

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 Mr. Joseph A. Ciulla

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

Official School Name Old Farmers Road School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 51 Old Farmers Road

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

Long Valley NJ 07853-3151
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Morris County

Telephone (908) 876-3865

Fax (908) 876-9506

Web site/URL https://www.wtschools.org/OFRS

E-mail jciulla@wtschools.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*Mr. Jeff Mohre

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

District Name Washington Township School District - Morris Tel. (908) 876-4172

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. Kathleen Koop

(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	17	32	49
1	26	24	50
2	30	34	64
3	20	31	51
4	26	25	51
5	28	35	63
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	147	181	328

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90 % White
 - 0 % 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: 5%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	329
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1%
3 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3%
Total number students who qualify: 10

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
44 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>30</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</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: 7
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, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	22
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.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

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	96%	97%	96%	97%	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.

Old Farmers Road School, a caring, involved 21st century learning community committed to excellence in education, ensures that all students are provided with an exciting, meaningful learning environment that enables them to become well-rounded, lifelong learners, who reach their full potential as responsible adults.

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

Our child-centered, kindergarten through 5th grade school is one of three outstanding elementary schools in scenic Washington Township - Long Valley, New Jersey. Old Farmers Road School (OFRS) first opened its doors on November 27, 1965. The school quickly expanded in 1968 and then again 1979 to accommodate rapid community growth. Long Valley is considered a suburban community with strong rural ties. Long Valley is a picturesque historical town that was originally known as German Valley up until World War I. Farms, although not the dominant community feature of the past, still proudly occupy many acres of land. Housing developments from different time periods dot the landscape. Currently, there are 328 students who proudly call OFRS their elementary school. Many families are second or third generation to Long Valley. They are very supportive and partner with the school on many levels.

At OFRS, our commitment is to educate the whole child, taking care to meet his/her academic, social, emotional, and wellness needs. We provide our students with a life-long love of learning and a challenging educational program that develops skills and knowledge necessary to lead successful, meaningful lives. In order to accomplish these goals, our highly qualified educators employ a variety of strategies and techniques: hands-on activities, learning centers, workshop formats, cooperative learning, small group, and direct instruction to meet the individual needs of learners. Character development is engrained in all we do. Our school is a place that encourages and recognizes the positive contributions of our students and staff.

Students are provided with a balanced literacy program that integrates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing across the curriculum. Many teachers are also trained in specialized reading techniques. Guided reading, shared reading and writing, reading aloud, interactive writing experiences, independent reading and writing, spelling, phonics instruction, and academic vocabulary development are all valued components of the balanced literacy approach at OFRS. Everyday Mathematics serves as the basis for our mathematics instruction in grades K-5 along with Connected Math in grade 5. Our Professional Learning Communities initiative allows teachers the opportunity to work as a structured collaborative team toward the goal of continuous improvement. Additional components of our core curriculum include guided discovery science, social studies, health, and a full complement of related arts: music, physical education, computer technology, art, library/media, and Spanish. We value the arts at OFRS. Third grade students participate in a recorder concert and all fourth grade students participate in chorus. Fifth grade students have opportunities to participate in band, chorus, and orchestra. Every spring our art teacher partners with parents and leads a school wide art show.

Standardized monitoring of student progress includes Running Records, Measures of Academic Progress, Cognitive Abilities Testing as well as daily formative evaluations. The NJ PARCC language arts and mathematics exam is administered in grades 3, 4, and 5. Recently, OFRS was recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education as a school scoring in the 99th percentile in terms of academic growth and achievement as identified on the NJ PARCC assessment. The 99th percentile equates to a number two ranking in Morris County and a number thirty in the state ranking. By any measure, a high honor in a state of over 2,500 public schools!

Students' special needs are met through the services of literacy specialists, math support teachers, an Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS), 504 team, as well as an in-house Child Study Team (CST). The CST works in collaboration with special education teachers to provide programming to students that have a learning disability or emotional/behavioral challenge. Gifted and Talented programming is also offered to students who meet those qualifying standards. Beginning in grade 3, students also take part in Continental Math League and National Science League.

Maintaining a strong home-school partnership enhances our students' attitudes toward school and learning. Therefore, parent involvement is a fundamental component of our school. The OFRS Parent Teacher Association (PTA) provides substantial support for both classroom teachers and special programs and projects that could not otherwise be achieved. The PTA regularly purchases technology enhancements. The PTA brings exciting and educational assemblies to Old Farmers. The PTA funded assemblies relate to author visits, Lenape Indian Studies, Liberty Science Programs, Laser Spectacular, reptile, and penguin

programs and more! In addition, the PTA also takes the lead in coordinating the annual Trick-or-Truck, Walk-a-Thon, Holiday Boutique, Book Fair, Talent Show and Spring Fair. Furthermore, the PTA sponsors innovative teacher mini-grants. We are very fortunate to have such a devoted educational partner! Another group that supports all of the Washington Township Schools is the Municipal Alliance. Moreover, OFRS Grandparent POWER volunteers and our strong connection with the Washington Township Veterans Association Post 1776 are further evidence of the bond we foster with the greater community. Together, we regularly provide patriotic flag raising ceremonies and collections for the troops.

In closing, our school is known for its high academic standards, nurturing environment and family/community involvement. Over the past 52 years, many boys and girls have come to our school to learn. They were all taught by teachers and staff who loved being here, and were proud of the school. We are all very lucky to be a part of Old Farmers Road School community of learners.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Core Curriculum: Washington Township Schools' core curriculum is designed to facilitate high-quality teaching - learning processes relevant to the successful attainment of the adopted New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The WTS core curriculum is vast in educational experiences, providing a plethora of professional resources designed to equip educators with the tools and guidance necessary to ensure continuity of quality instruction within a developmentally appropriate educational framework. Each written area of the curriculum is intended to be a living document within the ever-evolving arena of curriculum development and delivery. Current and future contributions to the core curriculum are made by the district's esteemed professional faculty who are deeply acknowledged and appreciated, and are indicative of a thriving educational culture where collaborative, professional learning communities have become the new norm.

Reading/English Language Arts: The goal of the Washington Township English Language Arts Integrated Curriculum is to prepare all students to become literate and active learners within a rapidly changing community and the world. The home-grown units are orchestrated using the Understanding by Design curriculum model of Wiggins and McTighe. Each grade level has several balanced literacy units which focus on The New Jersey Student Learning Standards with an emphasis on student engagement and authenticity, as well as a collection of evidence to ensure understanding. For example, our fourth-grade learners engage deeply in the causes and effects of the Revolutionary War, while our fifth graders delve into an appreciation of heroism in their study of slavery, civil rights, and injustice. Our English Language Arts integrated curriculum is rich in historical experiences, such as our third graders reading, writing, speaking and listening to stories of westward pioneers or cultural folklore to enhance research of different countries. Our primary students engage in reading and writing about colonial times, create a wax museum to enrich a study in biography, and community service. An authentic balanced literacy curriculum provides language rich experiences through the use of read aloud, guided reading/writing, shared reading /writing, writing/reading workshop, and direct explicit instruction of skills. Foundational reading is anchored using a multi-sensory approach to phonological acquisition. Our teachers scaffold learning using assessment guided instruction and hands-on activities, such as letter/word making in sand, or body movement for sight words. Our curriculum addresses not only the New Jersey Student Learning Standards but also embraces research on brain-based learning, multi-intelligence theory, cooperative learning and differentiated instruction.

Mathematics: Washington Township Schools adhere to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics. The mathematics standards provide clarity and specificity while emphasizing important models for mathematical practice. Not only a conceptual understanding of fundamental ideas are outlined, but the key principles of mathematics and the laws of arithmetic provide structure. The mathematics curriculum used in WTS is supported by the Everyday Mathematics program. A rigorous and balanced approach, the program, alongside the curriculum raises expectations for conceptual understanding and mastery of basic skills. An emphasis is made for how students learn by building understanding over time. Higher order and critical thinking skills are stressed using real-world problems ranging from the concrete to the abstract. All major content domains are included in the curriculum: number sense, algebra, measurements, geometry, data analysis and probability beginning in kindergarten. Varied assessments guide instruction, as well as varied instructional techniques, provide rich experiences using cooperative learning, daily routines, and games. Preparing our students for the future by providing a curriculum to improve students' problem-solving agility is paramount in Washington Township Schools.

Science: The Washington Township Schools' science curriculum addresses the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science. The standards are designed to actively engage students scientifically by practicing and applying science and engineering concepts. These standards provide concrete examples and resources for the development of our curriculum. The learning experiences begin with essential questions about the world and students experiment with how scientists investigate and find solutions. The curriculum is structured into grade level explorations and discovery units, ranging from topics such as "The Materials and Motion Module" in kindergarten that provides early-childhood students with integrated experiences

with physical science, earth science, and engineering core ideas that relate to students' interests to our fifth graders discovering chemistry in "The Mixtures and Solutions Module" which introduces fundamental ideas about matter and its interactions. Students gain diverse experience that contributes to the understanding of crosscutting concepts of patterns; cause and effect; scale, proportion, and quantity; systems and system models; and energy and matter. Students in Washington Township DO Science by actively participating in scientific investigations and discoveries.

Social Studies: Critical content for the social studies program was developed using The New Jersey Student Learning Standards which supports a vision of "providing learners with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to become active, informed citizens and contributing members of local, state, national, and global communities in the digital age" (NJDOE, 2014). Content focuses on seven themes which spiral systematically within and through the grade levels. The scope and sequence of critical content is presented using thematic instruction offered in an interdisciplinary approach. Students learn fundamental concepts about government, citizenship, geography, economics, and history. The integrated curriculum provides a development of core democratic values, the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and how key people and events contributed to the development of the American heritage. Exploration of cultural universals enable students to realize how the availability of resources, the changing environment, and innovation impact everyday life. Each topic is explored using key essential questions to stimulate inquiry and deepen understanding. For example, an essential question in our third grade curriculum asks: Why is it important to understand the perspectives of other cultures in an interconnected world? Each unit in our curriculum is supported by rich literature, thought-provoking informational text, and high levels of student engagement and interaction with real-world applicability.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Old Farmers Road School Related Arts unit is a collaborative Professional Learning Community (PLC) team that complements classroom core curriculum units and advances student learning. All students in grades kindergarten through fifth participate weekly in library and technology, music, art, physical education and health, and foreign language. The school nurse, gifted and talented teachers and PTA (Parent and Teacher Association) also provide educational programs with various grade levels that enhance learning. The essential focus of the Related Arts team is to provide instruction and activities that timely align with classroom curriculum themes that build on students' existing knowledge and learning, while modeling positive character education behaviors.

The library/media and technology center serves not only the student population, but the entire school faculty community, with curriculum relevant literature and electronic database resources. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade receive weekly curriculum grade appropriate instruction in literature appreciation (i.e. book talks, author study and book genres), computer application skills (i.e. catalog searching, multi-media presentation tools and design, website evaluation) and research skills and computer ethics (i.e. plagiarism, copyright, bibliography, digital etiquette and safety).

Art class at Old Farmers is a creative space for grade kindergarten through fifth students to explore a variety of mediums and processes, such as drawing, painting, collage, and clay. Students study individual artists, Art Movements, and Cultural Art (i.e. Piet Mondrian, African Masks, Ancient Egypt, and Pop Art). Students also learn how to form and share opinions about works of art through Museum Walks and Art Talks. Student work is showcased in the halls throughout the school year and at our annual spring art show for family and friends.

Music at Old Farmers includes students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Students enjoy playing instruments and singing, while learning about different instruments and genres through video and interactive computer programs. Note reading and musicianship are acquired through concert preparation as all grades perform each year for family and friends. Fifth grade culminates with band and orchestra performances and an all-inclusive, fifth grade Broadway style musical.

The physical and health education at Old Farmers includes students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The students are engaged physically and cognitively throughout their weekly lessons. The students are involved

in developmentally appropriate activities (i.e. yoga, fitness, and movement skills) with an emphasis on life-long skills. Cross-curricular collaborative lessons are developed in conjunction with several of the other teaching staff using language arts, social studies, mathematics, art, music and science (i.e. The Lorax, Winter Olympics, cultural dances).

Spanish instruction is given to all kindergarten through fifth grade students on a weekly basis. In conjunction with the curriculum, the goal of Spanish class is to have the students develop a functional use of the Spanish language, while introducing them to the culture and history associated with it. The focus is on verbal communication and comprehension. Motion, repetition and music help students make connections to curriculum themed general education programs in areas stressing literacy, numeracy, science and social studies.

The talented and gifted (TaG) teachers serve kindergarten through fifth grade students identified with unique higher-level learning needs. TaG students utilize 21st century skills including creativity, design, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving as they plan, design, and implement projects, such as, simulating a colony on Mars, researching the brain, researching an historical person and presenting a “Night of Notables.” Throughout the program, the running themes relate to growth mindset principles that include positive risk-taking, becoming comfortable with struggle, and using failure as a tool for growth.

“Healthy Children Learn Better” is the core concept of our school nurse. Teaching healthy habits about nutrition, safety, exercise, sleep, hygiene, and prevention, the nurse provides continual education throughout the school year. Health tips, teacher collaboration, bulletin boards, technology alerts, screenings, lunch and learn programs, annual wellness week, classroom lessons, teachable moments, and parent-nurse conferences, are all part of the continual actions of the nurse that strives to bring optimal wellness to the students, staff, and parent community.

The related arts team strives to advance student learning by complementing the classroom core curriculum and providing instruction and activities that timely align with classroom curriculum themes, as well as to enhance each students’ educational experience with various educational programs, all while modeling and teaching positive character education behaviors.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Over the last eight years Old Farmers Road School (OFRS) has implemented a professional reflection of all educational practices. This reflection has allowed us to genuinely collaborate across all grade levels to keep our philosophy of a child centered approach to instruction at the core of all we do. Our instruction encourages and supports both children and staff to be their best selves; persevering and problem solving in all that we do. Children are afforded a safe and supportive learning environment. This environment encourages them to go above and beyond in academics, as well as activities that extend well beyond classroom learning.

OFRS prides itself on providing diverse learning experiences for all of its children. Through the use of technology, cooperative learning activities, problem based learning experiences and cross grade level opportunities, children and staff alike are encouraged to step outside their comfort zone, to push through obstacles and to persevere. Teachers model each and every day the attributes of “lifelong learning.” It is in this, leading by example that our children recognize that learning never ends; rather it is a journey, one that can be difficult, but incredibly rewarding as well.

Planning such experiences requires teamwork and open sharing by all colleagues. At OFRS, we are fortunate to be given daily time to meet, discuss, reflect and create meaningful lessons for all children. In preparing these lessons, data is collected and analyzed which helps drive our instruction. Specific data instruments include running records, MAP testing in gr. 1-2, COGAT in grades 2 and 4, Continental Math in grades 2-5, National Science League in grades 2-5, Wordmasters in grades 4-5, and District Developed Assessments in grades K-5 for reading, writing and math. Through the use of this data, we are able to accurately assess the strengths and meet the needs of each child. Should a child require additional support, our Intervention and Referral Services (I &RS)committee works in conjunction with classroom teachers,

parents and support personnel to develop an action plan for the child. In addition to I&RS, before school reading support and math support is also offered for students who qualify.

Our district-created curriculum follows a scope and sequence that aligns with our New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Using the district-created timeline of instructional goals streamlines our activities and provides the opportunity for genuine reflection of student learning. This reflection allows teachers to adjust their teaching practices, thereby keeping activities meaningful and relevant to our students. In using a balanced literacy approach within our ELA instruction, students are engaged in the daily reading of various genres in multiple formats. Guided reading groups expose our students to authentic literature while developing the specific skills of each child as determined by their running record assessments. In addition to reading, writing is a critical component of all subject areas here at OFRS. We are very fortunate to work closely with our district literacy coaches and literacy instructors. We utilize a team approach when planning and implementing our writing lessons. Our literacy coaches model the instruction for teachers and students which allows our teachers to learn and reflect on the best practices of literacy instruction. This directly benefits our students and certainly supports our teachers in their professional development.

Math and science instruction is guided through a variety of teaching techniques. Using whole group, guided groups and project based learning, students are exposed to many different learning experiences and opportunities in which they must collaborate and problem solve. As such, our students strengthen their ability to persevere and are able to apply their skills to real world situations. Daily use of iPads, Chromebooks, SMARTboards, online learning tools and other electronic devices greatly enriches student learning, while helping to develop 21st century technology skills. Across all grade levels students create and share projects and presentations using a variety of technological resources and tools.

Old Farmers Road School is a school committed to the education of the whole child. Through our teaching practices, engaging activities and professional reflection, we work each day to enhance the educational, emotional and social well-being of our children, and that is something we are very proud of.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The cornerstone of the positive school climate at OFRS is rooted firmly in providing student-learners the real-life skills of positive and effective communication, problem-solving, healthy interpersonal relationships, and conflict resolution. Providing students with practical life skills that develop resiliency and compassion is a vision we strive for. Our low rate of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (H.I.B.) related incidents and disciplinary interventions truly speak to the inclusive and empathetic climate at OFRS. Classroom teachers and special area staff engage and motivate students in a variety of ways, including a comprehensive Code of Conduct that clearly outlines the expectations for all students and staff. This has served to secure a culture of respect and citizenship.

Students and staff can feel the sense of community as you walk through the doors in the morning. Positive school culture begins at the start of the school day when all students and staff have the opportunity to pause for the Pledge of Allegiance. A greeter is outside every morning and afternoon during student pickup/drop-off to greet students and their families. Well-established programs such as Peer Leadership, Social-Emotional Learning lessons, daily flag-raising, School Safety Committee, patriotic seasonal school-wide celebrations, and PTA sponsored programs for staff and families reinforce this feeling of kinship and school family.

Teachers feel valued and supported primarily by the collaborative teams they work within. Our school principal meets with these teams on a monthly basis. District literacy coaches and in-house literacy specialists also tier support for teachers who may have student's needed varied interventions and unconventional supports. An in-house Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) Committee meets monthly with teachers, parents, and specialists to develop action plans tailored to support the teacher and the student learner. A School Safety and Climate Committee also monitors the well-being and security of all students and staff. These layers of support and rigorous tiers of emotional, social, and academic interventions ensure that all student and teacher needs are met.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Old Farmers Road School (OFRS) is eponymously named. Appropriately so, the growing relationships that OFRS has with its families and the community factor significantly into its success. The strategy is twofold: open invitation and reciprocity. OFRS and its parent-led PTA sponsor various school events and activities that educate, entertain, heighten camaraderie, and fundraise. Family and community participation is warmly welcomed and encouraged; in fact, many school events and activities are not possible without parent leadership. Gratefully, OFRS families have consistently shown outstanding generosity of time, talent, and treasure. Examples are plentiful: parents read in classrooms and volunteer at events and activities; families tend the school garden, attend student arts exhibits and performances, and monetarily support fundraisers. Even grandparents participate, lending warmth and assistance to classrooms through the Grandparent POWER initiative.

OFRS is a proud member of the Long Valley community. Community helpers such as the police, fire department, and wellness professionals visit with and educate the students. OFRS also honors the community's military and police with a biannual flag raising ceremony where students, staff, and families recognize the service of these fine men and women. Students prepare handwritten notes of gratitude and well-wishes for both veterans and active duty troops. However, their goodwill does not end there; because students and staff - many of whom are Long Valley residents themselves - are so entrenched in the community, they, in turn, give back.

As senior members of the school, fifth graders offer "Peer Mentor" guidance to younger students, particularly kindergarteners, and spearhead a winter community service project to benefit a vulnerable population. During this school year alone, students school-wide collected and donated foodstuffs to a local interfaith food pantry; collected and donated approximately 1,000 pounds of Halloween candy to send to

servicemen and servicewomen in a veterans hospital and overseas - plus postage!; raised almost \$1,500 to purchase Scholastic books for both their own classroom libraries and underprivileged young readers; donated toys to the Toys for Tots Program; and collected food and supplies for homeless pets in collaboration with local Scouts.

Since parents and the community factor so significantly into OFRS' success, they are informed of students' needs, challenges, and achievements by the administration, classroom teachers, and the PTA, all of whom regularly disseminate information via website, email, and "backpack mail." Some teachers maintain interactive websites and apps of their classrooms' day-to-day. Communication is transparent, fluid, and, best of all, fun: OFRS maintains a rotating school-wide photo gallery that proudly showcases school and community life.

3. Professional Development:

The Old Farmers Road School strives to create an ongoing teacher professional development model focused on improving teacher practice and student growth. Teachers generate and participate in Professional Learning Communities on topics, such as, but not limited to, FLIPGRID and Seasaw in the classroom, differentiation strategies in mathematics and English Language Arts, ESL instructional strategies and parental involvement, School Wellness Awareness, Word Study through multi-sensory strategies and Unpacking the NJSLS-S/NGSS.

Staff participates in cross content area professional development teams throughout the school. The School Climate and Culture team, the School Improvement team, the District Education Advisory Panel, as well as the Child Study and Interventions and Referral teams provide input into the professional development needs of the staff. Based on staff learning, the teams have increased the use of data to response to concerns and plan student and school programming. Following embedded training, teams use the multi-tiered systems of support to identify students in need of additional academic instruction. Through the collective focus on professional development efforts for all the professionals, the Old Farmers Road School works to serve the needs of colleagues, students and the community.

Specialists partner with teachers in several areas. Conquering Mathematics provides teachers with content specific best practices for elementary mathematics. The University of Pennsylvania provides literacy based instructional strategies to infuse into lessons. Continuing with a strong emphasis on literacy skill, trainers skilled in Orton-Gillingham methods work with the teachers over multiple years to incorporate targeted strategies to strengthen the core academic areas.

Teachers attend a variety of professional learning experiences based on choice and interest provided by experts. Colleagues turn-key the new information with peers during daily team planning meetings, after school workshops and/or by volunteering to present during district professional development days. Of unique importance and pride for the Old Farmers Road School is the dedication to expand practice and the classroom environment by connecting with other classrooms across the country. It is a way to grow the students social justice awareness when working with teachers and students from a variety of demographic backgrounds.

Based on multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data, the Old Farmers Road School staff have made tremendous gains in instructional practice and student growth through the collective efforts of professional development. Yet, the staff continue to look for ways to reflect, revise and improve pedagogical talent.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership focus at Old Farmers Road School (OFRS) can be summarized as a "shared-servant" leadership model. The principal cannot do it alone. There is a feeling of collaboration, cohesiveness, and cooperation on our staff. We exhibit a shared responsibility for our students, staff, and families. Our building principal guides and empowers all within our school with the overarching goal of advancing our students. Our decisions are handled democratically, with opportunities for input and collaboration.

Together, we are far better at advancing our shared aims. The OFRS leadership model recognizes our students are complex beings. And our all-encompassing goal is simple, improving the whole child. We strive to improve students academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and artistically, all the while exhibiting good character.

We recognize that high performing leaders affect student achievement. Our principal is clinically evaluated using the McREL balanced leadership framework. This forward thinking framework has four components: 1. Leadership, 2. Focus of Change, 3. Magnitude of Change, and 4. Purposeful Community. The McREL model identifies the following 21 leadership responsibilities: Affirmation, Change Agent, Communication, Contingent Rewards, Discipline, Flexibility, Focus, Ideals/Beliefs, Input, Intellectual Stimulation, Involvement with Curriculum Instruction and Assessment, Knowledge of Curriculum Instruction and Assessment, Monitor/Evaluate, Optimize Culture, Order, Outreach, Relationships, Resources, Situational Awareness, and Visibility. Our principal's performance is formally measured using these hallmarks of school leadership.

At OFRS there are different opportunities for shared-servant leadership. Grade level teams regularly meet to plan, evaluate, collaborate, and connect. The schedule is designed so that teacher preparation times overlap whenever possible. In addition, Professional learning Communities (PLCs) meet regularly to set goals, collaborate, share expertise, improve teaching skills and improve the academic performance of our students. Our school also holds face-to-face "Principal's Meetings" where grade level teams meet in person in small groups. Our School Improvement Panel (ScIP) has an oversight role. The ScIP is charged to oversee, support, and ensure the district's evaluation, professional development, and mentoring polices are sound at the school level. This representative committee acts as a liaison amongst our faculty. In addition, the ScIP committee works closely with the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC). Our DEAC representatives maintain open lines of communication and assist in providing coherent professional development for the district.

Why is school leadership so important? At Old Farmers Road School, we recognize that leadership requires knowledge, skills, experience, and a positive attitude. We value productivity, teacher and staff morale, innovation, and student success. We believe with these components in place, we will continue to improve upon our high quality instruction thereby setting the stage for remarkable student academic outcomes.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Our website proudly displays our motto “Caring is Cool at Old Farmers Road School.” This philosophy is practiced within the school community, on an emotional and academic level. In the effort to build on academic success, we incorporate cooperative and collaborative learning and differentiate classroom environments. It is by personalizing student learning that we can challenge students individually or in the context of a group. Our Response to Intervention System encourages all to appreciate their peers’ diversities, learning styles, strengths, and weaknesses. Our shared responsibility to do what is right by our children drives this protocol of support.

Academic success begins with the attitudes of the students themselves and filters throughout all those who the children may encounter. Old Farmers Road encourages a climate where staff is encouraged to reach out to each other and use a tiered system of support. Faculty members collaborate on new programs, shared ideas and capitalize on each other’s strengths. Teachers are encouraged to ask questions and seek out advice from Occupational and Speech therapists, related arts teachers, special education teachers, literacy teachers, guidance counselors and English Second Language instructors.

In the next level of support, we have instructional aides, co-teacher models for special education and in class and small group Literacy Support. Teachers and parents maintain a strong connection to assure that a child is progressing. Beyond the classroom, a teacher may use the Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS) in an effort to brainstorm ideas. The committee includes the school principal, homeroom teacher, parents, Child Study team representative, guidance counselor, nurse and Reading Specialist. The team meets once per month to discuss any students who are in need of greater support. The teachers complete a questionnaire and data compilation, providing a “picture of the whole child,” along with a list of interventions that have been used. As a team, the committee discusses strengths and concerns while creating an educational plan to help the student feel successful. A progress check is made within a month’s time to assess how the plan is working.

At Old Farmers Road School, we understand that children progress at different rates and aim to instill lifelong learning. Through our protocol of support, we strive to reach each child and help them to become an independent learner, a problem solver, and a child who feels successful in their school environment.