

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Ethan Maayan

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

Official School Name James Fallon Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 51 Clifford Drive

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

Wayne NJ 07470-3501  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Passaic County

Telephone (973) 633-3125 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.wayneschools.com/jf E-mail emaayan@wayneschools.com

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. Mark Toback  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail mtoback@wayneschools.com

District Name Wayne Township Tel. (973) 633-3000

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. Donald Pavlak  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 2 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools

14 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
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	21	20	41
<b>1</b>	27	34	61
<b>2</b>	37	36	73
<b>3</b>	37	30	67
<b>4</b>	35	26	61
<b>5</b>	47	36	83
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	204	182	386

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 82 % White
  - 1 % 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: 1%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	356
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5%  
Total number students who qualify: 19

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %  
43 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>1</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</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: 13
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	16
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
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 20:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	95%	94%	96%	97%	92%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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.

At James Fallon Elementary School we believe in nurturing and celebrating respect for one's self and others, fostering creativity, and promoting academic excellence.

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**

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James Fallon Elementary School is one of nine elementary schools in Wayne Township NJ. We are located in a suburban community in which our graduates continue to be recognized for their academic and athletic achievements. The school was renovated and re-opened in 2000 after being closed for many years. James Fallon School is located in a quiet, residential area of homes where parents are primarily white collar, well-educated and involved in their children's school experience. Our property includes a nature trail which is utilized for environmental lessons, two baseball fields, a playground area and a blacktop area.

James Fallon School features a committed staff, supportive parents, strong leadership, and a devoted network of PTO volunteers working collaboratively to sustain an energetic and caring atmosphere and a challenging academic environment where the 388 Fallon students can achieve their personal best. The teachers at Fallon work as teams at each grade level. This provides them with the opportunity to share information and grow as professionals. In grades 4 and 5, students receive departmentalized instruction for science, social studies and mathematics. Through departmentalization, both students and teachers benefit from varied learning and instructional styles.

James Fallon is now in our second year using the Schoolwide program for our English Language Arts instruction while following a rigorous NJSLs aligned curriculum. The curriculum is based on a balanced literacy framework and features Readers/Writers workshop with a focus on growing readers and writers through mini-lessons and small group/individual instruction. Differentiated learning opportunities to meet individual student's needs are built into the curriculum and lesson plans to provide for remediation as well as enrichment.

James Fallon is now in our 3rd year of using the EnVision math program. This program is also aligned with the NJSLs as well as the PARCC assessment.

This year, Fallon and the district implemented a new science curriculum using the National Geographic "Exploring Science" program which involves students in the processing skills of inquiry, investigation, and discovery. A partnership with Ramapo College allows students to engage in an Environmental Discovery Center where students explore nature, habitats and the environment in an enjoyable, experiential manner. Fifth graders participate in a culminating two day outdoor education experience at Fairview Lakes. Grade four students participate in an annual trip to the Meadowlands Environmental Center.

In the area of technology, James Fallon students research and immerse themselves in learning while utilizing 219 student Chromebooks and 110 student iPads. Each classroom is equipped with either a BrightLink or Sharp interactive panel. Each month the district's Coordinator of Technology Education provides training on the latest classroom technology tools. In addition to weekly media classes, each class utilizes a weekly "Tech Time" period where students work with their classroom teacher and Media specialist to improve their technology skills.

For students who are experiencing academic, behavioral or social challenges, an Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee convenes and offers assistance to teachers and parents through a problem-solving process focused on the development of a plan that will address individual needs. Dependent on need and eligibility, students may receive services from a reading specialist, basic skills teacher, speech-language specialist or resource center teacher.

Our school counselor involves the students in various social/emotional learning experiences through small group and whole class lessons. The Social Decision Making and Problem Solving Curriculum is utilized along with additional topics including bullying prevention, character education, and conflict resolution skills.

Enrichment specialists provide whole class enrichment lessons for all K-3 students, and meet with qualifying students in grades four and five twice weekly to work on project-based activities.

A unique aspect of learning at Fallon involves inclusion of every student in a grade level musical program in which they present a special academic or character education theme related performance to the student body and parents. Students also attend weekly vocal music classes and art classes. In addition, a fourth and fifth grade band and chorus, and a special art program for artistically talented children enrich the curriculum. Other yearly traditions at Fallon include Field Day, Battle of the Books, Poetry Contest, Talent Show, Presidential Awards, American Citizenship Awards, Move Up Day and Cultural Enrichment assemblies.

Character Education continues to be an important aspect of the student's education. Social/Emotional learning is enhanced via lessons from the school counselor and the LEAD program. Another focus in the social/emotional development is our "Violence Prevention Week" and "Week of Respect." In addition to these activities, the School Counselor facilitates friendship clubs at lunchtime and the principal facilitates a Student Council. The principal also reads a character education themed story to each class four times per year.

The PTO sponsors the "Fun at Fallon" after school program through which teachers present classes on a variety of subjects including TREPS, dance, cooking, acting, STEM, a talent show and sports activities.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

The district relies on research based practices and materials to meet the learning goals of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). At Fallon, we seek to develop our students by providing a myriad of learning opportunities that engage students and are aligned to the appropriate standards.

The ELA curriculum is rooted in Reading and Writing Workshop model. The workshop model provides opportunities for various teaching formats based on student needs including: mini-lessons, read alouds, guided reading, strategy groups, independent reading and conferring. This approach allows teachers to provide whole class lessons and targeted interventions within the classroom. The reading units include: responding to text, genre study, and cross curriculum concepts. Each grade level from K-5 has five units taught in the following sequence: launch, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and an integrated social studies unit that incorporates all of the genre work studied throughout the year. Each grade level also follows writing units to address the writing experiences required by NJSLS: narrative, opinion/argument, and explanatory/informative. Every grade level has grammar lessons which naturally embed into the writing units. To fulfill the foundational skills standards, our students in grades K-2 receive systematic phonics instruction using FUNdations. The Wayne School district chose FUNdations because it is a multi-sensory approach and lends itself to both the Wilson and Orton-Gillingham reading intervention programs.

In math, students learn content aligned with the NJSLS in the areas of number and operations in base ten, operations and algebraic thinking, fractions, measurement, and geometry. The early elementary grades focus on building a strong base for mathematical understanding. Students build foundations with counting and cardinality in kindergarten, working frequently within five. In first and second grade, the major focus shifts to an understanding of addition and subtraction with multiple methods to represent and solve these problems. By third grade, students gain a basic understanding of multiplication, division, and fractions. This foundation allows students to solve more complex problems with the four operations and fractions in fourth and fifth grade. Students transfer their knowledge of fractions to decimals. In all grade-levels, students progressively learn about measurement, time, money, data, and geometry. Each math lesson is designed to allow students to use their prior experiences to construct their own meaning of new mathematical concepts. Students frequently use hands-on materials and visual representations to model mathematics and solve multi-step problems. This development of student understanding allows students to apply mathematical concepts in new situations.

Science instruction aligns to the NGSS and NJSLS which allow students to design and construct experiments as they apply the 3-Dimensions of Science: practices, content, and cross-cutting concepts. Students are provided opportunities to engage with the concepts as they move along the learning progressions. To help provide NGSS-aligned instruction, the district uses Exploring Science and Mystery Science programs. Using these resources, students are engaged in hands-on activities and scientific questioning, which allows them to draw evidence-based conclusions and be active participants in their learning. Students revise their models based on data collected during scientific inquiry and may repeat the same experiment to improve upon results.

Our social studies curriculum focuses instruction on learning about local communities in the earlier grades and then expands to resources and history of New Jersey, and the Age of Exploration. Students learn about American Colonial period followed by the American Revolution. To expand their knowledge of world history, fifth graders study Early People Migration, Maya, Aztecs & Incas, Three African Kingdoms, and The Renaissance. From grades K-5 our students learn about the environment around them which expands along with their growth to learn about the world. Our school uses a variety of materials culled by curriculum committees, information via technology, and non-fiction texts to support learning.

Fostering civic learning and awareness, the student code of conduct is recited by all students each morning. Students in grades four and five have the opportunity to participate in the student council, led by the building principal. Our guidance counselor conducts lessons that address character and social emotional

development; lessons are reinforced by all staff. The building principal frequently visits classrooms to share children's literature that promotes social and emotional development. Finally, the school maintains regular contact with parents to ensure students' growth in all areas.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

In addition to academics, all students at James Fallon Elementary School in grades K-5 have opportunities to engage in physical and creative outlets during the school day. Daily specials classes include physical education, music, art, and media. The school counselor also teaches students how to handle social situations and the nurse provides instruction about health and wellness.

Our physical education curriculum is designed with the goal of having students be active individuals and to equip them to make informed decisions about wellness in hopes that they will lead healthy, active lifestyles in the future. The content of the curriculum keeps safety as a focal point as we teach teamwork, fitness, and health in positive, supportive environment. Our physical education program considers individual needs, abilities, and interests.

During music classes students are engaged in creative and active musical experiences. Music can help students develop critical thinking and leadership skills and our music education program helps to create well-rounded individuals. Our program fosters a love of music and demonstrates the power music has to bring people together. Musical programs are practiced at each grade level, and performances are enjoyed annually by parents and students. Students in grades four and five may participate in band and/or chorus as well. Those participating in band receive instrumental lessons and participate in large group practices. Chorus members meet weekly to hone their vocal music skills. Two performances each year celebrate the talents of our chorus and band.

Our art curriculum is standards aligned and through it students are able to express themselves using a variety of media, techniques, and processes. In art classes, students are able to participate in self-directed learning as well as work collaboratively. They learn to appreciate art for its worth as they create, analyze, interpret, and evaluate various pieces of artwork. Qualifying students in grades four and five also participate in an additional enrichment art class once each week.

Through our media program, students are encouraged to appreciate the power of literature and develop a passion for reading. In addition, they learn to be responsible digital citizens as they are taught how to search for information in print and online materials, and how to critically evaluate information. The curriculum includes coding as well as makerspace opportunities through which students engage in hand-on projects which allow them to design, build, and invent as they collaborate with their peers. Projects involve science and engineering and students learn and practice the art of perseverance. Units of study for our media program include: Media Center Orientation, Reading Literacy, Literature Appreciation, Informational and Digital Literacies, and the Research Process.

At Fallon we have a dedicated school counselor who follows a social emotional character development curriculum designed with the goal of helping every child to achieve social-emotional and academic success in a safe, nurturing environment. The focus of the program is on self-control, self-awareness, and decision making/problem solving. All lessons and activities are grade level appropriate. In addition, our counselor pulls small groups to help students work through any challenges they may face.

Our school nurse teaches students about health and wellness through lessons which include hygiene, first aid, safety, growth and development, nutrition, and more.

Each specialist communicates regularly with classroom teachers to ensure student needs are met, and to plan cross-curricular lessons. The focus at Fallon is always on the well-being of our students.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

At Fallon, instructional methods, interventions, and assessments are designed to ensure that we meet the needs of our students and maximize their growth. Teachers differentiate instruction to meet students' needs. An I&RS team convenes monthly to provide targeted interventions for at risk students, which can include classroom accommodations and/or basic skills instruction in language arts and math. Basic skills teachers use unique materials to provide targeted instruction. Identified special education students may participate in small group settings for language arts or math. These students may have in class support for core subjects. A dedicated reading specialist works with identified students to teach encoding and decoding. In addition to the interventions and instructional methods outlined below, district staff meet annually to analyze data from local assessments and state mandated assessments. Staff then creates plans to improve instruction and meet students' needs based on these results. Fallon has no achievement discrepancy for any subgroup greater than 10 percentage points in any grade level and subject.

ELA instruction is based in the Readers and Writers Workshop model using authentic literature. This model fosters student learning by incorporating teacher demonstration, scaffolded practice, and independent practice. Students work with grade level text and texts within their own reading level. Students participate in mini-lessons, guided reading, read alouds, strategy groups, and conferences with teachers. Students receive instruction in whole class, small group, and one-to-one settings depending on their needs. The district has common reading assessments, Fountas and Pinnell benchmarking, and formative assessments to provide targeted instruction. For writing, students use mentor texts to study writing types and author's craft to fulfill the standard requirements. Students compose their own pieces of writing incorporating the text features and craft they have studied, which are assessed using rubrics. In language arts, students develop their speaking and listening skills as they engage in partner and small group conversations. Students who struggle may qualify to see the school's reading specialist in grades K-2.

In math, students construct their own understanding of mathematical concepts using manipulatives and visual representations. Each math lesson begins with teachers posing a problem that students work in small groups to solve, which allows exposure to different ideas and methods for solving. This helps students analyze various solutions to deepen their understandings and construct written responses to explain their mathematical thinking. We follow the CPA approach to mathematics where students learn about concepts using concrete materials, construct pictorial representations, and then move to the abstract mathematical notations. This method of mathematics instruction allows students to learn about the 'why' behind mathematical operations so that they can apply their understanding to new situations. Teachers meet students' needs by differentiating instruction in several ways: varying the depth of questioning, meeting with small groups of students and/or individual students, and providing differentiated work. In order to identify student needs and monitor understanding, teachers use formative assessment as they observe their students daily. They also administer end of chapter assessments and two benchmark assessments throughout the year. These assessments align with targeted materials for remediation. Elementary enrichment specialists designed activities for each math chapter within each grade level in the form of long and short challenges. Classroom teachers use these challenges for students who have demonstrated mastery of concepts.

Science instruction is largely hands-on, allowing students to be active participants in their learning. Students participate in an Outdoor Lab program through Ramapo College that compliments the classroom curriculum. Students visit the outdoor lab to conduct long term experiments and teachers from the program visit classrooms to synthesize learning. Because of the authentic nature of science learning, students are assessed through some traditional assessments, but also through rubrics, projects, and assessments that mirror the type of activities that take place in the science classroom.

Our social studies curriculum infuses technology and integrates language arts into the classroom. Teachers use technology to enhance learning and provide various methods for students to engage with the content. Students have the opportunity to provide evidence of learning using technology available in the school. Fourth and fifth grades incorporate Document Based Questions into the units to foster interdisciplinary connections with language arts. Students are assessed in a variety of ways including tests, projects and presentations.



## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

The James Fallon School culture creates an environment that makes teachers feel valued and supported. We have a staff liaison committee who meet with the principal on a monthly basis to discuss building concerns. James Fallon has an open-door policy as well. Teachers and staff always have the freedom to ask questions and voice concerns both to peers and administration. We celebrate each other's accomplishments and milestones by announcing birthdays, providing staff appreciation breakfasts and encouraging friendships outside of the school environment as well.

At James Fallon Elementary School, we feel that our students' success depends on their experiences in our safe and positive learning environment. We work very hard to foster a warm, friendly, respectful, and open school culture, as well as encourage collaboration and an open leadership mindset. Our entire school community has a stake in the success of our school, and we value the relationship between teachers, students, and families, as well as model honesty, cooperation, and respect among our stakeholders.

James Fallon employs a code of conduct to which all students and staff adhere. The tenets of this code include being friendly to everyone, accepting responsibility, demonstrating loyalty and honesty, choosing to cooperate with others, objecting to bullying, and always doing our best. We have a student council program with elected representatives from grades 3, 4 and 5, who work as leaders with our principal and a parent to improve our school environment. In addition, we also have a safety patrol program for fifth grade volunteers who help to ensure our school is a safe place for learning.

Our school prides itself on a coordinated effort to be the first district in the state to be designated as a "No Place for Hate" district. At James Fallon, we are working to instill the principles of "No Place for Hate," which include: promising to treat everyone fairly, being kind to everyone even if they are not the same as you, telling a trusted adult if someone is being hurt or treated unfairly, and making sure that everyone should be able to feel safe and happy at our school. James Fallon has a school climate team, comprised of students, parents, staff, and administration. This team surveyed all students and staff last year and used the results to formulate their action plan for the 2017-2018 school year.

Our climate team's action plan was kicked off at the beginning of the school year with a Kindness Challenge. Students were challenged to perform over 5,000 acts of kindness in a two week period, as well as collect as many gently used sneakers as possible for donation to students in Africa and Puerto Rico who were in need of footwear and supplies following wartime poverty and natural disasters. The action plan is reinforced by monthly classroom character education lessons provided by both the principal and the counselor. In addition to these activities, students participated in the Kindness Elves project (demonstrating random acts of kindness), peer helper program, grade-level shows that reflect the character education lessons, lunchtime friendship groups led by the school counselor, and school spirit days. Students are recognized by SUPER awards (Students Using Positive Energy Regularly) given out by faculty and staff to recognize students who have done something "super" to make James Fallon a better place.

Along with the SUPER awards, many other recognitions are awarded to both staff and students. James Fallon believes that students should be recognized for achievements that are above and beyond what is expected of them. These awards include Band Student of the Week, teacher and grade level recognition breakfasts, Governor's Educator of the Year Award, Presidential Awards, and American Citizenship Awards. In addition, student and staff birthdays and special accomplishments are recognized over daily morning announcements.

To instill a love for learning and to encourage collaboration and creative thinking, James Fallon implements many different educational programs. Students are engaged daily in a rigorous academic curriculum. Teachers encourage students to work collaboratively with their peers, while also facilitating the learning process. Students are motivated to solve problems, think critically, and take academic risks. Our school has participated for several years in Read for the Record, Read Across America, author visits,

outdoor and indoor science labs, GATES programs (Gifted and Talented Enrichment Services), Hour of Code, professional development opportunities (attending and/or leading workshops), and new teacher mentoring. Along with this, our reading specialist partners with classroom teachers to model and guide students in their use of reading strategies. James Fallon also has a 21st Century Classroom, which is outfitted with state of the art electronic equipment and STEM-based learning activities. One other activity that is available to students is the “Fun @ Fallon” afterschool program, in which students can enroll in various afterschool groups, including dance, robotics, various fitness classes, arts and crafts, Spanish, and TREP\$ (an entrepreneurial program for students in grades 4-8).

We believe that the social curriculum is as important as the academic, and that children learn best when they feel capable, connected, and contributing to the school environment. Therefore, at James Fallon School, we strive to ensure that every student feels successful.

## **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Communication and collaboration with families and the Wayne community is a key component to our school’s success. Positive and productive relationships are fostered with the support of the PTO and community organizations. These partnerships not only include the immediate school community, but also extend to families and Wayne Township as a whole. We have partnerships with local universities including William Paterson, which provides student teachers and related service provider externs, and Ramapo College, which implements science-based lessons in the classroom several times per year. Atlantic Health Systems (Chilton Hospital) provides classroom lessons on nutrition, smoking, stress-reduction, and germs.

James Fallon’s I&RS committee (Intervention and Referral Services) is a multidisciplinary team comprised of teachers, parents/family members, school counselor, Child Study Team members, related service providers, and the principal. This committee serves to assist students experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties, and the staff responsible for addressing the needs of these students. The focus of the I&RS committee is to problem solve and collaborate to meet the educational needs of each child.

In addition to parent involvement in the I&RS process, parents also engage in parent/teacher conferences, and, during American Education Week, are invited to observe their children in the classroom setting. James Fallon has nearly 100% parent attendance at Back to School Night. In order to address the needs of students new to our school, we have a new family orientation during the summer, and a yearly kindergarten orientation in the Spring. Prior to the start of school, all families and staff are invited to a PTO-sponsored ice cream social where they can get together with their friends and classmates in a non-educational setting. Teachers are not required to attend, but we have nearly 100% voluntary participation in this event. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to be class parents, who help to coordinate classroom events and parties. Parent volunteers also help with facilitating student council meetings and activities. Teachers invite parents and relatives to be classroom mystery readers, which is a fun and exciting activity to help students learn that their families are invested in their education.

We pride ourselves on giving back to our community, using input from both student council and the PTO. Sponsored events and activities that benefit our community include Jump Rope/Hoops for Heart (American Heart Association), Valentines for the Troops, holiday toy collection for St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital, Hats On Day (Leukemia & Lymphoma Society), and a schoolwide recycling program. To brighten our school community, murals were painted by students in our hallways. Our PTO also sponsors school wide assemblies on character education and cultural arts.

Communication with parents and families is an integral part of our open door policy and collaborative process. At the school level, teachers share weekly newsletters with parents to inform them of homework, upcoming projects, and special events. These are coordinated with the weekly PTO email blasts that all families receive. Our sign in front of the school also serves to inform the community of special events and recognitions that occur at James Fallon. Teacher representatives attend monthly PTO meetings and PTO-sponsored events. At the district level, parents and families have access to online performance reports and attendance records at any time. Wayne Township Public Schools maintains a district website. James Fallon has its own website with specific school-based information. There is a district app, Facebook page, and

Instagram account. Each week, families and staff receive an electronic newsletter from the Superintendent. Individual schools submit articles and information to be included in this weekly newsletter. Wayne Township has a Special Parents Association that issues invitations to all families and community members for their monthly meetings and events. The Wayne Education Foundation sponsors summer camps with various course offerings, including music, arts, cooking, and athletic activities. For our non English speaking families, an interpreter is provided during meetings to foster effective communication.

In today's day and age, parents are concerned about the safety of their children while they are at school. A Wayne police officer teaches weekly LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) lessons for our fifth grade students, and works in conjunction with the school counselor to educate all students on online harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB). In terms of how people treat each other, our code of conduct is the guiding principle for behavior at school.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Administrators in the Wayne Township Public School District and Fallon Elementary School believe that professional development is essential to teacher growth and, in turn, student success. Through professional development opportunities teachers are able to develop new skills, hone their practices, and keep current on educational research and trends. Professional development opportunities vary in content and format. Teachers are surveyed to gather feedback, and adjustments (such as creating optional sessions or adding sessions) are made.

This year, teachers at James Fallon Elementary School received professional learning opportunities through one-on-one coaching by the building principal as well as the district assistant principals and director. In addition, they participated in several expert-led demonstration lessons in the areas of math and reading. All demo lessons were followed by discussion and lesson analysis. Grade level teams of teachers received training relative to the analysis of standardized test data. Together they identified strengths in student learning and outlined how to address identified weaknesses by adapting strategies and approaches to certain concepts or skills.

At the district training venue, the Wayne Township Learning Center, James Fallon teachers attended a variety of sessions including direct training addressing how to teach inquiry-based science lessons and reading workshop strategies. In addition, they had time to engage with their colleagues during district-wide instructional planning sessions at which teachers shared strategies as well as addressed challenges. All training sessions included both general education and special education teachers in order to benefit all students.

Teachers of art, music, physical education, and media attended outside training specific to their fields, and some also attended teacher-run workshops with other local area teachers. The James Fallon principal regularly plans guest speakers for the art and music teachers to help them grow as professionals.

A district mentor program connected new teachers with experienced teachers in an effort to provide not only support and guidance to beginning educators, but to also instill positivity and optimism relative to teaching students.

The district employs a teacher coordinator of educational technology integration who provided in-house monthly training sessions on various educational software and tools. In addition, teachers attended a variety of the many technology sessions offered at the learning center.

All professional development is rooted in improving teaching and increasing student achievement. Teachers, who are the most important factor influencing student learning, are trusted and empowered. Through professional development opportunities, emphasis is placed not just on the navigation of the tools, resources, and programs, but on understanding how students learn and how to address the challenges they face.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

The leadership philosophy of James Fallon Elementary School is designed to promote trustworthiness and support to effectively implement curriculum and programs to increase and maintain student and staff achievement. This philosophy is one of collaboration. Every staff member is a valued and critical member of the James Fallon team. The collective goal is directly linked to student success. The principal consistently communicates with staff to capitalize on his or her strengths to build a successful team with a vision and purpose. School leadership in James Fallon Elementary School is grounded with strength and support. There is clear evidence of dedication and professionalism from instructional staff. There is strong administrative guidance, support and inspiration, as well as solid involvement from the parent community.

The principal and staff work closely together to lead and foster the James Fallon community including students, staff, and families. This collaborative relationship promotes a culture of respect, honesty, and dependability. The principal's leadership structure is designed to apply compassion and effectiveness in all decision making. As the leader of James Fallon Elementary School, the principal maintains a relationship with families. School safety, professional development, academic achievement, and other school based matters are all topics addressed and assessed consistently for successfulness.

The principal and school guidance counselor have successfully joined forces to implement and promote an anti-bullying campaign at James Fallon Elementary School. Programs such as, No Place for Hate and The Kindness Ninja, have been instrumental in the success of positive student relationships and acceptance among classmates and peers. The principal, school guidance counselor and all staff encourage the importance of self worth and core values for both personal and academic success for all students at James Fallon Elementary School.

The Parent Teacher Organization at James Fallon Elementary School oversees parent volunteers who manage essential fundraising and school community building initiatives. The school's principal, staff, and parents are granted the opportunity to voice opinions and input across a multitude of topics.

There are many ways in which the leadership of James Fallon Elementary School works cohesively and productively to positively impact students' academic achievement. The principal is successful in executing programs, fostering relationships, and making decisions with the education of the whole child in mind. With curricular high expectations, ultimately, decisions made by the principal meet the best needs of students and their growth.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The success of James Fallon school can be attributed to the positive relationships formed and maintained between the principal and the staff. The building principal is responsible for establishing a partnership with the teachers, students, and parents in order to create a positive school climate that is conducive to learning. A positive learning environment increases the students' academic achievement, motivation to learn, and psychological well-being. The leadership style of the principal is instrumental to the continued success of the school.

Part of the principal's effective leadership can be attributed to having teachers, students, and parents take advantage of his open door policy to talk about concerns or to seek advice. All members of James Fallon School, have the opportunity for involvement in the school's success.

All teachers have high standards for the success of all our students. The principal encourages their professional development outside of the classroom and offers collaborative team planning periods. He recognizes teachers for their above and beyond efforts and rewards their hard work and achievements. Teachers maintain an awareness of the current trends in education. Each teacher writes an annual Professional Development Plan, which sets goals and objectives for improvement with specific activities and measures for evaluating successful outcomes. School improvement is documented in classroom observations and annual evaluations. The principal conferences with teachers to discuss their current effectiveness and their next steps for improvement.

Students feel safe, engaged, connected, and supported in their classroom and school. The principal connects with each student at Birthday Lunch, a tradition that he looks forward to each month. The principal also oversees Student Council meetings where student representatives have the opportunity to bring their classmates' suggestions for improvement to his attention. Student Council also has the opportunity to organize fundraisers, such as Hats on Day for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the Toy Drive for St. Joseph's Children's Hospital, as well as school spirit days.

Parents are encouraged to come to our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings every month. Decisions are made collaboratively and committees are established to execute new initiatives. Our PTO is a major advocate for our school, and parents on the PTO organize fundraisers and allocate money for donations for the school.

In conclusion, the leadership style at James Fallon Elementary School is one which encourages an inverted pyramid hierarchy. The principal guides the school community to improved teaching and learning. The principal effectively leads and manages as he builds a team and cultivates the skills and abilities of the teachers.