

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 24 Todd Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Wolcott State CT Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 06716-2821

County New Haven County

Telephone (203) 879-8146 Fax (203) 879-8148

Web site/URL https://frisbie.wolcottps.org/ E-mail kmurtaugh1@wolcottps.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Anthony Gasper E-mail agasper@wolcottps.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Wolcott School District Tel. (203) 879-8183

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

Date _____

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

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

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	16	16	32
1	26	20	46
2	16	22	38
3	33	22	55
4	21	27	48
5	25	24	49
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	137	131	268

*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
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 80 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 4%

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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	278
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Dari, Mandarin, Albanian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Russian, Spanish, Macedonian, Turkish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31 %
 Total number students who qualify: 82

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %
47 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>5</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay | <u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	14
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
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 19:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	96%	97%
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 2020.

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.

The mission is to promote the academic, social, and emotional development of all students to become contributing members of the global community.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

On September 9th, Frisbie opened it's doors to our students in a hybrid model providing in-person learning four days a week with each cohort attending two days. Wednesdays continue to be FLEX days providing students with 90 minutes of synchronous learning remote learning while the other time is devoted to asynchronous learning activities. These days provide teachers the opportunity to check in with the distance learners and prepare learning materials. Our teachers are using webcams to provide instruction to the in-person learners as well as the students who have chosen to be remote learners during this pandemic. We welcomed back our Frisbie scholars for a full-attendance model from October 5th through November 19th. Due to COVID numbers in our surrounding area, we moved to a remote learning model through December 11th. On December 14th, Frisbie School followed a hybrid model providing in-person learning four days a week with each cohort having two days of in-person learning. The Frisbie staff was excited to begin 2021 with a full attendance in-person learning model with Wednesdays continuing to be FLEX days, a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. On March 10th, we moved to five days of in-person learning while Wednesdays follow a shortened day schedule.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

Our Frisbie community is one that is supportive of others. The majority of our families are working families where some even work more than one job. Our staff has always found the importance of teaching the students about giving back to others. Each month one grade level participates in a community service project of their choice. In just two days this year, we collected over 500 canned goods to help fill the shelves of our town's food pantry. Our school community came together to support many other worthy causes during the holiday season, such as PJ day for patients at our local children's hospital and Toys for Tots for our local children. We also partnered with the HeroBox organization to send items to 14 deployed service members. During the spring of 2020, teacher volunteers continued the tradition of planting flowers at the local nursing home as the students couldn't participate in this event due to the pandemic. Also, during this COVID teachers delivered packets to student houses so students would have the proper materials to complete assignments. In May, teachers gathered to parade around Wolcott in decorated cars with encouraging words. Our staff made a route map so that we drove by every student house to show our love and support during the pandemic. It was great to see the smiling faces of our Frisbie students and let them know how much we have missed them.

Students in all grade levels have been using the "Bee a Problem Solver" tree created by the Frisbie teachers to solve real world math problems for the past four years. Our staff created a visual aid to identify five kid-friendly steps to problem solving, identifying the problem, make a plan, try it, critique your work, and fix mistakes. An area of weakness for the students was step four, critique your work, so members of our data team created three rules to guide students-Be Helpful, Be Respectful, and Be Specific. Teachers used solve and shares to model the process and then students used accountable talk to critique problems. This language was also transferred to writing where students used it to critique writing pieces. Later, teachers created a problem solving rubric to guide students toward grade level expectations. During learning walks, a "look for" was to identify how teachers are using different components of the tree in the content areas. In math data teams, teachers critiqued student work as a way to determine whether the students grasped the material and where the instruction should go next.

i-Ready online assessments are used to monitor student growth and to determine next steps for instruction. A reading and math assessment is given to each student three times a year to pinpoint student strengths and areas for growth. During grade level and school data teams, teachers analyze this actionable data to drive instruction and create rigorous tasks. In technology class, students graph their results to track their progress. That is one of the tools that informs our instructional grouping.

The faculty and staff believe in the philosophy of teaching the "whole child". One step in improving our school climate is through team building activities with staff and students. These activities take place throughout the school year to develop and foster skills in communication, problem solving, and socialization. Three years ago, our staff found that more students were using devices, such as phones and video games, to communicate with their peers at home and this lack of verbal communication was transferred into the classroom. To address this, our school has made the social and emotional well-being of our students a top priority. From Wolcott's Vision of a Graduate, Frisbie focused on perseverance in the face of adversity and challenge. Classroom teachers used Breakout Kits to transfer learning into the classroom while also working on how to communicate with one another towards a common goal. In addition, our school climate team compiled hands-on activities where students could use their oral communication skills.

After teachers identified the essential skills of cooperation, collaboration, and creativity, a student survey was created to track their growth in these areas. The following year, every student and staff member attended a trip to Camp Sloper where they participated in a variety of activities that required students to work together to complete multi-step tasks. One of the favorite activities was the lower ropes course where they listened to their peers' advice while navigating the obstacles. At a School Climate Team meeting, student reflections were shared with the team along with survey results.

Due to COVID, we needed to rethink how we could still implement team building while following proper

health and safety procedures. Therefore, Camp Sloper instructors came to Frisbie to provide socially distant team building activities outside. Also, many teachers have chosen to utilize the on-line platform for the Break-Out Kits to provide students with rigorous tasks while giving them an opportunity to work on their communication skills.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Reading and writing standards are addressed by following the district curriculum plan, which aligns to the Common Core Standards with a progression that meets the needs of our students. Daily explicit teacher-led instruction with frequent opportunities for student responses progresses into student centered activities to promote discourse and engagement. Guided reading is another key instructional strategy used throughout the grade levels as the teacher meets with small groups at their instructional level based on F&P assessments, running records, and IReady diagnostic scores. Providing students with independent differentiated work allows teachers to respond to the varying learning needs of the diverse students in the classroom while providing corrective feedback. End of unit activities, exit tickets, running records, and anecdotal notes help guide teacher whole and small group instruction while providing flexible grouping. During COVID, online formats, such as RazKids, Reading A to Z, and Newsela, are being utilized to provide guided reading material while online breakout rooms allow collaborative opportunities for students as well as for teachers to provide targeted instruction in small groups. While remote learning, assessments were changed into Google platforms for easy access for students. After vertical collaboration meetings, the curriculum sequence was adjusted to address the standards and gaps of online learning from March, such as word study, phonemic awareness, and reading comprehension.

When remote learning, teachers kept their virtual format similar to in-person learning to provide the necessary daily instruction. Due to current health guidelines, the in-person lessons are more teacher centered as students are not able to work in partners or small groups. We are hopeful that soon we will be able to move back to a more student centered approach to learning.

Tiered intervention is provided to students who are not meeting grade level standards in math and reading. When moving students through tiers, students are progress monitored to keep track of their growth and move throughout the tiers based on the data. Along with unit assessments, IReady standards mastery tests on the computer are given periodically to students on a concept to plan for future instruction. IReady diagnostic online assessments in reading and math are given three times a year to analyze student and school performance in major domains were kept consistent no matter what format during the pandemic. This is another data point to help plan individualized instruction, reteach standards not mastered, as well determine focus areas for school growth.

Frisbie school's math core curriculum follows the scope and sequence outlined by the Common Core State Standards Initiative. Teachers are constantly having students work in flexible groups to share their mathematical thinking so students can learn from one another and prove to students that there are more than one way to approach a problem. Utilizing a hands on approach using manipulatives and visual representations especially helps students comprehend the abstract concepts and solve problems. Exit tickets are used frequently to check for student understanding and plan for instruction. In addition to unit assessments, performance tasks are another tool teachers use to challenge students' critical thinking and problem solving skills. Due to the effects of the pandemic, curriculum guidelines were adapted to first address student gaps in learning due to loss of instructional time experienced at the end of the 19-20 academic year. Teachers have adjusted their teaching style and have created new materials and resources to adapt to in person and remote learning. To further support student progress, Iready, Happy Numbers, IXL, Moby Max, Envisions/Savas are all programs utilized to keep students engaged in learning. Along with online learning resources, teachers also use the Google Suite technology to deliver live interactive lessons and post assignments to remote learners daily while also using breakout rooms for students to continue to work together to solve mathematical problems.

Assessments have also been adapted for remote learners. Teachers utilize resources such as web cams, scanners, google forms, Kami, and programs such as Envisions, Moby Max and Iready to assess at home learners and to gather information to effectively drive instruction. These assessments afford teachers the opportunity to analyze student performance and modify lessons appropriately to address student needs.

Since March 2020, teachers changed and adjusted the way lessons are created and delivered. With restricted
NBRS 2021

use of manipulatives and a ban on group work and collaborative learning, math instruction in the classroom looks very different. To follow new regulations set forth due to the pandemic, teachers and students have relied heavily on technology and have therefore learned how to navigate through technology more confidently. Some changes in teaching from March of 2020 include Live and interactive virtual lessons occurring daily, lessons and materials created are adapted to service virtual learners as well as in school learners, and an increased use of google suite and technology based assessments.

Our science curriculum is written around the Next Generation Science Standards. The scope and sequence of the activities are guided by the curriculum plan and carried out by teachers who continually make decisions based on student need. Teachers have aligned their teaching approaches, resources, and tasks to develop student knowledge to explain a phenomenon. Through questions, readings, and exploration, students develop their explanations for this phenomenon. When assessing the students, teachers use performance tasks, student journals, and open-ended questions, which are embedded throughout each unit of study. These ongoing assessments are used to obtain information about student learning that can inform future instruction and provide feedback to students. Due to COVID restrictions, students have not been able to participate in as many hands-on activities, such as working collaboratively to build a model of a molecule. Teachers have been able to demonstrate experiments or create the models with student input. The district utilizes a subscription to Generation Genius, an interactive tool that brings school science standards to life through engaging educational videos paired with lessons, activities, and assessments.

Students use historical thinking skills to develop an understanding of historical periods, issues and trends in US history, world history, Connecticut history, local history and the lasting impacts. The scope and sequence of the activities are guided by frameworks connected to the CT Core standards. We are currently investigating and rewriting curriculum K-12 in these frameworks that includes diversity, tolerance, and acceptance. When assessing the students, teachers use performance tasks, student journals, and open-ended questions, which are embedded throughout each unit of study. These ongoing assessments are used to obtain information about student learning that can inform future instruction and provide feedback to students. During COVID, students have been able to access the curriculum on-line and teachers utilized Google forms and slideshow presentations to evaluate student learning.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All of our students in grades kindergarten through fifth are provided with forty-five minutes of music, art, and technology instruction a week that follow our state and national standards. These instructional services have continued to be implemented during this pandemic. For our remote learners, teachers stream their lessons so those students can be provided the same opportunities as the in-person students.

For the younger students, technology lessons have focused around how to log into various programs and navigate the technology platforms, while the instruction in the upper elementary grades have focused on how to use Kami to manipulate PDF documents, use Google Classroom, and create presentations to share their knowledge with their peers. Also, students in grades kindergarten through five learn computer programming in a creative way by programming how to get various characters through a series of mazes. Students work at their own pace using problem solving skills, logic, and computational skills while developing their computer science skills.

Music has taken on a new form with the COVID pandemic as regulations are in place about singing. Therefore, our music lessons have become more focused on music appreciation(different styles of music, music notes, and information about different composers). As the arts are a great avenue for many students,

we have been strategic in being able to continue to offer instrumental lessons virtually to our fourth and fifth grade students. Our band teacher meets with individuals and groups of students at similar ability levels to keep the music alive at Frisbie.

The ninety minutes of PE classes each week provide students with physical activity, meaningful content, and ongoing assessment. The goal is that the skills and knowledge obtained will help students establish a healthy and active lifestyle into their adulthood. Ample opportunities for team sports have been afforded to our students in past years as it teaches students teamwork and social engagement. With COVID, we have had to focus on personal physical fitness and nutrition lessons to adhere to safety guidelines. Utilizing mindfulness and yoga videos has been helpful in becoming more aware of their thoughts and surroundings.

Each year in October, we kick off the Look for the Good Campaign where the focus is being grateful. Throughout the first weeks, students write what they are grateful for on sticky notes and add them to our school gratitude wall. Also, students write You Matter letters to friends or relatives letting them know how important they are. Visuals throughout the school remind students that gratefulness should be continued throughout the year. This year the program focused more on self-awareness and self-management. During COVID, we have adapted this program to include slideshows and discussions to focus on student emotions.

3. Academic Supports:

Frisbie School has various ways to tailor instruction, intervention, and assessments to meet the needs of our learners. In the beginning of the year at instructional data meetings, grade level teachers and interventionists share historical and current scores as well as anecdotal notes on student performance. For example, our grade four teachers and the reading specialist meet to discuss SBAC scores, I-Ready scores, classroom performance, and work samples, to determine if more targeted instruction is warranted. Conversations at the meetings are centered around identifying students who require tiered support and determining student goals while also identifying the adult actions that will occur in the classroom. These weekly data meetings serve as continuous structured collaboration between stakeholders to analyze instructional strategies and student outcomes. While using a common rubric, teachers devoted time to collaboratively grade these creative pieces. Teacher discussions helped to clarify the rubric language and minimize teacher variation in grading.

During the year, our early intervention team, which consists of the special education teacher, reading specialist, math interventionist, principal, and grade level teacher meet to review student academic and behavioral progress to determine if students are responding to interventions. Decisions are made whether to move forward with special education testing or move to more intense tiered instruction.

If students are not responding to intervention, then students are referred to the planning and placement team to determine if there is an area of disability. Specialized instruction is given to students whose needs can't be met by the traditional classroom environment and services. The use of classroom performance, observations, and evaluations allows the service providers to create goals that meet the needs of our learners. Collaboration between all service providers and parents are focused around the modifications the child needs to meet the individualized goals. Students who require accommodations in order to access curriculum are referred to a 504 team where their individualized needs will be planned for.

The goal of Frisbie's Project Explore program is to maximize the development of academically gifted learners by providing diverse, appropriate, and ongoing learning experiences that incorporate both their educational and social/emotional needs. This is accomplished by facilitating the exploration and development of their individual areas of interest and/or talent as well as leadership abilities. Students engage in problem-based learning experiences which are tied directly to their

interests. Currently our high ability students are working with children in Nigeria to investigate the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and take actions towards solutions.

Our English Language Learners are seen by our district EL teacher. Every student has a Language Development Plan with individual goals that are created by examining what level the student is on in regards to the Connecticut English Language Proficiency (CELP) Standards. For example, students in Kindergarten might have a goal to orally retell a simple sequence of events from an experience or a familiar story with a beginning, middle and end. To incorporate SEL and vocabulary this year, our EL teacher has been using Yale's Mood Meter to check in with students' feelings and expand vocabulary. Assistance is provided for these students during assessments if they need any clarification with the directions or content.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our Frisbie community has participated in The Great Kindness Challenge. The Great Kindness Challenge is one week of proactive and positive bullying prevention initiative that improves school climate and increases student engagement. The student council members designed a bingo board that challenged students to participate in various acts of kindness from picking up the trash for others to reading to someone at home throughout the week. Also as part of the challenge, the Frisbie Student Council collected over 600 gently used books to donate to the Wolcott Public Library and collected over 500 items for the St. Vincent DePaul Homeless Shelter. Kindness Week culminated with an assembly recognizing over 20 organizations in town and our volunteers for helping our Frisbie community. Students learned that helping others will ultimately help themselves be a better individual.

From Wolcott's Vision of a Graduate, Frisbie focused on having students set personal goals and implement strategies to achieve them to continue to motivate and engage students in their own learning. Check-ins with their teacher were conducted for progress monitoring and when their goal was achieved a star hung on the bulletin board.

Social emotional learning has been a key focus through the pandemic. Our teachers have been beginning their school day with restorative circles, morning meetings, and read alouds. Read alouds serve as a way for students to make connections to the characters in the story while promoting students to share their feelings. Morning meetings and restorative circles allow students to process through their thoughts and feelings about issues that are on their mind. An online platform, titled Class Dojo, allows our teachers to create a positive learning environment that encourages students by giving them points for skills such as perseverance and participation. To maintain student engagement during remote learning, teachers have utilized breakout rooms for students to work together. These rooms promote students to share their knowledge with their peers while learning from each other.

Frisbie students are completing 3 Act Math Tasks to facilitate deep mathematical thinking. These types of tasks take time and patience from the teachers and the students, but the benefits of the students learning to question, persevere, problem solve, and reason mathematically are instrumental. With a visual to hook the viewer and to peak their curiosity, students share their wonderings and noticings with their peers. Students are given some information after quality classroom discourse and then work in groups to solve the problem and almost always students use different methods to arrive at the same solution. These 3 Act Math Tasks provide an engaging context for the use of mathematics while providing students opportunities to talk about math.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Frisbie Elementary School values the importance of working with families to ensure student success and reaches out to organizations to help promote school improvement. Stem Night was a great evening filled with hands-on science, math, and engineering activities for students and families to complete together. Teachers brainstormed ideas and monitored stations to assist with the innovation activities. One of the families favorite stations was titled Don't Sink My Battleship, where family members used tin foil to create a boat and had a competition on which held the most weight in pennies.

One School One Book has been a successful initiative that has brought together our Frisbie School community, in which the students at all grade levels read the same novel. Frisbie selected a title, *The World According to Humphrey* that can be enjoyed by younger students, but will still captivate and stimulate older children. Also, our school came together as a community of learners to participate in activities that tie in with the book. Every classroom had their own *Humphrey* that visited each child's house throughout the year and students wrote a journal entry about *Humphrey's* adventures with their family. In art class, parent volunteers assisted students in creating their own sock *Humphrey*. This project has continued to build a sense of community among the students, parents, teachers, and staff along with everyone's love for reading.

Our PTO, Parent Teacher Organization, is an integral part of providing opportunities for the students and their families. The PTO provides many positive events, such as teacher grants, cultural activities, and money for field trips all intended to enrich the Frisbie School student experience. The PTO also sponsors a family in need during Thanksgiving and the holiday season. On multiple occasions, our school has partnered with our Wolcott Education Foundation to seek funds to carry out projects that are in need of funding. This local organization has assisted our school with One Book, STEM Night, and teambuilding, to name a few.

Curriculum Night is a parent night held in September for parents to learn about the grade level curriculum. It provides parents ideas of how they can assist their child at home with instructional content, organization, and study habits. Weekly communication through email is provided to parents along with a monthly newsletter to inform parents of the latest happenings in Frisbie School. Also, a page in the community newspaper is devoted to showcasing our students participating in various instructional activities. During COVID, the principal called parents of students who submitted assignments on time and were available for learning and deemed them “Remote Rockstars”. Another avenue of communication has been surveys to gather information about remote and in-person learning. These are just a few of the ways we have worked with families to promote student achievement.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Prior to the COVID pandemic, our school had various structures in place to make teachers feel valued and supported. In the copy room, teachers can place suggestions in a box that then will be brought up at the next faculty advisory meeting with the principal and a representative from the grade levels. Handwritten notes from the principal are placed in staff mailboxes commenting on their professionalism, collaboration, and flexibility throughout the year. For extended after school meetings, the principal provides a treat cart for staff to take something to quench their thirst and fill their stomach. Our School Climate Team, School Data Team, and District Data Team contain stakeholders from all levels that bring their expertise to the table to make decisions that will compliment our school community.

At the beginning of this year, library media specialists from middle and high school provided a tutorial for the staff on technology platforms and subscriptions, including Kami and Screencastify. This session allowed for teachers to ask questions in a judgment free environment about technology and best practices. Also, professional development was provided by our local educational consortium titled Connecting with Disconnected Students. Listening to students' feelings and restating the content of what is heard and labeling the feeling was one key strategy mentioned to help educators connect with those hard to reach students. An informational session was devoted around safety protocols for every staff member to inform them of school health policies and procedures. Also, continued collaboration with other grade levels has been a key component to addressing the gaps students might have from remote learning in the spring of 2020. Teachers have shared with other grade levels what content was covered and the depth of the content compared to previous years. Therefore, teachers can address any areas that might need to be reviewed before new content is taught.

Throughout this school year, we have continued to provide teachers professional development in needed areas, such as the Next Generation Science Standards along with vocabulary development. During FLEX Wednesdays, teachers have had virtual meetings with a curriculum consultant to learn the new standards and topics for their grade level. Also, a consultant from Literacy How has been working with grade level teachers to incorporate more of the vowel house and vocabulary development into daily reading instruction. The structure of our FLEX Wednesdays allow synchronous and asynchronous learning while also providing times for our teachers to make connections with our distance learners. The Frisbie community is very mindful of the stress the pandemic has caused on our educational structure and how we need to support teachers now more than ever.

4. School Leadership:

Frisbie School has one principal that oversees about thirty other staff members, while a head teacher covers for the principal when she is not in the building. Collaboration is key to a strong and successful school.

Focused, meaningful collaboration leads to increased student achievement along while providing students an equitable learning environment. Instructional data teams meet weekly to collaborate on student progress, share resources, and plan next steps for instruction. During this time, teachers and service providers share research-based instructional practices to increase academic achievement. For example, after administering an assessment, the data showed that many students still had difficulty with a fiction summary. Therefore, members discussed how they could take a different approach in teaching this standard and searched for various resources to utilize for instruction.

Data analysis is another critical component in the philosophy of Frisbie School. Our Frisbie School Data Team has eleven staff members and the principal which meet monthly to analyze various data points to improve teaching and learning to support school improvement. At the beginning of each school year, the team meets to develop the school growth goals. We analyze the SBAC and IReady data to prioritize the needs of our school, while also comparing how students have performed from year to year. School-specific targets are identified and the adult actions that include the specific strategies that the teachers will implement to increase student achievement. Progress monitoring data and benchmark assessments drive instructional decisions and resources.

The School Climate team that is composed of grade level teachers and other service providers meet monthly to reflect on policies and procedures to create a safe and supportive learning environment where students have positive relationships with their peers and staff members. Suggestions on how to improve the school climate are discussed by members of the team along with the student representatives that attend portions of the meeting. Actions steps are implemented to strengthen the social well being of the students and staff.

At the beginning of this year, the nurse and principal met to provide teachers with a safety protocol presentation and to address their concerns. The principal worked with teachers to design the setup of the classroom to ensure maximum distancing between students and setup technology for remote learning. Also, resources have been purchased or redistributed to provide students and teachers with instructional materials since students are not sharing tools. In addition, the principal has been in more correspondence with parents to inquire about absenteeism and conduct wellness checks. The nurse, teachers, and administrator are in constant communication about the health and well being of the students.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Our Frisbie community values are centered around respect. During our streamed morning announcements, a student representative begins our day with the pledge of allegiance, sings the Frisbie song, which states we take pride in all we do, and we end the announcements with our Frisbie Pledge, which states respect yourself, respect each other, and respect your school environment. When a staff member sees a student being respectful, a student is given a respect card. That card goes in the honey pot for our weekly drawing, where a student from each grade level is chosen. Frisbie staff and students pride themselves on respect.

One example of how our school celebrates various cultures is each year our third grade students hold a cultural food fair. Students choose a country of their choice, conduct research using a variety of sources, design a presentation board, and make a food that is representative of their country for others to enjoy. Parents are invited into school for this cultural fair and to learn about all of the different countries that are represented.

To create a culturally rich classroom, we continue to use read aloud to build knowledge about different cultures and traditions along with background knowledge about various events. Books such as *The Other Side* and *One Green Apple* are books that help students understand the importance of acceptance. *Scholastic News* is used throughout the grades to provide students with age appropriate information about current events. Our school psychologist and social worker implement diversity lessons throughout the year. Lessons teach students similarities and differences between each other in a realistic way to help students learn to respect themselves and

others. During Black History Month and Women's History month, we highlight people of different races and backgrounds that students can inspire to be and look up to. In restorative circles, students have an opportunity to share out about their culture and traditions while learning about the different cultures of their classmates. Our district is currently looking into professional development for staff members around courageous conversations. We are meeting with our educational consortium to gather more resources on equity and diversity to infuse into our social studies curriculum while also working to develop protocols around having difficult conversations with students. These are just some of the steps we are taking to address the current social movements.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Building relationships with students during these challenging times has been instrumental in our ability to continue to educate our Frisbie students. When beginning our convocation this year, the principal emphasized to teachers that our top priority this school year was the social emotional well being of our students. After being home since March, our priority was to ensure our students feel safe when walking through our school doors. Therefore, a video was made to show our community the new design of the classroom as there were no more desks in groups but rather desks spread apart for social distancing between students and teachers. Also, there were new procedures that were outlined in the video such as health and safety techniques that our students would need to follow daily.

Teachers were asked to create goals this year that encompassed creating a positive learning environment that is responsive and reflective to the needs of our students. Beginning the school day with a morning check in or a connection circle has been imperative to understanding the issues on our young scholars' minds. The circles allow teachers to help students process through their experiences while also understanding their thoughts and feelings. Teachers can begin with a topic or question where students listen closely to what others share and build on their own experiences. Students see themselves as part of the school community where they are safe and valued.

Restorative circles have been a change to the discipline procedure used at Frisbie School. When harm is caused to someone else or a student breaks the rules, a restorative circle provides an opportunity for open dialogue between the students. At this time, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and restore the relationship that has been harmed, rather than receive a punishment.

This initiative has been crucial in the academic success as teachers have created solid relationships with their students. In order to continue to move in this direction, our goal is to empower more teachers with the professional development training in restorative practice.