

U.S. Department of Education
2019 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 Mrs. Judith Castrogiovanni

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

Official School Name Jefferson Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 825 Lions Road

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

Jefferson Township PA 18436-3469
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Lackawanna County

Telephone (570) 689-2656

Fax (570) 689-3825

Web site/URL http://www.npsd.org

E-mail jacastrogiovanni@npsd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Bryan McGraw

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

District Name North Pocono School District Tel. (570) 842-7659

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. William Burke

(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. 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

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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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 | 28 | 29 | 57 |
| 1 | 33 | 31 | 64 |
| 2 | 42 | 39 | 81 |
| 3 | 35 | 42 | 77 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 or higher | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Students | 138 | 141 | 279 |

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 96 % White
 - 2 % 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: 10%

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

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

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate | Answer |
|--|---------------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 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 | 19 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 28 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017 | 279 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.10 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 10 |

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: 23%
Total number students who qualify: 63

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
33 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>27</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:

| | Number of Staff |
|--|------------------------|
| Administrators | 1 |
| Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 14 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc. | 7 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 6 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 2 |

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

| Required Information | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 | 2013-2014 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 95% | 95% | 96% | 95% | 95% |
| 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.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To educate and challenge all students to their maximum potential and prepare them for the demands of a global society.

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

Serving 278 children, Jefferson Elementary is a K-3 school located in Jefferson Township, Pennsylvania. Our school resides in a rural community within the North Pocono School District. The Jefferson staff and community share a collective belief that working as a team strengthens our impact and benefits our children.

At Jefferson Elementary, students are challenged with strong core curricula across all subject areas. Regular team meetings are held to identify students who need additional support. These meetings include classroom teachers, reading and math specialists, the school counselor, administrators, and, when needed, the school psychologists and behavioral specialists. Our professional staff continuously seeks out new and innovative ways to address the ever-changing needs of our students. Each classroom teacher sets aside a block of time to work with small, skills-based groups each day. In order to facilitate this targeted, small-group learning, the principal designates 1 of 4 instructional aides to assist every classroom during this time. This represents our primary level of support and has proved to be the greatest factor in improving student achievement. Other supplemental supports include Title I reading, math intervention, computer-based fluency remediation, as well as push-in programs delivered by the Intervention Specialists. At Jefferson Elementary, parent involvement is valued and encouraged. Annual events such as Family Reading Night, Reading Picnic, Mad Scientist Day, Family Math Night, and Field Day allow parents opportunities to formally participate in their child's education.

Our overriding goal is to equip students with the tools to become well-rounded citizens. The Olweus anti-bullying program permeates our school-wide culture via classroom and whole-school activities. Our Olweus team, consisting of teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, and community members, meets quarterly to ensure that the program's precepts remain our core philosophy. Students are recognized for exemplifying these ideals via a monthly Citizenship Award. This award, voted on by peers, is given to students who demonstrate empathy, responsibility, problem-solving, and fairness. In addition, faculty and staff give weekly Kindness Awards to students who are observed putting these ideals into action. Other such programs include bi-weekly guidance and mindfulness lessons designed to support students' skills in self-regulation, self-care, and peer interaction. At Jefferson, our belief is that the importance placed on character education directly impacts students' academic achievement.

Jefferson Elementary consistently exceeds Adequate Yearly Progress targets on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). For the 2018-2019 school year, Jefferson has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with the Keystone Award for Academic Excellence. Additionally, our school was named a Title I Distinguished School in 2012 and again in 2018. These accolades highlight our commitment to academic excellence. Along with these noteworthy achievements, Jefferson has been recognized in other areas contributing to the growth of our students. Through the National PTA's Reflections program, our students regularly produce award-winning entries at the state level across many arts categories.

In 2010-2011, our school received Bronze level distinction through the Healthier U.S. Schools Initiative spearheaded by former First Lady Michelle Obama. Through a school-wide effort to conserve energy and preserve our environmental resources, Jefferson Elementary has been the recipient of the Energy Star Award multiple times, culminating in becoming 6 years certified in 2017.

Strong ties to the community are fostered through annual projects to benefit local and statewide organizations. Over 700 items are donated annually to St. Joseph's Center Baby and Children's Pantry, a local non-profit providing necessities to children in low income families. Through a student running club, Jefferson Elementary became involved in a Northeastern Pennsylvania charity event known as Ryan's Run which supports Allied Services, a rehabilitation facility for children and adults with disabilities. To date, over \$10,000 has been raised by our school, making Jefferson Elementary the top school contributor for each of the past three years. This year, students incorporated a Pajama Day fundraiser benefiting Children's Hospital of Philadelphia into their annual Polar Express Day celebration. The students emptied their piggy banks to raise over \$300 for this worthy cause. Our annual Scarecrow Contest, Dress Down December, and Faculty Volleyball Game events generate canned food donations, throughout each school year, to stock

several food pantries serving the different counties representing the district. Parents and community members regularly express pride regarding Jefferson Elementary's dedication to providing ways for our young students to make a positive difference in their community.

As a result, community support for Jefferson Elementary and its students is unrivaled. In 2011, the principal identified a need for renovations to the school playground. In an overwhelming response from the community, over \$35,000 was raised in less than a year to completely fund the project. The events held to raise funds became community gatherings that brought everyone from our extended Jefferson family together for the benefit of our children. In addition, community members volunteered their skills and time to install the new equipment. Parents also donated labor and resources to landscape a newly created Butterfly Garden for outdoor student learning, a perennial flower garden, the addition of Buddy Benches to our play areas, and reusable water bottle filling stations in our school.

Another highly-valued component to our school community is the Jefferson Elementary Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Our PTA works tirelessly to provide resources such as nonfiction magazine subscriptions for all students, periodic special events, a social for graduating third graders, daily planners for each child to use throughout the year, and age-appropriate books and/or crafts for each child each holiday. This treasured group of parents also ensures that field trips are fully funded, enabling all students to attend regardless of cost.

The cooperation of our school board, administration, staff, parents, and community has created an atmosphere of support, growth, and enthusiasm at Jefferson Elementary. The resulting educational environment is one where students thrive and establish a lifelong love of learning and of giving back.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The Jefferson Elementary K-3 English language arts curriculum reflects a research-based approach to literacy, in which students build knowledge and skills at every level. The use of a unifying weekly concept and essential question inspire inquiry and discussion, and carefully-selected texts challenge students to meet or exceed Pennsylvania Core Standards.

Through the use of whole group and small group instruction, along with independent, self-selected reading, students practice and apply skills and strategies that have been explicitly taught and modeled. Vocabulary acquisition and use enable students to access more complex texts. Students read a variety of genres at their independent and instructional reading levels. Small, flexible groups enable teachers to plan for and meet students' needs. Clear and consistent instructional routines are utilized to maximize instructional time in the classroom. Technology is utilized to extend student learning. Parents have access to digital resources and support via the district website, online portals, and teacher webpages.

Our writing curriculum requires students to write to and across texts. Research inquiry and genre writing allow students to explore the traits and craft of the writing process. Authentic writing tasks and peer interaction challenge students to apply their writing skills.

Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment provide a complete and accurate picture of student performance. Benchmark data is collected at the beginning, middle, and end of each year. Teachers have time to analyze data, which is broken down to grade, class, and individual student levels, with the goal of guiding instruction. Interventions are provided in small flexible groups based on students' needs. Immediate corrective feedback is provided to promote success and enjoyment of reading and writing. In this way, Jefferson provides students with the skills and desire to read and write a wide range of texts for a variety of purposes.

1b. Mathematics:

Jefferson Elementary utilizes a research-based mathematics curriculum that emphasizes the application of mathematics to real-world situations. This curriculum features a carefully engineered spiral implemented to develop mastery and depth of knowledge. Teachers, kindergarten through third grade, balance teacher-directed instruction with opportunities for student-led problem solving, hands-on explorations, and continual practice.

Students at Jefferson Elementary explore, apply strategies, practice fluency, and share multiple ways of solving problems. Learning naturally flows through activities involving games, manipulatives and tools, and oral and written responses. Jefferson Elementary's principal has created a schedule that provides a daily block of 86 minutes for mathematics instruction. This block empowers teachers and students to work in whole group, small group, and independently. As a result, students develop strong reasoning and problem solving skills. The instructional routine unfolds the same way, each day, providing consistency for our students. Lessons begin with mental math and fluency, then move to an introduction of the essential skill/concept, followed by class practice, independent practice, and review.

Differentiation options are embedded to support the success of every learner, and the Jefferson Elementary Mathematics Intervention Specialist continues that tailored instruction via support sessions for students, as needed. Technology resources are employed appropriately both in the school setting and as an outreach tool for families to use at home. Jefferson Elementary promotes student learning and success in the area of mathematics by hosting opportunities for students to demonstrate for their parents the mathematics strategies and understandings they have mastered at our Family Math Night.

Jefferson Elementary incorporates a variety of assessments to determine students' mathematical competency and to support strategic instructional decision making. Students engage in daily formative assessments, unit assessments, self-assessments, cumulative assessments, open response assessments and benchmark assessments. This variety of diagnostic tools allows teachers to identify skills and standards that students have mastered as well as those that may require additional whole group or targeted instruction. Jefferson's principal works with remediation specialists and teachers to schedule data meetings tri-annually. These meetings provide each individual teacher uninterrupted time with the principal and specialists resulting in powerful, program-guiding decisions.

1c. Science:

At Jefferson Elementary, the goal of our science curriculum is to deepen students' understanding of the world around them. Our cross-curricular instruction encourages inquiry and investigation by nurturing the innate curiosity of our students. This method of instruction increases students' engagement and allows them to immerse themselves more fully in the development of their understanding about what science is, how it is practiced, and how it pertains to their lives. Authentic and meaningful assessment of skills, strategies, and processes are used to evaluate mastery of scientific principles. Assessment data allows teachers to identify areas of strength, need for support or remediation, and maps future instruction.

A classroom magazine is used across grade levels to expose students to engaging nonfiction content about current scientific trends and discoveries. This resource helps to build non-fiction reading skills and increase content area knowledge.

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities are planned and implemented to help students become problem solvers and innovative thinkers. By inventing, asking questions, and investigating, students make predictions and informed decisions. STEM activities allow students to access and engage with information and to integrate and apply knowledge in a seamless manner. Cooperation and communication are essential as students work together to apply what has been learned.

Our field trips are designed to help students explore their world in an engaging and developmentally appropriate manner. Students have the opportunity to connect classroom lessons to real-life experiences. The nature of our field trips include social, sensory, and high-interest components designed to increase engagement and encourage curiosity. The emphasis on science outside of the classroom reinforces to students that science, in its many forms, is an important part of life.

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

The Jefferson Elementary K-3 social studies curriculum challenges students to meet their maximum potential as responsible citizens in a global society. Using a curriculum map to guide instruction, teachers plan activities and experiences that enable students to make real-world connections and grow as community members. Recurring themes allow students to revisit concepts on a developmentally-appropriate level. Through a variety of texts and methods, students learn about citizenship, cultural literacy, problem solving, and the role of responsible citizens in the world. Authentic and meaningful assessment of skills and strategies are used to evaluate mastery of citizenship principles. Assessment data allows teachers to identify areas of strength, need for support or remediation, and maps future instruction.

Jefferson's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) generously provides to students at all grade levels a classroom magazine subscription. This weekly magazine exposes students to engaging nonfiction content about current events. This resource helps to build non-fiction reading skills and increase content area knowledge. Students learn about the world around them as well as the ways in which other children their age are making positive changes in their communities and around the globe.

A variety of character-building programs are implemented at Jefferson Elementary to teach students about the importance of fair and responsible behavior in the classroom and school community. Our use of an internationally recognized bullying prevention program teaches students how to treat others with kindness and respect, recognize and resolve conflict, and compromise with others.

Through the social studies curriculum and numerous extensions of classroom learning, students learn what it means to be responsible community members. It is through our Acts of Kindness Awards and Citizen of the Month programs that we recognize students who go above and beyond in demonstrating what has been learned. Throughout the week, Jefferson faculty and staff recognize students who are exceptionally kind to others. These students receive an Act of Kindness Award. The Jefferson Citizen of the Month program empowers students to nominate peers who demonstrate excellent citizenship. These students show, through their words and actions, the characteristics we hope to see in all of our students. Their reward is recognition during morning announcements, a special breakfast with the principal, a commemorative citizenship pin, and a post on our school website and Facebook page.

Jefferson Elementary achieves the goals set forth in our social studies program by addressing student growth as citizens both in and out of the classroom.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The visual arts education program at Jefferson Elementary incorporates historical art concepts and critical response in order for students to make connections to the real world and compare what they've learned to their own lived experiences. Students are taught to view art as a valuable area of study, both on an independent and transdisciplinary level. Student artwork is displayed throughout the hallways to create a gallery experience. The art show at the end of the school year is a meaningful, culminating event that highlights work from each student in the school.

Jefferson Elementary students in kindergarten through third grade receive music instruction two times each week for forty-three minutes. The skills acquired through our music program are: note reading skills, steady beat, basic rhythms, pitch, proper vocal technique, understanding of basic music vocabulary, basic forms of analyzing and evaluating music. Students in second and third grade learn to play mini glockenspiels to reinforce a connection between reading music and creating music. Students in kindergarten and first grade play unpitched instruments to strengthen their understanding of steady beat and rhythm. The music program is a source of great joy and great pride for our extended Jefferson Elementary family who enjoy concerts and special events throughout the year.

Jefferson Elementary offers physical education to all students grades K-3 grade twice a week for 43 minutes throughout the school year. The physical education program strives to instill a life-long love of fitness. A mix of traditional and nontraditional skills are introduced throughout the school year from catching and throwing to cup-stacking. The physical education program's culminating event, Field Day, brings our community together to cheer on our students as they showcase their growth in a variety of skills. Over 30 parent volunteers work in shifts to run stations where students complete various physical tasks. In addition to P.E., health education is offered to first, second, and third grade students, once weekly for one quarter of the school year. Topics include hygiene, nutrition, and safety awareness as well as drug and alcohol awareness for third grade students.

Jefferson Elementary pioneered an after-school program offering Spanish language instruction to all first, second, and third grade students in our building. The lead teacher was one of our North Pocono High School Spanish teachers, and she was supported in her instruction, after school, by two members of our Jefferson Elementary team who are fluent Spanish speakers, themselves. Students from our high school's AP Spanish class also volunteered to demonstrate and assist with instruction of our elementary students. One day a week, Jefferson students were invited to stay after school to learn Spanish words and phrases that

connected to the state curriculum standards they were learning throughout the school day such as numbers, days of the week, colors, weather related terms, and more. Our Jefferson teachers used this opportunity to bring the exciting language and culture learning from the after-school program into their own classrooms asking students to use the Spanish words throughout the day where applicable. This program was cited as a model program in the Pennsylvania School Boards Association e-publication and in our local newspapers.

Students at Jefferson Elementary work with their teachers and with one another to prepare for the realities of the 21st century educational and workplace landscape. Access to touch screen laptops empowers students and teachers to practice, research, discover and apply information daily. Several Jefferson Elementary teachers have received advanced training via a district-wide initiative focused on cutting-edge technology and its uses in the classroom. We have invested in the very technological resources that our teachers have been trained to use. Students learn, from their classroom teachers, the proper use of such resources and the power that they have at their fingertips to access more knowledge about any topic and to present that information to others.

The library is rightly placed at the physical center of our school and is a place of wonder and imagination. Book exchange for students is scheduled once each week but may happen daily for our more voracious readers. Kindergarten and first grade students at Jefferson Elementary are introduced to the library and the media available to them there; the curriculum delivered via the school librarian once each week for one quarter. Second and third grade students attend library class once each week for three quarters of each school year. That curriculum focuses on research skills and technology.

Jefferson Elementary's school-counseling program is designed to serve all students with the goal of developing social-emotional skills that prepare them to be productive members of a global society. Classroom guidance lessons, taught bi-weekly to students in kindergarten through third grade, focus on topics such as feelings, self-regulation, SMART goals, career exploration/awareness, conflict resolution, kindness, and acceptance. Small group and individual counseling is available to every student in the building on a referral basis, from teachers, parents/guardians, administration, or the school counselor and may include topics such as anger management, social skills, divorce/separated families, coping skills, and self-control. All Jefferson Elementary students engage in four mindfulness lessons each quarter within four major units: introduction to mindfulness, mind/body awareness, thoughts and emotions, and application of mindfulness techniques.

3. Special Populations:

Jefferson Elementary teachers, specialists, and administrators meet frequently to analyze data as we meet the challenge of educating each unique child. Students at Jefferson have access to specialists within the regular education program so immediate and intensive support may be offered as soon as a student exhibits measurable gaps in achievement. The Jefferson Elementary kindergarten intervention specialist provides services designed to ensure that kindergarten students, regardless of pre-K experience, have the support needed to reach their maximum potential. This program offers early remediation services 2-3 times per week for 30 minutes tailored to student needs in ELA for the lowest achieving 20% of students in kindergarten. Jefferson's mathematics interventionist works with the lowest achieving 15% of students in grades 1-3 to provide individualized instruction based on data and teacher collaboration. The interventions delivered are designed to bridge gaps and the math intervention program is flexible and responsive to best meet students' needs. Title I reading support is delivered by the Jefferson Elementary reading specialist and is rooted in the regular education ELA curriculum. Students qualify for Title I help based on their performance on DIBELS, a Title I screening test, teacher input, and curricular assessments which are all discussed at tri-annual data meetings.

The Child Study Team at Jefferson Elementary tackles the challenge posed when all regular education methods of support and reinforcement are not enough to adequately meet a student's needs. Formative and summative assessments are closely analyzed to determine if a student needs further testing. The results of testing are then discussed with our team of professionals and the student's parents so that, as a team, we may secure the specially designed instruction that an IEP offers to address the areas in need of support, accommodations, and progress monitoring for the child's success. Students with speech and language,

occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision, and/or hearing needs are also supported via a team approach to evaluation and implementation of an IEP or 504 plan. Such plans bring professionals, highly qualified in their fields, to the table to offer therapy, accommodations, and advocacy through our Jefferson Elementary team approach.

Special education services are provided to Jefferson Elementary students who qualify under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as a student with a disability. Special education and related services include learning support, speech and language support, and occupational therapy. Learning support services are provided to students who qualify and demonstrate a need for specially designed instruction in order to make progress in the general education curriculum. Curriculum is presented to students in a differentiated form in order to achieve success. Progress monitoring of students occurs bi-weekly to ensure growth in areas of need.

Students who are performing above grade level are given opportunities to extend their learning through access to more complex texts and differentiated resources, as well as activities that promote and encourage student choice. Students who qualify for our gifted program have learning opportunities tailored to their unique qualities. The gifted program also offers a wide range of language study, enrichment and exploration trips and hands-on projects and presentations with real-world applications.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Jefferson Elementary is a family. As such, every individual associated with our school is a member of that family: school board members, administrators, teachers, staff, students and their relatives, and community members. We work together to sustain Jefferson Elementary's positive environment and can-do culture. Our team believes all students need and deserve a school where they can take academic risks and develop valuable social connections, and so our focus is placed on students' emotional needs and growth. Teacher instructional practices are inextricably linked to whole-child development.

Jefferson students participate weekly in purposeful lessons that cultivate an environment rich in kindness and compassion. For the past six years, Jefferson Elementary has implemented an internationally recognized bullying-prevention program. Class meetings are conducted weekly with the purpose of understanding bullying, what it is, how to prevent it, and how to build positive peer relationships. Our school buddy bench, symbolizes all that our school believes about interpersonal relationships: every child is a valuable member of our family and should be treated with kindness. Located on the playground, the buddy bench provides each child a place to go when he/she is looking for a playmate. Students respond promptly when they see a peer sit on the buddy bench by welcoming him/her to join in their fun.

As a result of the lessons they experience weekly, Jefferson Elementary kindergarten through third grade students promote acceptance, respect differences, and are understanding of each person's uniqueness. Individual students are recognized weekly for acts of kindness observed by faculty and staff. Another powerful way we send that message is through our Citizen of the Month award. Each month, one grade level is featured, and students are nominated by their peers for the award. Recognition for this honor includes breakfast with the principal, a citizenship pin, a certificate, and a featured spot on the school and district websites. Students and faculty also participate in monthly mindfulness lessons with the physical education teacher. The focus of each lesson is to help everyone practice being in the moment through guided breathing, visualization, and sensory awareness. The goal is to increase emotional well-being, mental health, and physical health, which all contribute to a positive school climate.

The teachers at Jefferson Elementary Center share a vision of connectedness and support with their students, community, and administration. The Jefferson team collaborates during daily planning time, sponsors a Sunshine Club to celebrate with and show support for colleagues, and seeks to find the joy and humor with each other every day. The principal at Jefferson Elementary Center has a long-standing open door policy and utilizes positive notes, events, and talks to ensure that all teachers know they are valued and supported. She sees all member of the Jefferson Elementary family as individuals and takes the time to know and connect with them. She greets all student by name and checks in with them about the little things that matter most.

The global support found in and surrounding Jefferson Elementary School continues to manifest an exceptionally warm, vibrant, and inspiring school climate.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Jefferson Elementary fosters strong family and community ties. Those relationships serve as the foundation for student success and school excellence. Parents, teachers, administration, school board members and students work cooperatively to enhance academic achievement and social-emotional learning.

The Jefferson Elementary team offers families creative and engaging opportunities to participate in the education of their children. Our annual reading and math nights provide parents with meaningful insights into their children's curriculum and progress while fostering a joy of learning. Our team designs activities that provide parents with strategies to support student success. Keeping parents informed of and engaged in school activities is a top priority. Monthly, joint principal and Parent Teacher Association newsletters are used to highlight important social and academic topics. Jefferson also utilizes the district website,

Facebook page, and local news to communicate so that our school family feels connected and excited about the many opportunities to get involved at Jefferson.

Our Parent Teacher Association supports many opportunities for Jefferson Elementary students. In the school setting, the P.T.A. supplies daily agendas and homework folders used to keep parents informed and connected to the classroom. Students gain a deeper understanding of curricular concepts through educational field trips within our community sponsored by our P.T.A. Such trips enrich and reflect Jefferson Elementary's daily classroom lessons. In addition, the P.T.A. coordinates family activities such as movie nights, trunk-or-treat, holiday celebrations, and the third grade social. These activities strengthen the bonds of our Jefferson Elementary family.

Community engagement is also facilitated through our local Rotary Club and Veterans of Foreign Wars organization, county and township government offices, and local universities. The Rotary Club meets with our third graders and discusses the importance of good citizenship and academic achievement. They also provide our students with dictionaries which are used throughout the year to strengthen vocabulary development. V.F.W. members, along with veterans who have been invited by our students, join us for our annual Veterans' Day program honoring their service in word and song. Each year, veterans teach our kindergartners about our nation's flag and the Pledge of Allegiance. Lackawanna County and local townships help our students understand their local government, recycling opportunities, and the volunteer fire and rescue services provided in their communities through presentations and cooperative drills.

The academic excellence and outreach success experienced by our students is the direct result of genuine bonds that make the Jefferson family bigger than those who work for our school district and attend our school each day; it includes the family members of our students, our community members, and our regional partners in Northeastern PA. Jefferson's commitment to engaging families and the community supports our students as they grow to be actively engaged in the world around them.

3. Professional Development:

Jefferson Elementary Center prides itself in actively engaging in professional development. Professional experiences range from building-level faculty meetings to attending cutting edge workshops and conferences.

Faculty meetings are held monthly to collaborate across grade-levels and disciplines. Topics have included meaningful presentations regarding reading and math strategies and practices, utilizing student data to guide decision making, writing across curricula, goal setting, medical and safety protocols, and classroom mindfulness strategies. In addition, experts in mathematics and reading education are secured for in-district trainings and workshops that benefit all teachers and students.

Opportunities outside of the school day, school year, and even outside of the state are all entertained through an established protocol in our district. The Jefferson principal budgets yearly to send teachers to out of district trainings and workshops. The North Pocono Assistant Superintendent budgets for professional development at the district level and organizes summer opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively on learning and curricular projects. An example of such an opportunity took place during the summer of 2018. Two Jefferson Elementary teachers, who had set the goal of enhancing their writing instructional practices, applied to attend The Teachers' College Reading, Writing Project at Columbia University and secured the funding through our North Pocono professional development protocol. The Jefferson Elementary principal and the Assistant Superintendent worked collaboratively to secure the funding and support their attendance. The knowledge gleaned from that opportunity has since been shared with colleagues within the Jefferson Elementary team, benefiting more teachers and students. Such opportunities and the collaborative learning that follows those opportunities are the norm in our school and our district.

Ongoing goal setting and the resulting initiatives also support and drive Jefferson Elementary and North Pocono's professional growth and development. Each member of the administrative team is expected to identify and work toward the achievement of goals on a yearly basis and those identified goals often drive

the work of our in-house experts as they offer their talents for the professional development of our professional staff. For example, beginning in summer of 2018, a group of teachers were invited to be part of the 21st Century Technology Integration Pilot. This initiative's aim is to further develop 21st Century teaching methodology in the North Pocono School District with the support of 21st century technology resources and training offered by our district technology experts.

The North Pocono School District and the team at Jefferson Elementary exemplify the sincere belief that life-long learning is essential for educators and for the success of our students.

4. School Leadership:

Great school leadership starts with a great love of those one leads. The principal at Jefferson Elementary makes her love of the school district, its faculty and staff, the students, and their families the starting point for each decision and the center of each new goal. Challenges are opportunities for growth in her eyes, and she leads others to see it that way. Everything expected of those at Jefferson is modeled by the principal. She is known for her smile and her positive attitude, and both have proven to be contagious.

Over the last ten years Jefferson's principal has worked to build relationships with the team she leads. The faculty and staff are empowered to bring her fresh ideas, as well as problems to be solved, knowing they will find respect and an open mind in their principal. Indeed, she has created multiple leadership teams within the building that enhance academic achievement such as our E.L.A. lead-teacher team and mathematics lead-teacher team comprised of one teacher from each grade level serving as liaisons and contributing members. The Jefferson team is motivated to take initiative and inspire students and one another as they work toward common goals. Every Jefferson relationship is rooted in kindness and respect, and the principal takes every opportunity to lift others up with genuine praise. The positive ripple effect of those interactions resonates.

A perfect example is the way in which our Jefferson Elementary playground came to be. The principal identified the need for new equipment. She gained approval from the superintendent and school board to pursue that goal. After meeting with a playground company and understanding the cost, she formed a committee of parents and teachers, and that committee, led by the principal, worked together on monthly fundraisers that involved all members of the school district community, area businesses and professionals, and local government. Within 9 months, the Jefferson Elementary family raised over \$35,000--through donations of time, talent and treasure--and a beautiful new resource was installed that benefits all member of the North Pocono School District and surrounding communities. Most importantly, the playground provides a source of endless fun and imaginative possibilities for our students.

Jefferson Elementary students know that they are treasured, and instilling that knowledge starts at the top. The principal knows the names of all students (and their family members); that one commitment has an enormous impact on the school community. Parents are invested in the school's success because they know that the school and its leader are invested in their children. All stakeholders feel genuine pride for Jefferson Elementary and work to contribute to the school's success in all areas--academics, community service, student centered community teams and organizations, P.T.A. support, event attendance, campus improvements. The principal leads everyone in the belief that Jefferson Elementary success is a credit to our whole community. With that belief at Jefferson's core, high achievement of every kind is a natural and assured result.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Jefferson Elementary deliberately and strategically utilizes daily intervention periods to drive academic growth, respond to remediation needs, and foster strong connections between teachers and their students. This practice results in great success. Intervention periods are part of the master schedule at Jefferson and take place every day for every student. Each grade level has a designated period during which intervention support is delivered to the whole class at each student's data derived level. Four out of nine periods per day, our aides are devoted to supporting the teacher-designed interventions taking place in Jefferson's kindergarten through third grade classrooms. A shared sense of purpose and mission makes our intervention periods powerful vehicles for student achievement.

Intervention periods are designed to offer individualized instruction that meets the needs of all students: the highest achievers, the students successfully working at grade level, and those students who are struggling to meet established benchmarks. Intervention goals are determined based on a review of data that examines both summative and formative assessments. Classroom teachers ensure that high achieving students grow, grade level performing students deepen understanding and solidify skills, and below benchmark students build skills that will lead to improved achievement. Groups are designed to be flexible and meet changing needs as students grow and make gains. Students whose needs have qualified them for Title I reading or mathematics interventions receive those services in addition to their teacher-designed intervention period.

Participation in intervention periods is not optional. Every student participates every day. The benefits of intervention periods are rich and multi-faceted. Students who are achieving beyond grade level expectations work on activities and challenges that involve texts aligned with their Guided Reading Levels so they experience, for example, the challenge of reading complex and interesting texts and responding to them in writing. Students who demonstrate on-level practice and skill strengthening take part in activities that extend the learning going on in their weekly E.L.A. unit utilizing materials from our reading series, games that offer fun and engaging decoding and phonics practice, and materials developed by their teacher. The aide sent to the classroom is assigned to one of these groups to provide supervision, encouragement, and structure throughout the period. Students, who are not yet working at grade level, spend intervention periods with their teacher in small group working on core skills that they have yet to master. This specific practice led by the classroom teacher, builds skills and confidence for students as they work to acquire needed understandings and see that they can master the E.L.A. skills that will set them on the path to success.

Building intervention periods into the Jefferson Elementary master schedule, providing teachers with the support of an aide during intervention periods, and empowering classroom teachers to be the diagnosticians and prescribers, who shape the intervention period daily, has had a positive and significant impact on student achievement at Jefferson Elementary.