

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. George A. Drozin

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

Official School Name Donald H. Eichhorn Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2057 Washington Avenue

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

City Lewisburg State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 17837-1258

County Union County

Telephone (570) 522-3212 Fax (570) 522-3331

Web site/URL http://middle.lasd.us E-mail drozin_g@lasd.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Steven Skalka E-mail skalka_s@lasd.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lewisburg Area School District Tel. (570) 522-3205

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 Mrs. Kathy Swope
(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 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, 2016 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	0	0	0
6	82	77	159
7	85	79	164
8	82	67	149
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	249	223	472

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 81 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 6%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	458
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.059
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
13 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %
Total number students who qualify: 114

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
57 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.

- 5 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 9 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 3 Mental Retardation
- 1 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 7 Other Health Impaired
- 25 Specific Learning Disability
- 6 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
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	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 26:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	95%	96%
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 2016.

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
If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2002

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.
Our mission is to engage students in meaningful, collaborative, challenging, authentic experiences. Student learning is measured by appropriate, ongoing assessment that guides necessary interventions.

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

The Donald H. Eichhorn Middle School (DHEMS) is a true middle school, servicing 470 students in Grades 6-8 in the small town of Lewisburg, PA. Lewisburg is a thriving community located in rural Central Pennsylvania, and is best known for being the home of both Bucknell University and the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary.

DHEMS is more than 50 years old, but you would never know it, because it is in excellent condition and there is a positive atmosphere that is felt when you step inside. The walls are decorated with student-created murals, produced over the past 20+ years. The murals add color and vibrancy to the halls. They illustrate just the tip of the school's focus on the whole child.

The halls are also adorned with our universal expectations, our mantra and our mission statement. Our universal expectations - Be Respectful, Be Accountable, Be Prepared and Be Safe - are the backbone of the school's award winning School Wide PBIS program. DHEMS has been recognized by the state for fidelity of implementation for the past eight years and as a "Model Site" for PBIS for the past three years. Our mantra – "If it's best for kids, we do it" – are words that we live by.

The school is named for Dr. Donald Eichhorn, a former Lewisburg Superintendent and one of the founding fathers of the nation's middle school movement. With this pedigree, we work hard every day to address the needs of the whole child and to never forget the unique needs of adolescent students.

The school's enrollment is 470 students, with almost 30% qualifying for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program, a statistic that has been increasing over the past 15 years.

The schedule is one of the strengths of the school's overall program. DHEMS employs a block schedule with 76 minutes devoted to each class. Students have a block of both English Language Arts and Math each day and will alternate a block of science or social studies every other day. In addition, students have a block for Related Arts each day. Our curricula are based on the Pennsylvania State Standards, with the exception of math, where 7th and 8th graders may take Algebra 1 or 2 and try to satisfy a high school graduation requirement of passing a state Keystone Exam. The Related Arts offerings include PE/Health, Technology Education, Family and Consumer Science, Music, Art and Foreign Language (French or Spanish). The schedule allows for a full block of common planning time for each team every day.

Each class has an on-line component. The school entered into a 1:1 laptop initiative two years ago. Each teacher maintains a Moodle site for each class, which allows students access to assignments and content at any time. The laptops have become an important educational tool.

This describes the academic part of a student's day. During a 90-minute block in the middle of the day, students have the opportunity to participate in one or more music ensembles – band, chorus, or orchestra. Approximately two-thirds of all students participate in at least one ensemble – one reason that Lewisburg has been named a "Top Community for Music Education in the USA" by the National Association of Music Merchants, for six years. In addition to music, the mid-day allows students to participate in clubs and activities two hours a week. These clubs, run by teachers, involve opportunities for students to choose athletic, creative, competitive, strategic or artistic activities. Activities include a variety of sports, rock climbing, coding, the school's TV station, Student Council, painting murals, or working in service learning, among the many offerings. These activities are paramount to addressing the social and emotional needs of our adolescent students. Also at mid-day, gifted programming is offered, as well as additional support for struggling students.

Every two weeks the school runs an "Advisory Schedule" which creates an additional block of time for our advisory curriculum. This includes lessons on anti-bullying, college and career awareness, character education and a variety of other topics students of this age need.

Some of the traditions of our school include an annual faculty/student volleyball match. All music ensembles perform for the student body. All 6th graders compete in a Stock Market game with DHEMS

producing top 10 state finishers each year. We celebrate Veteran's Day each year, inviting veterans from our community to celebrate with us. Students get involved in events like Brass Caroling, Dance Recitals, Fall Play, Talent Show, and competitions in math, chess, TSA, Odyssey of the Mind, STEM and others. Also, DHEMS plays host to the District Art Show, where artwork from every student in the district is displayed.

Our staff works hard to provide for the needs of our students after school as well. Students who need additional help stay after school for DASH (Dragon After School Help). Near the end of each marking period, we offer Saturday School – a three-hour study hall, staffed by two teachers, to help increase grades or improve understanding.

Our top priority is our students. We are a community working toward a common goal – student success. We try to accomplish this in a supportive, safe and positive environment. This is what we are most proud of and continue to work hard every day to achieve.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At the Donald H. Eichhorn Middle School, the curriculum for each of the four core subjects is based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. This is in line with the elementary school and intermediate school that feeds DHEMS, to provide a seamless transition to middle school. The curricula at the middle school are aligned with the standards, but courses are designed to prepare our students for success in high school.

With the math curriculum, the 6th grade uses the PA Core Standards as an outline, but incorporates higher level thinking questions that connect foundational 6th grade skills to more rigorous pre-algebra topics. This helps prepare students for Algebra 1 in 7th grade, or helps prepare students for success with the 7th grade standards. Students are grouped heterogeneously in all 6th grade math classes.

The 7th grade also uses the PA Core Standards in three of six total sections of math. The other three 7th grade sections are Algebra 1 classes. Here, students are taught a combination of Keystone Algebra in addition to PA Core Standards that aren't included in a typical Algebra curriculum. Algebra understanding is enhanced through rigorous instruction and application of concepts.

In 8th grade one section of students is taught the 8th grade PA Core Standards with a basis in pre-algebra. Three sections of students take Algebra 1, utilizing the Keystone Algebra Standards to deepen Algebraic understanding. Two sections of 8th graders use the Keystone Algebra Standards to master Algebra 1 with the high school Keystone Exam taken at the semester break. After that, these students proceed with Algebra 2, again using the state standards as a basis.

Students at any grade, who can demonstrate readiness for the next level, may enroll in a self-paced online course in order to accelerate to the next course in the district's sequence.

ELA teachers provide projects and lessons that build foundational and 21st century skills for students. Teachers implement and use interactive notebooks to not only teach students organization, but also to aid them in kinesthetic learning. Vocabulary is leveled from grades 6 thru 8 to teach formal communication skills.

Communication, cooperative learning and projects that simulate career paths are the core of the 21st century skills. Teachers assign essays based on current events in order for students to articulate their ideas in the appropriate format.

From their beginning at DHEMS students learn about research through a scaffolded approach. One of the highlights of sixth grade is a Wax Museum project where students take on the persona of an historical figure whom they researched and wrote about, by posing as them in a wax museum. Additionally, students will write and recite poetry in a Coffee House atmosphere. In the seventh grade, students delve into marketing by creating advertisements and presenting book talks to persuade other students to read books they have read. Eighth graders continue with performance and poetry recitation, become city planners by creating their own utopian societies, and create their own newspapers. Each experience is crafted to give relevance to their understanding of the PA Core Standards.

The DHEMS science program is a three-year program, based on PA Core Standards, designed to give students a solid foundation in all science disciplines, while utilizing an inquiry-based approach.

Sixth graders take on Earth sciences with units in astronomy, weather, and geology, among others. Some activities include "archeological digs" to discover and classify fossils, using K'nex materials to discover how water behaves and to build "Mars Rovers," as well as a multitude of other hands-on activities.

In 7th grade students learn life sciences with major units in genetics and ecosystems. Some activities include raising trout in the classroom for a variety of experiments, while also scouting the region for ideal spots to stock native streams with them. Students will also construct both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

The 8th grade program involves physics and chemistry. Students take advantage of authentic opportunities to investigate fundamental forces such as gravity and electromagnetism, as well as how atoms, molecules and compounds behave. Students perform many hands-on experiments to observe and describe these and other physical phenomena.

The school's social studies curricula includes three very distinct classes. Sixth grade focuses on ancient civilizations, economics, culture, and the five themes of geography. Students are given a great deal of choice and project-based assessments are utilized in this blended environment. Additionally, all sixth graders compete in a Stock Market Game, with many DHEMS teams earning top honors at the regional and state levels. The seventh grade class is world geography, where a multiple intelligences approach is integrated with technology. Students learn about physical and cultural geography around the world. The eighth grade course is an American History course that also utilizes a blended learning approach. Skill based assessments with particular emphasis on primary source analysis and applications are used, as well as students being encouraged to take multiple perspectives. Students are also exposed to citizenship and civics through their social studies classes. The study of ancient civilizations, notably Ancient Greece and Rome, teach students the fundamentals of Democracy and Republic Government. These concepts, along with other basic governmental processes (like trial by jury), are connected to our present society and government. The study of American History takes advantage of not only learning about the roots of our nation, but also gives students the opportunity to understand why our government and society are organized and structured the way they are. Lessons in civic responsibility and citizenship are woven throughout their American History lessons. Coincidentally, the school serves as a polling place for all local, state and federal elections.

Both science and social studies classes support the school's focus on literacy and support the ELA classes by using writing as one of their means of assessment. Feedback consistent with the PA Core Standards in ELA is provided to all students.

While the core content curriculum is rigorous and does well to follow the PA Core standards, the effectiveness of the DHEMS program is enhanced by authentic learning opportunities in all subjects. All classes integrate technology in varying degrees and all classes offer student choice and chances for student collaboration. Creative and energetic teachers create this environment of achievement and engagement, which ties the overall curriculum together.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The DHEMS Life Skills/Arts Curriculum gives students the opportunities to explore areas of interest and to express themselves in a variety of ways. All students receive a full block of related arts classes each day. The classes rotate each day and change at the semester break. All students take the following courses: Physical Education/Health, Art, General Music, Foreign Language (Spanish and/or French), Family Consumer Science, and Technology Education. Additional course offerings include electives in Chorus, Band and Orchestra. All of these courses provide opportunities for students to be active, for hands on activities, for problem solving and critical thinking, for musical and artistic expression and for language expansion. This portion of each student's day addresses the needs of the whole child and benefits the social and emotional development of our adolescent students.

All general music classes include reading and writing music, composing and performing, as well as listening to and analyzing music. The curriculum includes the study of world music and American music. Activities include writing jingles, studying and experimenting with sound effects, performing a rock and roll cover song, creating a film score, and learning to play guitar. Students will study and perform African, Chinese and Japanese music. In their study of American music, projects will center on spiritual and slave music, Appalachian folk music, country music and early rock and roll.

All choirs sing high quality repertoire, including A Capella, foreign language, classic and pop music. All bands perform original music written for concert band, marches, classical masterworks and film music. Each Orchestra ensemble performs original music, full symphonic orchestral arrangements, film music and other genres.

Foreign language is offered to all students. Students who have a strong interest in languages may complete high school level 1 in either Spanish or French by the time they leave DHEMS. Sixth graders are introduced to French and Spanish languages and cultures in an exploratory approach. Prior to beginning 7th grade students are asked to choose one of two paths – French 1 or Spanish 1. Students who elect to take French 1 will take a semester of French in both 7th and 8th grades and will enter high school eligible to begin with French 2. Students who select Spanish 1 will take a semester of Spanish in 7th grade and a full year of Spanish 1 in 8th grade. These classes meet every third day. These students are eligible to begin high school at the Spanish 2 level. Students who elect not to continue with Spanish 1 in 8th grade will receive a semester of exploratory Spanish. All classes include listening, reading, writing, conversations, grammar and culture. The emphasis in exploratory classes is basic vocabulary, conversational language and culture.

Technology education supports the students' acquisition of essential skills in math and science through the practical application of these concrete concepts. Technology education is a STEM-based curriculum, where students apply math concepts through three dimensional CAD and engineering projects, manufacturing, and robotics. Students explore computer programming through LEGO Mindstorms Robotics Engineering Curriculum along with web page design using the latest software in Adobe Creative Cloud. Lastly, students explore the engineering design process through three dimensional CAD software and Computer Aided Manufacturing using two CNC mills. Our goal is to introduce all students to a variety of STEM-related technology fields, giving each student a basis to further their knowledge at the secondary level.

Family Consumer Science classes involve three main topics: basic cooking, sewing and career exploration. Students in 6th grade will work cooperatively to create simple dishes and snacks, while learning about basic kitchen equipment and learning simple cooking skills. Seventh graders will expand their knowledge of cooking and also learn basic sewing skills – both with needle and thread and on sewing machines. Students will create wallets, pillows and/or pillowcases. Eighth graders complete self-interest inventories and analyze their results as they focus on career exploration. The career portfolios they create are continued in high school.

All students receive Health and Physical Education classes every third day throughout their middle school careers. Students work on skills like teamwork, leadership, problem solving, communication, fitness and sportsmanship. Health units focus on goal setting, decision-making and research in areas of substance abuse, nutrition, internet safety and sexual health education. Physical Education activities include choreographing and performing original dances, team sports, creating personal fitness plans and adventure activities. Units include orienteering, archery, lacrosse, wrestling, basketball, rock climbing, aerobic fitness, yoga and field hockey, just to name a few.

Students in art explore concepts in increasing complexity and complete projects in a wide variety of media. Sixth graders explore foundational key art concepts. They work with color wheels, different types of paints, paper Mache, and ceramics. Seventh graders work with watercolors, create bobble heads, participate in poster contests and learn about proportional and perspective drawing and sketching. Eighth graders explore classic art techniques. They design covers for school publications (yearbook, agenda, handbook) and T-shirts. Eighth graders also create ceramic projects, and create their own 3-color prints. The emphases in all art classes are creative expression, problem solving and decision-making.

Each grade level is supported by the MS Library. The Librarian works at all grade levels to provide the lead and/or support with many of the English Language Arts and any research-based projects. The Wax Museum and Coffee Houses are rooted in the library. Most of the biographies and much of the research materials for the Wax Museum (and of the costumes) are from our library. All students read books and complete comprehension tests each month for points toward their Mind Jogger Goals. The hallways are full of students' Mind Jogger folders. This program is run through the library as well. Students have 24/7 access to our library Moodle, which is updated with access to a variety of resources to support student learning.

Overall, the Life Skills and Arts curriculum is diverse and helps students learn far more than in-class content. Students become increasingly self-aware of what they like, what interests them and what

opportunities are available for them. Their newfound middle school interests become life-long passions as they grow.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Teachers at the DHEMS use a standards-based curriculum aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards and Eligible Content Anchors, providing consistency across grade levels and departments. In addition, all faculty are trained and certified in APL methods and continue to practice Learning Focus Solutions (LFS) strategies. APL strategies include bell ringers, posted agendas, wait-time, on-the-clock activities, think-pair-share, and closure. LFS approaches include learning maps, lesson essential questions, vocabulary previewing, and summarizing strategies. Classroom differentiation is strongly encouraged and utilized throughout the planning, teaching, and assessing processes.

Some examples of instructional methods utilized by our faculty include: direct instruction with the use of graphic organizers and study guides, project-based learning, and computer-based programs such as: Moodle, Google Classroom, Quizlet, NewsELA, IXL, Study Island, and ReCap App. All of these computer programs are differentiated according to students' needs. Teachers also use Power Teaching, in which students work in teams to problem solve, make connections, and apply skills. In the science classes, students follow a hands-on curriculum that includes field/laboratory work whenever possible. Students take an active role in the classroom, especially while working in cooperative learning groups and during independent practice time. Teachers serve as facilitators of learning regularly assessing students to determine if learning objectives are met. This includes the use of both formative (bell ringers, checks for understanding, choral response, tickets out the door, etc.) and summative (teacher-created quizzes and tests, projects, lab reports, writing assignments, etc.) assessments. In addition to local evaluations, the middle school utilizes standardized tests, such as 4-Sight and Classroom Diagnostic Test (CDT) benchmarks, Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA), the Gates MacGinitie, and Pennsylvania Keystone Exams. The results of these standardized tests, as well as teacher-made placement exams, are used to make informed decisions for student placement.

Teachers meet as grade-level teams to analyze results data and to determine students who show deficits or gaps in learning. Those students are then placed in remediation groups during a midday period for targeted needs in both reading and math. Read Naturally, Fast ForWord, SRA, Khan Academy, and direct instruction are used during these support periods. In addition to differentiating for historically underperforming students, DHEMS also offers the opportunity for high-performing students to accelerate using APEX or eQUIP courses and for enrichment through the gifted program. Gifted services are offered to students who demonstrate a need through qualifying assessments. These students meet each week with their peers to work on high-interest topics, discussion questions, personal goals, and to prepare for state and national competitions.

At DHEMS, faculty and staff believe that all children can succeed. The aforementioned programs and strategies help to level the playing field for and decrease the achievement gap of historically underperforming students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

DHEMS has a unique school climate and culture, which values the whole child. Curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities engage and motivate our students. For example, students are given a voice through a variety of means. Student council allows active responsibility in how the school operates. These student-leaders are afforded choices that can be made for the student body and 21st century skills that prepare them for the real world. Students organize dances, fundraisers, community service, and outreach projects. A variety of choices are offered through co-curricular activities. More than two-thirds of our students are involved in co-curricular activities such as band, chorus, and orchestra. Yearbook, clubs, and a school play are available. Additionally, students are able to join a myriad of sports and extra-curricular activities. In order to engage all students, opportunities for social learning are available through counseling groups and Listening Post (where students have lunch in small groups to talk to Bucknell University near peers). All students benefit from our advisory program where students learn how to treat one another with respect, sportsmanship, team building, and begin to think about career choices for their futures.

Our school wide positive environment is reinforced with a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports plan. We reward students for doing the right thing by following our universal expectations of Respectfulness, Accountability, Preparedness, and Safety. Students are rewarded with Dragon Raps and have the opportunity to win prizes and entrance to special social events such as Fall Festival and a Valentine's breakfast, among other events. For struggling students, motivation is fostered through DASH, an after-school help program, and Saturday School. During midday, remediation and enrichment is offered to students, which also fosters relationships with teachers. Midday also provides the opportunity for a recess break for students after their lunch. During this time, a variety of clubs are offered two days in each six-day cycle. These clubs help foster meaningful relationships based on student interests. They include operating a morning news show for the school's TV station, composting, growing seedlings for the community garden, and writing children's books that the authors read to elementary students. The year culminates with a school wide celebration called Fun Day and Carnival followed by a talent show and an awards assembly.

Teachers are the leaders of the DHEMS school climate. Each teacher is a member of a professional learning community allowing members a voice in the decision making process. Grade levels meet regularly to discuss student achievement and student concerns, and to consult on effective instructional practices. Each curriculum area meets weekly to maintain vertical alignment and student engagement. Teacher relationships are bolstered by social committee activities.

The positive school culture and climate are the products of caring. Faculty and staff, who care about all students, get to know every student and their families. Students feel cared for, respected and safe as a result. This culture builds upon itself.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

DHEMS has worked to develop relationships with our families and a variety of community organizations to create opportunities for our students and best serve their needs.

Parent engagement with the school takes on many forms. DHEMS has an active Parent School Association (PSA) where parents volunteer as chaperones for dances and field trips, and organize a student carnival and field days. Teachers and parents meet for open houses and the school closes for two days every November to dedicate the time for parent conferences. Parents are also involved in our disciplinary process. Parents are contacted if students have an incident at school and are invited to the school for meetings with staff if issues escalate.

The guidance department at DHEMS coordinates the connection of students and families with community resources based on the recommendations of grade level teams, the Student Assistance Program team, and

parent/student communication. Among these community resources are CMSU (a multi-county mental health, intellectual disability, and drug and alcohol service organization), Children and Youth Services, local counseling services, and the local chapter of The United Way. Sometimes families and resources are connected through a school organized community and school partnership (CASP) meeting in which representatives of multiple agencies meet with a family in need to explain the supports available to them.

DHEMS prides itself on strong communication with parents and the community. A DHEMS Facebook page is updated regularly with current events happening at the school. In addition, the DHEMS website provides important information pertaining to students and the community. Special events and accomplishments are shared with the community through various media outlets, such as local newspapers and newscasts. DHEMS also provides an easily accessible online grade book for parents to monitor their child's progress at any time.

DHEMS has had a long-standing relationship with Bucknell University. Over the years, Bucknell has provided the school with guest speakers, near peer counselors for our Listening Post program, tutors, and educational opportunities. Bucknell's Office of Civic Engagement has partnered with DHEMS for a variety of service projects and grant opportunities. DHEMS maintains relationships with a variety of community organizations that provide programs and speakers for our students. A local judge speaks annually to students and local alumni provide job-shadowing opportunities for students.

Our Student Council works with local businesses to help support our PBIS program, food drives, and charitable fund raising. Several club offerings benefit local non-profit organizations serving animals, veterans, and needy families. In partnership with Penn State's Thon to support pediatric cancer research, DHEMS students raised significant money for the cause.

Through the science department, DHEMS has developed relationships with several organizations, including the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance, the R.B. Winter chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Union County Conservation District, and P.A. Fish Commission.

DHEMS has had a longstanding relationship with the VFW and the American Legion, as students participate in essays contest, write letters and help create "care packages" for Veterans and deployed soldiers. DHEMS annually presents programs for community members and local senior living centers for Veterans Day. The school also serves as a gathering place for a variety of community events including Alumni Association dinners held every Election Day.

3. Professional Development:

The Lewisburg Area School District recognizes "on-going professional development of employees profits students and enhances the quality of the district." With this belief, DHEMS offers many professional development opportunities for faculty and staff both daily and yearly.

All teachers participate in APL training, a five-day course focused on instructional skills and positive classroom management that brings a consistency to all classrooms in the building. Faculty also participates in Professional Learning Communities at the end of each school day including SAP, Curriculum Clusters, Technology Team, Positive Behavior Support Team, Advisory, and School Advancement to name a few. Through these PLCs, teachers are given the opportunity to collaborate, team plan, and learn from each other. Also offered during this time are teacher trainings where experienced teachers offer training on software and skills in which they excel to other faculty members. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to attend conferences to stay up to date on teaching practices; teachers are then encouraged to report back to faculty on what they learned and how it could benefit the school. Along with conferences, teachers are encouraged to complete graduate coursework related to their respective instructional domain. The Donald H. Eichhorn Middle School also invites several guest speakers to present on topics such as students in poverty, school wide positive behavior supports, and best practices for middle level students.

In a high achieving school, complacency can be the greatest challenge to overcome. Through these professional development opportunities, teachers are able to evaluate their practices and improve upon the

high achievement of our past. DHEMS is always developing staff to achieve the standards set forth, improve school climate, and meet the needs of all students.

4. School Leadership:

At DHEMS, our school motto is “If it’s best for kids, we do it!” addressing the unique needs of the whole adolescent child. This is the foundation that directs all faculty and staff leadership decisions. From being present in the halls, interacting with students, and visiting various classrooms within a school day, our principal provides positive encouragement and support that promotes a climate of value and worth for all students and staff. However, we do not believe it is a single leader who must undertake these tasks but a multitude of leaders.

In addition to the principal, there is a head teacher who assists in positively influencing the school climate by building positive relationships with students during lunch/activity periods. The DHEMS guidance counselors lead Advisory, a Student Assistance Program, Career Counseling and small group counseling sessions that help address the social and emotional aspects of students.

Teachers participate in actively leading the school as well. Subject specific cluster meetings focus on continuity across curriculum, which leads to student success. Grade level teams meet three days each six-day cycle to discuss the academic, social and physical needs of students. Teachers and staff also lead other committees to address the whole child, such as School Wide Positive Behavioral Support team, the Student Assistance Program team, the School Advancement Team, the Advisory Team, as well as offering a variety of midday clubs and activities.

The Green Dragon Foundation is a local non-profit organization that contributes mightily to the district – funding programs and providing resources that the district would not otherwise be able afford. Members of the GDF work with our school leaders to decide how their resources can best serve the needs of our students. Some of their recent donations have funded new guitars for the music program, new digital equipment for our in-school television studio, field trips and academic and competition fees, as well as hands-on scientific experiment kits and supplies.

Our leadership, diverse programs, and academic excellence have provided DHEMS with the opportunity to become one of the highest achieving schools in the state. Our combined efforts create the success that our students achieve in all aspects of their middle school career. DHEMS doesn’t settle for academic success but rather measures success in terms of the whole child, helping to prepare each student for the challenges of today and beyond.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One way we try to ensure DHEMS student success is with the implementation of 1-to-1 computer accessibility. Through this implementation, the students practice and develop 21st Century skills that enhance their current academic success and prepare them for future learning. In addition, the 1-to-1 computer program provides equal opportunities for all learners to meet their individualized academic goals.

With a laptop at the fingertips of every student, 21st century skills are addressed in a variety of ways to increase academic achievement. For example, students have opportunities to build collaboration skills across all content areas. In Social Studies, students create group presentations through Google Slides. This application allows multiple students to work on the project simultaneously, which encourages effective, positive communication between and among students. Along with promoting communication, Google Slides also holds each group member accountable by documenting the time spent and the work completed by each student. In English Language Arts, the 1-to-1 laptop program encourages self-directed learning. Students choose their topics and then conduct research through investigative practices. During research, students are also encouraged to make connections to previous learning across all content areas. The 1-to-1 implementation teaches many 21st Century skills such as collaboration and self-directed learning. These skills promote student achievement in and outside of the classroom.

Because students have diverse backgrounds, the 1-to-1 computer implementation creates equal opportunity for all learners to find success across the curriculum. When students complete assignments on their laptops, teachers are able to provide immediate and ongoing feedback. For instance, in class, teachers provide comments and suggestions to student responses through an online classroom in addition to face-to-face feedback. Software programs available on student laptops allow teachers to effectively differentiate assignments based on students' needs. In math, teachers utilize programs such as IXL and Study Island to reinforce and extend skills. These programs can be adjusted based on the individual learner so that all students can experience success. Through active teacher-student communication online and individualized practice opportunities, students experience academic success.

The DHEMS 1-to-1 laptop program is only one of the school's strategies for academic success, but it has become a useful learning tool in all classrooms. It is the vehicle through which we can truly personalize learning for all of our students, and with this tool students can access their content and assignments from anywhere or at any time. This is helpful for students who are absent and for those who have busy after school schedules.