curriculum, differentiation, assessments, technology integration, and curricular horizontal and vertical alignment.

This year, Madeira Middle School teachers had the option to participate in a book study led by a building instructional leader. This group read Todd Whitaker's *What Great Teachers Do Differently* and met 4 times to discuss the philosophy and practice behind his findings and theories. This gave teachers an opportunity to reflect on their teaching practice and engage in a dialogue that led to thoughtful reflection among grade levels based on the theory and ideas in each chapter. Chapter topics ranged from lesson planning, to classroom management, to administrative style and building relationships.

Staff members have the option of taking part in the Building Leadership Team that meets monthly to discuss important issues that affect daily life at Madeira Middle School. This year, this committee discussed a professional development plan for our upcoming one-to-one technology roll out, alternative options to our master schedule, and school culture and climate initiatives.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership at Madeira Middle School is focused on building a positive school culture in which each student and staff member is valued. Our leadership structure consists of a principal and an assistant principal with the support of a full-time school counselor and full-time Director of Student Services. Our leadership philosophy is built on collaboration and mutual trust. Many decisions are made after gathering relevant data and garnering opinions of staff, students, and parents. Collaborative decisions are important, but the principal and assistant principal are able to make quick and decisive decisions when necessary.

Our administrative team encourages data-informed decisions. Types of data may include results from state assessments, formative and summative classroom assessments, universal screeners, and anecdotal information. The administrative team prides itself on building relationships with students, staff, and parents and the community. Our school leaders are visible, approachable, and engaged in the school, and have an "open door" policy in which stakeholder needs often come before their personal needs.

A core principle of our leadership philosophy is transparency. Transparency is achieved through open/honest conversations and a strong communication plan that consists of meetings, emails, blog posts, and the use of social media. Our principal and assistant principal lead by example. They are lifelong learners who actively participate in professional development, develop their personal learning network, and have a growth mindset. They are willing to help where necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the school.

Each month, all or part of the administrative team meets with groups such as the Instructional Leaders, Building Leadership Team, Parent/Teacher Organization, and staff. The overarching goal of each of these meetings is to support the learning and success of well-rounded students. Some meetings include specific data, while others allow the principal to gain anecdotal information to make decisions. The principal reviews the school budget quarterly to ensure spending is appropriate and matches the needs of the building. He works closely with the PTO and the Madeira Schools Foundation, who provide financial

support to meet the needs of students through activities such as field trips, speakers, and technology. Building leadership is supported by the members of the Board of Education and Superintendent, who encourage a focus on fostering 21st Century habits and strategic district goals. The MMS administrative team also meets with each grade-level team weekly to discuss professional development, student concerns, analyze data, and hear feedback regarding school culture and happenings.

Our principal is aware that school/life balance is necessary in the 21st century. He promotes clubs, athletics, and other activities for students. He meets and talks with individual students, staff, and parents to gauge the climate and culture of the building. He supports social gatherings inside and outside of the work day that are open to all staff.

Our leaders at Madeira Middle School stay current, solicit feedback, and openly communicate before and after decisions are made. The leadership is built on trust, high expectations, and the belief that each person in the school community has an essential role and corresponding responsibilities.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Madeira Middle School is successful because we genuinely believe in the core value of "personalized learning" and "ensuring success" for each child. This guiding belief translates into a practice that binds our academic practices, use of assessment data, and our school culture into one force to promote the best for all students. As a result, student-centered activities become what our building leadership team focuses on, and what drives our team meetings forward.

During the school year, staff will take time to reflect on our literacy initiative(s), connections made within the content areas (vertical and horizontal), progress students are making through MAP and AIMSWeb data, and how student respect and behavior demonstrates the LIGHT in our building culture. These reflections occur at the team level, department level, and also at the building level, so we can have a macro and micro view of the "world" known as Madeira Middle School. Student success means all three of these areas need to be in focus, stressed, and reviewed. To leave one of them behind, or out of the conversation would mean we are not focusing on the "whole child" at Madeira Middle School which would mean a portion of our core value of personalizing learning and ensuring success would not be coming true.

In life, sometimes adults have a hard time of checking their egos at the door and maintaining the interests of students at the center of the conversations around curriculum and instruction, assessment, and school climate. Our school is different in that the adults do what is best for children instead of themselves. We create the right building schedule for the children, and offer the best courses for the children, and figure out the best way to measure success for the children. This makes our school a different place and a successful place for individual students, small groups of students, and the school as a whole. This is the practice of a true middle school environment (National Middle School Association) that focuses on the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral needs of middle school students. It is what makes Madeira Middle School one of the heart-beats in the middle of the city of Madeira, Ohio.

Madeira Middle School is a school community where learning is personalized and success ensured. This is not just a mission statement, but a way of life.