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

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal <u>Mrs. Ericka Simmons</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name <u>Mariemont Elementary School</u>
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>6750 Wooster Pike</u>
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

<u>Cincinnati</u>   <u>OH</u>   <u>45227-4303</u>
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County <u>Hamilton County</u>

Telephone <u>(513) 272-7400</u>   Fax
Web site/URL
          <u>http://www.mariemontschools.org/</u>
<u>mariemont-elementary-school</u>   E-mail   <u>Esimmons@mariemontschools.org</u>

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*<u>Mr. Steve Estepp</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)   E-mail <u>sestepp@mariemontschools.org</u>

District Name <u>Mariemont City</u>   Tel.   <u>(513) 272-7500</u>
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 <u>Mrs. Nan Dill</u>
(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   2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   1 Middle/Junior high schools
                                      1 High schools
                                      0 K-12 schools

                                      4 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [X] 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	28	36	64
1	34	37	71
2	43	37	80
3	45	54	99
4	44	45	89
5	40	37	77
6	44	41	85
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	278	287	565

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

    0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    1 % Asian
    1 % Black or African American
    1 % Hispanic or Latino
    0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    93 % White
    4 % Two or more races
    100 % Total

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 4%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	12
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	25
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	565
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
    1 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %
    Total number students who qualify: 33

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
                                                      50 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.

7 Autism	0 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	13 Other Health Impaired
0 Developmentally Delayed	13 Specific Learning Disability
2 Emotional Disturbance	9 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	1 Traumatic Brain Injury
5 Intellectual Disability	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	28
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	16
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2017.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes _   No X

    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 Mariemont Elementary we are committed to ensuring that each student achieves, strives for excellence, grows and develops as a learner within a caring and collaborative learning environment. Providing the utmost in quality education for our scholars of today by offering enriching opportunities for individual achievement to inspire our leaders of tomorrow.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

The Village of Mariemont is a quant historical town located in Mariemont, Ohio, just outside of Cincinnati, Ohio. It is an area filled with history and tradition. Mariemont was named after its founder Mary Emery back in the 1920's. Long before Mariemont became a village, Native Americans occupied the land as evidenced by the historical Indian burial mounds that can be visited in the area. The Village of Mariemont has one of the few elected Town Criers remaining. Mariemont was named a National Historic Landmark in 2007 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Mariemont Elementary School is a four-story red brick building. It sits next to Mariemont Community Church and is adjacent to the village square. This area serves as the center of the community with shops and restaurants, including the Mariemont Inn, the Mariemont Arts Movie Theatre and a historical Mariemont Barber Shop. Prior to the building becoming an elementary school, it was originally Mariemont High School. In 2011, the building underwent extensive renovations while still preserving its historical character. The building still has the original entrance, auditorium and signage of Mariemont High School. There is a large soccer field that separates the parking lot of the church and school on which you will find students during the school day playing at recess. There is a separate fenced-in playground area just for the kindergarten students to play on during their recess time. After school and throughout the weekend you will find both the soccer field and kindergarten playground being used by the community for playing, soccer practices and games.

In the year 2010, Fairfax Elementary, a smaller school within the district that was experiencing a decline in enrollment, merged with Mariemont Elementary School and that same year Mariemont Elementary transitioned to a full day Kindergarten program. Mariemont Elementary is one of two elementary schools within the Mariemont City School District and serves students kindergarten through sixth grade. There are approximately 565 students who attend Mariemont Elementary from three surrounding communities, the village of Fairfax, the village of Mariemont, and parts of Columbia Township. There is a mix of affluent to economically disadvantaged students with diverse academic and behavioral needs. Mariemont Elementary is predominantly a walking and biking community. Parents will also drop off their children and there are some students who are bussed depending on their distance from the school. Each day before and after school parents, dogs, and strollers can be seen standing outside the front entrance as students enter and exit the building for the day.

There are numerous long-standing traditions that make Mariemont Elementary special and unique. On the first day of school students are greeted by the teachers outside and once they have made it into their classrooms the school community will join together for a flag raising ceremony outside by the flagpole. This wonderful school tradition and event is attended by parents, community members, the superintendent, the mayor, the chiefs of police, police officers and firefighters to mark the official opening of school for the year. Other long-standing traditions include sixth graders spending a week at Camp Kern, the annual Halloween parade, Special Person Day, holiday programs, 5th Grade Kindness Retreat, school carnival, talent show, 6th Grade Play and Field Day. These experiences give our students and families many wonderful memories of their elementary days.

Mariemont Elementary staff is committed to ensuring that each student achieves, strives for excellence, grows and develops as a learner within a caring and collaborative learning environment. We believe wholeheartedly that it takes a village to educate a child. Our village is comprised of not only our staff, parents, and students, but also our surrounding communities, volunteers and mentors. The staff partners with the parents and community and believes that consistent and open communication creates a positive learning experience for our students. Mariemont Elementary is driven by the district's mission of "Providing the utmost in quality education for our scholars of today by offering enriching opportunities for individual achievement to inspire our leaders of tomorrow."

Although there is not a formal breakfast program in our school, breakfast items are purchased and provided to students in need. Efforts to provide clothing and hygiene items are coordinated by community volunteers. Generous contributions enable all students the opportunity to participate in after-school enrichment

activities. At-risk students benefit from a variety of mentoring and tutoring programs. Whiz Kids, a program sponsored by City Gospel Mission, supports struggling readers in younger grades. High school students volunteer to mentor/tutor students in 4th-6th grade. Our 5th and 6th grade teachers provide after-school homework help to at-risk students during a program we call, "Afternoon Achievers".

The school is a close knit and supportive community with high expectations for excellence. Mariemont Elementary has a multitude of resources through our PTO and the Mariemont School Foundation. These organizations seek to enrich and maximize the education of every Mariemont Elementary student by providing funding and volunteer support for a wide variety of enrichment opportunities and special events as well as staff support. The district budget also supports innovative instructional practices and helps to ensure that each learner has what they need to be successful inside and outside of school.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Reading Workshop is the framework for instruction and the foundation of the English Language Arts core curriculum. The Reading Workshop framework builds independence, choice and differentiation into every child's literacy day. This approach to teaching reading nurtures self-discipline and a collaborative mindset within a classroom environment that is organized with flexible, collaborative spaces. As a part of the Reading Workshop framework the teacher provides focused literacy lessons aligned with Ohio's State Standards. The teaching focus for the lesson is a direct reflection on the needs of the students. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) given in grades K-2, Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) Text Leveling Assessment in grades K-6 and the STAR Reading assessment in grades 2-6 are measures used to identify student needs and to monitor student progress within the Reading Workshop framework.

The teacher regularly meets with students individually, in small skill groups and in Guided Reading groups. Guided Reading is a bridge between whole group instruction and independent work. It addresses student skills needed for comprehension and decoding while building vocabulary knowledge and critical writing skills. The Units of Study for Teaching Reading was adopted as a resource to support explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies. Mariemont Elementary also uses Words their Way as its research-based approach to phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction as a component of the Reading Workshop framework.

Mariemont Elementary's math curriculum is built around using the 8 Mathematical Practices in our instruction. Students are engaged in exploration of mathematical concepts, making connections between math and real-world problems through collaboration and differentiated learning activities. Building perseverance, confidence and persistence is the foundation of math instruction. We utilize Bridges in Mathematics in grades K-4 and Eureka Math in grades 5-6 as our primary resources to implement the Ohio Learning Standards. Incorporating Number Corners in grades K-4 and Number Talks throughout grades 5-6 allows students to work on conceptual understanding and decomposition of numbers to solve problems. Technology is also integrated to provide students with additional opportunities for enrichment, practice and reinforcement. IXL is an online program used in grades K-2 and TenMarks is an online program used in grades 3-6.

Using a variety of resources allows teachers to differentiate using flexible groups. Teachers are able to present math in multiple ways to stimulate different approaches to learning and continued development of each student's growth mindset in mathematics. The students become thinkers rather than doers of math, with conceptual understanding being the priority for learning, rather than memorization of procedures.

We address the Ohio Learning Standards in science through the 5 E's (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) and across all curricular disciplines to recognize connections and deepen understanding. To achieve this, students participate in hands-on, inquiry based and collaborative explorations. These opportunities build interest and increase the students' individual investments in their learning to take core content knowledge and apply it in real-world situations. Technology resources such as Newsela, Mystery Science, and Engineering is Elementary, assist teachers within the classroom. The district's STEM initiative extends the material beyond the typical classroom, reinforcing problem solving and reasoning skills that lead to student achievement. The COSI on Wheels program comes to our school annually to further foster engagement in science through interactive displays and activities.

We teach the Ohio Learning Standards for social studies through inquiry and research. Our teachers guide students in their development of how to obtain information as well as reflect on the quality of resources they are using for their inquiry. Students make connections to their own lives and world around them through their research and collaborate to produce and present projects that display their connections. The integration of technology and Project-Based Learning (PBL) into the curriculum provides the students an audience to prepare for and communicate while developing the necessary skills for success in their future.

The annual Veteran's Day assembly is an important tradition in our school community. Students grades K-6 are involved in planning and presenting a program to honor veterans from all branches of the military while learning about various aspects of our nation's history. The assembly includes musical performances, poems, decorations, slide shows and speeches. Veterans and their families are invited to attend, making the assembly a memorable experience for all.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Weekly studio art classes are vibrant, enriching and integral to our students' overall learning while allowing self-expression and creativity. The year culminates in May with our school-wide art show, where students choose their best piece to exhibit. This year's show, a large mixed media mural representing the three surrounding communities will be unveiled. Research and walking tours were held in partnership with the Mariemont Preservation Society to gather ideas for the mural and students chose an element (citizen, organization, building, etc.) to portray.

Mariemont Elementary students participate in regional and selective statewide exhibitions, including an all-Ohio competition for art criticism. Students hone their skills in thinking and writing about art in 3rd grade with the ODIP (Observe, Describe, Interpret and Prove) model and then compete in the Jerry Tollifson Art Criticism Open as 4th graders. This thinking and writing about art directly supports students' acquisition of critical thinking, analysis and communication.

Wildlife artist and community member, John Ruthven, visits several times a year to share his expertise with our students. A Visiting Artist and Cincinnati native, Cedric Cox, worked with our students and graced our entryway with two of his beautiful canvases. Additionally, annual field trips are taken to local art museums where students personally experience what they've learned in the classroom, making connections across the curriculum (e.g., making Ancient Egyptian canopic jars from clay and seeing the real thing). We also offer field trips to dramatic and musical performances, invite troupes in for school-wide assemblies and all 6th grade students participate in an inclusive musical each year.

All students participate in a robust music program from K-4th grade and then have the opportunity to specialize in chorus, strings or band for grades 5 and 6. Performances for all grade levels are held at least three times a year. This year, our visiting Artist is a composer who has worked with all grades. This experience will reach a crescendo with a performance of original compositions written and performed by our students.

Physical Education classes are structured around a wellness curriculum that includes fitness, information on nutrition and inclusive games while encouraging sportsmanship. Newer offerings include a rock-climbing wall, purchased by the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and visits by professionals to instruct disciplines such as yoga, dance fitness and Taekwondo. All students participate in our annual Walk-a-thon, sponsored by the PTO, and Field Day and are encouraged to participate in the community Warrior Run which raises funds for mental health programs. Additional opportunities include Girls on the Run for 4th grade students, and a new parent-initiated Running Club open to all grades.

Grades K-2 students experience Spanish enrichment. Our 3rd-5th graders have a semester of Spanish and Mandarin classes where they dig into basic conversation skills and build vocabulary. Sixth graders focus on culture, delving into the different traditions and ways of life of native Spanish and Mandarin speakers. These classes promote tolerance and interest in different cultures, improve critical and abstract thinking and build communication skills.

The school library is a unique and essential part of the learning community. Our students have access on a weekly basis to a beautiful, inviting space that allows for individual, small group or whole class participation in information literacy and information technology. Annual author visits, book fairs and book clubs enhances and strengthens a positive reading culture. The one-to-one technology fosters the skills needed in informational literacy and allows students the opportunities for self-directed learning while inspiring students to become lifelong learners.

At Mariemont Elementary all of our students in grades 1-6 are matched up one-to-one with technology. All 5th and 6th grade students participate in a STEM class to promote skills that are needed in our ever-changing environment. These classes include Robotics, Makerspace, Video Productions, Shark Tank, Weekly News Updates, and Kids That Code. Students in grades 5 and 6 participate in choice based, non-graded 90-minute block classes called, "Explorations" every Monday morning. These Exploration classes change quarterly and allow students to pursue their passions in a variety of categories: sports and health, STEM, the performing arts, outdoor education, world language and the visual arts. In addition to Explorations, the district sponsors our Warriors Beyond after-school enrichment programs. A wide variety of classes are offered to provide students with the opportunity to participate in high interest areas such as visual and performing arts, robotics and cultural experiences.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Mariemont Elementary uses many research-based best practices to reach all students. Our goal is to meet learners where they are and build upon their strengths and facilitate their growth. We focus on the academic and social-emotional needs of each student to create the appropriate learning experiences for all children.

Mariemont Elementary uses differentiation and tiered instructional practices across all curricular areas in order to meet the needs of its students. Students are given a rigorous curriculum that challenges them at each level. Students identified and receiving services through an Individual Educational Plan are included in all classrooms and supported by Intervention Specialists. All students participate in "Learning Lab." Learning Lab is a daily thirty-minute instructional time where students receive either intervention or enrichment in Reading and Math based on student needs and data. During intervention learning lab, teachers use research-based instructional practices to instruct students not on track. Teachers are trained to use Leveled Literacy Intervention, Orton Gillingham, and Bridges Math Intervention. During enrichment learning lab students engage in inquiry and project-based learning.

Using data to inform instruction is key to teaching at Mariemont Elementary. Grade level teams, instructional coaches and administration, meet monthly to review current data and make decisions about interventions and enrichment opportunities. In addition to state testing data, Mareimont uses district-wide assessments to determine each student's instructional levels and to help determine Title I services, enrichment and intervention groupings. We administer the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in grades K-2, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment to all students and Renaissance Learning STAR Reading to grades 2-6 and STAR Math Assessments to grades 1-6 as universal screeners. Students receiving Tier 2 interventions are progress-monitored monthly with STAR and/or DIBELS. Teachers use formative and summative assessments in the classroom to make instructional decisions.

Mariemont Elementary uses the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to identify students with targeted intervention needs. Based on data and needs, students move fluidly between various levels of support as staff implement research-based interventions and continually monitor student progress. Teacher teams meet with the Dean of Students, the Intervention Coach and other school personnel to review individual student data. During these meetings the team reviews student growth, adjusts interventions, as needed, sets specific goals based on the data and schedules a 6-week follow-up with the team.

Mariemont Elementary focuses on strengthening all students, including our gifted population. Students are given the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) in first grade and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) in third grade to identify gifted learners and programming. Students are challenged through differentiation, enrichment activities, accelerated math programs for students in grades 5 and 6 and also through subject and whole grade level acceleration.

Mariemont Elementary utilizes one-to-one technology across all curriculum and grade levels to ensure students master the 21st century skills required to compete in our global economy. Special needs students use iPads to enhance their educational experience. Several students use iPads to communicate with peers and teachers. A scope and sequence grades K-12, aligned with our courses of study, frames the technology skills taught at each grade level. The use of SMART Board technology is implemented in every classroom. Furthermore, blended classes combine classroom learning and online instruction.

Mariemont Elementary is dedicated to closing the achievement gap of our economically disadvantaged subgroup population. Administration and staff meet regularly to monitor the academic and social-emotional needs of our students. All students at Mariemont Elementary attend full-day kindergarten free of charge. We provide Title I reading services for students grades K-3 who are not on track and progress-monitor monthly. We offer a summer reading program for those students who are not meeting the district benchmarks by the end of the year in grades kindergarten through second grade.

Mariemont Elementary understands that children learn best when many non-educational needs are addressed. For that reason, we offer after school programs, including fine arts and enrichment opportunities, homework assistance and Whiz Kids, a mentoring/tutoring program. The district provides free busing for students with transportation limitations to attend after school activities. Through a partnership with a local church, Mariemont Elementary offers a supplemental food program to provide food for the weekend. We also provide free breakfast items every morning to those in need to ensure that all of our students are ready to learn.

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

The school climate and culture fostered at Mariemont Elementary is unmatched. Our school engages and motivates students through a variety of methods and creates a positive environment that supports their academic, social and emotional growth. Our school culture creates an environment where teachers feel valued and supported through a shared vision and ongoing collaboration.

We use a variety of strategies to engage and motivate all learners. Students are engaged through learning experiences such as Google Expeditions, virtual reality tours, and Google Hangouts with people around the world. Each school day, students explore interests through a project-based learning lab. During this time, students have the opportunity to collaborate with other students on projects that interest them and with the support of technology, have the opportunity to share projects in many different formats. Our school motivates learners by finding out their interests, strengths, needs, passions, and areas of growth. We seek to build relationships with each student so that we are able to individualize our instruction each day, encouraging students to be the best they can be.

We provide a positive environment that supports students in their academic, social, as well as emotional growth through believing that every student has potential and the ability to learn. Failure is not an option for any student. We individualize instruction for every student according to their needs; differentiating their work, as well as providing daily small group instruction.

To ensure that the social and emotional needs of our students are met, we have weekly community meetings where topics such as kindness, acceptance and empathy are discussed. Not only do our teachers advocate for our students, but we also have a counselor, school psychologist and a partnership with an additional counseling service (Child Focus Inc.) that are able to coordinate services such as support groups, dog therapy and social groups. Furthermore, our students are able to join and lead committees devoted to kindness, improving our school, recycling and service. Through these committees, students grow in their leadership skills and realize the direct impact they are able to have on their school as well as the people and the world around them.

Our teachers feel valued and supported through a culture of mutual trust that is established. We operate as one team, aligned with our mission and always seeking to do what's best for all of the students. Our school has weekly staff meetings, weekly grade-level collaboration time, and check-ins with administrators and support staff to better ensure that our students are making progress academically and social-emotionally. Frequent communication further helps build relationships between the staff.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

An essential ingredient to the educational experience at Mariemont Elementary is engaging families and the community. In order to provide the best experiences for our students, we ask community members to share their expertise with us to enhance learning through visits from authors, scientists, community leaders, professors, philanthropists and more. Through our Warriors Change the World initiative and our partnerships with the local Kiwanis Club, our students see learning beyond the walls of the classroom. For example, fifth grade researched the impact of hunger on the Cincinnati community, met and collaborated with community leaders of local organizations working to improve this issue. In addition, our kindergarten and second grade students build partnerships with community members such as residents of a nearby senior living center and the local police and fire departments.

Families are a part of each student's learning experience throughout the course of the student's school career. At the beginning of each year, students and their families are invited to school before the first day of learning to drop off supplies and talk with their teachers in an effort to grow relationships, ease anxiety and build enthusiasm for the upcoming year of learning. A curriculum night is offered during the first few weeks of school to inform families of the academic and personal growth expectations for the current year.

Towards the end of the school year, students and their families are invited to an open house to meet their future teachers and catch a glimpse of the learning they will experience in the upcoming year.

Learning is shared through weekly newsletters and educational experiences are posted on social platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Parents and guests are seen daily in the school building taking an active part in the students' learning. We are extremely proud that 79% of the parents in the district volunteer in our schools! We have partnered with Whiz Kids, a literacy-based tutoring/mentoring program for the past 3 years. Whiz Kids works closely with local churches and organizations to provide tutors for our students in gr. 1-3 who have been identified as needing additional support, who are at-risk, and/or could benefit from one-to-one mentoring.

Student-led conferences are implemented in grades 4-6 to help students take ownership of their education, monitor their own progress and communicate their successes and goals throughout the year. Students continue to share their progress and goals through written reflections and goal setting. In addition, parents can view student academic progress throughout a student's school career, including scores on district and state standardized test, at any time by accessing our comprehensive District Data Dashboard.

3. **Professional Development:**

We understand that students must possess a whole new set of skills and knowledge to be successful in the future and that those skills are continually changing. In 2013 the Mariemont City School District's "Destination 2026" initiative outlined a strategic plan to guide the instructional vision of the district, explore the knowledge and experiences students will need to compete and succeed globally and to steer our professional development opportunities.

Through this process, we have determined actions of the Highly Effective teacher: creating clear learning targets, designing creative learning opportunities to inspire students, modeling and encouraging resiliency, cultivating trust, providing meaningful feedback, using assessments, advocating for student success and nurturing student well-being.

Professional Development is ongoing, relevant and individualized in order to meet the needs of all staff. Through our designated PD team and our PD days that we call, "Mariemont Academy", we pilot new programs and provide opportunities that allow teachers to explore their passion. As our demographics and clientele have changed, we have made adjustments to enable our staff to understand the impact of poverty on learning and strengthen our Global Competency. We have five designated professional learning days scheduled during the school year, optional summer days and ongoing mini-PD sessions before, during lunch and after school to provide teachers offerings to meet their needs and encourage a growth mindset.

We have five instructional coaches in math, literacy, intervention, gifted, and technology that provide job-embedded PD for all teachers in the building. Instructional coaches research best practices, monitor the effectiveness of programs, provide ongoing feedback, monitor students' growth and achievement and use this data to guide instructional decisions and support teachers.

Teachers also have unique incentives to pursue new ideas through our "Innovation Projects" which offer optional opportunities for collaboration and innovation beyond job expectations. These projects provide an opportunity to pilot innovative programs, conduct research and try out new ideas as a building/department, and participate in focused, collaborative, in-depth PD around an area of need. Some examples of these projects include: a new app to teach vocabulary through fine art, an after-school program that provides additional support for struggling students, and a "go green" initiative to recycle, compost and reduce waste.

Our district also has a strategic compensation model that rewards employees for outstanding performance, and contribution, encourages processional growth, offers options for advancement through building and district leadership roles, and promotes creativity. Professional development is a priority and because of this, student achievement is enhanced as our educators continually seek to grow in their practice and enhance instruction for the students they serve.

4. **School Leadership:**

Partnership is the word that best describes the leadership philosophy within our school. The Principal and Dean of Students work together with the teachers and staff to provide a culture of learning, leadership and mentorship. Administrators and teachers collaborate on a regular basis and share in making decisions that best meet the needs of our learners. Once a month, representatives from each grade level/department meet to discuss current successes and needs within the building. This team then meets with their grade levels to share the information. There is a school-wide theme each year to create a common language and provide a visual of the overall school focus for the year. Each week the principal publishes a weekly newsletter that includes relevant articles, positive quotes that are theme based, encouragement and helpful guiding tips aligned to the core curriculum. Each month the principal and superintendent conducts classroom walkthroughs to collaborate on meaningful strategies that are based on our district philosophy of being global learners and having a well-rounded educational experience.

Each year staff members are encouraged to join a book study based on the district action plan and focus for the year. At Mariemont Elementary the teachers read the book, Failure is NOT an Option: 6 Principles That Advance Student Achievement in Highly Effective Schools, by Alan M. Blankstein. Once a month, collaboration meetings are held that consist of grade level teachers, administrators, intervention specialists, instructional coaches, counselor and school psychologist. During these meetings, the team reviews data, individual progress of students, overall progress of grade levels and discusses any interventions or changes that need to occur to enhance student success.

The staff is encouraged to take risks and try new innovative practices through the "Innovation Project" incentive. These projects provide an opportunity for educators to identify a problem that with the right solution can help to improve the experience for our students. Teachers and staff also take on leadership roles by serving on various committees to support district and school initiatives. One example of this is the district Instructional Leadership Team that has members serve as grade level mentors for new teachers and work with instructional coaches to assist their grade level. The Instructional Leadership Team also takes an active role in staff professional development by leading PD sessions and planning the opening day elementary staff retreat to start the school year. There is also a building Kindness Committee made up of teachers and staff who plan for student's social-emotional well-being through monthly kindness themes, school-wide activities, and a Kindness Kick-off assembly.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

We embrace the belief that failure is not an option for any of our students at Mariemont Elementary. Every student and meeting the needs of our students, is at the center of all learning and every decision made. We employ multiple effective strategies to ensure student success. The most instrumental strategy has been the implementation of the workshop framework in reading, writing, and math. The workshop model is student and data driven and strives to meet every learner's needs. This framework supports student choice, interests and preferred learning styles. The workshop framework provides a highly conducive learning environment for differentiation as well as student ownership and empowerment.

The learning environment is an integral component of the workshop framework to ensure that every student is successful. The careful set up of the classroom is purposeful, flexible and intentional. Student workspaces support small group collaborative work. Students have options to work in small group rooms, utilize different seating options such as wobble stools, standing tables, floor space and Swiss balls. There are also areas for independent practice, whole group meetings and small group instruction. Evidence of learning is posted on anchor charts displayed throughout the room. Anchor charts are created collaboratively and are used to record strategies, processes and strategies during the learning process.

The workshop framework encourages a growth mindset. Students recognize that learning is a process and mistakes are expected as an integral part of the process. Tapping into student strengths, offering choices, encouraging self-evaluation and reflection, as well as goal setting fosters student ownership. Students use technology to showcase their work, critique the work of others, and get feedback from their peers.

The workshop framework allows teachers to differentiate and fosters student independence. Curricular resources are able to be adapted within the workshop framework to meet the needs of our learners. The teacher is able to efficiently and explicitly teach reading, writing and math skills. The teacher also consistently meets with students individually, in small skill groups and in guided groups.

Within the workshop framework the teacher will gradually release the responsibility of learning to the students based on their individual needs and abilities. While the teacher actively confers and teaches small groups, students practice new learning and apply prior knowledge. Data analysis, teacher observation and student/teacher goal setting drive instruction. The workshop framework creates a learning environment that invites learners to construct conceptual understanding while fostering life skills such as self-regulation, self-discipline and a collaborative mindset.