

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Crosby Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8382 New Haven Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Harrison State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 45030-9207

County Hamilton County

Telephone (513) 738-1717 Fax (513) 738-1718

Web site/URL  
<https://www.southwestschools.org/crosby-elementary-school/> E-mail joanne.aghotte@southwestschools.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\* Mr. John Hamstra E-mail john.hamstra@southwestschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Southwest Local Tel. (513) 367-4139

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. Jeffrey Biddle  
(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**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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

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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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	47	39	86
1	51	37	88
2	56	50	106
3	45	48	93
4	51	42	93
5	40	43	83
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
<b>Total Students</b>	290	259	549

\*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
  - 3 % Asian
  - 3 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 80 % White
  - 6 % 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: 6%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 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	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	30
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	544
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

Bermese

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

2 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 16 %

Total number students who qualify: 90

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %

43 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>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>2</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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	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.

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

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

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1997

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

Academic and Social Growth for ALL students, everyday!

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Crosby Elementary was first built in 1951 in the rural community of Crosby Township, and was identified as Crosby Township Grade School. Today, Crosby Elementary is one of four elementary schools in the Southwest Local School District. It is situated just northeast of the city of Harrison in Hamilton County and includes a small southwestern section of Butler County.

Crosby Elementary was a recipient of the National Blue-Ribbon Award in 1997. Receiving this prestigious award has helped our school develop a reputation of excellence. The school currently serves 551 students in kindergarten through fifth grades (up from 326 just six years ago). Due to the extraordinary growth, several additions have been made to the original building, while still maintaining a rural, community feel.

At Crosby we live the mission of ‘Academic and Social Growth for all students, EVERY DAY’, the motto of ‘Excellence Through Relationships’ and our four core values of ‘Trust, Respect, Ownership, and Leadership’.

Academically, curriculum and instruction have changed immensely over the years. The advancement of technology has allowed our school to enhance instruction and provide a more individualized approach to education by providing us with real-time data to guide instruction and differentiate lessons to meet all students’ needs. The curriculum is also much more rigorous. In order to assist the teaching staff with these complex lessons, instructional coaches are used to provide guidance, training, and other resources. Last summer, the instructional coaches and teachers collaborated to deconstruct all reading and math standards to create a pathway to mastery. Teachers use this pathway to design lessons to not only reach the intended Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level, but to stretch students one level above. In addition, Crosby Elementary takes pride in its Response to Intervention (RtI) program. This program allows for students to receive instruction to meet their needs whether they are below, at, or above grade level and remain fluid throughout the school year based on individual student progress monitoring data.

The vast changes in curriculum and instruction have transitioned the role of the principal from a school-building manager to an instructional leader. The principal of today provides feedback through informal observations, conducts data meetings to improve student achievement, and offers numerous professional development (PD) opportunities throughout the year. The principal uses monthly staff meetings to provide meaningful PD; providing options so that teachers can focus on individual areas of growth. The principal also encourages staff to use instructional coaches to improve instructional practices and support them in risk taking.

To address social and behavioral needs, Crosby Elementary has adopted the Positive Behavior Intervention Program (PBIS). This program directly correlates with our school district’s core values. Each month the students attend a school-wide assembly where students focus on a character trait. Teachers and support staff reinforce these skills in the classroom. At the end of the month, students vote for the classmate who best exemplifies the trait. Selected students celebrate by attending a pancake breakfast made by the Principal.

Technological advances have allowed our school to be more connected with families and our community. Our website, Facebook page, and Twitter account keep parents and the community current on school happenings, news, and achievements. We have also developed partnerships with local churches; creating ways to support our underprivileged students by providing food over the weekend, dental visits at school, and basic personal necessities.

Our school prides itself on being able to offer numerous extra-curricular activities. We acknowledge that education is just one piece of the puzzle. Crosby Elementary makes it a goal to involve every student in at least one extra-curricular activity. This allows them to reach their greatest intellectual, physical, social/emotional, spiritual, or cultural potential.

On the intellectual side, students can participate in afterschool programs that foster critical thinking, problem solving, and project-based learning in Crystal Clear Science, Math, Engineering, and Lego Clubs.

To foster healthy lifestyles, we offer a variety of athletic activities. These include Girls Club, Basketball, Skills and Drills, Running, Volleyball, and Unicycle Clubs. We are especially proud of our Unicycle Club; a staple of the school for two decades. Unicyclists practice daily before school to perform precise routines for local high school and college half-time shows. In addition, the team also participates in local parades, including the Cincinnati Reds Opening Day parade.

To assist students in growing socially and emotionally, we offer clubs not only before and after school, but during the school day as well. Our Fifth Grade Ambassadors assist parents during special events. The Leadership Lunch Bunch brainstorms ways to make our school and community a better place. Our Student Advisory Council works with our principal regarding problems or issues that arise and work collaboratively to find solutions. Our Make a Difference (M.A.D.) Kids Club focuses on implementing random acts of kindness in a community outreach setting.

Our students can grow spiritually, if they so choose. We have a partnership with our local churches who work together to offer Lightning Squad, a faith-based club, that meets monthly after school.

Finally, we offer clubs for students who want to grow culturally. We host Starting Artist club, an after-school group led by a local professional artist, as well as the Emerge Dance program for students who enjoy expressing themselves through dance and movement.

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

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

Crosby Elementary is not a ‘one size fits all’ type of school. Differentiation is a key component of our instruction. At each grade level standards are understood, deconstructed, and delivered to the children based on their learning readiness. Before new standards are introduced, students are given a pretest to assess their skill base. These results are then used to plan and implement lessons on the appropriate level and depth of knowledge for each student.

The teachers at Crosby Elementary use Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) to help guide their instruction, to differentiate that instruction, and lead students to deeper understanding of all concepts. Webb’s Depth of Knowledge includes four levels. Level one is known as recall. Level one requires students to recall specific information and remember facts and details. Once students have mastered recalling information, they are ready for level two. Level two is known as skills and concepts. Level two requires students to infer, classify, compare, and interpret information. Level three is analysis. At this level students are ready for strategic thinking. The complexity of thinking increases at level three and requires the students to start planning, using justification, and complex reasoning. Throughout level three students practice formulating opinions and explaining them. Finally, students reach level four, extended thinking. At this level students can ask how else their knowledge can be used. Students can apply their knowledge by completing a project.

Using Depth of Knowledge to guide instruction at each grade level and subject area allows us to create higher level thinkers at Crosby Elementary. For example, our fifth grade students performed an in-depth study of Mars, focusing on the necessary steps for surviving on the red planet for six months. They researched, produced journal entries, blue prints, and ultimately a model of a base designed to support human life. This included food source, water source, and shelter.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

Crosby Elementary strives to provide engaging literary practices and experiences that nurture enthusiastic, lifelong learners who purposefully and thoughtfully delve deeper at every reading and writing level. Differentiation and intervention are the foundational base of our elementary curriculum. Kindergarten through second grade emphasize early literacy skills including fluency, phonics, vocabulary, spelling, phonemic awareness, and assessment. Mastery of these skills is our goal. Using research-based programs including Read Live, Orton-Gillingham, Signs for Sounds 1 & 2, Read Works, Moby Max, AimsWeb, and RTI (Response to Intervention) allow for great success including 100% of our third graders passing the Ohio 3rd grade guarantee.

Expanding the skills of high achieving readers and writers to promote creativity, collaboration, communication skills, and critical thinking are practiced at all levels of reading and writing instruction through flexible grouping. Data analysis and teacher input are integral keys in modifying our instruction and determining the differentiation of learning groups. This data plays an important role in determining the design of instructional delivery. To keep our curriculum practices comprehensive and rigorous, progress monitoring and benchmarking data assessments happen summatively and formatively; thus, fluid grouping allows learners to progress at a developmentally appropriate pace. Our ELA curriculum successfully allows Crosby readers and writers to evolve and grow throughout all grades as their aptitudes increase. Utilizing multi-sensory, explicit, and sequential approaches to reading allows all readers and writers to succeed. Crosby teachers educate themselves on ELA trends and honor best practices of teaching approaches. Teachers utilize Webb’s Depth of Knowledge, whole group, small group, individualized instruction, leveled groups, mixed ability grouping, and project-based learning. The support of volunteers including parents, church groups, senior centers, community organizations, college and high school students is instrumental in organizing and orchestrating an education environment allowing teachers to target specific learning aptitudes to reach each Crosby learner at their unique and individual level.

## **1c. Mathematics**

Math instruction at Crosby Elementary begins with building concrete foundational understanding. Students with a strong foundation in math will be more successful later in their education when they get to more complex problems. Prior to the school year, each grade level meets and creates a pacing guide for the entire year of math instruction. Teachers at each grade level look at the data from the previous year and make changes as necessary.

Primary classrooms start each school year focusing on place value and number sense. Students with good number sense understand how to manipulate numbers, are able to explore numbers and number relationships, can find number patterns, and can gauge how reasonable an answer is when solving problems. Students that develop number sense early on are able to find multiple ways to solve a problem; this is a vital math skill to have.

As the year progresses and each new skill is introduced, students are given a pre-assessment. The entire grade level gives the same pre-assessment without any prior exposure to the concept. Each pre-assessment has questions ranging from Level One Depth of Knowledge to Level Four Depth of Knowledge. Based on the results from the pretest, students are sorted on readiness levels and then broken down into differentiated math groups.

The group of students that are struggling on a particular concept are placed in a level one group that includes a classroom teacher and an intervention specialist. This group focuses on breaking down the skill for the students and strengthening their foundational skills. The level one group uses concrete examples, math manipulatives, and hands on games and activities to build the students knowledge and confidence.

Students that had some prior knowledge of the math concept would be placed in a level two math group. This group consists of a classroom teacher and an instructional aide. In this group the teachers will build upon the knowledge that students already have and move them into a deeper understanding. The level two group focuses on basic application of knowledge and solving one step problems.

In level three math groups, the students are with a grade level teacher. These are students that are ready for strategic thinking. This requires reasoning, developing a plan or a sequence of steps, and solving more complex problems.

Level four math groups take grade level concepts, extend their thinking and apply it to real life situations. Students in this group use complex reasoning to analyze, design, and create. Projects have included creating a store to practice purchasing items, measuring items to create a structure, creating a pizza using equivalent fractions, and using area and perimeter to design a new school.

Breaking students into leveled groups allow each student to learn and grow at their individual readiness level. This system helps students build confidence and develop a love for learning.

## **1d. Science**

Crosby Elementary Science teachers use the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach to teach science. The UDL is a way of teaching and learning that gives all students an opportunity to succeed. Through the UDL approach students are offered flexibility in the way they can access materials, engage within the classroom, and show what they know through flexible project choices.

Students receive science instruction in a variety of ways at Crosby Elementary. The primary grades integrate science through reading instruction and STEAM units. In grades three through five science is taught on a larger scale. Teachers model science experiments, show videos, use slideshows, give the students virtual reality encounters, and have hands-on science opportunities to connect science to real life experiences. Each year our third grade students plant lettuce and have a salad party. The students are responsible for planting, watering, picking the lettuce, and cleaning it in order to have their salad party. The students in fourth grade connect science to real life by growing baby chicks and then donating them to local farmers. Students in

fifth grade conduct oil spill experiments to learn about the effects spills have on the environment. Fifth grade has also built and distributed bat houses throughout the community to help support bat conservation efforts.

During science, students are always highly engaged because they are often presented with choice. Projects are presented with multiple ways to explore the topic being studied. Students may also choose how to demonstrate their learning through a variety of product options. Science is truly made fun at Crosby Elementary and is a favorite of many.

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

Crosby teachers believe the primary purpose of social studies is to promote democracy and civic engagement. The social studies curriculum (Ohio Learning Standards) accomplishes this by teaching students how to be responsible citizens, appreciate cultural diversity, and how to contribute to the community. Social studies related literature is integrated into all curricular areas. Project-based learning is used to engage students in demonstrating their understanding of the curriculum. One example of Crosby learners demonstrating their knowledge through project-based learning is our Famous Americans Living Museum, which is open to parents, grandparents, and other community guests. Students also help plan and host an annual Veterans Day celebration that honors our veterans for their service and sacrifices. A strong home to school connection is cultivated through monthly open-ended projects including: US Flag project, Santa's New Suit, Holidays Around the World, 100th Day projects, and Flat Stanley traveling the world.

The goal at Crosby is to foster and nurture 21st century learners who are problem solvers and can apply real-world skills to improve their community. Our exceptional location in Crosby Township makes us unique in the best way because we are in a rural like setting on the cusp of a big city. Our hometown pride is intoxicating and servant leadership drives our school and community. While promoting our four core values: TRUST, RESPECT, OWNERSHIP, and LEADERSHIP, we also lead by example to teach our students the importance of serving our community and those in need. Our annual "Day of Service", the Saturday after September 11th, inspires service projects that take place all over the Southwest Local School District (SLSD) community. In a single day, Crosby, SLSD, and community volunteers come together to beautify and improve our community and the lives of community members. The impact of servant leadership is profound and creates memories for a lifetime; for Crosby learners and community recipients.

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

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

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

At Crosby Elementary, students are also given opportunities to learn and grow in non-core areas such as art, music, physical education, and media. Students in grades one through five receive instruction in all areas once a week for 50 minutes. Due to the time restraints of half-day kindergarten, our youngest students only attend media.

In Art class, students work on a variety of projects that are displayed, on a regular basis, throughout the building. Most of these projects support literacy, math, and inventive thinking. In third grade, dream catchers are made to support an ELA unit. Fifth graders work on rotational symmetry printmaking, which incorporates math vocabulary. First graders are encouraged to use inventive thinking when working on machines, inspired by a Shel Silverstein poem. Many students are selected from each class to enter a project in the Harrison Branch Library Art Show, a collaboration of all four elementary buildings. Each year, the students' artwork is also displayed in a school wide event, Showcase Southwest. Parents and community members are invited to celebrate the visual talents of our students.

Music class involves learning a variety of musical concepts as well as gaining an appreciation of the art of music through various learning techniques and teaching strategies. Students learn to sing, read music, and play various instruments, one of which is the recorder. Students are rewarded for mastering musical skills

associated with each new song in "the Recorder Karate" series. Different colored yarn is tied to the end of their recorder signifying the mastery of the musical concepts. Fifth graders participate in a unit where they create a musical instrument. Each year, first through fifth grade students put on a performance for parents and the community. Performances involve singing, dancing, speaking, and recorder playing. Teachers, parents and students work together to create costumes and props to enhance the production. It is a great evening celebrating the musical talents and gifts that each student brings to the classroom.

Physical Education classes are always moving and busy. Students participate in stretching, strength and core exercises, and cardiovascular endurance activities in each class. Students in younger grades learn and practice locomotor and non-locomotor skills and manipulative activities through a variety of skills, drills, and games. They can achieve certificates for improvement and mastery of different skills. Older students learn to incorporate sport skills into game situations. Many of the games in class involve strategic thinking and teamwork. Sportsmanship and fair play are encouraged at all levels and in all games. Each student participates in fitness testing twice a year. Many rewards can be earned, with 75% improvement being the top award. Parents and grandparents volunteer with the fitness testing. The Physical Education classes also participate in fundraising for the American Heart Association's Jump and Hoop-a-thons. All students participate in two days of jump roping and/or basketball playing while the fundraising is being done. Third through fifth grade students also periodically have gym homework, which is an exercise log of the physical activity that they do outside of school. This is to encourage exercising and healthy living as a lifelong goal.

Each week, the students also visit the Media Center. This is home to the library and independent instruction learning technology skills (learning.com). Kindergarten students enjoy listening to seasonally themed stories, as well as selecting books to take home for the week. Older students spend the majority of their time working on learning.com, a program that develops critical technology skills. During the 50-minute class, the students are also given time to choose books to check out for the week. The Media Center is also open before school for students to return and check out new items if they finish with them before their next scheduled class.

These non-core curriculum classes help to develop well-rounded individuals and give students an opportunity to explore other areas of interest.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

Students in first through third grade who are not "on-track" for reading success, as outlined by the Ohio Department of Education, are placed on a Reading Improvement Monitoring Plan (RIMP). Students that are placed on a RIMP are provided high quality, research-based instruction and strategies that allow students to attain the appropriate level of reading competency. Their progress is monitored bi-weekly to ensure that students are making adequate growth. These students receive comprehensive instruction that addresses and incorporates the five critical strands of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Some of the quality research-based programs that we use to support learning at Crosby Elementary include Orton Gillingham, Systematic and Sequential Phonics, Signs for Sounds, Reading A-Z, GATE, Read Naturally, Read Live, Read Works, Moby Max, and Study Island. Many of these programs require technology therefore, each student is provided with access to their own individual laptop.

Students identified at risk for academic failure receive intensive intervention from their classroom and Response to Intervention (RtI) teacher(s). Students who make little to no growth, despite explicit intensive instruction for 6-8 weeks, are referred to the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT). The IAT team consists of parents/guardians, classroom teachers, intervention specialists, school psychologist, school counselor, related services, and a district representative to formulate a plan for the next steps. Notes are taken on the student's educational background, medical information, strengths, and concerns. Progress monitoring data collected during the RtI process is also discussed. Based on the information presented at the meeting, the team then decides on the following options: Progress has been made, no need to schedule a follow-up meeting; Implement a new intervention plan for 6-8 weeks and re-meet to review the results; or Tier 1, 2, and 3 supports have not been effective, refer for evaluation.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

To meet the needs of students performing above grade level, Crosby Elementary has several programs in place. During our grade-level RtI time these students receive enrichment opportunities four to five days per week. Our goal is 1.5 years growth for all students. Programs used during RtI to meet the needs of these students are Primary Enrichment Thinking Skills, Defined STEM projects, computer coding, and novel studies. In addition to providing these students with enrichment opportunities, Crosby teachers who work with students identified as gifted have taken the required professional development hours to ensure we are using the most effective instructional practices to support students performing above grade level. Our students performing above grade level receive differentiated instruction, materials, and homework intended to challenge them. Many of our after-school programs are also geared toward our students performing above grade level. Last year, students were invited to participate in an after-school engineering program that was funded by Crosby for the first semester. This engineering program was also offered during the second semester for students who wanted to continue. At Crosby, we place a strong focus on challenging students and providing enrichment opportunities for students performing above grade level.

### **3c. Special education**

Crosby's special education department consists of two instructional specialists (IS), a speech pathologist, two occupational therapists, and a physical therapist. Crosby Elementary implements an inclusion model and considers multiple factors when determining the least restrictive environment for students identified with disabilities. Everyone in our special education department works closely with the classroom teachers to provide the best strategies and resources for our students. The ISs and grade level teachers have a weekly common plan time to create lessons to meet every student's needs. The collaborative planning time affords the IS and general education teachers to allow for seamless co-teaching opportunities. This co-teaching has a positive impact on the learning of students, but also the teachers as colleagues. Sometimes the instruction our students need cannot be fulfilled in the general classroom. Teachers and ISs are in constant communication to decide when students are able to be included in the general education classroom and when they need to be pulled out for specialized instruction. This combination of inclusion and pull-out promotes the success of students. In addition to providing support in the classroom, ISs also pull students to work on their individual Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals. Students on an IEP not only receive their Specially Designed Instruction time, and general classroom support, but they are also included in our building wide RtI program described below.

Our ISs are also heavily involved in our IAT process. They attend meetings to help brainstorm Tier 1 and 2 interventions for teachers. When students show little or no progress with Tier 1 and Tier 2 classroom interventions, our ISs implement Tier 3 interventions to help collect more data on whether a student may have a suspected disability.

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

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

To meet the diverse learning needs of our students, teachers utilize the Response to Intervention model (RtI), which allows the differentiation of instruction. The first step in our RtI Process is to collect baseline data by using a variety of assessments. The Kindergarten Reading Assessment (KRA) is given to all kindergarten students at the beginning of the year. This assessment includes ways for our teachers to measure a child's readiness for engaging with instruction aligned to the kindergarten standards. Students in first through fifth grade take the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) assessment in reading and math. This benchmark assessment allows teachers to screen student achievement in the Fall, Winter, and Spring, with the end goal being a year and a half of growth for all students. Additionally, students in kindergarten through second grade take a variety of assessments using AIMSweb. These assessments give our teachers the necessary data to implement flexible grouping within the RtI groups.

In first and second grade, students receive 45 minutes of RtI, 5 days a week. Classroom teachers, ISs and RtI aides allow small groups to be formed so that students can receive intense intervention at their individual

level. Teachers in grades 3-5 provide intervention to their students through skill building activities that are tiered to students' individual needs. Classroom teachers and ISs review progress monitoring data during weekly grade level meetings, so that students can move to the appropriate group as soon as they are ready.

The district's instructional coach, principal, ISs, and classroom teachers also meet four times a year to analyze progress monitoring data. These meetings are designed to evaluate the quality of the programs being used as well as identify students who may need additional support or enrichment.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

This year, our school has embraced a new character education program titled Random Acts of Kindness. This program has greatly impacted students and staff alike, adding to the positive vibe you feel upon entering Crosby Elementary. Each month, a new character trait is introduced to students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Our grade level content may vary academically, but socially we are all working on the same big ideas covering such words as respect, kindness, inclusiveness, integrity, responsibility and courage. Our principal hosts monthly assemblies for primary and intermediate grades. These presentations feature videos, songs, books and more. Throughout the month, teachers present related lessons and activities within their own classrooms. Primary classes sometimes buddy up with intermediate classrooms for special projects. This is a mutually beneficial approach, as both the younger and older students work collaboratively to complete tasks. This also helps foster an overall team approach to learning at Crosby. Students earn tickets for living out these concepts each day. Tickets are collected for a Wall of Fame. Weekly, we have drawings for small prizes and kids from each classroom are randomly chosen. This maintains momentum and helps kids focus on the monthly concept. At the end of each month, students vote on a classroom peer who best exemplifies that trait. Those peers attend a pancake breakfast where our principal, secretary and “special guests” reward the kids. Having all students learning about and modeling these key behaviors creates a positive learning environment and supports students’ social and emotional growth. This program exemplifies the lifelong character traits we hope to instill in our students for today and the future.

We also offer two big academic challenges at Crosby each year. One is the Holiday Reading Challenge in which students record the number of minutes spent reading at home. Those who meet or exceed our goal celebrate during a “Hot Cocoa and Donuts” morning. In the summer, we urge students to continue learning by offering our Summer Stretch program. The goal is to keep targeted students engaged in meaningful learning and especially keep them reading over the summer. Both programs are greatly successful here at Crosby, and we are proud that our students take ownership for their learning year-round.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Crosby Elementary prides itself on the strong bond between home, school, and community. All stakeholders work together to support each other in creating a caring and nurturing environment.

The Crosby Parent and Teacher Association plays an instrumental part in the school's success. The association holds several fundraisers to provide teachers with supplies for their classroom, send students on field trips, and bring in special programs offered by the Cincinnati Zoo and Children’s Theater. The PTA also consists of many sub committees. The Hospitality committee feeds teachers on conference nights, arranges appreciation gifts, and provides refreshments for events throughout the year. The Student Care committee provides clothing, shoes, and lice kits to students in need.

As a school we feel honored to have partnerships with our community to fulfill needs of our students. In 2019 we partnered with the Freestore Foodbank to provide for the food insecure. This organization supplies us with weekend food packs to give to our neediest families. In November, we work with Crosby Senior Center as well as Miamitown Church of Christ to help fulfill our students Christmas wishes. We coordinate clothing and shoe sizes, special interests, etc. with the families and pass along the information to our sponsors. Community members including teachers shop for students and wrap gifts to make sure their Christmas morning is extra special. Church on Fire is another local church who plays a major role in the holiday season for our school. They bring over 30 volunteers to our school and host a seasonal event for our students. They bring Santa, snow, compassion and love to our students. They go above and beyond to give all 500+ students a gift to open as well. Seeing our community come together for these events is truly amazing.

Communication is a key part in engaging our families and keeping them connected. We start each year with an open house to meet teachers and review curriculum, procedures and expectations. Our staff prepares

weekly emails and newsletters to help inform families of upcoming events. Teachers also use texting apps to keep families in the loop as well as Progressbook for grade management. Parent/teacher conferences are held four times a year but families are encouraged to schedule a meeting at any time throughout the year.

Crosby Elementary sees the importance of celebrating our victories. Families are invited to join in award ceremonies to see their child recognized for their accomplishments. In May, we also welcome former students back to walk our halls. Current Crosby students line the halls clapping with excitement to congratulate the soon to be high school graduates.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Professional learning and growth is of the utmost importance at Crosby Elementary. Teachers understand that education is an ever-evolving field, and make it a priority to develop themselves and their teaching practices. Professional development (PD) is provided both by the Southwest Local School District (SLSD), outside personnel, and by Crosby Elementary staff members.

The entire SLSD staff receives two days of inservice training at the beginning of each school year. District-wide data is broken down by building, grade level, and classroom so staff members can hone in on specific strengths and areas of improvement. Small group sessions that focus on innovations in instruction are held so that teachers can strengthen and improve their teaching practices to increase student achievement. Topics for these sessions are often based on the results of informal needs assessments and in areas that staff members feel that they need further support and training. Teachers are then encouraged to attend sessions that best fit their own instructional needs.

Several Crosby Elementary teachers serve on district Math and English Language Arts (ELA) committees. These committees selected new curricular programs for both subject areas. They also met throughout the summer to deconstruct state standards in their respective grade levels and create curriculum maps that ensure the new curricula meet and extend all standards.

Collaboration is key to effective learning, for both students and adults. Our teachers understand the power of learning from each other. Crosby Elementary teachers meet weekly to analyze data, plan instruction, and share best practices. These regular meetings allow teams to share insights, successes, or concerns. Teachers also meet regularly with district Math, English Language Arts, and Technology coaches to further their understanding and expertise in each area. These coaches provide invaluable knowledge and support as teachers and staff members work to improve their skill set.

Staff members at Crosby Elementary understand that teaching and learning is a fluid process and that improvement is always possible. Teachers participate in book studies and graduate level college courses focusing on best practices for gifted students. Staff also participated in an inservice focusing on trauma-informed strategies to better understand how to identify, encourage, and support students that experienced trauma. Crosby also uses “in-house” master teachers to support learning and to share proven techniques, strategies, and programs to help better serve all students.

At Crosby, all staff members are dedicated to holding ourselves to a higher standard in order to provide the best education possible for all of our students. With a variety of professional development opportunities, we believe we accomplish this goal.

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

At Crosby Elementary, leadership is not solely the responsibility of administrators. Instead, it is a vital role shared between building administrators, teachers, support staff members, students, and families. The principal of Crosby Elementary understands that teachers are highly-trained professionals that know what is best for the students in their class, and allows them the freedom to meet their students’ needs in the ways that best serve them. The principal performs a multitude of administrative duties while also working collegially with staff members to support and champion their efforts. The focus of the principal's efforts is to improve teacher effectiveness by building on their strengths.

Crosby Elementary teachers and staff members willingly serve on district committees that analyze grade-level standards, construct curriculum maps, and work to adopt new curricula. They act as liaisons between the principal, superintendent, parents and families, and the community. Teachers also comprise the building Response to Intervention (RtI) Team, and analyze data to best determine the next steps for students that require extra interventions or enrichment. The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Team, composed of teachers and the principal, worked throughout the summer to identify important character traits that would serve as the main focus for Crosby's character development the following year. They also developed a plan to teach these traits, and recognize students who exemplify them. Teachers also lead by example by presenting at staff meetings, district inservices, and local professional development workshops.

Students are recognized as integral parts of our building leadership team and are included in crucial roles such as the Fifth Grade Ambassadors, which runs the schools' recycling program and participates in morning announcements. They work with parent volunteers to assemble weekend snack packs for underprivileged students, and set up the school carnival in the spring. Younger students also take on leadership roles at Crosby. Primary-aged students participate in a Leadership Lunch Bunch with teachers, and MAD Kids works with staff members to use their leadership skills to help the community. The principal values student input and holds meetings with the Student Advisory Council, a group of students from all grade levels, to give feedback on Crosby's strengths and what they viewed as areas for improvement.

The culture of Crosby Elementary centers on student-achievement, while also supporting students' social-emotional wellbeing. By working hard now to instill a love of learning in all stakeholders, our leaders cultivate lifelong learners and prepare them to take on various leadership roles on a much larger scale in the future.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Collaboration is believed to be responsible for Crosby Elementary's success. Staff, students, families, and the community collaborate with vigor and a common purpose.

Since 1951, Crosby has always had an extremely strong connection to our families and community. We bridge the gap between home and school by welcoming families the first moment they walk through the door. Our friendly office staff knows every student and family member by name. The staff and PTA come together to host Camp Cougar, a one-day event for new families to visit the school, meet teachers, and participate in activities with other new families. For over 40 years, our PTA's main fundraiser has been the Ham and Turkey Dinner, which has since evolved into the Crosby Carnival. This annual event brings families together and is run by volunteers including teachers, parents, grandparents, students, and former students. Crosby families are very supportive of academics as well. Annually, we have approximately 50 parent and community volunteers that come in to work with students individually or in small groups. Family members are also encouraged to participate in our everyday school lives and are considered our partners. Whether they are eating lunch with their child, volunteering in the classroom, or attending special events, our school-home relationship is strengthened.

Crosby has a strong partnership with our local churches through a program called "This City, His City." This program brings our school and community together to meet students' needs including food, school supplies, clothing, shoes, tutoring services and mental health supports. Local churches also combine forces to provide an after-school club for students who want to grow spiritually. Whenever we face challenging circumstances, the churches are often the first community to step up with the resources needed to help overcome the obstacle.

Certified staff collaborates weekly with their grade levels to discuss both academic and social needs of their students. They discuss ways to integrate research-based instruction and make data-driven decisions for deliberate student progress monitoring. Grade level teams also join forces with our district and county instructional coaches to brainstorm ways to support high and low performing students, as well as ways to implement new curriculum resources. Certified and classified staff unite to provide social growth opportunities for students such as Lego Club, Crosby Carnival, and participation in Muscular Dystrophy fundraising.

Crosby Elementary is successful because of the collaboration between staff, students, families, and community members. This is the foundation upon which we have built our school.