



## **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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 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
  - 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>	36	25	61
<b>K</b>	14	11	25
<b>1</b>	10	14	24
<b>2</b>	21	18	39
<b>3</b>	17	10	27
<b>4</b>	21	16	37
<b>5</b>	13	15	28
<b>6</b>	17	18	35
<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>	149	127	276

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 92 % 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: 7%

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	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	20
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	290
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 41 %  
Total number students who qualify: 114

8. Students receiving special education services: 23 %  
63 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>3</u> Autism                  | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>7</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>31</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</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: 10
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.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
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.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 161:1

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	97%	97%	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.

<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.

With the unwavering expectation that every child can make positive academic and social growth, the Oakwood Elementary community provides a safe, caring environment for students to develop skills to meet life's challenges as life-long learners and responsible, productive citizens.

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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Oakwood Elementary prominently displays the phrases "You are a necessary and important part of the Oakwood Elementary community!" and "It is a good thing you are here today. We would not be a complete team without you!" on the wall of our main hallway. These cheerful phrases announce our mission daily to the staff, students and parents who make up our school community and set the tone for our approach to education. We are committed to helping all children grow academically, emotionally, and socially in a safe, caring environment. The staff, students, and community of Oakwood Elementary are dedicated to helping each child recognize his or her abilities and capabilities. Through attention to individual needs, we know every one of our students can meet the high expectations we have for them and can use their unique abilities to reach their full potential and make a positive contribution to society.

Located at the southeast corner of Paulding County in northwest Ohio, Oakwood is a small rural village with the population of around 600; however, we draw our student body from a 65-square mile area. Because we are a rural school district serving a large area, we work extra hard to reinforce a sense of community and to promote the idea that we are all part of a team. We accomplish this by encouraging all of our staff - including administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, cooks, and custodians - to get to know each student by name and to have a vested interest in their success.

Oakwood Elementary is a pre-school through sixth grade building educating 276 students. Approximately 60 students have IEPs tailored to special needs that range from developmental delays to autism. We are a Title I school, and 50% of our kindergarten through sixth grade students participate in the free and reduced meal program. Though our district serves many economically disadvantaged students, our rural, blue collar community is proud of its elementary school and is very supportive of our goals and activities.

While many families and young people have had to leave the community for job opportunities, the Oakwood Homecoming each Labor Day Weekend brings many former residents back to the village to reacquaint themselves with families and memories of their hometown. Oakwood Elementary staff walks in the Labor Day parade, giving us the opportunity to make a connection with past and present students and families. We are fortunate to be able to use the community park, the ballpark, and the Cooper Community Library for different activities throughout the year. Members from the community generously donate school supplies, hats, and gloves throughout the year; and through a Christmas for Kids program, they make sure children in need have Christmas gifts.

For more than forty years, Oakwood Elementary third graders have performed the Third Grade Memorial Day Program on Memorial Day where we honor local military men and women before a packed gym/café. We also have a Veteran's Day Program in November. In the spring, we host an open house called Learning Is An Art to share exciting projects with the community and to show our appreciation for what they have made possible for us.

A landmark in the community, the first Oakwood School was built on our site in 1884, and eventually became the home of the Oakwood Bobcats. In 1971, the district consolidated with Paulding Exempted Village Schools (PEVS). Over the course of several years, upper grade levels were incorporated into Paulding Middle and High Schools, and Oakwood Elementary became one of two elementary buildings in the PEVS district. In 2003, the old school building was replaced with a brand new elementary building.

As part of the facilities upgrade, our school has been able to integrate technology. Now, every classroom has a SMART Board. We are at a nearly one to one student to mini laptop ratio. Additionally, we have a large computer lab and an iPad cart. Our students use multiple forms of technology every day in preparation for our ever-changing digital world and global society.

At Oakwood Elementary, we strive to meet each child where they are and to provide a well-rounded education. Teachers are passionate about creating and delivering lessons that engage multiple learning styles. They use a wide variety of formative assessments to monitor student understanding throughout lesson delivery and use the data to determine when intervention and acceleration is needed. We have a dedicated

forty-minute intervention period for K-6 and a thirty-minute Title I period for K-3 every day to provide remediation and enrichment in reading and math. Students track their own progress in several areas, graphing scores and setting growth goals. Students have music and physical education classes twice a week. They have art and technology class once a week. Each class also visits the media center once a week where they have 9,000 books available for students to borrow. Through PAWS (our positive behavior system) and our monthly Character Trait of Focus, students demonstrate their pride, attitude, work ethic, and self-control while developing traits such as respect, responsibility, and perseverance. We understand the importance of providing resources to foster the growth of the whole child, as it is the blend of positive character development and academic success that will make Oakwood Elementary students life-long learners and well-rounded citizens of tomorrow.

Oakwood Elementary has a tradition of excellence in academic achievement as seen in our State testing success, regularly averaging above District and State mean scores at each grade level and earning ratings of "Excellence" and "Excellence with Distinction" on several occasions. This happens because we know every child can be successful; and, as a team, we are not satisfied until each one is. We realize that the Oakwood Community is entrusting us with their most valuable and precious possessions - their children. They are in good hands with our team!

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

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

Oakwood Elementary's core curriculum, Ohio's Learning Standards, lays the foundation for all lessons, activities, and assessments.

Oakwood fulfills Ohio's Learning Standards for ELA, including "Reading for Literature" and "Informational Text" by providing access to a multitude of short stories, novels, picture books, and readers' theaters to encourage engagement and enjoyment of reading. We provide support in writing, language, speaking, and listening skills to ensure standards are met. Informal and formal assessments occur daily to provide immediate feedback and reflection for students, while also providing data for measuring growth.

All students (grades 1-6), take the STAR reading assessment during the Fall, Winter, and Spring benchmark windows, and kindergarteners take the Early Star. Data from these assessments help us organize students by their instructional needs, identify specific areas in need of intervention, and measure growth. All students in Kindergarten use small guided reading groups, to reinforce whole group learning. First grade implements the Panther Bag program, which allows students to choose books at their own reading levels. Students read these books each evening at home with parents and again to an adult at school the following day to develop fluency and comprehension. Upper grade levels use Scholastic Storyworks and Scope magazines to provide high interest fiction and non-fiction articles at rigorous Lexile levels. Through formative and summative assessments, we determine where intervention is needed and use differentiated, leveled programs - Title I Reading (K-3), Phonics First, Fast ForWord, Reading Assistant, Education City, Study Island - to help each child move forward at a pace that is right for them.

Our district has adopted Everyday Math for Kindergarten, My Math for grades 1-5, and Glencoe Math for upper grades. Teachers in grades 3-6 have taken the initiative to introduce supplemental materials which further enhances the curriculum and ties it back to real world examples.

STAR Math is administered to all students in grades 1-6 during the Fall, Winter, and Spring benchmark windows. We use this data, along with prior Ohio State Test results and performance on classroom assessments, to pace lessons and to measure growth. Every grade level implements daily and weekly spiral review as part of their math lessons to keep concepts fresh and connected. In grades 3-6, these are called Show What You Know and Weekly Workout. We place a strong emphasis on knowing math facts with our Math Masters program because students who are fluent with their basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division math facts develop a better number sense and have to spend less time on computation, making them stronger in math overall. As students meet the fact goal for each operation, their names go on the corresponding lists on the Math Master wall. When they have mastered all the operations checked at their grade level, their Math Master star goes on the wall; and they are eligible to attend our Math Master Party in the Park in May. Students receive instruction and intervention in a variety of ways including: math stations, short videos, white board practice, small group projects, TenMarks, Study Island, Xtra Math, and Education City. Our math teachers have made a strong effort to close gaps between grade levels. Our focus is to provide students with real world problems and for students to develop strategies that will allow them to become lifelong problem solvers.

We take a hands-on approach to teaching and learning Ohio's Science Learning Standards. We also integrate skills and strategies for reading, locating, and interpreting informational text into our science lessons. Among the day-to-day labs, demonstrations, and videos, science becomes real to students with special grade level projects. Kindergartners are introduced to the scientific method through many simple science experiments. First graders create animal habitats, which include research reports. Second grade has ant farms and collaborates with Paulding Putnam Rural Electric Company to build personal wind turbines and solar bead bracelets. Fourth graders work with community volunteers to build snap circuits. Sixth graders study momentum and force by building roller coasters for marbles. The education specialist from the Soil and Water Conservation District frequently visits our building to bring special programs, such as the Streamulator (erosion simulator) to the classrooms.

Through the use of picture books, trade books, videos, internet searches, Studies Weekly magazines, and a variety of projects, our students are exposed to the Social Studies Learning Standards. We recognize that many of our students do not have the opportunity to travel outside of northwest Ohio so we make a concentrated effort to make the Standards real to them. Our first graders learn about producers/consumers and goods/services by operating markets in their classrooms. Fourth graders further those economic concepts through a unit in which they create and operate a bracelet manufacturing business - borrowing money, buying supplies, marketing and advertising their wares, and selling to consumers (younger students). Our 5th and 6th graders practice the democratic process when they elect the 6th grade Student Council each year - petitions, campaign posters and speeches, and voting at the polls. Projects and activities, including research and writing, support cross-curricular integration.

Our 5th graders get to work with the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer for twelve weeks. He also speaks with each class about safety and his role in law enforcement. Third graders return to school each Memorial Day to perform our annual Memorial Day Program where we recognize active and former members of the military and pay tribute to those who have died in service for our country. We invite local veterans and their families to school on Veteran's Day for a student-led program. We participate in our district's mini Relay for Life each spring. Our Student Council organizes building-wide coin collections and canned food drives to help those in our community who are in need. This helps children learn they are a part of a bigger world and their actions can make a positive difference to those around them.

Oakwood Elementary is home to six preschool units for children ages 3-5. The units have a 5-Star Step Up to Quality rating from the Ohio Department of Education. All classes include students who are typically developing and those with developmental delays in a variety of areas. Many of our typical students attend school tuition-free as part of an Early Childhood Education grant for the economically disadvantaged. Our preschoolers come to school four half days a week. The core curriculum covers all academic areas. It also addresses social, emotional, and fine and gross motor development. The preschool uses Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards and the Creative Curriculum. Our preschool team encourages family involvement in their child's education and works closely with parents to develop a good rapport recognizing our interaction with them sets the tone for successful family collaboration for many years to come. Families complete a needs assessment which helps teachers plan monthly family days. Our preschool students become familiar with the building and staff which allows for a smooth transition to kindergarten.

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

All students at Oakwood Elementary School experience an array of subjects important to their development as members of a global society. These subjects include physical education, wellness education, visual arts education, music education - including instrumental music for grades 5 and 6, and technology. All of these subjects are an integral part of the development of essential 21st-century skills.

The specialists teaching these subjects at Oakwood Elementary are professionals outside of the classroom setting and hence bring their expertise to further enhance their students' experiences. Additionally, in their efforts to collaborate, our art, music, technology, and physical education specialists utilize each other's knowledge as well as the knowledge of the entire faculty as they create relevant lessons and activities.

All of Oakwood Elementary School's special areas of instruction help to empower the students with skills to think creatively through problem-solving, collaborating, thinking critically, and working positively with others. Through the instruction given in these disciplines, students also benefit from much-needed physical, emotional, and mental growth.

Our physical education curriculum, while based on Ohio's Physical Education Standards, is designed specifically for our Oakwood Elementary population, with students in K-6 meeting twice weekly. Oakwood Elementary students are encouraged to develop a life-long appreciation for physical activity as it relates to health and wellness. One example that supports this objective is the ODE's PACER program (Progressing Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run) implemented twice annually. The national SPARK (Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids) Program resource is used for multiple activities promoting good health and

life-long wellness. In an effort to involve the community in our mission to promote a healthy lifestyle, our physical education classes participate in the American Heart Association's "Jump Rope for Heart" Program each year. There is also the time honored and much anticipated tradition of the annual 6th grade vs. the staff volleyball tournament. Our music and physical education specialists occasionally combine their respective disciplines in activities using music and movement, providing unique learning opportunities for all students, especially benefiting those who best learn kinesthetically.

Our music curriculum, also based on Ohio's Learning Standards, is implemented for 40 minutes twice weekly in grades K-6, and students in grades 5 and 6 may also choose to participate in our strong instrumental music program. Oakwood Elementary students at all grade levels experience a wide variety of sequential musical activities which encourage critical thinking, collaborating, problem-solving, and teamwork, skills very necessary for their preparation in becoming an important member of our global society. Our music specialist integrates other subjects such as math, reading, science, visual arts, and social studies into lessons and makes notes of this in carefully-constructed lesson plans developed to help students make these interdisciplinary connections. In addition to collaborating with physical education classes, our music specialist combines lessons with the visual arts specialist.

The K-6 student population at Oakwood Elementary has visual art for 40 minutes once a week. The classes reference Ohio's Visual Arts standards with regard to content. The art specialist includes lessons specifically designed to enhance confidence and mutual respect as well as self-expression and experimentation utilizing a variety of media. Students experience creating art as well as learning how to critically evaluate the work they create. Activities are designed to be interdisciplinary in nature and to enhance and build upon the content being explored in art as well as in the students' grade level classrooms. The students have opportunities to represent Oakwood Elementary in the community by participating in contests and in shows. In addition, all students participate in our "Learning Is An Art" event held annually each spring. This event showcases the achievements of Oakwood Elementary students across all discipline areas which reinforces the relevance of one discipline to another. This event is well attended by the community.

Students are now able to attend technology class once a week for 40 minutes. Students use basic technology, such as Google Docs, internet searches, and online practice games daily in their core classes. This technology class was created three years ago; and we are still developing a detailed curriculum for each grade level. Besides learning keyboarding and the parts of a computer, students have the opportunity to explore Green Screen, coding, Merge Cubes, Book Creator, Google apps, and logic puzzles. They also learn about digital citizenship and online test-taking strategies. Students are building a digital portfolio they can take with them as they leave Oakwood Elementary prepared to be 21st Century Learners.

All of these connections aid our students, many of whom have not ventured far from their respective homes and school, in finding their places in not only their homes and our school, but also in the bigger picture. Experiences in the "special" subjects provide relevance as students come to understand how they are part of our Global Society.

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

Oakwood Elementary teachers use a variety of methods to maximize student learning and growth. We work hard to develop a community atmosphere in each classroom and throughout the entire school. We are a team of learners who are working together to reach our goals. We use a variety of instructional methods to meet the needs of all students. Teachers Based Team meetings occur at each grade level to monitor student growth and achievement. Students can be referred to our Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) if regular interventions are not helping a student make growth. The Intervention Assistance Team, composed of classroom teachers, intervention specialists, the school psychologist, and our guidance counselor, has been established through our Response To Intervention (RtI) process to develop intervention strategies for struggling learners at multiple tiers. Along with this, each teacher uses a variety of small group, whole group, differentiated and individualized instruction based on student need. Our team of teachers uses a variety of pre-assessment data such as STAR reading and math scores, diagnostic testing, reading prediction indicator tests and previous year state test scores to work with our special education team. This collaboration allows us to modify curriculum and differentiate assignments and instruction to benefit each learner, those

needing enrichment activities and those requiring intervention. Technology is integrated into our students' daily curriculum by having one-to-one student laptops in grades 1-6, technology classes and computer-based interventions. Our current curriculum, in the four core content areas, provides a wealth of explicit instruction to support auditory, kinesthetic and visual learning.

Inclusion of special needs students and intervention specialists in the general education classes, whenever possible, has been our practice for many years. This ensures students are introduced to grade level content among their peers while all students are benefitting from the support and reinforcement of the intervention specialist. While most intervention such as one-on-one re-teaching takes place within the classroom, before and after school tutoring is available and provides differentiated instruction for students who are not currently at grade-level. We also use our high achieving 6th grade students as teaching assistants during some of their study periods.

Many varieties of assessments, including formative and summative assessments, are used to drive instruction. Along with traditional tests and projects, short-cycle reflections, exit slips, spiral review, and learning logs are used by many teachers to gauge student understanding of a particular skill or concept. Progress monitoring is also completed to ensure that the individualized education plan goals are met. At each grade level, students track their own progress in different areas, graphing scores and setting goals. This visual motivates them to take ownership for their own academic growth. Students who are making progress toward their goals are encouraged through weekly reward plans set up within their classrooms, such as taking their good news (high scores, reading fluently, making positive gains) to show the principal and getting to take something from her treat bag or having their good news broadcasted on the morning announcements. Along with this, students are also tracked on their Ohio State Testing scores and are offered a larger reward for passing all parts of the assessment. This reward is given each year, and students strive to achieve this recognition.

One example of how our school uses data to improve school performance is through the use of attendance data and rewards. Student attendance is charted and placed outside each grade level. Students can see the rise and fall of their homeroom attendance. Rewards are given for classes that achieve a certain attendance level each week. Students also have a quarterly reward program that honors their quarter grades, attendance and ability to bring up grades. We also have a character building program utilized by all grade levels within our school. We have a character trait of focus for each month. These include responsibility, perseverance, honesty, enthusiasm, self-control and a variety of other essential skills. Finally, we have a Student-of-the-Month program in which one student per classroom is honored and recognized by their family and friends.

We believe that a key reason our school is performing well is due to the positive relationships that teachers and all staff form with our students. We have a very strong team approach that encourages our students to see that they are part of something bigger than themselves. Just recently, a 2nd grade student said, "I just love this place!" Our goal is to have every student excited about spending their days at our school. Our staff is dedicated to ensuring that students enjoy learning, are engaged in their academic success and have the opportunity to reflect upon their decisions. We're working hard to build relationships with and between our students to help them learn but also to grow as members of our community. This sense of community among our students and teachers creates an environment where students are treated as individuals and lifelong learners.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

We strive to create a climate where our students know they are in a safe environment and the people working with them truly care about them inside and outside of school. We know growing up is difficult and there are bumps along the way; but through personal attention, character education, and positive motivation, we can provide strategies and support for our students to reach their full potential - academically, socially, and emotionally. One of our building-wide focus statements at Oakwood Elementary is "positive culture creates positive character!"

Student-of-the-Month - Each teacher selects one student per month as his/her student-of-the-month. This student's family is invited to have lunch with him/her to recognize this honor. A picture of these students and their lunch guests are displayed in the showcase in the main hallway.

Character Building - Each month, we focus on a different character trait such as respect, honesty, caring, and perseverance. The character traits all have a focus statement and are posted in every classroom in the building. The guidance counselor visits classrooms to do character building lessons around the focus statement. At the end of the month, two students in each classroom are selected as Character Builders for regularly demonstrating the character trait. These students' pictures are on display on two hallway bulletin boards.

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) - At Oakwood Elementary, the PAWS program is used throughout the building. Students who consistently demonstrate Pride, (positive) Attitude, (strong) Work Habits, and Self-Control earn the right to attend a monthly reward such as extra recess, BINGO, extra gym time, pep rally, talent show, and special assemblies.

Quarter Awards Programs - Each quarter, students are recognized in front of their peers for being on the Honor Roll, for having Perfect Attendance, and for earning B.U.G. Club (Bringing Up Grades) status.

Accelerated Reader Store - Students are motivated to read books and to score well on their Accelerated Reader tests by being able to visit the AR Store at the end of each quarter to spend the points they earned. Items in the store are donated by staff and community members.

Morning and Afternoon Announcements - Students who have earned high test scores, achieved Math Master status, or earned other special accomplishments are recognized on the announcements and get to draw from the treat bag in the principal's office.

Students never know when these special events are going to happen, as our policy is "Miss School...Miss Out!" Our goal is for them to understand they are part of the great things that are happening every day at Oakwood Elementary!

The staff at Oakwood Elementary are a tight-knit group - colleagues and friends. They are provided with needed resources, given time to collaborate together, and socialize during monthly luncheons. When staff join the Oakwood Elementary team, many of them are here for their career.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Oakwood Elementary has an important place in the hearts of its community members. We are grateful beyond measure for the support they show us. Communication is key to keeping our extended school family connected. A monthly newsletter and menu are sent home each month and are available on our website. Special events are announced through our website, on our electronic welcome sign, and by our instant alert system. Pictures are regularly submitted to the local newspaper to share the exciting things happening at our school.

We have built strong relationships with several local organizations. The Paulding County Library system organizes a Battle of the Books for interested 5th and 6th graders each year and donates all the books on the reading list to our school library. Throughout the year, several classes visit the local library branch for special programs, and student artwork is often on display in the children's section there. The Oakwood Volunteer Fire Department and EMS come to school each year on Fire Safety Day to teach our children about fire safety, observe and critique a fire drill, and to let them see their equipment up close. They also join us during School Safety Week to observe and participate in our safety drills. The Paulding County Soil and Water District's education specialist brings programs to the classrooms to enhance science concepts. A local dentist visits our first grade every year to promote visiting a dentist and the importance of having healthy teeth. A local company allows our teachers to apply for education grants each spring, donating up to \$4000 toward requests for resources and equipment. Over the years, we have been able to acquire a variety of learning tools such as snap circuit sets, pre-school playground equipment, musical instruments, whisper phones, and iPads from these grants - teaching tools that engage student learning beyond measure but are simply not in our school budget. Members of the community donate school supplies at the beginning of the year and hats and gloves during the winter season. They also take care of families in need at Christmas time with a Christmas for Kids program. We count on our classroom volunteers who listen to students read, practice sight words, and review math facts. They tremendously enhance our ability to give children one-on-one attention. It is because of the support of our community and the examples they set that we are able to provide a well-rounded approach to educating the whole child.

Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is active and supportive. They manage fundraising for the school. They host a much-anticipated carnival each spring. They organize a special end-of-the-quarter event for students each nine weeks - Clean up the Community Day, Egg Hunt, game stations. They help us fund field trips to places such as Imagination Station and Mazza Museum, places that bring what students are learning in the classroom to life. The PTO provides scholarships to high school seniors who have attended our elementary school. The PTO also provides lunch for the staff at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the year, and they give teachers a stipend for classroom supplies.

As was mentioned earlier, we have a number of activities throughout the school year where we extend a special invitation to our families and friends to join us - Veteran's Day Program, 3rd Grade Memorial Day Program, "Learning Is An Art" open house, band concerts, musical performances. These activities allow our students to shine but also show them that they are already an active part of their community.

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

The third of our three building-wide focus statements is "They take their cues from us... be a lifelong learner." All professional development is aimed at helping teachers meet children where they are and increase achievement for all.

Our school district schedules two to four professional development days per school year for all staff. We recognize that the diversity in student learning continues to grow so it is important that our teachers are equipped to meet those unique needs. Our district-wide focuses have been formative assessment, differentiated instruction, and school safety. Using formative assessment and differentiated instruction comes naturally to a high-quality educator, but the professional development opportunities provided by our district have helped teachers learn how to make focused and deliberate decisions about how to best implement them in their daily lessons. School safety requires continuous communication, practice, and revision.

As part of our district plan, teachers for each grade level have spent a great deal of time unpacking the Learning Standards and have created district curriculum maps. These curriculum maps help set the pace and timing at which lessons, units, and assessments are implemented. Professional development time is used each year to review and edit these maps.

Additionally, teachers are given the opportunity to take two days each year to attend trainings or conferences of their choice, paid for by the district, such as math conference, technology trainings, Ohio Kindergarten Conference, etc. This allows teachers to grow and to stay current with new developments in

their specific area(s) of teaching.

At Oakwood Elementary, we have made an effort to take professional development one step further. We have built in four 2-hour time blocks throughout the year where all students in the building are monitored by the principal and paraprofessionals while teachers meet to work on/review vertical alignment, develop common vocabulary, and create rigorous assessments. We have teachers' meetings twice a month where teachers discuss issues like classroom management, formative assessment ideas, and data management. Because we often learn best from our peers who are in very similar shoes, teachers will also be asked to present lessons and best practices at our teachers' meetings. Common planning periods allow grade level teachers to communicate daily, and teacher-based team (TBT) meetings are held with each grade level on a monthly basis to review data and make adjustments to interventions being provided in the classroom and in small group.

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

At Oakwood Elementary, school administrators and teachers are a team. We have collaborated to develop our building-wide focus statements which include character development and academic growth for students and being lifelong learners as a staff. The administration works together to find the resources that allow the teaching staff to provide rigorous and exciting lessons, while being fiscally responsible to our community. From the district office, the superintendent visits the building regularly, stopping into classrooms and talking with students in the hallway and café. The curriculum coordinator leads curriculum mapping, textbook selection, assessment training, state testing coordination, and other professional development. The special education/preschool director manages the IAT and IEP process and provides support, resources, and materials to the intervention specialists and preschool teachers. The District's school board is supportive of hiring highly qualified staff members and of providing the resources necessary for effective instruction. All are committed to keeping lines of communication open between their offices and the teaching staff.

The building principal holds herself and her staff to the same high expectations we have for our students. Using input from each grade level, she creates building and grade level schedules, making a strong effort to maximize uninterrupted instruction time and to allow for inclusion and team teaching. She is hands on with the curriculum and with helping to develop interventions for specific student needs. The principal has embraced the Ohio Teacher's Evaluation System (OTES), using the information supplied by teachers and what is observed in the classroom as detailed evidence in the rubric so teachers can use the rubric as a guideline for self-reflection and to create their own professional growth goals. The principal meets monthly with a Faculty Council to resolve any issues that might be hindering the building's forward progress. She listens to ideas of all stakeholders and attempts to incorporate any ideas and suggestions that will enhance student's learning opportunities.

The staff at Oakwood Elementary are expected to and are given the autonomy to provide high quality, rigorous lessons that make a positive difference in student achievement. Staff members with leadership skills emerge during collaboration, but facilitators make an effort to ensure that all voices are heard and everyone gets a chance to contribute to discussions and implementations of building-wide decisions.

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

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We are proud that we use data to keep our students and teachers accountable, but the tightknit nature of our school community allows us to buttress those statistics with qualitative observation. When zooming in on the one most instrumental practice of our school's success, it is hands down that we know and care about each of our students. From the principal, to the guidance counselor, to the classroom and specials teachers, to the custodians and cooks, we are dedicated to knowing and acknowledging each child by name. We have a working knowledge of their academic abilities, of their families and home situations, and of social and emotional needs. This knowledge helps us create the very best learning environment for each child. It is essential in determining what interventions to apply to struggling children and which enrichment activities will provide the spark needed to push the high achieving student to the next level. It also allows us to find the right way to communicate with individual families. Additionally, by knowing our students, we are able to proactively address social/emotional issues. We believe children reach their maximum potential as 21st Century Learners when they know the adults who are working with them care about them as an individual.

We celebrate the success of our students on a regular basis. As mentioned earlier, students who reach milestones in classroom activities and programs are recognized on the morning and afternoon announcements. Students who earn A's or make marked improvements on classroom assessments share their graded work with the principal and get to choose something from the treat bag. Hand written notes from the principal, congratulating students, are included on State testing results before they are mailed home. Teachers share good news and praise with families on grade cards and progress reports. Students who are "Caught in the Act" of doing good deeds for others have their names entered into a weekly drawing. Students are chosen by their teachers to receive special recognition for consistently demonstrating the character trait of the month. Success breeds success so we see these efforts paying huge dividends.

Working collaboratively, we make it a priority to incorporate multiple learning styles into our lessons. We communicate our high expectations to our students and then help them meet these expectations through interactive lessons, discussions, projects, activities, and assessments. Every day is not a perfect day at Oakwood Elementary. Sometimes our students do not enter the building ready to learn, not every family sees value in the education we are providing, and we do not handle every problem or situation correctly; however, every day is a new opportunity for our dedicated staff to make a positive impact on the children of our community. We are passionate about making the most of this opportunity!