

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Norwayne Middle School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 350 S. Main Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Creston OH 44217-9607  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County OH

Telephone (330) 435-1195

Fax (330) 435-4633

Web site/URL  
http://www.norwaynelocal.k12.oh.u  
s/

E-mail keleatherman@norwayne.net

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\*Mrs. Karen O'Hare  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail nrcn\_ohare@tccsa.net

District Name Norwayne Local School District Tel. (330) 435-6382

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. John Widmer  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	67	50	117
7	58	50	108
8	52	49	101
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	177	149	326

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 97 % White
  - 0 % Two or more races
- 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 5%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	309
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
K'iche', or Quiché, is a Maya language of Guatemala.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31%  
Total number students who qualify: 100

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %  
38 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>2</u> Autism                  | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<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.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school 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 27:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	95%	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 2018.

<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.

Create an environment where experiences are varied and appropriate, focusing on academic achievement as well as the social, emotional, and physical development of the middle school child.

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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The North Central School District was consolidated in 1949 when the communities of Burbank, Creston, and Sterling combined to provide improved educational opportunities for its young people. Voters passed a bond issue for the building of the new consolidated high school in 1950, and in 1953 classes began at Norwayne High School for students in grades 9-12. Burbank, Creston, and Sterling schools housed students in grades K-8 until 1972 when the 7th and 8th grade consolidated program opened at Creston School, thus Burbank and Sterling Schools provided for students in grades K-6. In 1988, a sizable addition and building renovations transformed the Creston building into a middle school for grades 5-8, and Burbank and Sterling became K-4 buildings. In 2006 another bond levy was passed enabling the district to build new elementary and high school buildings in addition to renovating the old high school to serve as a middle school.

Today all buildings are on one campus, and the campus has become known as the Norwayne School District with Norwayne Elementary housing PK-5th grade, Norwayne Middle School housing grades 6-8, and Norwayne High School accommodating grades 9-12. The Norwayne Local School District is rural and agriculture is the main “livelihood”. The primary tax duplicate is comprised of agricultural and residential property. There is little industry to support the tax base. Approximately 51.3% of the school’s revenue comes through the state foundation program, 33.6% from local real estate taxes, 5.3% from federal grants, and 9.8% from other sources. The district passed a .75% Earned Income Tax in November 2013 which provided approximately 10% of the revenue for the district in FY18. The district ranks 9th lowest out of 10 districts in Wayne County in valuation per pupil (\$134,492), and 9th lowest in voted tax millage. Norwayne’s per-pupil expenditures in FY17 were \$8,441, which ranked 592nd out of 606 school districts in the state of Ohio. Norwayne remains in the lowest 2% of Districts in the state for cost per pupil but remains the highest in performance for a comparison group as indicated by the 2016-17 Ohio School District Report Card.

The school climate is reflective of a very caring community who supports the schools and school programs both by voting needed revenue when called upon to do so and by their volunteerism in the schools. The district has an active community, school and adult support groups, as well as the academic boosters and athletic boosters, which raise funds to help meet the needs of various educational and student activity programs. There is something truly unique about Norwayne Schools and the Norwayne Community, which is characterized by always asking – “Is what is being proposed or suggested really good for kids?”

Strong family values throughout the community help guide students’ thinking and their ultimate social behaviors both at school and throughout the community. About 71% of the graduating classes continue on through some type of post-high school preparatory program of studies. Norwayne’s alumni have assumed roles of leadership in many fields, including teaching, business, farming, and industry. A hallmark of the Norwayne District is its congenial and harmonious relationship with tremendous successes in working together on matters of mutual concern. The Norwayne Alumni have proven to be generous in supporting scholarships and school improvements including facilities, programs, and various other endeavors.

The Norwayne staff is comprised of a blend of ages ranging from 22-65; the average age is 45. The average experience level of the professional staff is 13.8 years and the support staff is 10 years. Attitudes and attributes among the staff are varied but again, the blend of expertise provides for the enrichment of curriculum and an expansion of opportunities for students. 61% of our teachers hold Masters’ Degrees or more.

Leadership in Norwayne is both a top down and bottom up approach since input from the staff, parents, students, and community is continually sought as the district revises/updates its curriculum and provides its students with educational opportunities. The district, through its Board of Education all the way to the community level, has a communication plan which operates through the Board Communications Committee. Yearly goals are established and monthly activities/reports are a segment of the regular school board meeting agendas.

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

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

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Whether talking about the four core principle classes of Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science or discussing what are considered other curriculum classes we must not overlook a key element that exist in our school. For all classes taught at Norwayne Middle school each staff member has collectively and carefully looked at in detail Ohio's Learning Standards for the class they are teaching. They have each been required to write a curriculum map for their class and take ownership of its contents. These maps have been a strong guidance and influence of our academic rigor.

Our 6-8 Language Arts (LA) curriculum at each grade level and has four unique curriculum designs to fit each student's capabilities. While each class is differentiated they are all reflective of Ohio's Learning Standards. The following classes are offered at each grade level 6-8; an Enriched class that contains identified gifted learners, a base class centered around the average expected learner, a blended class of struggling learners and inclusive IEP students, a resource room pullout class for learners on an IEP who need more one-on-one learning. Classes taught with IEP students in them have a lower teacher to student ratios with additional tutors. At the 6th and 7th grade we offer Title 1 classes as well. After going almost 20 years without a new textbook adoption we recently purchased a new online curriculum. We utilize a series from Houghton, Mifflin, and Harcourt called Collections. This series presents materials and activities in a variety of ways, allowing students to interact with different types of content. Students have the tools they need to think critically, expand their curiosity, and tackle challenging concepts which help them learn to close read selections and prepare for high-stakes assessments. Teachers have class sets of Chromebooks to be able to implement the use of the online curriculum.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

Similar to the above mentioned LA curriculum but allowing for some acceleration, our 6-8 math curriculum offers four unique curriculum designs at each grade level. They too are all reflective of Ohio's Learning Standards. The following classes are offered at each grade level: a base class centered around the average expected learner, a blended class for struggling learners and inclusive IEP students, a resource room pullout class for learners on an IEP who need more one-on-one learning. Classes taught with IEP students in them have lower teacher to student ratios with additional tutors. At the 6th and 7th grade we offer Enriched classes with compacted curriculums for students who will be on track to take Algebra I as an 8th grader as well as Title 1 classes. For our 8th graders we offer Algebra I. However, unlike our LA department, we do not use any textbook series in our math department. All of the lessons are taught using resources and materials created by our staff specifically designed to address each learning standard. Teachers also have available class sets of Chromebooks to use with students and an online resource called MobyMax to help individualize instruction to meet student needs.

#### **1c. Science:**

This is another example of a curriculum that we feel is best taught without a textbook. Across the board, in grades 6-8 our science teachers use a vast amount of resources and materials to operate their classes. They have tried to incorporate as much hands-on and STEM-based lessons as possible. A lot of the supplies used to conduct lab experiments are done through community donation. Also, we are the benefactors of a former alumnus who previously owned and sold his adaptive technology business. We have utilized him as both a financial and educational resource on several projects. He has purchased us a Makerspace classroom cart, 10 Vex robotics kits and competition board, and two 3-dimensional printers. This has allowed us to start an after-school science club.

The science curriculum focuses on three areas at each grade level: earth and space science, life science, and

physical science. As these areas pertain to the 6th grade, the focus is on the basics of modern cell theory and all living things are made of cells. They cover rocks, minerals, and soil as well as matter and motion. At the 7th grade level, they study cycles and patterns of the earth and moon, cycles of matter of flow of energy, and conversion of mass and energy. In 7th grade, our students take a field trip to the Great Lakes Science Center. The 8th-grade curriculum centers on the physical earth, species and reproduction, and forces and motion.

#### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Norwayne Middle School, through our district curriculum meetings, developed a spiral curriculum for grades 6-8. The curriculum is designed so when one year's grade level social studies class ends, that is where the next grade level begins in historical time.

The 6th grade curriculum begins with a review of geographical features, map study skills and geographical terminology. The regions that are the main focal point are Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Indus Valley/India and Ancient China. The emphasis in each unit is broken down using the common core standards in the area of geography, history, government and economics. Throughout each unit, when it is part of the unit, world religions are also discussed. At the end of each unit, a cumulative project that pertains to the unit is done by each student as a closure to the unit.

In 7th grade, the area of instruction stays in the Eastern Hemisphere and picks up with Ancient Greece and follows the historical timeline to the Age of Exploration. In each of these cultures, geography, history, government and economics are the focus of each unit once again. In seventh grade, students learn about the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire and the Middle Ages through the Renaissance. Towards the end of the year, they are introduced to the Age of Exploration.

In 8th grade, the students review the Age of Exploration and continue with the discovery of America. This timeline runs through the discovery of America to the American Civil War. Eighth grade focuses on historical people, events and battles that have affected the development of the North American continent. The students will learn how the United States was developed and how the American government was formed and continues to function today. The influence of democracy today is a major focus. A field trip to Washington DC is the culminating activity of our school year tying our American history curriculum altogether.

#### **1e. For secondary schools:**

#### **1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

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

Students attend Visual Arts classes on a daily basis for two 9 week grading periods which total one semester per year. This is the same for our Computer classes as well. These two classes alternate each 9 week grading period. For example, a student will take Art every day the 1st 9 weeks of school and then during the 2nd 9 weeks they will take Computer class. Both of these class curriculums follow Ohio's Content Standards. These class periods are 48 minutes long.

Physical Education (PE) is scheduled in conjunction with each student's choice of musical curriculum. Students choose between General Music, Choir, or Band. PE and Music are conducted all year, but meet on an every other day basis and therefore total one semester as well. For example, a student in the 1st semester will have PE on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday while having their Music choice on Tuesday and Thursday. During the 2nd semester, those classes reverse the days and PE will meet on Tuesday and Thursday while having Music on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This balances out the number of days students attend each class for the year. These class periods are 48 minutes long as well.

In summary, all four of what we call specials classes meet for 48 minutes and are given to all students grades 6-8 for a total of 1 semester per year.

Our 8th graders can elect to take one extra class in addition to the above-mentioned specials classes. Spanish I and AG are full-year courses. Speech and Drama are semester courses. Since Speech and Drama are only semester courses students have the option to take either one or both of them. Speech is offered in the fall and drama in the spring.

A typical 6th and 7th grade student schedule would look like the one below:

1st semester

Math, Science, Art, Language Arts, Social Studies, Study Hall, Music (Tu, Th)/PE (M,W,F), Expansion (STEAM/Intervention)

2nd semester

Math, Science, Computer, Language Arts, Social Studies, Study Hall, Music (M,W,F)/PE (Tu, Th), Expansion (STEAM/Intervention)

A typical 8th grade student schedule would look like the one below.

1st semester

Math/Algebra I, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Art, Music (Tu, Th)/PE (M,W,F), Spanish I, Study Hall

2nd semester

Math/Algebra I, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Computer, Music (M,W,F)/PE (Tu, Th), Spanish I, Study Hall

### **3. Special Populations:**

When discussing the individual needs of students, we rely on a process called Response to Intervention (RTI). Staff members on grade level teams to utilize the RTI process to identify and address students deficiencies. These teams meet once a week to discuss struggling students' and the use of various interventions to accommodate for students. They document each intervention, how it's working, and make any necessary adjustments. Should the interventions prove successful the team leaves them in place until such time as they seem fit to alter them. If the attempted intervention have not proven successful for a student, then the team may make a determination to request further diagnostic testing by the school psychologist.

Should a student be identified as having a disability then an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is formulated. The school psychologist, special education coordinator, an intervention specialist, principal, teachers, and parents come together to give input and write the plan. After the plan is crafted outlining the services and interventions needed progress monitoring takes place every 9 weeks and an annual review occurs as well. The plan dictates whether the student receives their curriculum in an inclusive classroom setting or the need exists for a pull-out setting. The pull-out setting allows our intervention specialist to work with students more one-on-one. These students usually receive an additional class period of intervention as well.

For students who are functioning above grade level or have been identified as gifted receive a Written Education Plan (WEP). All of our teachers have now been gifted trained and are able to adjust their

curriculums to meet the needs of these students. Identified gifted students are typically placed into enriched or accelerated classes. WEP's are progress monitored every 9 weeks and reviewed annually for renewal just like an IEP.

Students who come from an economically disadvantaged situation are given an extra intervention period. This class typically has a student to teacher ratio of 6:1. Teachers focus on providing these students essential study skills, organization, time management, and ways to be more resourceful.

Each year every student is evaluated by the teaching staff and ranked from top to bottom. Not only are they evaluated based on academic performance but social interaction as well. Any necessary scheduling adjustment occurs to ensure that student are placed in classes that best fit their needs. This scheduling process takes countless hours by the staff and each student is hand scheduled. We want the placement for them to be academically and socially successful.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Norwayne Middle School has built a school climate based on a foundation of Character Counts pillars. We utilize words such as Respect, Trustworthiness, Caring, Citizenship, and Fairness. Every staff member has what we call Character Counts cards in their rooms. When teachers see students display one of the six traits they submit their name to the office for recognition. Each day during announcements the cards are read to the student body. Those students then come to the office where the principal congratulates and rewards them for being good role models. After reading the cards on the announcements we display them on the walls so everyone can see each act of character. We have designated one of our most traveled hallways as the “Hall of Character.” This hallway has banners representing each of the six pillars as well as various character quotes like, “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.” — John Wooden.

Our school counselor is the advisor of our Teen Institute. This group holds weekly meetings to discuss topics of concern by the student body. They help promote our anti-drug use pledge and run Red Ribbon Week. Local law enforcement officers work in conjunction with them as well. In an effort to have school spirit our cheerleaders have pep rallies during each sporting season. Our student council hosts school dances and run a dodgeball tournament during lunch time. They have ice cream sundae bars at the end of each grading period for students who achieve the honor roll. These activities help to promote healthy alternative choices to drugs and alcohol.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Each year before the first official day of school even begins, Norwayne Middle School lays the foundation for welcoming parents and students into our building. Two weeks prior to the start of school we host our orientation night for all new and incoming students. The evening before the first day of school we hold our school open house to allow everyone to get to know our staff. Throughout the school year, we host three evenings of parent-teacher conferences that allow us to engage in discussions about student progress. Parents utilize an online monitoring program called ProgressBook to help keep up with their children’s grades and assignments. Each month parents are invited in for breakfast and an awards ceremony to recognize students who were chosen as scholars and citizens.

Norwayne Middle School has long had an outstanding relationship with its Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). This group has been instrumental in serving the needs of our school and students. While the parents who participate in this organization seem to change every 2-3 years, this group’s support continues to remain rock solid. Our PTO takes on the responsibility of providing concessions for all of our extra-curricular sporting events. They feed our staff in the evenings we hold our conferences. This year they purchased 120 graphing calculators for our Math departments. The list of their contributions to our school and students is endless.

Our school and community come together for several traditional special events. For example, each year we host a Veterans Day assembly and invite over 100 veterans to attend a service and feed them breakfast. The Future Farmers of America (FFA) class choose a local family in need and host a benefit in their honor. A long-standing tradition has been our DC Dinner fundraiser. For 27 years our 8th-grade class has gone to Washington DC. During the months of November and December, our school holds a can food drive and a Chain Links for Charity fundraiser. We work with a local church and the Lions Club to put together baskets to be delivered and purchase needed coats, hats, and gloves for the holidays.

### 3. Professional Development:

Two years ago, our school formed a professional development committee which meets twice a year to discuss and formulate plans for needed staff training. As a district, we have established one full in-service day as well as three additional 2-hour delayed school start days for the sole purpose of staff development.

Each semester, subject-specific teachers meet for a day with our Curriculum/Gifted Coordinator to review good teaching practices and curriculum concepts. During the past 3 years, a heavy emphasis has been placed on gifted training for the staff. Another big initiative has been increasing their knowledge and application of numerous Google apps. We are very close to a 1:1 ratio with Chromebooks and recently sent three staff members to a Google summit. Upon their return, they will hold after-school classes to train the rest of our school staff. Much of the push to get the staff more in tune with these Google apps is because of our large commitment to the use of Chromebooks. The increased availability of the Chromebooks coupled with continued training in classroom uses for it has been a benefit to our students. It has also been a contributing factor in their educational growth. In addition to all of those days for staff development, we utilize an online resource called PublicWorks. This has been very beneficial in keeping our staff abreast of pertinent information on topics such as Homeless Students, Dating Violence, Hazardous Materials, and proper Fire Extinguisher usage to name a few. Our school, as well as the district itself, places a lot of value in making sure our staff is well trained. The benefit to our students is well worth the investment of time and money

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

The leadership philosophy is one that not only exists within the school but is very present throughout the district. It is both a top down and bottom up approach that values everyone's contributions all the way from the school board President to the support staff. We pride ourselves on having a collegial team approach. No one person makes a decision concerning student welfare or educational direction without seeking the insight and opinions of many. We rely heavily on surveying, data, and discussion when making important decisions as to how best to proceed. We involve key staff and community stakeholders when needed. For example, we recently took on a large district endeavor to install a new turf surface at our community stadium. The idea was brought to the school by a group of interested community members, alumni, and local business stakeholders as something they would like to see happen. To accomplish an undertaking of this size took an enormous amount of and leadership. All personnel resources at various levels served on committees such as planning and fundraising all the way to the dedication ceremony. Not only was it pulled off in less than a year's time but it was all done through community donations. No school district dollars were used in the financing of the project.

When we look at the leadership specific to Norwayne Middle School the same philosophies apply. The Principal of the building is tasked with ensuring that each staff member takes an active role in contributing to the overall success of its students and school. The best example of this would be when the principal sat down with the staff to establish goals for the building and discussed needed changes. Then a scheduling committee was formed to investigate how best to accomplish those goals.

One of the other contributing factors to the school and district stability is the longevity of its leadership. Our school board has a member who has served 25 years along with a recently retired member who spent 20 years as well. Their presence and steady guidance have been essential over the years. The prior superintendent spent 50 years in the district and 28 of those as the superintendent. The current superintendent has been with the district 35 years and the past 16 as an administrator. The elementary and high school principals have each been in place for 20 years. All of these years of combined leadership experience are the help with the steady guidance of educational decision making

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

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If we were to point one thing that contributed to our schools increased success it would have to be the changes that occurred in our master schedule. Almost all of the changes directly affected how we scheduled students to meet their individual needs. In total, we have made 4 critical scheduling changes. First, we created a daily common planning time for our grade level teachers to meet and collaborate as a team. They are able to collectively discuss vital issues concerning instruction, interventions, and student needs. Secondly, we added a period called Expansion. This 48 minute period allowed us to expand our curriculum to both the high and low end of the spectrum. Higher functioning students were given STEAM concepts on a 9-week rotational basis. Mean while our identified special education and economically disadvantaged students were placed in small groups to receive extra interventions. During those interventions, we incorporated an online remediation program that tracked student progress. A third change was made concerning our band program. Students wanting to participate in band (half of which were our lower functioning students) were having to give up their study hall 3 days a week. This pulled them away from the opportunity to get additional time and help to complete assignments or study for assessments. Finally, we created and scheduled identified gifted students into enriched and accelerated classes. All of these key scheduling changes were critical steps to allowing us to make the other necessary changes in our teaching practices which ultimately lead to student growth across the board for every student.