

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

Official School Name School No. 5
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1014 Bower Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Linden State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07036-2543

County Union County

Telephone (908) 486-2666 Fax (908) 925-7335

Web site/URL http://www.linden.k12.nj.us/schools/school5/ E-mail lscamardella@lindenps.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Marnie Hazelton E-mail mhazelton@lindenps.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Linden Public Schools Tel. (908) 486-2666

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Gregory Martucci
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 11 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	26	38	64
K	10	30	40
1	18	26	44
2	25	23	48
3	20	17	37
4	19	21	40
5	18	18	36
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	136	173	309

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 62 % Black or African American
 - 28 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 8 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 13%

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	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	41
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	309
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 79 %

Total number students who qualify: 244

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

29 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>22</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: 4

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.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	17
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 12:1

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	93%	96%	93%	93%	94%
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.

School No. 5 prides itself as being a community of learners, where we set goals, where we have values, and where we will succeed.

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

School No. 5 is “a community of learners, where we set goals, where we have values, and where we will succeed.” This mantra is more than just words to our staff, students, and families at School No. 5. It is the cornerstone of our programs, traditions, and successes. It is a deep belief that the school community is kind, safe, and strives for all students to reach their academic potential. Our school prides itself on its service to its students, families, and the diverse surrounding community.

School No. 5 was built in 1923. The annex addition that houses the pre-K 3 and 4 classrooms was constructed in 1964. An inner courtyard playground was created in 2011 for our youngest learners. In 2015, the back playground was renovated to allow our students, in kindergarten through grade five, a safe place to play during recess and outdoor physical education classes. As of 2017, School No. 5 has a renovated media center where students are afforded the opportunity to visit weekly for instructional activities in all content areas.

Originally, School No. 5 serviced students in grades pre-K through two. However, in 2012 it was rezoned to allow our community to have its own pre-K through grade five neighborhood school. This provided our families with continuity and security throughout their children’s elementary years, and made School No. 5 the heart and soul of our tight-knit community.

The School No. 5 student body consists of 309 students. Our demographics are as follows: sixty-two percent African-American, twenty-eight percent Hispanic, eight percent White, one percent Asian, and one percent of our students are two or more races. Seventy-nine percent of our students are economically disadvantaged, and nine percent of our students are serviced through our special education programs which include, but are not limited to, out of class resource rooms and speech and language therapy.

In 2018, School No. 5 adopted several opportunities to better meet the needs of our students that aligned with new district initiatives. Some of these opportunities are: a new six-day rotating schedule, departmentalization for grades three through five, “What I Need” or “WIN Time” for students in grades one through five as our district-wide Response To Intervention (RTI) model, and additional time for collaboration for grade level common planning meetings. We also have a gifted and talented program on the premises for our students who need enrichment activities across curricula. Students in grades two through four are also provided with Title I services to help close the achievement gap in both mathematics and language arts. As part of the district’s Technology One-to-One initiative, students in grades kindergarten through five have daily access to iPads stationed within their classrooms.

School No. 5 students have made consistent, significant academic achievements. As a result, this was the second year in a row that our New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) scores have increased in language arts for grades three through five, and in mathematics for grades four and five. For the past three school years, our students have made tremendous growth. In the 2018-2019 school year, we had the highest scores in grade five language arts for our district with seventy-five percent of the students meeting or exceeding the state benchmark.

Our school has had many technological accomplishments in recent years. In 2019, School No. 5 achieved Bronze Tiered certification for Future Ready Schools. All teachers have achieved Apple Teacher Certification moving us toward becoming an Apple Distinguished School. Technology is integrated into instruction across all curricula. Smart Boards can be found in all classrooms in grades pre-K through five. All teachers in grades kindergarten through five have Apple iPads to help support student learning. Apple TVs are utilized to enhance instruction in grades three through five. To help ensure that technology is being integrated effectively, staff receive monthly district-wide professional development given by leaders demonstrating research-based best practices.

School No. 5 students are recognized for their many talents through venues, such as the annual Talent Show, performance-based Student of the Month assemblies, Star Student of the Week program, and Attendance All Stars monthly celebration. Our Positive Behavior Support in School program (PBSIS) is the cornerstone of

our behavioral successes through demonstration of monthly character traits with class-wide performances.

The connection between home, school, and community is valued because it supports parental involvement, and encourages parents to take an active role in their child's education. School No. 5 communicates through Blackboard Connect, monthly school calendars, flyers, Classroom Dojo, Class Tag, email, and letters. The PTA is paramount in providing our students with extracurricular activities. The Police and Fire Departments, along with the city's Mayor, play an integral part of our school community. School No. 5 truly makes people smile and warms their hearts. It is a great place to be and a better place to learn.

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

The philosophy of the School No. 5 community is that our students are loved first, and taught second. It is our belief that students' basic needs must be met before any academic instruction can take place. Once these needs are met, the opportunity for learning can begin. Educating students is a shared experience among the School No. 5 staff. It is through collective efficacy that we believe that all students can and will achieve academic excellence. Every teacher sets high expectations in their classroom for all students. Students internalize these expectations, and challenge themselves to meet the goals that have been set for or by them. Instruction is differentiated and scaffolded to meet students at their individual academic and social-emotional levels. It is our shared belief that teachers adjust and use a variety of instructional strategies to ensure student achievement.

Our staff prides themselves on rigorous instruction, aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). Every lesson from grades pre-K through five has a clear structure and consistent routine, allowing for the gradual release of students to work independently. Each lesson begins with the teacher presenting a student-friendly learning objective, or a WALT (We Are Learning To) statement, along with the importance of the content. The students, along with the teacher, recite the WALT statement in order for students to take ownership of their learning. The teacher then will discuss the success criteria with the students to allow for students to self-assess and reflect throughout their learning. The lesson concludes with a formative assessment, in order for the teacher to check for students' understanding and drive instruction.

School No. 5 is an authentic "community school" where partnerships with parents and community leaders help foster a positive atmosphere. A well-rounded education truly begins at School No. 5.

1b. Reading/English language arts

School No. 5 uses a balanced, integrated literacy approach in daily reading instruction to meet all grade-level standards. Through language arts instruction, students learn effective communication skills in the forms of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. They are active participants, able to express their ideas, think rationally, and comprehend spoken and written communication.

The language arts curriculum is designed to develop skills that are essential to becoming effective, lifelong readers. The strategy of gradual release ensures a concrete model of expected learning. This allows teachers to formatively assess students' understanding, and to scaffold instruction based on students' needs. FUNdations is a multi-sensory and systematic phonics, spelling, and handwriting program used daily in grades pre-K through one. In addition, our first-grade students receive supplemental phonemic awareness instruction, using the research-based Heggerty's curriculum. Both programs provide critical foundational reading skills, specifying students' needs in phonological skills.

Differentiated instruction is key to our language arts programs. Pre-K and kindergarten follow the Tools of the Mind approach to literacy instruction: engaging students through literacy exploration, reading, and writing skills. Students in grades one through five are engaged in guided, independent, and shared reading experiences using the Journeys resource. The Journeys program has built-in differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Scaffolded center activities are aligned to state standards, and are based on students' varying skill levels. Teachers integrate NJSLS into their daily lessons, using data to drive instructional practices. This creates readers and writers who truly understand and value literacy as a skill.

The English Language Arts (ELA) block focuses on the skills and strategies necessary to become proficient readers and writers. Each ELA block comprises an eighty-minute window, encompassing both whole and small group instruction. Whole group consists of phonics practice, word work, and essential literacy skill-building. Small group is structured with two twenty-minute guided reading groups, focusing on the

academic needs of the students.

Teachers implement the Houghton Mifflin evidence-based writing curriculum, centered around analyzing a model, practicing the task, and writing narratives, opinions, informative, and responses to literature. Students see what good writing looks like, and can use the model to guide them as they learn different modalities.

Students are assessed through formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments include: anecdotal notes, teacher observations, weekly comprehension tests, and exit slips. This data helps the teacher drive instruction, monitor student learning, and provide ongoing feedback to improve academic growth. Summative assessments include: Diagnostic Reading Assessments, spelling inventories, progress monitoring, and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). This data is used to chart students' progress, tailor lessons, and evaluate student learning against grade-level standards. Data is analyzed at faculty meetings and during common planning sessions in order to plan instruction, set goals, review students' progress, form groupings according to need, provide intervention services, and communicate student progress to parents. Grades three through five are assessed annually using the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA). This data allows teachers to understand achievement gaps, trends in students' performances, and customize instruction to strengthen individualized student learning.

To enhance our ELA programs, students receive technology-driven instruction. This incorporates 21st century skills that will assist in preparing students for success in the future. Technology encompasses multiple skills and standards, allows for differentiation to meet all academic needs of individual learners, is personalized, and engages students. Students are exposed to content that includes rigorous challenges and higher order thinking, to increase their depth of knowledge.

1c. Mathematics

In the 21st Century, mathematics plays an ever-growing role in most aspects of daily life. School No. 5 has adopted different programs that connect math concepts to the real world. Math for elementary students begins the foundation to understanding numbers, patterns, and their relationships.

In pre-K, teachers use the Tools of the Mind approach to math in order to address the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Focal Points and the National Mathematic Distillation of mathematical standards into the primary areas. Our pre-K students focus on the development of numbers, which include: whole numbers, operations, the development of geometry, and measurement. Math is integrated into all daily routines through individual and small group choices, planned experiences, problem solving, and reflection.

Grades kindergarten through five use the GO Math! program which provides students with opportunities to go beyond the traditional rote math concepts. This program helps our students become lifelong mathematical thinkers and problem solvers. Students, in conjunction with differentiated instruction by teachers, take their computation skills to the next level by learning to explain how and why they arrived at their answer. Students are provided with opportunities to engage in learning, and show their thinking and reasoning through hands-on math materials, mathematical tools, visual representations, and verbalizations. It is the goal of the mathematics program to provide the students with 21st Century skills to further their investigation into the content.

Daily math lessons for grades kindergarten through five are broken into five parts: engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. Through this program, students activate their prior knowledge, work collaboratively, apply and transfer knowledge, and are assessed for understanding. The Go Math! program organizes a three-tiered platform to best meet the needs of all students. Tier one includes whole group instruction of the daily skill. Tier two includes small group instruction, where students are retaught the skill on their level. Tier three is where students receive intervention through the reinforcement of basic skills and concepts.

Students are assessed through formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments include: anecdotal notes, constructed response items, fact fluency practices, and self-assessments. This data helps the

teacher drive instruction, monitor student learning, and provide ongoing feedback to improve performance. Summative assessments include: chapter tests, the prerequisite skills inventory, and middle and end-of-the-year benchmark assessments. This data is used to graph student achievement, tailor lessons, and evaluate student learning against grade-level benchmarks. Data is analyzed during faculty meetings and common planning sessions in order to set students' goals, review students' progress, create groupings, and communicate student growth to parents. Grades three through five are assessed annually using the NJSLA. Teachers use this data to identify trends and academic gaps to tailor their instruction to meet students' needs.

Grades three through five utilize digital assessments through the Think Central platform. Teachers have access to the personal math trainer feature, which helps differentiate assignments and assessments for students. Reports are generated using the NJSLs, so instruction can be adjusted to reinforce or remediate depending on students' needs. When assigning activities to students, teachers can select the "adaptive workflow" option. This allows them to adjust to each students' specific skill set, including students who are working above grade level benchmarks. Think Central also allows at home access to students and parents where they can view their child's progress, as well as reinforcing skills using the interactive student edition and Math on the Spot videos.

1d. Science

School No. 5 strives to develop scientifically literate students, by teaching them to think critically and become problem solvers and life-long learners. Our school strives to create a community of diverse learners, and teachers that foster active, equable learning, quantitative reasoning, and scientific inquiry. Through integration of classroom laboratory, research, and practical experiences, students acquire skills necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, and collaborative problem solving. They will serve as a foundation for successful careers and informed, responsible citizens in an ever-changing world that is increasingly dependent on science, technology, and engineering. Students learn in a three-dimensional manner, using the Practices of Science, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas.

Our district adopted the Full Option Science System, Next Generation of Science Standards program because it addresses the NJSLs for Science. The program limits the number of core ideas, choosing depth of knowledge over broad shallow coverage. Students use materials as they work in groups to do investigations. They collect data and drawings in their notebooks and participate in "argumentation" backed by evidence and reasoning. The program also offers online resources for the teachers and students, including videos, activities, vocabulary, and eBooks. Each lesson asks essential questions and has enduring understandings. Our teachers offer modifications and differentiation for all students. A few modification strategies are: providing appropriate scaffolding, tiered centers and assignments, use of visual supports, use of technology, flexible groups, and providing multiple learning opportunities to reinforce key concepts and vocabulary.

Teachers use a variety of formative assessments, such as notebook entries, choral response, exit tickets, argumentation, student conference, observations, self- assessments, think-pair-share, and response sheets. Teachers are always listening and observing for misconceptions. Summative assessments are given at the end of each unit. All data is analyzed to identify knowledge gaps and gauge overall learning. Teachers adjust lessons, monitor student learning, give ongoing feedback, and provide small group instruction for those students who need additional assistance.

In previous years, grade five students completed the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge Science assessment. In 2019, fifth grade students completed the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment-Science (NJSLA-S) for the first time providing our school with critical baseline data that will be used in future data analysis.

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

School No. 5 aims to help students connect, experience, and understand the world around them. The Social Studies department's mission is: Know the Past. Engage the Present. Impact the Future. To that end, pre-K students are given activities relating to the family, classroom community, neighborhood, and the world. Kindergarten students learn through the Magic Tree House series, exploring different cultures and historical

periods. Students in grades one through five utilize the Pearson Realize curriculum that incorporates the study of economics, civics, history, and geography. Students learn about the evolution of society and how to become responsible, knowledgeable, and productive citizens. Engaging students in rigorous instruction enables them to become cognizant of diversity, identifying challenges and benefits of living in a world with various cultures. Students understand the world around them, comprehending how the past and present can play a role in the development of a country.

The Social Studies curriculum includes a research paper for grades four and five. It is intended for students to begin to familiarize themselves with the process of researching and writing about a topic, learning to integrate information, and creating one cohesive paper with an accurate description and understanding of the content. Life-sized floor maps are provided for students in grade five to allow for interactive, hands-on experiences in Geography, allowing for deeper understanding of map features and skills.

Through the use of technology, students in all grades are afforded opportunities to digitally interact with content while allowing for differentiation. Technology allows for students to take assessments, complete assignments, listen to applicable texts and songs, and watch content-specific videos.

Students are assessed both formatively and summatively, using the NJSLs as a guide. Formative assessments include: anecdotal notes, teacher observations, checks for understanding, and exit slips. Summative assessments include chapter assessments, and culminating projects, which are used to record student progress and drive instruction. Teachers use all data to drive instruction, provide feedback, scaffold, and differentiate for students who need additional support.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

At School No. 5, students in pre-K three and four actively learn through the use of the Tools of the Mind research-based curriculum, which meets state and national standards. It focuses on developing students' cognitive, social-emotional understanding, self-regulatory skills, and foundational academic skills needed for school readiness through creative play.

Make-believe play is the core of a Tools of the Mind classroom. Classrooms are transformed into content-specific themes every four to six weeks. Tools activities, such as play planning, are designed to challenge and scaffold each child's level. Teachers incorporate daily lessons, which develop foundational executive functioning and self-regulation skills. Pre-K Social Studies is incorporated into the theme building, where students discover the different roles, actions, and settings in which they occur. Background is built through reading, virtual field trips, prop making, and play planning. Some thematic units include: Family, Medical, and Restaurant.

Math is integrated into daily routines through small group choices, planned experiences, problem solving, and reflections. Students are introduced to key mathematical concepts, language, and processes. The connections between math and literacy are implemented routinely. Pre-K students explore various topics through the use of "Science Eyes." Through the use of various science units, students use their senses to make scientific observations. Some of these kits include: Magnets, Lights and Shadows, and Plants and Seeds.

Students are assessed both formatively and summatively. Formative assessments include: daily play plans, anecdotal notes, and teacher observation. Summative assessments include: monthly scaffolded writing, math benchmark assessments, and dynamic letter and sound assessments.

Students who attend pre-K have shown improved school readiness. In mathematics, data indicates that students have more concrete abilities in number sense and counting and cardinality. In addition, students perform significantly higher on the DIBELS assessment in kindergarten and grade one.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

School No. 5 prides itself on affording students with exceptional and imperative ways of perceiving and interacting within the world. We believe that students should develop into well-rounded individuals. Students are provided with a multitude of other curriculum programs to enrich their learning. Students receive foreign language, technology, art, and music classes once in our six-day rotating schedule.

School No. 5's Spanish program fosters academic accomplishments by improving cognitive skills and developing understanding for diversity. The Spanish curriculum is theme-based and progressive to ensure students develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are instructed in Spanish from kindergarten through grade five, to allow for sequential and cumulative instruction. Performance-based assessments are embedded in daily lessons plans, which are aligned with state and national standards.

The technology program at School No. 5 engages students in curriculum-related 21st Century learning activities. Students learn about important topics, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying and plagiarism through classroom discussions, applications, and books. Students learn various ways to operate and create using Mac operating systems. Through our district Technology One-to-One initiative, grades kindergarten through five are provided with iPads for hands-on instruction and projects, such as creating slideshow presentations, video productions, and music compositions.

School No. 5 incorporates general art and music for grades kindergarten through five. These programs have sequential courses to encourage skill development, technical mastery, and performance excellence. The courses also provide cultural enrichment, aesthetic awareness, and the ability to critically evaluate. In alignment with the general music program, students in grade three are introduced to chord structure and linear harmonies, through the use of recorders to begin their music reading skills and instrument playing. Students are assessed based on the New Jersey Core Course Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts, and Cumulative Progress Indicators for both the music and art programs.

In addition to the general music courses, students in grades three through five have the opportunity of participating in band and orchestra electives. Choir is also an option for students in grades four and five to enhance their music performing skills. All choir, band, and orchestra members are scheduled for class lessons once a week on a rotating pull-out basis during the school day. School No. 5 produces bi-annual concerts in the winter and spring in which students' artwork is displayed, in addition to performances by the choir, band, and orchestra.

Our students at School No. 5 are stimulated and challenged by a vigorous physical education program. All students in grades kindergarten through five receive physical education twice a week, while pre-K students receive physical education daily for forty minutes. Yearly, our students in grades three through five participate in the district's annual track and field events, as well as our walk-a-thon for a local food pantry.

The health instruction at School No. 5 follows the Glencoe Health and Fitness curriculum. Students in kindergarten through grade five are taught by the physical education teacher once a week in areas, such as nutrition, growth and development, health and wellness, and emotional health. Students are often given the chance to attend assemblies on topics, such as dental care and bike safety, to reinforce healthy and safe habits.

School No. 5's Media Program for grades pre-K through five allows students to access, use, and evaluate information from various resources. Students are able to utilize the library weekly to enjoy learning and investigating new topics, develop good reading habits, and have the opportunity to check out books. In alignment with our six-day rotating schedule, the School No. 5 Media Specialist teaches students in grades kindergarten through five how to research information using a variety of print and digital resources.

The Character Education Program for grades pre-K through five is a key strategy to help reinforce values for our students. This program encourages a home-school connection and teaches children about the basic character traits of responsibility, honesty, respect, caring, and diversity. Performance-based assemblies are

designed to showcase the highlighted character trait for the month. These assemblies allow families and community dignitaries to celebrate our students' social-emotional accomplishments.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Pre-K through grade five students are supported social-emotionally and academically through various platforms. The Title I program serves students in grades two through four in ELA and mathematics. Small group, push-in instruction is provided to those students who exhibit difficulty with basic, underlying concepts of grade level benchmarks. Lessons are customized to reflect students' deficiencies.

Students in grade one have a designated reading developmental specialist. This intervention was developed to close the achievement gap between kindergarten and grade one students. Phonemic awareness and alphabetic principle are the focus for these students who are deemed struggling readers based on data from their fall DIBELS assessment.

In alignment with our district-wide Response to Intervention (RTI) model, our school offers "What I Need" or "WIN Time" for grades one through five. Teachers meet during common planning time to discuss students' needs and develop instructional plans. Students are divided into groups based on their academic needs. Interventions for the below-level students are intense and are taught in a small group setting to assist in reinforcing skills that have not been mastered. After a WIN rotation is completed, teachers meet again to reflect on student progress and plan for future instructional goals.

Students in grades pre-K through five, who exhibit social-emotional and/or academic difficulty, may be recommended to our Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) program. I&RS is a process where teachers can look toward other professionals for instructional strategies and recommendations to better support students in the general education class. The I&RS team develops an action plan, with strategies to be implemented on a four to six week interval. At the end of that time frame, the referral will be reassessed to see if further action should be taken. Parents are included in the I&RS process, along with the general education teacher, to support the home-school connection.

3b. Students performing above grade level

School No. 5 presents many programs to students of all abilities and talents. High-performing students require accelerated challenges and curriculum presented in new, complex, and interesting ways. Students, who are performing above-grade level benchmarks, receive opportunities for divergent and convergent thinking through various platforms.

Students who pass the digital screener assessment, or the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), and receive a teacher recommendation, are admitted into the Gifted and Talented program. Gifted and Talented is an on-premise program designed for grades one through five to challenge their intellectual and creative abilities. It has a demanding curriculum that provides high level learning opportunities. Within the infused curriculum students solve problems, analyze materials and situations, and learn from real life experiences. Students meet for a half-day each week on a rotating schedule, and are expected to maintain continuous general education and behavioral excellence in order to remain in the program.

Students in grades pre-K through five, who do not qualify for the Gifted and Talented program, but still perform above-grade level, are supported via differentiated instruction across all curricula. Teachers offer enrichment to above-grade level learners by having them dive deeper with content. These students are expected to keep up with the class pace and are given more time to explore topics that are of interest to them. Students in grades kindergarten through five have accessible digital components across all curricula. These resources provide adaptive learning through individualized instruction to ensure that students are challenged and continue exceeding grade level benchmarks.

In alignment with our district-wide RTI model, our school offers "What I Need" or "WIN Time" for

students in grades one through five. Students who perform above grade level benchmark are given extension activities to ensure students increase higher order reasoning skills.

3c. Special education

At School No. 5, academic achievement and success is different for every child. Our goal is to provide individualized instruction to bridge achievement gaps between general education students and the special education population.

Our school uses a variety of resources, techniques, and interventions to close this gap. Resource classrooms have paraprofessionals to assist students with learning and implement accommodations in their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Identified students can receive services including: speech therapy, counseling, and occupational/physical therapy to support their comprehensive program. Special education learners receive differentiated, explicit, systemic, and targeted daily ELA instruction using the Sonday program. This multi-sensory program builds fluent readers; scaffolding phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency instruction. The Journeys curriculum is implemented through intervention texts by breaking down passages for easier comprehension. The Houghton Mifflin evidence-based writing curriculum is scaffolded by using graphic organizers and writing stems. The Go Math! program is individualized for students' needs by using the ThinkCentral platform, re-teachable lessons, targeted small group instruction, and modified assessments. Digital components including Animated Math Models and Interactive Student Editions provide step-by-step skills practice.

Special education students are mainstreamed into general education classrooms for social studies and science. Grades one through three receive General Education Support (GES) for scaffolded learning. Grades four and five receive in-class support from the resource teacher to allow for differentiation of instruction.

Formative and summative assessments help teachers customize instruction. Sonday mastery checks afford students individual mobility to progress through levels by showcasing skill growth and proficiency. The Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) data enables teachers to specify deficits in comprehension and fluency, and create student groups. Math benchmark assessments are given three times a year to assess student growth toward grade-level standards, allowing teachers to set goals, and group students according to their needs. All school, district, and state assessment data provides teachers with students' individual strengths and weaknesses in order to group students. Groupings are fluid, and change based on student progress. This remediates deficits as students progress toward their IEP goals.

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

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

School No. 5 fosters a positive learning environment for all students to feel welcomed, safe, and respected. This environment ultimately leads to academic achievement, leadership opportunities, relationship building, and consistently high daily attendance.

The moment students enter school, they are greeted by staff with a warm smile and an enthusiastic “good morning.” The day begins with students delivering the morning announcements in collaboration with the principal. It is during this time that our entire school community recites the Pledge of Allegiance, our school mantra, and PBSIS motto. This provides a strong foundation and sets the tone for learning to take place.

Beginning on day one, teachers engage students in the learning process by making learning relevant and meaningful. Teachers establish a clear code of conduct with their students, identifying behavioral expectations and the importance of good decision-making. Structured routines and procedures are discussed and modeled for students consistently. Teachers tailor instruction to students’ strengths and needs, while engaging them in rigorous academics. Students take ownership of their learning by charting data in their student portfolios, being reflective when given teacher feedback during individual conferences, and setting personalized short-term and long-term academic goals. Students are expected to self-assess by using rubrics and success criteria set forth by their teacher.

At School No. 5, recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors strengthens students’ intrinsic motivation. When students feel good about themselves, it is reflected through their self-image, school work, and how they treat others in the school community. Programs, such as Star Student, PBSIS, and Character Education, aid students in making better choices; not just by receiving incentives, but through their ability to resolve conflicts amicably, cope with life’s difficulties, and display empathy towards others.

Leadership opportunities contribute to a positive learning environment; allowing students to learn how to communicate and interact with each other. The monthly in-school postal service program, “Wee Deliver,” provides students in grade three with a leadership role to retrieve, sort, and disperse the mail for the entire school. The Wee Deliver program allows students to practice letter writing skills using Character Education themes. Students in grades four and five can apply to become student Vanguard, who assist with technological issues and work on schoolwide projects. Grade five students can participate in Kiwanis Kids Club or “K-Kids” and Safety Patrol. The K-Kids partake in community sponsored projects and activities. The Safety Patrol assists with maintaining a safe school environment.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

School No. 5 values the connection between home, school, and community; and supports parental involvement, and encourages parents and prominent community members to take an active role in our students’ education. Welcome letters, monthly calendars, digital platforms, and social media accounts keep parents and dignitaries informed about activities and events. With these strong partnerships and open communication, student achievement thrives.

Relationship building between the classroom teacher and students’ families is paramount to setting the stage for a successful school year. Back to School Night is a forum where teachers explain expectations, guidelines, volunteer opportunities, and home-school support through Title I workshops. Parents are informed weekly through Wednesday’s folders, which contain important notices and upcoming events. Teachers create monthly newsletters to highlight important happenings in their classrooms. Phone calls, personalized notes sent home, and daily planners are also utilized to communicate with parents. Parents are able to ask their teacher for a meeting to discuss their students’ progress at any point in the year.

Communicating student progress to parents is crucial. Data portfolios are sent home three times a year to provide student progress to parents at the midpoint of each trimester. Students are responsible for charting

their data in order to explain their academic goals to their families; thus, taking ownership of their learning. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year to discuss challenges and achievements. Digital report cards are available for parent viewing at the end of each trimester. Attendance memos go home three times a year to monitor student tardiness and absenteeism.

School No. 5 has ongoing involvement with community dignitaries. The parent-teacher association is vital in maintaining this connection through various events, such as the Holiday Boutique, book fairs, Fun Day, Muffins for Mom, and Donuts for Dad. The Police and Fire Departments, our Mayor, and other community dignitaries participate during Read Across America Week, American Education Week, Women's History Month, and Black History Month, by speaking to our students about various experiences.

School No. 5 has built strong partnerships in education. The Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs support our school through grants and generous donations. Annually, local businessmen and women from surrounding corporations come in to educate our students about the basics of finance during our Junior Achievement event. In 2019, the Union County Freeholders assisted us with developing a school garden, and donated funding for a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) night that brought together students, parents, and teachers.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The welcoming environment of School No. 5 begins with the first step entering the building. Walking up the rainbow painted steps, all stakeholders are reminded of the seven character education pillars of our school community. The brightly decorated doors, academic bulletin boards, murals, and hand-painted ceiling tiles with inspirational quotes surround everyone with the warmth of belonging.

The Culture and Climate Committee aids in creating this welcoming environment. Each month, the committee chooses a staff member to be recognized for outstanding professionalism. The committee implements monthly, schoolwide contests, which showcase collegiality while highlighting student work. Teachers are also valued through the daily "thank you" from the principal during the morning announcements, along with her "open door" policy, Teacher Appreciation Week, school spirit days and monthly luncheons. These activities help unify the school community.

Through data analysis, School No. 5 was able to vertically align schoolwide instructional strategies in order to increase student achievement. This ongoing process is based on the ever changing needs of our students. One learning goal was to focus on using ideas from Tools for Thoughtful Assessment, specifically, the Top Hat Organizer, to assist with students' comparing and contrasting skills. Continuous follow-up was implemented to help support teachers during their post-conferences and summative evaluations. The external rounds data found that student questioning needed more variation of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels. Monday faculty meetings, common planning, and professional learning communities are used to turnkey information from the ILT and instructional coaches to deepen teachers' understanding of DOK.

Teachers are supported professionally in an array of ways. Monthly professional development is built into the district's calendar to support best instructional strategies. Common Planning is used for teachers to support one another; practicing interrater reliability by examining student work, planning grade level events, parent communication, and "WIN Time" planning. First and second year teachers are provided mentorship for help and guidance with instruction and policies. This lends itself to staff participation in peer observations. The School Improvement Plan (ScIP) committee was developed to assist teachers with creating student growth objectives and professional development plans. Through administrative feedback during post conferences, summative evaluations, and lesson plan review, teachers are given specific areas to focus on for individualized growth. All of these professional experiences align with School No. 5's unified approach to meet the needs of all students through supporting and enhancing teachers' practices and capacity.

4. School Leadership:

Teachers at School No. 5 are provided with the opportunity to participate in leadership responsibilities aligned with the principal's personal philosophy of shared leadership. Some examples of shared leadership consist of teachers having an "open door" policy to model best practices and build capacity, becoming mentors or "buddies" for new teachers, and signing up for committees and club advisors. Creating "a leader in every seat" helps foster teacher leadership and collective efficacy, the belief that we all have a positive effect on our students.

There are a variety of ways for teachers to participate in shared leadership; however, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) has proven to have the largest effect on student achievement over the last four years. The ILT consists of the principal, instructional coaches, a resource teacher, academic support staff, and teachers from each grade level. The ILT works collaboratively to establish yearly goals and meets monthly for in-house professional development on topics, such as, but not limited to, visible learning, Tools for Thoughtful Assessment, best practices, and the latest trends in educational research. Information is turnkeyed to staff using faculty meetings, common planning time, and professional learning communities (PLCs) in order to improve student achievement.

Data analysis has been a major part of our school's success. The practice of diving deeply into state and district student data helps identify specific strengths and weaknesses in order to drive instruction and provide specific feedback to students. Grade level teachers collaboratively chart students' performances using district-specific benchmark assessments in both ELA and mathematics. Through this practice, teachers are able to set academic goals for students and closely monitor their progress. Grade levels present overall student achievement to the entire staff for collective ownership and reflection on instructional strategies.

In order to help further collective efficacy, leadership and data analysis, internal and external teacher rounds have been adopted. The entire staff works together to identify a problem of practice and specific learning focuses, or "look fors." An example of a "look for" may involve interviewing students during a lesson about whether they understand the learning objective. Small groups of teachers are able to visit other teachers within the school, gathering data around the identified problem of practice and specific learning focuses. This data is then analyzed by the entire staff, and recommendations are given for areas in need of improvement. Professional development is then administered to improve these areas of instruction.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

“Be kind, be safe, and try your best” is our Positive Behavioral System In School (PBSIS) motto. Striving for academic success begins with meeting students’ social-emotional needs. Loving our students first, and teaching them second has proven highly effective. A strong behavioral program across all grade levels increases consistency and communication of expectations.

The PBSIS program rewards students that demonstrate positive behaviors and consistently follow school rules. Posters display common language throughout the hallways, dismissal doors, and stairways, to remind students of what is expected daily. Students receive Cub Coupons as a way of reinforcing and celebrating their good choices. Cub Coupons can be given throughout the day by any staff member. The School No. 5 Tiger collects the Cub Coupons and consolidates them for the raffle during the performance-based monthly assembly. These assemblies showcase grade-level performances based on a specific character trait. Students are also recognized for displaying outstanding conduct by being chosen as Student of the Month. Students are individually called onto the stage and presented with a certificate. These students, along with their families, are invited to attend a principal’s luncheon as a token of their accomplishment.

Learning how to respect others, being responsible for your actions, and resolving conflict are important skills for students to learn. The PBSIS initiative has expanded, implementing the Attendance All Stars and Star Student programs to continue meeting the needs of our students. The Attendance All Stars program highlights the importance of coming to school consistently. One class per grade-level is identified with having the highest percentage of monthly attendance, reinforcing the positive impact between student achievement and daily attendance. Waiting all month to be recognized for outstanding behavior can be difficult; therefore, the Star Student program helps students feel successful weekly. Teachers select one student from their homeroom every Friday to be acknowledged for their outstanding conduct. Students who are chosen have their names announced over the loudspeaker and receive a PBSIS prize.

PBSIS has positively impacted students' behavior. The expansion of the program has led to a decrease in substantiated Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying referrals, disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and incident reports. Clear and consistent expectations have created a positive, unifying environment for the school community. The continuation of the monthly PBSIS assemblies, weekly Star Student, Attendance All Stars, and Student of the Month recognition allows students to be acknowledged and rewarded for choosing positive behaviors.