

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Henry B. Milnes Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8-01 Phillip Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Fair Lawn State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07410-4198

County Bergen County

Telephone (201) 794-5550 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://milnes.fairlawnschools.org E-mail sp Primavera@fairlawnschools.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. Nicholas Norcia E-mail nnorcia@fairlawnschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fair Lawn Public Schools Tel. (201) 794-5500

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. Ron Barbarulo
(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 2020 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 2014 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: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	37	32	69
1	44	50	94
2	36	36	72
3	45	43	88
4	47	50	97
5	50	47	97
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	259	258	517

*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 20 % Asian
 - 2.9 % Black or African American
 - 12.1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.4 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 61.4 % White
 - 3 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 3%

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, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	510
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Chinese, Filipino, French, Georgian, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Marathi, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Malayalam, Punjabi, Polish, Romanian, Sinhalese, Castilian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, Yoruba

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %

Total number students who qualify: 28

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %

77 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>5</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>25</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>38</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: 1

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the 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.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	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 2019.

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.

Henry B. Milnes Elementary School is committed to ensuring that each student is given the opportunity to achieve academic and social success at the highest level. As an academically, culturally, and socially diverse learning community, we provide an instructional environment that is both supportive and challenging, and is differentiated to meet the needs of each student.

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

Henry B. Milnes Elementary School is a K-5 school located in the very diverse, welcoming community of Fair Lawn in Bergen County, NJ. With a town population of 32,000+, Milnes, the largest of six elementary schools in Fair Lawn, serves over 520 children from varied socio/emotional, economic, religious, cultural, and academic backgrounds. In 2020, Milnes was ranked 51 out of more than 1,400 public elementary schools in New Jersey according to Niche. Our inspiring motto, “Where Heroes Are Born,” holds true in that Milnes maintains a high standard of academic performance by focusing on individual children’s needs within a challenging yet supportive, inclusive environment, encouraging every student to call forth their inner hero.

Walking Milnes’ main corridor, one hears happily-engaged students’ voices and sees bright brick walls captioned, “Attitude is in the Mind’s Paintbrush, It Colors Any Situation.” The bricks are painted multiple colors by every single student, representing our school’s diverse cultures and our belief that every child is a unique individual. Six enormous “pillars of good character” adorn the lobby, illustrating the important role character education plays at Milnes. Instruction and committee-developed programs and activities promote character values, such as our “Post-it Kindness Wall,” Mix-it-Up and Twinning Days, food drives, and community service projects. The pillar tenets are advanced in assemblies, including inclusive presentations, and in our annual celebration honoring community members who best exemplify each pillar as nominated in students’ essays. Milnes strongly believes that character education, in both large and small moments, is crucial for building a kind, caring, empathetic student body today and for the future.

An accomplished and dedicated principal, staff, and involved parent community are committed to helping each child achieve their full potential. We fundamentally believe the essential elements contributing to academic success are our intrinsic understanding of students’ developmental readiness and differing learning styles, the importance of engagement, and fostering a safe, nurturing school environment. Our school engenders a warm, family-like environment that is conducive to risk-taking and success for all. We emphasize differentiated instruction, literacy for all students, ambitious math initiatives, the use of technology, and authentic student assessment within overarching New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Milnes takes great pride in its exemplary educational programs that support and challenge each child, develops and celebrates their unique talents, and promotes tolerance and appreciation of others. Towards that end, Fair Lawn is committed to small class sizes for optimal learning. Every Milnes grade has four sections (one has three), many with paraprofessional support. Special Education offers both replacement teaching and in-class, co-teaching support. Specialists also include: English Language Learners (ELL), Technology, Art, Vocal/Instrumental Music, Physical Education, World Language, Reach and Explore, Academic and Creative Heights (REACH), Literacy/Math Intervention, Child Study Team (CST), Speech, Occupational Therapy (OT and Physical Therapy (PT).

Unique experiences enhancing our students’ education are our World Language program, providing Spanish instruction to every K-5 student; the REACH (Reach and Explore Academic and Creative Heights) enrichment program, challenging motivated students through an independent study of their choosing; and Literacy/Math Intervention programs, supporting non-classified students falling below grade level. Students focus on this and other specialized learning in individualized or small-group settings during our Personalized Learning Periods (PLP) occurring daily at every grade level to avoid interrupting core curriculum subjects. Remaining students receive reinforcement or extension from homeroom teachers.

Additional unique offerings include: our school-wide Mindfulness and Growth Mindset initiatives, imparting strategies for intentional awareness and growing confidence and positivity; the CarePlus School-Based Services program, providing integrated care and social support for students struggling with emotional family/peer issues; and an on-site Special Class III Resource Officer (retired FLPD), promoting safety and providing additional security. Teacher-led, after-school activities include: Student Council, Gardening and Science Clubs, and more, further enhance our students’ overall learning experience.

Milnes believes in sharing responsibilities for effective education, placing a high premium on collaboration.

Common planning time on every level and across disciplines allows teachers to: collegially develop instructional plans aligned with the curricular standards, incorporate district and school initiatives, and ensure continuity to best meet the needs of every student.

Our active PTA holds monthly meetings, and plans fun/educational activities and fundraising events to sponsor cultural arts programs, technology initiatives, fifth grade graduation activities, school store, holiday boutique, book fairs, and more. The PTA collaborates with staff to sponsor safety assemblies, motivational speakers, and renowned children's authors/illustrators, informing and inspiring our young learners. Students may explore their physical, emotional, and social sides in PTA-sponsored, parent-led classes that include: Public Speaking, Robotics, Yoga, Chess, and more. Parents are also part of our school's goal setting and implementation, participating as we coach students in learning life lessons alongside approved curriculum.

Henry B. Milnes Elementary School is a special and unique place - a learning, thriving community that takes great pride in working together to ensure that each and every child we educate flourishes and meets or exceeds their potential to achieve and grow into accomplished learners and caring, productive citizens.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Milnes School prides itself on its high curricula standards. All lessons are driven by and closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). Our district and school’s collaborative philosophical approach allows for and encourages daily, weekly, and monthly common planning time to develop and share a living and changing curriculum, thus enabling Milnes School to adjust lessons to more closely and efficiently align to the ever-changing NJSLS. Through collaborative effort, teachers also maximize the effectiveness of their lesson planning and delivery.

Our teachers utilize continuous and varied student assessments, both formative and summative, to inform and guide planning and instruction. The programs in use have gone through a host of selections and modifications to ensure that they were the best methods to reach and inspire our student population, while fulfilling state requirements for ensuring a thorough and efficient education for all. Our students’ different learning styles are accommodated through various strategies and approaches best suited to each child to support and challenge every student to reach their full potential.

The NJSLS-SS are modified by the state every five years to incorporate ever-evolving revisions, and our district is committed to revisiting our programs’ alignments, goals, and curriculum by forming summer committees. Our teachers are always well-represented on these committees, reflecting their deep and abiding dedication to providing the ultimate education for our student community. Revisions oftentimes result in new initiatives, as in the case of our district-wide report card committee. Upon their recommendation, administration and faculty collaborated to develop and institute Standards-Based Report Cards, beginning in kindergarten, adding a new grade level each year. Student achievement, now completely aligned to the standards, is expansively reported and tracked over time informing teachers, parents, and administrators.

Milnes School takes great pride in its core and non-core curriculum, instruction, and academic supports.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Milnes’ ELA program is closely affiliated with Columbia University’s Teachers’ College (T.C.) Readers and Writers Workshop. K-5 teachers employ the researched-based workshop model to structure literacy and writing instruction. Our goal is to prepare students for ELA success, turning them into life-long, confident, motivated, and independent readers and writers. Our workshop model supports each child’s individual, assessment-based learning through explicit teaching strategies, and small-group work with multiple opportunities for personalized instruction during conferring. We wholeheartedly believe in, and closely follow, the T.C. “Bill of Rights” as the basis for every student’s success.

Students receive 70 minutes of reading, 35 minutes of writing, daily beginning with a mini lesson introducing a new NJSLS-aligned skill or strategy. Instruction includes explicit, responsive whole-group teaching and modeling inclusive of ELL and higher-/lower-level students, excepting Resource Individualized Education Program (IEP) students, following the model in pull-out classes. Students then work independently or in partnerships to apply mini lesson skills/strategies, engaging in daily journal writing, and reading self-selected, “just-right” books from our diverse classroom libraries. At the workshop’s conclusion, the group reconvenes for students to share thoughts/reflections on their learning, promoting pride, and fostering meaningful communication with classmates.

Throughout each week, K-5 students engage in small-group guided reading, gathered together by instructional reading level and/or reading/writing goals. During guided reading, students work on specific skills, i.e. decoding, comprehension, or word work, to improve their independent reading level as determined by quarterly-administered, leveled T. C. assessments and on-going informal running records. Analyzing each student’s assessment uncovers a student’s ability to decode words, retell, and respond to

literal and inferential comprehension questions, establishing their independent reading level.

In concert with the Language Arts Supervisor, the district Literacy Coaches provide instructional support by coaching/collaborating with teachers to ensure a strong literacy program, by refining delivery of appropriate literacy practices and monitoring student/district progress through the analyzed formal/informal assessments. These goals are met, in part, through teacher training workshops, professional book clubs, and collaboration with individual teachers during annual six-week cycles working on professional goals. Recent initiatives include: the implementation of Orton-Gillingham-based phonics programs as part of our balanced literacy curriculum, staff development around the use of flexible grouping structures (i.e. strategy groups), and professional support for ELL and homeroom teachers in writing.

Additionally, teachers incorporate technology into their reading and writing lessons, such as supporting students with the online resources Raz-Kids, HeadSprout, and Epic Books. Many teachers access supplementary websites, e.g. Reading A-Z and ReadWorks. Project-based learning is also encouraged, such as third grade's Living Museum culminating their biography unit.

In addition to IEP/ELL programs, identified struggling students receive small-group, targeted pull-out support in our Literacy Intervention Program (LIP) utilizing the Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) System during PLPs. Accelerated learners benefit from our REACH program, enriching learning through research-based explorations, analogy competitions, and higher-level texts containing abstract, sophisticated themes.

Milnes school's strong, effective ELA program fosters reading, writing, and critical thinking skills/strategies for lifelong reading success.

1c. Mathematics

Our school's very successful 18-year Mathematics program in all grades, is built around Everyday Mathematics, The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. Currently, the Everyday Mathematics 4 (ED4) version that directly aligns with NJSLs expectations, is in use, with students receiving 70-minutes of instruction daily. Our curriculum goal focuses on the theory that there is more than one way to solve a math problem; and, by learning varied methods and strategies, students develop and become deeper, creative thinkers. Students are expected to mathematically solve problems and then deconstruct their thinking to explain the process in writing. Students are consistently engaged in talking about math and sharing strategies in whole, small-group, and one-to-one meetings. This integration of literacy skills exemplifies the cross curricular aspects of our program, and strengthens skills necessary for math success and for NJSL Assessments.

Learning takes place through direct instruction, modeling, problem solving, exploration, remediation, enrichment, and integration of technology. Structural components include: Mental Math (brief 5-minute warm-ups), Math Messages (lesson openers), Unit Lessons with differentiation (extra-practice/challenges), Activity Cards (for group work), Home-Links (homework assignments and parent pages), Assessments (progress checks, unit tests, and cumulative assessments), and online resources (for students, parents, and teachers).

New NJSLs concepts, skills, and strategies are introduced via whole group instruction, utilizing Smartboards and ED4 kit materials (e.g. teaching manuals and assessment handbooks, student resource books, student journals, math masters photocopier pages, charts), and a wide variety of manipulatives (including base-10 blocks, decks of number cards, counters, scales, coins, dominoes, shape blocks, clocks, and more). Students are then tasked with the application of the new concept/skill/strategy in a multitude of independent or partner learning formats, i.e. daily math boxes, gaming and other group activities. Gaming and group activities provide reinforcement activities and extra practice, and are the focus of Flex Fridays when no new skills are introduced. Teachers pull small groups of similar-ability students throughout the independent practice or partner-work portion of the lesson to provide remediation or enrichment as informed by observation and on-going assessments.

Our accelerated learners benefit from our REACH program that enriches our ED4 program with in-class research-based, math-concepts explorations. Struggling students (including ELL as needed, but omitting IEP students who are served in pull-out replacement classes) are referred to our Math Intervention program via teacher observation. Students enter the program, if qualifying cut-off scores on unit and cumulative assessments, and NJSLA math scores, are met. Our Math Intervention Program provides supplementary basic skills reinforcement of corresponding EM4 lessons, utilizing manipulatives, alternate strategies, and multi-sensory materials. Intervention students meet two-three times weekly depending on the grade, during 35-minute PLPs.

In addition to the district's and ED4 program's recommended pacing charts, assessments drive and inform each individual teacher's pace. Daily informal check-ins and students' self-assessments, paired with unit and bi-monthly cumulative assessments and beginning-of- and end-of-the-year summative assessments, are administered, scored, and analyzed. Data is tracked online in an on-going manner. Resource, Intervention, ELL, and REACH teachers maintain constant contact.

1d. Science

Milnes School's science program reflects an integrated, thematic approach to the study of the field of science, supporting the philosophy and goals of the NJSL-S. Through our district's evidence and research-based program, "Knowing Science: 3-Dimensional Teaching and Learning," students develop an understanding of the core principles of physical, earth, space, and life science, while engaging in engineering and technology through engaged exposure to rich, non-fiction text, and collaborative, hand-on experiences.

Our program is largely based on the belief that students are born investigators. Their understanding develops over time which requires knowledge and practice. Our program focuses on core ideas and practices linking to students' interests and experiences, promoting equity for all students. NJSL-S lessons are planned collaboratively across grade level, with teachers delivering the skills/concepts to their students (inclusive of IEP/ELL) in whole-group settings by direct teaching, modeling, and inquiry-, discovery-based, problem-solving, and investigative experiments. "Knowing Science" textbooks/online books, and science-based trade passages and articles (Scholastic Science, Nat Geo Kids, etc.) are utilized via paper, Smartboard, laptops, and video clips. Various hands-on materials are supplied through the program's accompanying kit. Students break into small groups to collaboratively practice the methods/strategies/materials presented to facilitate internalization of their learnings. Teachers ensure that students of all levels are supported and challenged.

The majority of our grade level field trips are rooted in our science program. One outstanding example: visits to our high school's well-regarded, county-level planetarium in preparation for our larger experience visiting New York City's "The Hayden Planetarium." Students prepare and attend with theories to "prove" and questions to answer. These and other field trips enhance and extend our students' knowledge and hands-on experience of curriculum application.

Assessments include teacher observation, quizzes and tests, and performance on projects, Test Ready, and Pearson's TestNav prep, plus grade five's NJSLA-Science scores.

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

Our Social Studies program, aligned to NJSL-SS, helps students make sense of their world through an integrated study of history, geography, economics, government, and civics, with a strong focus on humanity: people and events that individually and collectively have affected the world. Through goals and curriculum, including literacy initiatives and project-/skill-based learning, our students begin to understand the world around them, building a strong foundation to grow into responsible, contributing citizens. Students also begin developing skills necessary to become critical thinkers, effective public speakers/ writers, and informed technology consumers/users.

Our "Windows of Communities" curriculum spirals through leveled units layering awareness and

knowledge beginning at self, family, and community, through state, country, continent, and world. Specific communities studied across the globe provide focused snapshots for community comparisons (Venn diagrams, charts), extending students' understandings of other peoples and cultures. History, geography, and government units open students' eyes to ancient civilizations and the birth of our own: upper grades complete oral and written projects studying the Colonies, Westward Expansion, and the Constitution.

Lessons incorporate text sets, online NewsELA, Time for Kids, Pebble Go Next, Social Studies for Kids, and YouTube clips. Students work to answer essential questions, gathering information individually and in small-group collaborations, coming together to share learnings and insights. Lessons are tiered and differentiated, accommodating varied learning styles and abilities, supporting and challenging all students.

School-wide learning opportunities occur during class, club, and Student Council meetings, and needs-based drives benefiting the community, enhancing civics/economic units, and providing hands-on learning about rights and responsibilities. Field trips further extend knowledge across curricula, as when second graders tour the town in their Communities and Mapping units.

Rubric assessment, data-driven, and informed lesson planning comes from chapter quizzes, unit tests, teacher observations, project evaluations, and oral and written performance reviews across core curricula.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

NJSLS-based, non-core curriculum programs are an integral part of our school's climate and culture, supporting and elevating students as they acquire essential skills and knowledge.

Spectacular works are created in our grades K-5 art classes during their weekly 35-minute art instruction period. Curriculum fosters an appreciation of the creative process, promoting students' experimentation with various media for aesthetic and utilitarian purposes. Students develop positive character traits, life skills, and build growth mindsets while exploring visual arts. Design elements/principles are emphasized as students learn foundations of painting, drawing, and the construction of two- and three-dimensional projects.

Through our music curriculum, all students explore leveled, spiralling concepts: solfege, rhythm and beats, movement, and ensemble singing, during one weekly 35-minute period. Vocal, instrumental, listening, and movement skills begin in grades K-2 (singing games, playing classroom instruments, and performing together); recorder program in grade three; and voluntary strings/band instrument programs in grade four. Students perform vocally and/or instrumentally in concerts/musicales/graduations, showcasing talents and skills, gaining an appreciation of musical arts.

The Health/Physical Education program is an integral part of our students' education. All students receive two, 35-minute periods of P.E. instruction and 95 minutes of health instruction weekly. Through health curriculum, including Health Wave and Sanford Harmony, students build knowledge/self-awareness as they access health information. P.E. teaches students how bodies move and how to perform physical activities. Students participate in team, individual, and dual-sport activities, learning the health-related benefits of regular physical activity and skills to adopt physically active, healthy lifestyles. Through movement, exploration, and rhythmic activities, students increase self-control/confidence, learn to cooperate with others, assume leadership, and become behaviorally-responsible.

Spanish is Milnes' K-5 designated World Language utilizing basic speaking and listening skills. Curriculum fosters appreciation and understanding of the Spanish-speaking world: language, customs/holidays, cultural aspects. Spanish posters, signs, and labels are posted throughout the school promoting vocabulary acquisition. Spanish immersion occurs in one weekly, 35-minute period, with an interdisciplinary approach in art/music via Spanish artists/songs.

Students, grades K-5, receive one weekly 35-minute period of Technology instruction. Curriculum includes: “Digital Citizenship” teaching students to think critically, behave safely, participate responsibly in our digital world; “Coding” utilizing online and “unplugged” activities from the computer science (CS) Fundamentals course in Code.org; and “Computer Applications” touch typing, file management, internet browsers, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation software. Our spiraling curriculum presents more in-depth material yearly, building strong computer applications and keyboarding foundations by the end of fifth grade. COWs (Computers on Wheels) laptops are signed out by classrooms, and the Media Center computer availability is by rotating sign-up. Students attend Library with their teacher and the media aide 20 minutes weekly, checking materials in/out, gathering research books, etc..

Additional curriculum is best represented by Milnes’ Character Education. As described in other sections, students are guided to develop the crucial values represented by the six pillars of good character through inspiring instruction, activities, assemblies, and service projects. Our year-long focus supports students’ efforts taking ownership of their character-building and decision-making, empowering everyone to model the six pillared traits, and grow into citizens of good character.

Milnes participates in the yearly “Week of Respect.” Activities focus on preventing/remediating harassment, intimidation and/or bullying. Students learn appropriate behaviors from: Mean Stinks Campaigns, Anti-Bullying assemblies, and pledges.

Sanford Harmony program promotes positive peer relationships through daily lessons, activities, and interactions. The social-emotional K-5 curriculum focuses on positive communication skills, working together, and developing a sense of respect for others in diverse learning communities. The major components are: “Unit Studies,” empathy-building activities (read-alouds, role play, and problem solving), encouraging understanding, and “thinking-out-of-the-box” when building relationships; “Buddy Up” daily “share alouds” with alternating peers; and “Meet-Ups” whole-group/partner collaboration on varying topics.

Mindfulness and Growth Mindset are important components of our students’ daily lives. Each day begins with the ringing of mindfulness chimes, encouraging everyone to have a “mindful moment” before learning begins (i.e. taking three “belly breaths”). A Mindfulness instructor trained staff, sharing a myriad of techniques now infused into every classroom. Tools/tips for students struggling with social emotional skills and/or learning/focusing difficulties are accessed daily. Parents received training, employing mindful habits at home. Growth Mindset, a previously-launched, accompanying initiative, finds classrooms, hallways, and “mouths” filled with positive, encouraging phrases.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Great attention is given to understanding and accommodating our students’ varied learning styles. Differentiation and modification work hand-in-hand to ensure that every child meets their full potential. Utilizing the workshop model across curricula, whole, small group, and one-to-one instruction strategies best meet the needs of all learners.

Mini-lesson instruction focuses on the NJSLs skill and strategy, then students work independently, in small groups or partnerships, to apply and practice the skill/strategy. The teacher supports small groups of students requiring additional modeling, instruction and reinforcement. Resource replacement classes occur in tandem. Before- and after-school help, ELL, and OT/PT is available as needed.

Non-classified students, struggling below expectations, during the year are referred to the Literacy and/or Math Intervention Programs for additional support, joining students identified in September via formative/summative assessments and district criteria cutoff levels. Intervention teachers push-in to support kindergarteners for three weekly 35-minute periods. Small-group, pull-out instruction in reading and math, grades one through five, supports up to five students per group meeting two to three times per week, respective to subject and grade, during the Personalized Learning Period for 35-minute periods.

Students are grouped across the grade by similar reading and/or math levels, standardized assessment scores, identified strengths and weaknesses, referral data, and other measures. The Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) System program and Everyday Mathematics Basic Skills sections best meet these struggling students' needs. Differentiated support, utilizing manipulatives, supplemental materials, hands-on activities, and alternate strategies, is also provided. Student progress is closely tracked via record-keeping of formative and summative assessments (NJSLA, Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP5) performance, cumulative and unit math assessments, Teachers College (T.C.) and Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2) reading assessments, Running Records), anecdotal notes, teacher observations, and ongoing communications with homeroom teachers. Students may flexibly exit and enter the program(s), or be further referred to I&RS and CST, as warranted.

3b. Students performing above grade level

To teach higher-level thinking skills to all students while identifying, and gathering information about above-level, academically-talented learners, the REACH (Reach and Explore Academic and Creative Heights) program provides four types of push-in/pull-out services focusing on meta-cognitive skills. REACH curriculum facilitates the development of higher-order thinking skills, critical thinking processes, and problem solving strategies while fostering independence in students' learning.

In the Type 1 service, the REACH specialist teaches one trimester of tiered push-in lessons (all students) utilizing PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills) in K-2, STEM in grade 3 introducing the Engineering Design Process, and advances STEM in 4-5 deepening the Engineering Design Process. She also observes/records students' academically-talented behaviors. Two specialized sets of REACH identification data - classroom assessments, behavioral scales, teacher observations in K-2, plus CogAT Screener, CTP5, NJSLA scores in 3-5 - are also utilized to develop a talented student's profile/matrix.

This data accompanies the homeroom teacher's referral request for a student's Personalized Enrichment Plan (PEP). The PEP Team (classroom teacher, principal, REACH teacher, parent) determines if the student qualifies, developing a pull-out and in-class enrichment plan if so.

In the Type 2 service, highly-motivated grade 3-5 students develop, implement, and present an Independent Study on a chosen topic facilitated by the REACH teacher in PLP pull-out sessions; and in WordMasters, a national language arts/critical thinking competition, interested grade 5 students study and participate in three WordMasters Challenge Tests after all students are taught analogies and strategies.

Identified K-2 students in the Type 3 service meet with the REACH teacher for further PETS work and Brain Flex small-group enrichment To teach higher-level thinking skills to all students while identifying, and gathering information about above-level, academically-talented learners, the REACH (Reach and Explore Academic and Creative Heights) program provides four types of push-in/pull-out services focusing on meta-cognitive skills. REACH curriculum facilitates the development of higher-order thinking skills, critical thinking processes, and problem solving strategies while fostering independence in students' learning.

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Identified K-2 students in the Type 3 service meet with the REACH teacher for further PETS work and Brain Flex small-group enrichment opportunities; and she meets with identified grade three through five students to “dig deeper” with similarly-talented peers in Literacy and Math Seminars. Type 4 services are highly individualized programs for a few students: Specialized Programs, Early Entrance, and Dual Enrollment.

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3c. Special education

Milnes School takes great pride in its Special Education program’s inclusivity. Our program supports and challenges each child, celebrating their unique talents and promoting an appreciation for and tolerance of others. In previous years, Milnes housed various special education classrooms: LLD (language and learning disabilities) and Stepping Stones (autism). Our current models for IEP students are in-class support and pull-out resource room classrooms.

In the co-teaching model, a general education teacher teams with a special education teacher to instruct IEP and general education students together. Resource teachers push into general education classrooms to support IEP students during writing. Understanding the importance of including all students and that every child has their own learning style, we also acknowledge that a pull-out model best supports other students’ learning. Replacement Resource classes follow the same curriculum/assessment procedures as the general education teachers, utilizing Everyday Mathematics Curriculum, the Readers and Writers Workshops, and Orton-Gillingham. Our Child Study Team (social worker, learning consultant, and psychologist) collaborates with resource teachers to closely monitor IEP students and manage cases.

During 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, Milnes received an Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative (ISCI) grant through Rutgers University. ISCI assists schools in developing and sustaining successful practices to promote school climates that best support the inclusion of students with disabilities. Our grant’s goals were to increase student and parent awareness and knowledge of individual differences; sustain teacher awareness for students with disabilities; increase student understanding and empathy of various disabilities within the school environment; and, enhance the school climate by bringing new programs to Milnes. Through this grant, all students attended assemblies promoting inclusion and awareness. Diversity books were purchased for the school library, and adaptive physical education equipment was ordered to better meet the needs of our students with disabilities. This honor prompted Milnes to create the more inclusive classroom environment that exists today.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

The overarching goal for our English Language Learners (ELLs) is to help students develop language acquisition and cognitive academic language skills in the areas of language arts, math, social studies, science, and social Instructional Language. The ELL Program applies its own NJ State Learning Standards and curriculum that drive instruction.

Upon registering in the district, parents complete a Home Language Survey, identifying children who may qualify for ELL services. If so, a screening procedure and state-approved test assess language proficiency. If eligible, parents are notified, and the child enters the program, although NJ State law provides parents the right to refuse services. Students are grouped for instruction by proficiency levels (beginner, intermediate, and advanced) across grades, regardless of native language, but may be grouped with another grade, if the proficiency discrepancy is too great. Students receive small-group ELL instruction for 30 minutes daily. When the home language is Hebrew, Russian, or Spanish, students qualify for 30 additional minutes in

writing in accordance with the district's Bilingual Waiver. Students attend ELL during the Personalized Learning Period (PLP), however pull-out may occur during the corresponding homeroom's literacy or math periods. ELL writing groups meet during the homeroom's writing period. Instruction often parallels classroom concepts, emphasizing short oral/written responses, progressing to conversations/paragrap, and speaking in full sentences is expected.

Throughout the year, the district offers parent information/workshop evening sessions, both district-wide and at Milnes, and family activities, such as a Family Game Night. Milnes teachers plan and facilitate sessions.

A summative assessment, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, is administered annually, tracking students' progress, while also serving as one of multiple measures (teacher observation, on-going informal reading/math assessments, and oral language skill.) utilized when determining exit status. Entrance into the Literacy or Math Intervention program may occur if a student is excessively struggling.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

As a district, our goal is to provide immigrant students and their parents with opportunities and resources to more fully understand the academic curricula offered in Fair Lawn and the various resources available throughout our community.

At Milnes, our program focuses on improving literacy standards by placing students in different classes in addition to their homeroom assignment based on their specific needs, and appropriate age and ability levels. Our programs include opportunities to engage in book clubs, strengthening students' overall comprehension and skills acquisition, in addition to tailored phonics instruction to increase overall literacy success. Specifically, immigrant students enter the ELL and/or the Literacy and/or Math Intervention programs to support their learning during the PLP period during school hours. These students also receive targeted support during their homeroom class' NJSLA prep practice through TestNav and Test Ready material. Additionally, identified immigrant students receive additional tutorial/instructional time before and/or after school supporting standards achievement through their homeroom teachers.

In addition to these programs, our district offers support for families through parent workshops, informational meetings, and family math game nights. Our Milnes School staff helps to plan and assist at these district-wide opportunities to further support partnerships and parent engagement in our community.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Milnes prides itself on creating an atmosphere in which all students feel comfortable, accepted, and valued. Within our overarching, inspiring motto, “Where Heroes are Born,” we developed our mission statement, “Milnes School is committed to assuring that each student is given the opportunity to achieve academic and social success at the highest level. As an academically, culturally, and socially diverse learning community, we strive to provide an instructional environment that is both supportive and challenging, and is differentiated to meet each child’s individual learning needs.” As such, the Milnes community works collaboratively to provide all students with numerous, varied opportunities to grow and shine throughout the year in a positive, motivating climate. We focus on the whole child, supporting their academic, social, and emotional growth.

Two types of Spirit Days, wearing school colors and event days (like Crazy Hat, Wacky Socks, and Rainbow Days), foster the feeling of being one enormous team and bring out our fun and creative sides. We wear designated colors for World Kindness, Diabetes, and Autism Awareness Days, broadening empathy and health awareness. Interactive, educational assemblies, such as “Corey the Dribbler,” enhance curriculum to further inspire students. During NEA’s “Read Across America Week,” eagerly-anticipated activities - Read-a-Tee, Storybook Character, Buddy Reading, Author Visit, and V.I.P. Reading Days - promote a lifelong love of reading.

Character Education initiatives help students learn effective ways to interact with peers. In 2019, every grade represented a specific pillar and students wrote about a community hero who best exemplified that pillar. One student per class invited their hero to be recognized at a schoolwide assembly. In 2018, students spotted performing an act of kindness were recognized over the PA, and their picture was added to the Star Student board. Teachers employ positive reinforcements, including star students of the week, compliment jars, and behavior modifications such as Class Dojo. The principal recognizes positive student behavior that goes above and beyond, encouraging others to display exemplary behaviors.

Opportunities are offered for continued growth in all areas. Motivated students participate in our REACH program, creating and completing an independent study. Struggling students are supported and encouraged in our Intervention programs. Students also volunteer for the Gardening Club, Student Council, Girls Club, or take part in morning announcements.

The staff’s own growth opportunities, daily collaborations, and supported, acknowledged efforts, enable our positive and motivating learning environment, thereby ensuring the successful growth of our students, emotionally, academically, and socially.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

To improve and enrich our learning community, Milnes School reaches beyond its walls to foster a close-knit relationship with our parent community. In doing so, we create a stronger integrated relationship with all students and their families. Our inclusiveness is anchored by continual staff communications, presentations, and collaboration. Parents are informed, participating members of discussions concerning standardized tests, technology, the gifted and talented program, and aligned standards; and are our partners through parent-teacher conferences, our school website, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, and Peach Jar and Smore, our school messenger system. Additionally, teachers maintain constant contact with families via Google Classroom (students) and Remind App and School Email (parents).

Representing all families, our dedicated PTA plans with our principal, surveys teacher needs, provides supplies for students and staff, volunteers at events with upper-level student leaders (Field Day, Walk-a-thon), and sponsors cultural and educational events/programs aligned with our curriculum, like the “Lion Dance Plus” assembly. Book fairs, fall festivals, and spring carnivals are planned, manned, and attended by families and staff alike. Funds generated from these events, plus tricky trays, adult bingo, and family game

nights, are also utilized for building improvements (outdoor “Buddy Benches,” flower boxes, etc.). Additionally, fundraising connects us to the Fair Lawn community as students lead efforts to support local businesses, organizations, and events. Parents and teachers, with student helpers, host fun, educational after-school and evening learning, such as debate/typing/cooking clubs, yoga, and science, chess, public speaking, robotics classes. Milnes prides itself on 100% PTA teacher membership, supporting and contributing to PTA endeavors both financially and organizationally.

To ensure a safe environment, our in-house SpecialIII Resource Police Officer (respected and beloved by all), principal, social worker, teachers, and parent liaison, established a school safety team. This partnership values and addresses family needs, implementing safety initiatives with the Police Department such as Bike, Halloween, and Safe-Routes-to-School assemblies and school drills, contracts assemblies (“Too Smart to Start”), and composes Anti-Bullying informational communications, further supporting the home-school connection.

Upper-level students in Student Council take on leadership roles and collaborate to complete service projects. They outreach charities and hospitals, fostering school, local, and global awareness by advocating/sponsoring events for everyone’s participation - from food, clothing, and toy drives, to health awareness programs (“Pennies for Patients”), to scholarships for Fair Lawn High School seniors.

Together we achieve a culture of support, positivity, and inclusivity, ensuring success for the entire Milnes community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The Fair Lawn School District, and Milnes School, by extension, is committed to basing our professional development on the foundation of learning and professional standards, and research-based best practices, set by the State of New Jersey. Our philosophical approach to professional development is informed by the standards coupled with data analysis of student achievement. The results guide our decision-making and drive instruction, enabling administrators and teachers to plan, design, develop, and implement varied learning and enriching professional development activities.

Professional development is not just a district-wide commitment, but a priority of each school. Our year begins with full-day district and/or school workshops focused on the implementation of changes and updates to our curriculum. In the course of the year, two additional full-day district or school workshops geared towards further professional development are offered. This continual support enabled the training and implementation of our successful initiatives: Growth Mindset, Mindfulness, Sanford Harmony, and Responsive Classroom, and learning the new CarePlus Service components.

Fair Lawn prides itself on a culture of collaborative inquiry and problem-solving. Teachers are encouraged to participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) throughout the year, both across the district and within the school. The district provides four quarterly PLC early-dismissal days for faculty members to come together to explore and enhance our instructional strategies. Teachers are also encouraged to develop our own PLC initiatives as part of district-wide choices, such as educational book clubs. This provides an avenue for teachers to team up to learn collegiately in on-going instructional improvement and self-reflection.

More informal approaches to professional development include: common planning time, and faculty and grade level meetings (with subject specialists, curriculum coaches, speakers, trainers) providing opportunities to work in collaborative groups to analyze teaching and student achievement data, and learn from, and with, others. Our staff members regularly give presentations at faculty meetings and in-service days. Colleague-led workshops and meetings create a culture of brainstorming and sharing that enriches and informs our everyday instruction. Teachers are also encouraged to attend or develop our own summer workshops to expand, support, and/or better align our curriculum.

Our professional growth is celebrated in presentations before the Board of Education, at staff meetings, and to parent groups. We turn-key our learning experiences, sharing them with other professionals. This

encourages an atmosphere of self-confidence and risk-taking among staff members as well as giving us an opportunity for continued growth and improvement within our school.

4. School Leadership:

Effective schools have effective leadership ~ a phrase epitomized by the Fair Lawn school district from the top down. Our district administrative team (superintendent, assistant superintendents, special-services/subject supervisors, and principals) demands high standards for themselves and for those they lead. The team meets weekly with the same goals: quality and continuous improvement and success for each and every student; and holds the belief that one school's success is shared by all. Milnes school wholeheartedly embraces these tenets, and under our dedicated principal's leadership, extends them further to the staff, students, and families.

Our principal embodies and promotes the district's vision with the highest standards. She mentors, supports, and leads students and staff to improve and achieve success. She maintains open lines of communication, meeting regularly with our school's CST, literacy/mathematics coaches, staff, and PTA, and is open to alternate views. Input, discussions, and kindness are encouraged, leading to a richer and more empowered school community. By working as a team, a respectful and collaborative environment is created, and the entire school body is poised to attain their highest goals.

Along with daily tasks, every staff member voluntarily undertakes leadership roles on various committees: ScIP (School Improvement Panel), DEAC (District Evaluation Advisory Committee), I&RS (Intervention and Referral Service), Anti-bullying/Character Education, Safety Team, Student Council, Author Visit/Read Across America, PTA Representatives, Scheduling, etc. Through our principal's leadership, guidance and collegiality, members collaborate to develop procedures and activities to ensure students' success with support and enrichment in keeping with our overarching mission statement and goals.

Since professional leadership is crucial to the academic success of our students, our principal encourages staff to lead and mentor each other, sharing strengths, improving weaknesses. We advance new initiatives and seek out training, and she learns and grows along with us, supporting our efforts. By furthering her own knowledge and effectiveness as a principal, she creates a shared platform with all faculty members.

As her main focus is on student learning, our principal performs daily classroom walk-throughs and formal/informal observations, providing constructive feedback on classroom management, instructional delivery, and learning environments. She offers support and praise to individuals and groups personally and in public to the staff, administration, and parents. Together, we also discuss and analyze data from our evaluation model and student achievement, utilized by ScIP to develop a schoolwide professional development plan for the ensuing year.

Our school serves as a driving force for leadership within the community.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Milnes employs a multitude of strategies as it strives to ensure success for all students. Superseding all others in importance is our continuous focus on every student's socio-emotional learning.

Five years ago, Responsive Classroom workshops were introduced. Employing its strategies for effective classroom management, fostering mutual respect and increased student responsibility, greatly enhanced our efforts to elevate our school environment, infusing it with empathetic connectivity and purposeful productivity.

Responsive Classroom's integral elements were embraced by all teachers, propelling the establishment of classroom rules, supported by assigned, logical consequences, socially-, emotionally-, academically-rich experiences, and a climate conducive to the development of student independence and confidence to make better choices.

Last year, Sanford Harmony, a social-emotional teaching program promoting strong classroom relationships between all students and their teachers, was adopted. Its goal: providing every student the skills necessary to become compassionate, tolerant, and caring adults. Once again, teachers embraced the new program, pairing it naturally with Responsive Classroom since it contains various components supporting our in-place activities. Morning Meetings (additional components presented at other times) now include: modeling, sharing, discussion experiences teaching students how to respectfully treat others, listening to peers attentively, patiently, caringly, and appropriately working through disagreements, benefitting all students' socio-emotional growth.

To fully support all students, our district partnered with CarePlus School-Based Services for psycho-education, skill-building, and therapy. A part-time CarePlus Social Worker, housed at Milnes, provides: individual/group counseling and social skill-building, conflict resolution, anger/stress management, in-class support for students and teachers, parental programs, partnerships with CSTs as indicated by IEPs, and more.

Our Mindfulness training (begun last year) and implementation continues, extending Mindfulness into daily activities. "Mindful Chimes" sound over morning announcements, encouraging the entire school community to mindfully take "three belly breaths.." Teachers created "calm corners" (AKA "Zen Zones," "Relaxation Stations") - a quiet space for students stocked with breathing beads/sticks, glitter jars, PlayDoh, specific coloring sheets. Teachers regularly share successful activities/materials. Our PTA sponsored parent workshops, bridging the gap between home and school.

By infusing both ongoing and newer programs into our school climate, Milnes' students have gained awareness and positive understandings of the importance of safe, kind, caring classrooms, recognizing others' feelings and discovering commonalities. Students are developing appropriate strategies for expressing feelings and appreciating differences and practice the empathetic skills of speaking respectfully and listening to others in our diverse learning community.

Educating the whole child, particularly socially and emotionally, is what equips all Milnes students to achieve so successfully!