

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Barbara Neal

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

Official School Name Redwood Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 13925 Fruitvale Avenue

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

Saratoga CA 95070-5603
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Santa Clara County

Telephone (408) 867-3042

Fax

Web site/URL

od <https://www.saratogausd.org/redwood>

E-mail bneal@saratogausd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Ms. Nancy Johnson

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail njohnson@saratogausd.org

District Name Saratoga Union School District Tel. (408) 867-3424

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 Ms. Cynthia Miller

(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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 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
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 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	131	113	244
7	138	136	274
8	160	144	304
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	429	393	822

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 61 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 27 % White
 - 8 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 4%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	849
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
31 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Mandarin, German, Korean, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Uyghur

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2 %
Total number students who qualify: 15

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
76 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>15</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>1</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>19</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>31</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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 including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	40
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	16
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 28:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
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 2017.

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.

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

The mission of Redwood Middle School is to create an environment which excites and inspires students, creating a passion for learning now and in the future. To educate students to their fullest potential, our focus includes promoting academic success, providing a balanced curriculum, and building caring, responsible citizens. With students as our number one priority, staff will continuously reflect on our teaching practices, use data to guide instruction, share ideas and concerns, and communicate regularly with all stakeholders.

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

Redwood is an exceptional middle school located at the base of the beautiful Santa Cruz Mountains in Saratoga, California, serving 822 students in grades six through eight from three elementary feeder schools. The campus has housed a learning community since 1952, in a school district established in 1865. Current students are supported by staff, parents, volunteers, community agencies, local businesses and an educational foundation. The student population reflects our city's global diversity and socio-economic complexity. Redwood celebrates the fact that multiple ethnicities and first languages are represented. Despite a wide range of economic, cultural and social backgrounds of our students, a strong curriculum and social/emotional support system foster a climate that propels all students towards success.

At Redwood Middle School, students, staff, and stakeholders work together to ensure that each student receives a comprehensive and balanced educational program that includes rigorous academics and promotes student well-being. All students can develop their potential to think critically, communicate effectively, work both independently and collaboratively, and be creative and innovative. Student learning is our top priority, and staff members continuously reflect on the improvement of teaching practices, the use of data to guide instruction, and engagement in professional development. The objective of professional development is engaging in learning opportunities to grow professionally so that it affects continuous improvement and refinement of learning and teaching. Visible Learning, now in our second year of implementation, inspired by the work of John Hattie, is part of our staff's commitment to employing high-impact teaching strategies and letting go of the least effective teaching practices.

We define our work with stakeholders as collaboration—with parents, families and community members—to build on-going, growing relationships so that a common vision can be fully embraced and implemented. Redwood Middle School has a profoundly engaged and dedicated parent community. Parents stay involved in the learning environment by volunteering in classrooms, participating in decision-making groups, and attending school events. Families are provided information regarding upcoming events and school activities through a school marquee, school website, weekly E-News, and the student-produced Griffin Network News. Opportunities for volunteering include field trip chaperones, supervision for extra-curricular events, an art docent program, campus-wide Project Cornerstone initiatives, student activity nights and student clubs. There are numerous committees that rely on the valuable input of parents such as the Parent Teacher Association, School Site Council, District English Language Advisory Committee, graduation committee and the School Safety Plan committee.

Academics at Redwood utilizes quality Board of Trustees-adopted curriculum and teacher-inspired lessons combined with creative methods of delivery and well-resourced classrooms. The Next Generation Science Standards are used to guide the teachers toward what students should know and be able to do as they move to more complex levels of science. Math course access at Redwood is not restricted to pre-determined grade levels. Students are encouraged to demonstrate mastery of mathematical concepts and enroll in the course for which they are prepared to succeed and be challenged. The accelerated pathways allow qualified students to access high school courses while attending Redwood, and some students attend higher levels of courses at high school while still in 8th grade. Math support classes provided for all grade levels assist struggling students in accessing the rigorous grade-level math courses, as well. Redwood offers core classes that combine language arts, literature, and social studies into an integrated block. This allows for extended subject projects and cross-curricular investigations. Technology supports all curricular areas, as well as computer science applications, media arts and a newly created Maker/Space laboratory. Staff employs the 'Project Lead the Way' curriculum in STEM courses which begin in the elementary schools and continue in high school, thus allowing for a continuum of units without replication of material through all three school levels. Additionally, Redwood's performing arts department garners extensive community support and includes symphonic band, marching band, brass ensembles, string orchestras, choir and color guard.

Student well-being involves fostering a positive physical, social, and emotional learning environment to allow students to thrive and flourish. Thanks to generous parent donations, students receive extraordinary experiences in campus clubs such as Robotics, Garden, Science Olympiad and Leo (community service) clubs. Club 47 encourages students to hang out at lunch to socialize, do crafts and play games; and a six-

week lunchtime performing arts exploration led by local artists supports student creativity. Lunchtime intramural sports also promote increased connectedness amongst peers, and between students and staff. Our 2018 Student Wellness Fair has over 50 local agencies attending to provide students with social-emotional and healthy lifestyle information. Additionally, students are encouraged to internalize a growth mindset through monthly lessons based on Project Cornerstone's 40 Developmental Assets.

Redwood Middle School's strength lies in the comprehensive commitment of its staff, parents, and community to ensure a rigorous and well-balanced learning experience for all students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Redwood Middle School educators provide a “guaranteed and viable curriculum to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to learn”. Each student has access to a highly effective teacher, and access to the same content, knowledge, and skills in each class (Marzano, 2003).

Language arts and history-social studies are combined in a block class - Core- which allows for integration between the two subjects. The English language arts program encompasses the Common Core Standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students continue to develop a level of literacy that enables them to become informed and productive members of society. Language arts skills are acquired through a variety of experiences. Emphasis is placed on the four C’s of 21st Century Learning: critical thinking, communicating, collaborating, and creating. Through modeling and frequent feedback, students are able to write in many genres. The Literature Lab class is for students in our special education program. These students are below grade level and focus on similar concepts, but it is more individualized in a small class setting. The course is designed to help students improve reading skills in all areas including decoding, fluency, comprehension, critical thinking, vocabulary development, and spelling. Students build literacy skills while participating in common core activities such as building depth of knowledge and working on communication and collaboration skills. We also offer a Special Day Class (SDC) for students with more significant needs. These students may still be learning to read and comprehend beyond simple meaning and write in clear sentences or paragraphs. The English Language Development (ELD) program is a class for students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) to participate in academic discussions and other collaborative activities; deliver oral presentations; practice a variety of writing skills; listen and respond to peers and media; read to interpret; and explain information, findings, and evidence. The ELD teacher works with all of the teachers to support the learning needs of each individual ELL student.

The core teachers follow the California State Standards for History and use updated CA standards-based textbook materials, History Alive, which is published by Teachers Curriculum Institute. Sixth-grade social studies focuses on the investigation of early humans and the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Near East, India, China, Greece, and Rome. Emphasis is on gaining knowledge and understanding of geography, early settlements cultures, and achievements. Sixth-grade students examine critical issues, pivotal events, and important people. The social studies standards for grade seven encompass world history from the end of the ancient world through the early modern era. Emphasis is on reading and writing in the content area. Seventh-grade students gain knowledge and understanding of the major civilizations of the world; develop research, geography, and communication skills; and examine critical issues, pivotal events, and important people. The emphasis in eighth-grade social studies is on gaining knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and geography from the 1770s to the early 1900s. Students learn reading and note-taking skills that will help them to execute document-based analysis, develop research, and examine critical issues related to pivotal events and people of the time period. The curriculum is enriched by literature, media, and primary source documents. Standards-based lessons delivered emphasize problem-solving, critical thinking, information and media literacy, communication, and collaboration, and creativity.

The vision of the Redwood Middle School math program is to place students in the course for which they are prepared to be successful. Redwood provides three pathways for students: grade level, accelerated, and advanced, to best meet the needs of our students. Students on the accelerated and advanced pathways have access to Algebra 1 and Geometry, both of which are high school accredited courses. Math Advisory is designed for students who need extra support in their grade level math class. Concepts are both pre-taught and re-taught as is appropriate for students’ needs. We use current state-adopted textbooks, along with a variety of resources, to extend and deepen learning. We also offer an SDC class that is tailored to each student’s needs, as outlined in their IEP, from pre-algebra skills to basic counting and money skills.

Redwood’s Science Department has been transitioning to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which incorporates Disciplinary Core Ideas, Crosscutting Concepts, and the Science and Engineering Practices using the California integrated science approach. Our science classes are a balance of standards-

based hands-on labs, reading for meaning, demonstration, lecture, writing to explain, and inquiry learning. STEMscopes, our engaging and rigorous science curriculum, combines digital resources, supplemental print, and hands-on kits. All students also have an opportunity to join our Science Olympiad afterschool competition club.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our elective program offers students a wide variety of courses essential to providing our students with a well-rounded education. Our elective offerings are designed to tap into student interests and provide opportunities for students to think about future careers. While seventh and eighth graders enroll in two electives, our sixth-graders participate in the Exploratory Wheel, which consists of a sampling of different six-week long classes designed for students to experience a variety of electives. The Exploratory Wheel provides a brief excursion into the elective curriculum areas offered in the 7th and 8th grades. Classes may include Art, Spanish, Health, Music, Computers or STEM (Project Lead the Way).

Redwood has a strong history of visual and performing arts electives. Our instrumental music courses include marching band, concert band, symphonic band, and three levels of orchestra: Adagio, Presto, and Vivace. Our art program offers a wide range of experiences in the visual arts, from drawing and painting techniques to pencil, pen, and ink, charcoal, pastels, acrylics and ceramics, and wire.

At Redwood, students can learn to speak Spanish. Over a two year course, students begin learning to speak, read, and write in the new language. They also learn about what people do and how they live in different parts of the world. Students who complete both the 7th and 8th-grade class are eligible to enroll in Spanish 2 in high school and will have completed their first year of high school language requirement. Leadership, Yearbook, and Writing for Real Purposes are all popular electives.

Students who enroll in the Griffin Tech elective work in a self-paced, self-directed environment to learn new skills and produce a product, as well as provide tech support to students and teachers. Students in the STEM class learn skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics to solve real-world problems. They also work collaboratively to invent new products and innovate improvements to existing designs. The focus is on the engineering process, using curriculum from Project Lead the Way's Robotics and Automation unit. In Robotics, students learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems, and use the VEX Robotics® platform to build such things as robotic arms and automated toll booths. In addition to learning and creating real-world products, students get a chance to be creative and social in the STEM class. The Griffin News Network, our video production class, keeps the student body informed of current happenings on campus.

All students are enrolled in a daily physical education class. Redwood Middle School believes that the quality and productivity of each individual's life is enriched through participation in a comprehensive, sequentially planned physical education program that promotes the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being of every individual in the pursuit of lifelong health. The physical education department has three main goals. They are to promote: motor skills/movement knowledge, self-image/personal development and social development. Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in physical education include reading, writing, speaking and listening. CCSS standards are being integrated into the current Physical Education State Content Standards when appropriate thought out our units. Redwood's physical education classes follow the state framework and focus on personal fitness, skill building and gameplay, individual and group sports, and a strong health component.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Our teachers and staff are constantly striving to learn about best pedagogical practices and improve as professionals. Our collective goal is to provide an appropriate challenge for all students: those who need additional support, and also those who are performing at a high level. Redwood Middle School teachers have a variety of ways in which they differentiate instruction for students. Through our outstanding special education offerings, we are able to meet the needs of our special population in the least restrictive environment. This is in addition to classes with modified course content in math, English, science, and social studies. Within the regular education classrooms, our teachers are skilled in providing targeted instruction for each student: remedial/intervention and accelerated/extension. In many courses, students are given choices for topics on individual and small group open-ended and performance-based projects. Lessons are presented in a variety of modalities, including but not limited to video, interactive lectures, labs, problem-solving, and project-based learning. Teachers use instructional strategies including discussions, debates, presentations, and group work, ensuring that students actively engage in their learning and develop the skill, to substantiate their opinions and conclusions with documentation.

Redwood Middle School teachers have developed a comprehensive, balanced assessment system, which comprises both formative and summative assessments as integral parts to gathering information about student learning. Within every class, formative assessment is incorporated into the instructional process to inform teachers and students about students' understanding of content such that adjustments can be made in a timely way. Summative assessments occur after instruction and are used as part of the grading process and include state assessments in ELA, mathematics, and science; end-of-unit or chapter tests; and semester exams. For example, each grade level content area teacher administers an assessment in order to determine students' learning in relation to content standards. Summative assessments at Redwood serve the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of programs, analyzing the school's improvement in the Single Plan for Student Achievement goals; and information about grading on students' report cards. One important facet of Redwood's assessment system is student involvement in the process of self-assessment. Students often identify their own learning goals and then assess their own learning. To this end, Redwood teachers provide clear criteria and descriptive feedback to each student, with an emphasis on individual progress instead of comparison with peers.

Technology plays a big role in providing differentiated instruction at Redwood. For example, in English classes, teachers are able to work one on one with students over a collaborative document (Google Docs) online, providing specific feedback and individual direction for improved learning achievement. All students have access to laptops in their classes throughout the day.

To address areas with the greatest need for improvement, Redwood teachers and administrators are engaged in professional development regarding "Visible Learning" (John Hattie). Visible learning involves teachers seeing learning through the eyes of students, and students seeing teaching as the key to their ongoing learning. Essentially, the big idea of Visible Learning is for teachers to know the impact they are having on each of their students. Redwood educators have identified the following high-impact strategies: Collective teacher efficacy: helping all teachers on the staff to understand that the way they go about their work has a significant impact on student results; Formative evaluation and assessment; Feedback from students as to what students know, what they understand, where they make errors, when they have misconceptions, and when they are not engaged; and teacher-student relationships.

Considering Redwood Middle School's high performing status at the aggregate level in ELA and mathematics, the certificated, classified, and administrative staffs endeavor to not only maintain high status but continuously improve. There is a focus on analyzing performance data of individual and groups of students who are underperforming. As a system, the district is making strides in improving processes for collecting student data and sharing this information with staff members who are instrumental in providing programs and services to these students. Students' progress is monitored frequently to ensure that students are making sufficient progress. Students who are high performing are challenged at their "learning edge" via differentiated opportunities to learn. Redwood maintains high standards and expectations for all students, which is heavily supported by our supportive parents and community. Our district supports teachers by providing focused professional development and instructional coaching, all which are aligned with our

district's curriculum framework.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Redwood Middle School has created a community that promotes the celebration of our diverse population, not only in terms of demographics but also in the unique needs of individuals. Through strong relationships with families and partnerships with the community, we have established a caring and enriching educational environment that allows our students to be confident and secure in their emotional, social and physical well-being.

All students receive a Redwood Handbook which includes the expectations for student behavior. Conflicts are viewed as opportunities for students to learn and grow in social responsibility. Conscientious behavior and character building are also reinforced through our 8th period Project Cornerstone lessons. Redwood Middle School has been honored to receive the countywide Project Cornerstone ‘Caring Middle School Community’ award this spring.

Among the programs on campus that provide motivation and build a positive environment is WEB (Where Everybody Belongs). This program orients incoming 6th graders to the campus and connects them with an older classmate. Students meet with their WEB Leader a day before schools starts, connect with them on Fridays and participate in various team-building activities throughout the year. “Caught in the Act” recognition by staff members is yet another means to promote respectful student behavior, and select students are recognized weekly on the student-produced video news network. The “Student of the Month” award also acknowledges students whose character stands out for demonstrating spotlighted Project Cornerstone developmental assets.

Club 47 is a lunchtime club facilitated by our two guidance counselors where students participate in enrichment activities or simply gather to socialize. Activities may include a hands-on craft or celebration of a particular cultural tradition. The club invites volunteers, teachers, and staff to share their outside interests by sharing special activities. Wellness and academic tips and tools, plus community resources information, are available at Club 47. Providing resources is essential in healthy adolescent development, especially during the middle school years.

To promote civic responsibility, our “Leo Club,” in conjunction with Lion’s International, gives back to the community through service projects. The students’ most notable accomplishment this year was gathering and delivering supplies to Northern California fire victims. Other student clubs such as intramural sports, robotics, and garden club help to build student relationships which cross grade-level boundaries and transfer to positive, productive connections within the classroom.

Teachers are an integral part of creating the guidelines and programs which support our culture. Input on a yearly review of the Student Handbook, analysis of the student support programs, and nominations of students for the various award programs all provide valuable staff input. Our teachers rotate lunch and brunch supervision duty while students are in an open setting. This provides extraordinary opportunities for casual conversations and camaraderie between staff and students.

Administration values the opinions of teachers as site-based decisions are made with the assistance of our Department Chairpersons or our Student Academic Leadership Team. Teachers are also part of the process for long-term planning by positions on our District Leadership Team (DLT). At the start of staff meetings, we hold Redwood Raves, an opportunity for staff to provide open words of thanks to peers.

Student and staff well-being is a primary focus for our continuous attention and refinement at Redwood.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

In the 2016-2017 school year, Redwood Middle School convened a year-long task force to identify opportunities for student success and school improvement. To engage our community in this important work, the task force was composed of an equal number of staff and community members. There were six community forums and four online surveys reaching out to various stakeholders in the community. More than 350 parents attended forums and more than 450 people submitted survey data.

Many of the recommendations of the task force focused on finding ways to create a more welcoming and inclusive community, expanding student choice to develop passions and explore new interests through added electives and enhanced before-and after-school activities. Increasing student empowerment and strengthening connections between stakeholder groups was a goal of the task force.

Four subcommittees were created to deeply study suggestions emanating from the community. One of these, the Community Math Study Group has engaged in a seven-month study of the math program at Redwood. To further involve families in the process of academic review and recommendations, this working group included a 50% parent membership representing elementary, middle school and high school voices.

In response to community and parent input, some of the specific changes to Redwood school programs have included more options for students to explore interests through new electives such as orchestra, a Writing for Real Purposes elective, and STEM classes. Various clubs have been organized that extend several electives into extra-curricular activities. Our school is also designing a more welcoming physical entrance and improving both attractiveness and safety with better signage, fresh paint, and traffic flow re-routing. The City of Saratoga is partnering with us and has recently committed \$250,000 to improve an intersection next to our school.

Community support through our PTA is the foundation of the many enrichment opportunities that benefit our students. Funding for our student lunchtime and after-school clubs such as the garden club, intramural sports, Club 47, robotics club, Leo club, Science Olympiad is provided by PTA. Parent volunteers play an integral part in our after-school athletics and performing arts programs; which include marching band, color guard, choir, and a musical. Our community rallies around these enrichment activities and a majority of Redwood students participate.

Our interactive communication system is also instrumental in conveying timely information for our parents regarding grades, projects and the daily academic standing of our students. Parents can review and send important documents, receive attendance information and be apprised of any academic challenges that need to be addressed.

3. Professional Development:

Redwood is a high performing middle school with an energetic, professional and dedicated staff who take personal responsibility for students' achievement. Ongoing teacher collaboration and monthly professional development sessions have resulted in challenging units of study and innovative instructional practices.

As defined in our Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) Goal #2, and our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Goal #4, our teachers continue to receive training in Visible Learning. Each department has committed to focus on one of the high leverage practices this year. Access to Visible Learning training and time to collaborate regarding implementation has been provided to staff. One strategy chosen by the math department is 'Feedback'. When analyzing this in practice, we consider: "What will the

students be doing when the strategy is in play?” and “What are the teachers’ actions when implementing this strategy?” Other aspects are: “What would administrators be looking for when observing this strategy?” and “How will we monitor implementation?”

Redwood staff also believe in the importance of digital citizenship and preparing students for the highly challenging, ever-evolving technology world. We purposefully and intentionally demonstrate how to use technology responsibly to access learning opportunities while stressing the importance of constantly monitoring one’s own digital footprint.

All teachers annually write individual and collective professional objectives that align with the California teaching standards and will have a demonstrable effect on student achievement. Administrators receive professional training on how to monitor teacher goals, observe instructional practices and gauge the impact on student learning. This information is then communicated to teachers for further discussion.

Articulation between grade levels is a natural extension of our teachers’ commitment to their students’ growth. Teachers meet regularly with staff from the elementary schools to discuss student readiness and with departments at the high school to provide the necessary academic skills to ensure a smooth transition to high school.

The cornerstone of our academic program is intellectual stimulation and high academic standards. Teachers seek out opportunities to become subject area experts and then facilitate learning experiences through collaborative discussions among their peers. As we look at standards-based assessment data to determine the focus of instruction to promote and increase student achievement, our staff are in the process of training in the use of the Google Suite. Redwood teachers are involved at various levels of ed-tech training in the use of all aspects of Google for Education. Some are still at beginning levels while others have completed the program, earning the ‘Certified Educator in Google for Education’ badge, and are now mentoring other staff.

4. School Leadership:

Redwood Middle school involves teachers, staff, and stakeholders in decision-making and leadership roles at the school and district levels. We believe that engaging the community and staff in leadership roles will create the conditions necessary for them to become owners and investors in their school and district endeavors.

Through varied leadership opportunities and shared decision making, teachers are empowered to make decisions about curriculum through grade-level curriculum mapping, development of improved instructional strategies and program evaluations. Decisions are shared at staff meetings, through surveys, department liaisons, and piloted curriculum adoption processes.

The principal and vice principal facilitate numerous groups that act as advisory and decision making bodies. Each of the five departments has a chairperson whose duties include membership on the District Leadership Team (DLT). The purpose of the DLT is to elicit teacher voice on district decisions, ensure articulation between school sites, and establish professional development goals based on distinct, site, and student needs. Redwood also utilizes the department chairpersons as a site leadership team for issues related to facilities, events, and decision-making within the departments.

Redwood’s Student Achievement Leadership Team (SALT) consists of three teachers, one from each grade-level, the assistant principal and the principal; who collaborate on matters related to curriculum, student learning, instructional strategies and other factors affecting student achievement. The SALT team reviews student data, such as school-wide trends garnered from annual state assessment scores. The team presents trends that are reviewed at both the school level and at the department level. These identified trends then inform instructional practices at the grade levels.

At the end of each year, teacher leaders re-evaluate their roles and responsibilities, as listed in the

leadership job descriptions, for both effectiveness and efficiency. The district, in collaboration with teacher leaders, determines the need for leadership development training to increase skills such as facilitating meetings or working for consensus.

Community leadership is provided through venues such as the Redwood Task Force, Community Math Study Group, School Site Council (SSC), District English Language Acquisition Committee (DELAC), and the Superintendent's Advisory Council (SAC). When the Single Plan for School Achievement (SPSA) is developed, it must be reviewed and approved by the members of SSC. The district monitors the English language development standards under the advisement of members of DELAC. Parents who attend SAC provide valuable information to the Superintendent on matters ranging from academics to communications and site logistics.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Redwood Middle School has a history of academic excellence as measured by the State’s assessments as well as by regional and national math, science, music, poetry, and athletics competitions. This high degree of student achievement allows us to focus on building sturdy scaffolds for their performance. We have partnered with Project Cornerstone (PC), a Silicon Valley Initiative to help provide the 40 developmental assets in youth that create sustainable conditions for a healthy and positive future. Our staff employs research from PC’s Search Institute report, “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth,” a three million-youth study that identifies and addresses the basic building blocks of adolescent development.

In reviewing the 2017 Search Institute survey results, Redwood students consistently demonstrated a significantly higher percentage of assets than the average student in Santa Clara County. Below is a list of a few strong indicators of Redwood student efficacy: “Young person is actively engaged in learning.” “School provides a caring, encouraging environment.” “School provides clear rules and consequences.” “Young person cares about his/her school.”

Once per month our instructional schedule generates an additional period in the school day. Staff members provide an interactive 60-minute lesson based on one of the developmental assets. All students are taught the same lesson, which translates into a common vision and social/emotional conditions that support academic success. Some of the lessons have concentrated on positive self-identity, growth mindset, digital citizenship, character building and other topics that assist our students in creating a balance between the rigors of academics and the remainder of their daily activities.

For example, this March our lesson was focused on character development. The activity was centered on a documentary created by filmmaker Tiffany Shlain, a keynote speaker at this year’s California STEAM Symposium. The video asks students what they want to accomplish in their 30,000 days. What are three things they want to do in their lives? There is a character trait activity which evolves into a person’s sense of purpose followed by a class discussion on how character development has evolved over the decades and why it is important in schools today. Finally, students review ten daily practices to strengthen their character and they commit to further developing one in the weeks ahead. This lesson’s key ideas were revisited in the days that followed. The school’s student leadership class incorporated this lesson into a moving presentation to our Board of Trustees.

We believe that the building of assets and the continual revisiting of these concepts have a highly positive impact on academic success and help to create a well-balanced, supportive educational environment for Redwood students to excel.