

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 [X] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Melisa Stilwell

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

Official School Name Cedar Lane Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1259 Cedar Lane Road

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

Middletown DE 19709-9636
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County New Castle County

Telephone (302) 378-5045

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Web site/URL http://www.cedarlaneschool.org

E-mail melisa.stilwell@appo.k12.de.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. Matthew Burrows

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

E-mail

matthew.burrows@appo.k12.de.us

District Name Appoquinimink School District Tel. (302) 376-4100

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Richard Forsten

(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):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 16 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	68	65	133
2	79	80	159
3	94	67	161
4	76	69	145
5	69	83	152
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	386	364	750

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 8 % Asian
 - 20 % Black or African American
 - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 63 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 6%

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	33
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	46
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	750
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 7%
54 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Chinese, French, Greek, Gujarati, Malayalam, Spanish, Turkish, Ukranian, Krio, Nepali, Polish, Punjabi, Tagalog, Telegu, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15%
Total number students who qualify: 116

8. Students receiving special education services: 19 %
141 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>41</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>16</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>19</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>43</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>73</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</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: 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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	37
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	10

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 21:1

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	95%	97%	97%	97%	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 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.

Cedar Lane Elementary is a place where Learners, Leaders, and Friendships grow.

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

Cedar Lane Elementary has a significant number of choice students. Each choice student had to meet guidelines set forth by the state. As of now, due to growth, Cedar Lane is closed to choice.

PART III – SUMMARY

The first thing evaluators should know about Cedar Lane Elementary is that we are a fast-growing and diverse community of learners. Students come to us from around the globe – from India, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Kenya. In all, 17 different nations are represented in the languages spoken in our building. We've learned to thrive on change, and achieve one of the best academic records in the state, by identifying what counts: kids count, academic rigor counts, parent-student engagement counts, service learning counts, safety counts, and leadership development (students-staff-parents) counts.

Although our building was built in 1991, it required a complete renovation to add additional classroom space in 2010. As this growth has continued, we now have eight modular classrooms which have been affixed to the permanent structure. Although we have experienced tremendous growth, which has changed the face of our school community, we still retain the benefits of small town life. With the community expansion impacted by new families moving to the area, mixed with the number of Cedar Lane parents and staff who were attendees of Cedar Lane or graduates of the Appoquinimink School District, we have created a small town feel in a very diverse population of residents. This also helps continue the legacy of strong academic achievement, which is the foundation of all that we do and a driving force that attracts new families daily.

To further support Cedar Lane, we have a highly motivated and active PTA that strives daily to ensure the needs of our students are met. Most recently, they hosted a fundraiser that netted \$35,000 for the purchase of iPads and iPad carts to incorporate technology based learning school-wide. Their support also extends to supplementing classroom activities, sponsoring school spirit activities and engaging in student led community outreach opportunities.

This community and parental support is not only evident through our PTA's involvement. Last year, our district superintendent's call to action to pass our most recent referendum was met with a significant number of positive votes from our Cedar Lane families. The number of events staff and families participated in were tracked through the implementation of a school wide goal and a data tracker. This number correlated to spreading the message regarding the referendum.

While we continue to expand and grow one thing that remains the same is the focus, drive and dedication of our staff. Our teachers embrace the Leader in Me process which serves as civic learning to help prepare our students for global citizenship and responsibility in an ever growing vastly changing society.

The key strategies used within the school that challenge each child academically, physically, socially and culturally are built around our school focus of collaborative structures, productive struggle, and a balance of rigor appropriate for each student's learning needs. To assist students in seeing how their personal accomplishments contribute to the achievement of school wide goals, we participate frequently in goal setting, goal review and data driven student led conferences aligned to our school wide goals.

The accomplishments of our staff and students have aided us in being selected as a Schools That Lead demonstration site and chosen as one of the first eight schools in the state to participate in the Governor's Teacher Leaders Initiative.

The staff and overall community of Cedar Lane Elementary are driven to accomplish the highly important goal of educating the whole child. We hope to develop and send forth a well-prepared group of learners who also have a heart to serve their community and one-another.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Cedar Lane Elementary implements consistent and developmentally appropriate curriculum and methodologies to meet the needs of all students. Our best practices include: active, hands-on learning across the curriculum, integrated and thematic learning, cooperative learning, authentic assessment, full inclusion, and exploration of multiple intelligences, technology as a learning tool, flexible grouping to meet student needs, and embracing a growth mindset.

While all learning is designed around the Common Core State Standards, our drive for continuous growth and achievement comes from the flexibility and differentiation we offer our students through the various structures of learning. By not limiting our students to grade level confines we are able to remediate and extend all of our learners towards building capacity for 21st century skills. Our students begin each day with Morning Meeting, Leadership Meeting or other meaningful opportunities to start their day in an engaging format focused on social, emotional and academic learning.

We are currently in a place of change as we continuously seek resources that provide appropriate rigor and challenge for our diverse population of learners. We have worked with internal curriculum writing teams to unpack standards and create KUD's and student learning maps that align with the vision of the district and our overarching goals. Common formative and summative assessments have been developed to ensure students across classrooms are exposed to the same high level of rigor and data driven instruction. Although the primary tools to be utilized for the core ELA block are evolving and changing, we hold steadfast to the beliefs that our vocabulary and literature rich environment continue to assist our students in constructing meaningful connections within the world around them. Opportunities to write across all contents, including making claims, citing evidence, supporting opinions, defending ideas, and engaging in discourse to refute adverse opinions keeps 21st century skills as the focal point of what we expect.

Mathematically, the 8 standards of mathematical practice- problem solving, persevering, reasoning, constructing argument, modeling, utilizing appropriate tools, attending to precision, making use of structure, and the use of repeated reasoning drive our instruction. Through the use of Number Talks, we foster meaningful collaborative conversations based on clarifying student thinking, discussing deep mathematical reasoning, think-time and number sense; all of which afford students the opportunity to delve into math concepts and look at making meaningful connections across larger mathematical practices.

As we move toward adopting the Next Generation Science standards, we continue to utilize opportunities, experiences and our surroundings to immerse our students in the exploration of scientific theory through the use of claim, evidence and reasoning. To help engage and support our students in scientific explorations we supported student led efforts to establish an on-site garden with a rain barrel collection system, a student led recycling program, and student participation in a variety of habitat projects. The Stem Fair is a catalyst to further extend students learning opportunities and engagement in higher order thinking opportunities, as we foster high expectations for our students as active participants in their learning. To further expand student interest in science and technology students participate in an Engineering is Elementary Program, Project Lead the Way, Scratch IT, and Odyssey of the Mind, which went on to compete at the national level.

Social Studies lends itself to the many civic learning opportunities, which our students regularly lead, develop and participate in. Some of these opportunities include participation in a Socktober Drive which netted 1,500 pairs of socks for homeless shelters; a partnership in which students made blankets and wrote letters for soldiers during the holidays; a drive to support a local animal rescue agency which netted 26 boxes of food and supplies; a financial and school supply drive for students affected by Hurricane Harvey; and toiletry drive to support a local women's shelter. Our efforts with projects such as these develop young minds as entrepreneurs that are learning the importance of giving, time management, organization and community wide impact. A week long study of Pioneer Life transforms our building to transcend time to spend a Day in the Life of a Pioneer, which is a staple in our third grade curriculum that students embrace as they embark upon life in a time period most had not previously heard of or experience hands-on. Similarly,

our 5th grade students participate in a Living Museum that provides them with an opportunity to research and portray an individual who made significant contributions to history. By diving into the past, students are provided opportunities to embark upon historical travels that reflect on those that made a historical contribution to society in a vast number of ways.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Opportunities for students to participate in the arts and all other areas of the extended curriculum are incredibly important to engage the whole child. As a school, we have altered the schedule our students follow to help maximize learning potential. Our related arts classes for students in grades 1-5 follow a non-traditional rotating schedule. After considering the needs of Cedar Lane Elementary students, especially those who struggle with transitions, we rotate every two weeks. With this structure, students are able to complete an entire unit of study prior to transitioning to a new related arts class.

We are very proud of the arts opportunities presented to CLE students. Our 1st-5th grade students participate in a traditional art class during their rotations. The walls and display cases of the school are adorned with amazing examples of our student's talents. Art volunteers work weekly to change out displays and give all students an opportunity to see their masterpieces admired by all. We are equally proud of the building art show and our students' participation in the district art show. Inviting parents in to view their child's artwork is always a rewarding experience.

In addition to a traditional art class, our students are able to participate in a variety of performing arts classes and clubs. Musical instrument lessons are offered to 4th and 5th graders throughout the year with their lessons culminating in multiple performances for students, parents, and community members as part of our Leadership Day. Likewise, 4th and 5th graders also have an opportunity to take string lessons during the school day and participate in performances as well. We have offered chorus to 3rd – 5th grade students as a before or after school club. This year, that time has changed to a performing arts club called The Best of Broadway. There are approximately 75 students who participate in this club. They showcase their talent at a variety of school functions and will present a multi-day show at the end of the year.

While participating in physical education, our 1st – 5th grade students are provided with multiple opportunities to demonstrate student leadership through leading activities and modeling their precision as in-class experts. Within PE class, students interact with high school students who visit to lead lessons on a variety of health and fitness topics – such as, negative impacts of smoking, how exercise positively impacts your health, and the leadership example athletes become to peers and why that should be an honor. Jump Rope for Heart, Hip Hop for Health, a Fun Run and activity days are other activities in which all students have had the pleasure to participate.

In previous years, 4th and 5th grade students have had the opportunity to receive Spanish instruction as part of their related arts rotations. Three years ago, we were proud to begin offering Spanish to 1st – 3rd graders. Having the ability to offer foreign language instruction to all CLE students is incredible. We have seen such tremendous interest in languages and truly enjoy hearing our students utilize their new learning as they communicate with peers.

Utilization of technology throughout instruction is at the core of our high level student engagement. Teaching the technology natives generation has proven to be challenging as we adults expand our knowledge to embrace various ways to present content virtually. Our students participate in a typical technology course within their related arts rotation. During this time they participate in a variety of programming and robotics opportunities. Students in all grades also have the opportunity to deepen their technological experiences through participation in Project Lead the Way and an Engineering in Elementary program that focus on integration of science, technology, engineering and math. We are constantly striving to expand these resources to ensure extension happens for all students. Additionally, we have six classes who are piloting one-to-one technology through utilization of iPads to assist teachers in delivering instruction. Through the generosity of our PTA, we have also been able to purchase other iPads and carts for optimizing instruction throughout the building. Just last week, the principal was able to observe a 2nd grade reading lesson delivered entirely through Schoology and a 1st grade math lesson delivered through NearPod.

Our teachers are so incredible and embrace each opportunity to offer instruction in new and relevant ways for our learners.

Lastly, the talent of our library/media specialist is utilized to teach research skills and lead students to new discoveries about a variety of topics. Students are also about to demonstrate their leadership abilities as they lead literature circles and participate as reading buddies with younger classes.

We are extremely proud of the contributions of our talented related arts team and the experiences they provide our student body.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Cedar Lane Elementary, we strive to provide instructional opportunities that are well rounded, scaffolded, and provide each student with an opportunity to instructionally interact at varying levels. To ensure an appropriate level of rigor, teachers plan and deliver differentiated lessons to both remediate and extend. We utilize a Response to Intervention model to ensure each student receives multiple opportunities for growth and success. RtI is provided each day for 40 minutes. During this time, remediation is provided for our tier 2 and 3 students with research-based, high-interest resources that provide the innovative structure our students need. Likewise, extension activities are provided for all tier 1 students during this time. Enrichment is offered through a focus on innovation and growth-mindset. For example, most recently, we experienced a group of young 1st grade authors who were utilizing the standards and their prior knowledge of technology to write and illustrate their own books based on individual high-interest topics.

This school year, our PTA and business partners worked in conjunction to support our desire to expand our technology-based, STEM focused instructional opportunities through monetary supports of materials and training for teachers. One initiative we are proud of is Project Lead the Way. This program inspires, engages and empowers students to become designers and innovators as they investigate and work through real-world problems using skills developed in the areas of computer science, biomedical science, and engineering. Additionally, our tier 1 students participate in Engineering is Elementary. This is similar to Project Lead the Way as it inspires innovation as students construct new solutions to old problems. An example of this would be, designing a solar oven with which they need to generate enough power to cook a hotdog.

Problem-based learning is a crucial component to our student's success. We challenge students to think outside of the box and apply their learning in new and exciting situations. We also challenge teachers to plan and deliver technology rich instruction with a pilot 1:1 technology initiative at 3rd through 5th grades that will expand next year to encompass most 3rd through 5th grade classrooms with full implementation the following year. Through this initiative, we have seen student engagement reach incredible new heights. During classroom observations, engagement has often been measured at up to 100% as students remain both cognitively and behaviorally engaged.

Through our Data Digs, a process implemented by our district to assist administrators in becoming academic agents of change to move students toward building capacity in closing achievement gaps and celebrating accomplishments, several areas of need became evident. We discussed the need for a Morning Math Academy (a building-specific program geared toward 3rd-5th grade students who are close to proficiency) along with other programs and resources to remediate students as they embraced strategic instruction around the math practices and worked toward proficiency in the CCSS. Close review of multiple data sources (common formatives, summatives, MAP and classroom observation) gaps became apparent within our students with disabilities, our non-Caucasian subgroup, and a slight gap in 5th grade math.

Through pre-teaching, re-teaching, and scaffolding strategies, it is our belief that we will see a great return on our investment as students demonstrate confidence within formative and summative assessment, as well as application of skill as it relates to new tasks across curricular areas. As a staff, we have discussed learning strategies and styles, along with cultural variances that may impact student progress, as well as ways to embrace differences. Cedar Lane is the proud supporter of our district's Autism program and our district's Skill Builders program, which serves student's with social, emotional and mental health needs. It is our honor to be the staff chosen to embrace working with our highest need students and observing their growth

as they work toward transition back to their home schools with a new set of academic, behavioral and life skills. Within both programs, there is a significant focus on parent involvement. We offer a variety of opportunities for families to come together to support one-another in building relationships with those who can best relate to the challenges they are experiencing as parents.

As a whole school community, our expectations are high. Our staff drive themselves to embrace every opportunity to increase rigor for students and challenge them to grow in all manners. Through a significant focus on leadership, the celebration of one-another's differences and similarities, celebration of supporting our community and becoming the strongest "me" each student can be, we hope to graduate students who are prepared for middle school and beyond. Our overall goal is to teach students the importance of self and self worth, to show students that each opportunity is for growth, to dedicate ourselves to making mistakes in our overall pursuit of embracing potential, positivity, and possibility.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Within the Cedar Lane School community, we strive to provide an environment that engages, motivates, and shows support for all stakeholders. Our students are highly active in the learning environment academically, socially and emotionally. Working as Math Ambassadors, our 5th grade students demonstrate a high level of leadership by working alongside teachers in 1st through 3rd grades to lead small group math intervention lessons that engage their younger peers through a variety of rich academic experiences. Our student leaders also demonstrate their social and emotional awareness as they assist in the presentation of whole school Morning Leadership Meeting. Through this experience, our students learn about the 7 Habits of Happy Kids, creating an awareness and responsibility for one's self and others, and teaching other students about tolerance within the school community. Our student leaders have presented on Autism awareness, opportunities to lead service learning drives that give back to the community, and upcoming leadership opportunities – such as becoming a tour guide for new students and families.

Our staff is a unique group that has grown constantly over the past few years, with 22 additions in just the 16/17 school year. Each staff member quickly jumps in to become an active member of a school-wide committee, a driving force behind our well-functioning professional learning communities, and assistant in many ways with development and delivery of professional development. We have a highly active Sunshine Committee that assists with planning multiple staff development activities to help drive collaboration, problem solving skills and a sense of camaraderie among adults.

The peer-to-peer observation system that has been developed within the building is a great source of mutual support and respect that has a direct impact on individual growth in instructional delivery. In addition, recognizing one another's accomplishments through staff shout-outs and monthly celebrations helps to ensure all are valued and respected.

Having a voice to help propel change is highly valued within our school community and culture. Through surveys, opportunities to meet face-to-face with administrative staff, participation on a variety of high impact committees and attendance at school functions, our staff is able to articulate what is important to them and how best to advance the success of the school community as a whole.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

While we at Cedar Lane strive to incorporate engagement from a wide variety of stakeholders, family and community engagement is of the utmost importance. It is important for us to engage families and community in all aspects of the environment so that the relationships we foster help to create well rounded future leaders. We host volunteer and mentor training four times each school year to encourage families to participate in the day-to-day instructional programming. At this time we have over 100 volunteers who are in and out of our building on a regular basis. On any given day our volunteers can be found working in the library, assisting with art projects, having lunch in the café, reading with students or making copies in the office. We further engage families and community in the outreach projects we host such as a hat and mitten drive for local children in need, collecting to help sponsor a Make A Wish dream for one of our students, assisting two scouts with projects to earn their Eagle Badge, and supporting multiple families in need for various holidays. Our PTA diligently strives to host events that encourage active family participation such as mother/son game night, an annual father-daughter dance, family BINGO nights, trunk or treat, family paint nights, movie nights, and providing sponsorship of a school wide field day.

While collaboration between our students is a crucial element to our success, collaboration with our families is paramount to student achievement. Some strategies used to keep families informed of students' progress, achievement and challenge include rubric based Friday folders, utilization of teacher created websites, frequent e-mail and phone messages by teachers, staff and administrators, classroom and school newsletters student led conferences, student leadership binders, school-wide data displays and access to student grades and data via eSchool (a state wide data base). We also work hard to sustain business

partnerships with Papa Johns, Chick-Fil-A, Capriottis, Giant, Acme, Wal-Mart, Bob Evans and other independent local businesses.

Families who are new to our community are given tours of the school and an opportunity to meet staff to share about their students. As part of the tour, student leaders discuss how data is used and how our goal setting process works. We love these opportunities to share about our learning community!

3. Professional Development:

Our inclusive model of professional development is built around cultivating our talent from within to help our teachers, support staff and administrators grow in their expertise. While we strive to offer and create professional development activities that align with academic standards, we put increasing student achievement and overall school improvement at the forefront of all that we do. Administrators and staff work together to plan professional development opportunities throughout the year. A comprehensive review of school wide data drives many of the decisions made as to how and when a specific topic of professional development will be most well received and utilized by staff.

Professional development looks different in any given area as it serves multiple purposes. A critical component to the success of our school comes from the growth we make after reflecting upon data gathered from both individual classroom's and grade level's performance. Our teachers participate in monthly peer-to-peer walkthroughs with feedback targeted around the framework of a growth minded cycle of individual development. Staff work together to set specific targets and then collect data to share with each other based on those targets. Data boards are visible in each student leadership binder, each classroom, and in the hallways. We honor a system of transparency as it relates to data. We believe firmly in honoring our growth but also in creating a plan to improve where we are lacking.

Lesson studies are crucial in calibrating the level of instruction expected. Within this process, grade levels collaborate to create a single lesson to be used team-wide. A full grade level participates in a fish bowl lesson study after the creation of a lesson by having one teacher instruct the lesson with her students while grade level colleagues sit in. After the first round of instruction the team meets to debrief and discuss enhancements/changes that can be made to strengthen instructional planning and delivery. After working these changes into the lesson a different teacher then teaches the newly revised lesson to their class while grade level colleagues again sit in. The framework around this experience is based on the student's needs and what specifications the team has set forth. Our teachers are always very eager to participate in fish bowl studies as it gives them the opportunities for immediate feedback and implementation of new strategies in real time.

Another unique professional development we offer to staff is ed camp. This professional development serves as a means for special education staff to come together and focus on specific skills and the needs of the professional learning community.

Staff has a variety of ways to participate in the ideas around what professional development will be offered. They also have the ability to lead professional development based on strengths. Examples of staff led offerings include:

Leader in Me – Taking it Home; Embedded Assessment Opportunities; Advancing Student Questioning; Planning for Higher Order Thinking; and many more. Each of these opportunities has provided a meaningful way for staff to understand the instructional focus of Cedar Lane and experience modeling of expected strategies. As a result, we have experienced tremendous growth in student acquisition of knowledge.

4. School Leadership:

At CLE our leadership philosophy stems from the desire to drive change from within. Distributed Leadership is the platform from which change occurs. Our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) which consists of building administrators, representation from each grade level, the related arts staff and reading support staff make up the team who meet bi-weekly. This team collaborates, gathers, discusses, and shares

input among all staff about all things related to student achievement and success. These school leaders are able to serve as a group who assists with maintaining our consistent instructional focus: ensuring a balance of rigor, productive struggle, and collaborative practices. It is important to our principal that all staff can articulate and explain what our instructional focus means so that they can truly uphold it in everything they do.

Through our shared vision and a clear understanding of the path we will take to reach that vision our school team achieves success on many levels. Having a clear purpose brings us together and supports buy in from various stakeholders as well as district leaders. We have a strong desire to recognize the strengths in others, to cultivate an environment that honors hearing not just listening, and to honor the ideas brought forth by all. We dig deep to consider what will facilitate change and grow more leaders through inspiring others to find their passion.

The desire to inspire leadership in all has allowed quiet voices to be heard as they plan and deliver professional development for the first time, discover their passion in technology and having a flipped classroom, bringing a talent to the forefront as they lead after school yoga sessions for staff members and just get involved in a new and challenging way.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

When thinking of our school as an academic model of success we attribute The Leader in Me as the one practice by which we have grown and been most successful. In 2011, our school embraced the Leader in Me, which proved to be a transformational process that provided our staff with a tool to align 21st Century Skills and a growth mindset. Looking at the 21st Century Skills that serve as our district focus, known as our “District Beats”- creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and engagement; The Leader in Me framework provides clear and consistent language for our students, staff and community. Together we use the framework and found ways to imbed it into structures already in place to make student achievement and success for all even greater. The Leader in Me supported our drive for increasing student achievement as a focus on the 7 Habits became the internal motivation for choosing one’s own weather and success. Our student are able to look at life through the lens of creating your own happiness and success based on not only the choices you make and the path you follow, but the manner in which you reflect and respond to all situations. We are able to look at situations from the classroom to the playground and problem solve about what things might be in or out of our “Circle of Control”. This change in thinking has been huge for both our students and staff. The 7 Habits give us means to grow and build upon our academic success through such instrumental tools as data tracking and goal setting, while nurturing and caring for each other through a strong family -school connection. In the summer months we visit new families to welcome them to our school community and share The 7 Habits family guide, so that new families can work to be acclimated to the 7 Habits prior to the start of the school year. Early on in the school year we invite families in for Open House and after families visit their child’s classroom, we invite them to join administrators in the auditorium for a Leader In Me presentation. Throughout the year we offer Habit related Family Nights and parent education sessions at monthly PTA Meetings. We strive to enable our students to grown and succeed with tools that they can carry with them not only during their time at CLE, but in future academics years and beyond in their life as productive contributing members of society. While our students come to us from various backgrounds with vastly differing abilities, The Leader in Me supports each and every child who is a part of our Cedar Lane Family along with their families in order to make connections, set goals, and help us partner to develop the whole child through focusing on universal principles of being highly effective in life.