

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 500 Stockley Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Rehoboth State DE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19971-1846

County Sussex

Telephone (302) 227-2571 Fax (302) 227-5178

Web site/URL  
<https://www.capehenloopenschools.com/site/Default.aspx?PageID=21> E-mail Doris.Person@cape.k12.de.us

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Robert Fulton E-mail Robert.Fulton@cape.k12.de.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Cape Henlopen School District Tel. (302) 645-6686

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 Dr. Alison Myers  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 9 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                     | 30         | 44           | 74          |
| 1                     | 45         | 50           | 95          |
| 2                     | 42         | 50           | 92          |
| 3                     | 56         | 43           | 99          |
| 4                     | 40         | 47           | 87          |
| 5                     | 40         | 45           | 85          |
| 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> | 253        | 279          | 532         |

\*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
  - 10 % Black or African American
  - 15 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 68 % White
  - 4 % 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: 7%

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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year   | 23            |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year | 11            |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]  | 34            |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019   | 516           |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)   | 0.07          |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100  | 7             |

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

Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Vietnamese, Korean, Romanian, and Bulgarian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 14 %  
74 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %

Total number students who qualify: 222

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %  
98 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>14</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>9</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>21</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>39</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: 0
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.

|  | <b>Number of Staff</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| Administrators   | 2                      |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.  | 26                     |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.  | 17                     |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.   | 15                     |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 5                      |

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

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

| <b>Required Information</b> | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 | 2015-2016 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance    | 96%       | 95%       | 94%       | 93%       | 94%       |
| High school graduation rate | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        |

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

| <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.

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

We recognize and emphasize the academic achievements, individual diversity, and social well-being of all students.

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.

We are offering both an in-person and remote learning model to our families. Most chose in-person in a preference survey last August (67% in-person and 33% remote). Following the Center for Disease Control spacing guidelines, class sizes were limited to a maximum of 16 or 17 students.

The in-person students attend five days a week from 8:55 a.m. to 4 p.m. Our remote learning teachers report to the building and conduct their classes five days a week as well. We offer live streaming classes to students in our Cape Acceleration Program (CAP), our Intensive Learning Center (ILC), and our K-2 Spanish Immersion classes. Previously, we had three remote Immersion teachers instructing the remote Spanish classes. We moved to live streaming all K-2 Spanish Immersion classes in January after witnessing the success of the format in Grade 3 Immersion classes at another school in the district.

In October, we evaluated opportunities for more students to return to classes that did not have maximum capacity and invited students on a waiting list to return. We extended invitations again in November maximizing all classrooms except Spanish Immersion. In January, our one remote kindergarten class became an in-person class.

After Spring Break, we will begin live streaming the previously remote second, fourth, and fifth grade classes, resulting in at least 30 more students returning.

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**

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Rehoboth Elementary School is one of five elementary schools in the Cape Henlopen School District. Our student population encompasses the three towns of Dewey Beach, Rehoboth Beach, and parts of Lewes, Delaware. Until 2019, the school was located directly in front of Silver Lake, where multiple generations of students have fed the turtles on Turtle Bridge, had picnics on the lawn, and in early years ice-skated on the frozen lake. The school has had numerous grade level formations including K-8, K-6, and now K-5. Students walked from the K-1 building to participate in Related Arts and any school-wide assemblies in the auditorium. We are now able to maximize our teaching and learning in one space.

Rehoboth Elementary School's brick and mortar buildings may have changed recently, but the school that bears a legacy of heart and soul in the Rehoboth Beach area did not. The new building opened in September 2019 on the same grounds as its previous K-1 and 2-5 buildings, but the caring and nurturing mission to enrich the learning of all students never missed a beat. In March 2020, the doors closed suddenly until June, but the mission to enrich the lives of our students did not stop. Within weeks, we learned new technology; provided technology to our students; organized supply distributions; and listened to and watched via Zoom our students bear their souls as never before. Since mid-September 2020, the school doors have been open five days a week to as many students who desired in August to return to a building.

Rehoboth Elementary School's mission is reflective of our Cape Henlopen School District's mission and goals. "The Cape Henlopen School District celebrates the diversity of our students, staff, and community. We cultivate compassionate and innovative thinkers by providing every student with a welcoming, safe, equitable school community that is affirming and inclusive."

It is the mission of Rehoboth Elementary School to be flexible and innovative through the use of technology and the integration of research-based curriculum and our current state standards. We recognize and emphasize the academic achievements, individual diversity, and social well-being of all students. We remind ourselves (students and staff) of this mission with a daily pledge: We will be responsible, respectful, safe, and show excellence in everything we do. We celebrate one another for honoring the pledge with weekly student recognition and monthly staff recognition with a goal of having everyone recognized by the end of the school year.

We have outstanding community involvement to foster optimal learning and support for our students. Pre-COVID-19, over 60 mentors volunteered weekly for one-on-one instruction with our most vulnerable students. Numerous companies visit our classrooms and exchange real-world lessons about the environment, the economy, healthcare, community service, etc. We encourage our students to make practical applications of classroom knowledge. This has resulted in students making Chamber of Commerce presentations, winning youth environmental awards, and school-wide improvements such as no straws in the cafeteria. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is committed to supporting students and teachers. They work closely with our positive behavior support team to bring culturally relevant and best practice assemblies to our students. They provide no-cost activities to bring families together for dining or viewing experiences at the school.

The professional and personal expectations to provide a personal, targeted high-quality learning experience for all students is non-negotiable. Weekly coaching and collaborative professional learning communities (PLCs) provide exemplary learning and sharing opportunities for teacher -to-teacher connections. Our commitment to educational excellence over the years has resulted in numerous recognition opportunities from the Delaware Department of Education. We were honored to receive the National ESEA Distinguished and Recognition School Award in 2019.

Our school has programs that enrich the education of our students including a leadership team, an annual musical production, an art docent program, a recycling team, a male support group, Odyssey of the Mind, a running program, and a former after- school partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. Our positive behavior support program (PBS) and the Leader -In -Me teams work in collaboration to provide school-wide monthly activities celebrating our positive school culture.



The key strategies used in Rehoboth Elementary School are aligned with our district's strategic goals. Our first strategy is providing a supportive and healthy school climate so that students feel welcome, safe, and affirmed. We begin our day with a school-wide morning announcement focusing on character education led by a student leader. We have been trained and for the past five years have used restorative practices in all of our aspects of our school day. Students participate in morning meetings to learn about one another and to address any harm. We learned strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom and learned about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and the importance of relationships and our beliefs systems. During the COVID -19, we are aware of a greater need to connect with families. Presently, we are conducting independent work (Choice Boards) to learn even more about how our tone, gestures, and comments impact students, in addition to how our policies may hinder families.

Our second strategy is to achieve academic excellence by appropriately challenging and supporting all students. We implement to the standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment with fidelity. We offer an acceleration class for fourth and fifth graders. The Spanish Immersion Program will expand to Grade 3 next year. We have invested in three high quality instructional programs resulting in student success. We have chosen a reading framework that is inclusive of diverse populations and multi-tiered learning abilities. Our instructional team has data meetings (data days) to view and analyze student data for support plans and interventions to increase student growth.

The third strategy is to ensure that all students have access to and are included in their grade level standards in a setting appropriate for their needs. We have a problem-solving team that meets weekly to address social-emotional, behavioral, and academic concerns. Our positive behavior support program (PBS) and the Leader -In -Me teams work in collaboratively to provide school-wide monthly activities celebrating our positive school culture.

Rehoboth Empowers Dreams (RED), which ended in 2019, provided students and families with a variety of activities to connect families, the school, and the local community. Students attended field trips in the community to visit local businesses and learn about career opportunities in their hometowns. Parents were invited to multiple showcases throughout the year where they could explore their child's success from the program, as well as access parent resources and connect with the club leaders and staff. The EL teacher was able to connect with our non-English speaking families and provided them with support and learning opportunities while their children attended the program. At the end of RED, surveys were distributed to reflect on our achievement in connecting the students, parents, and staff. We plan to apply for this 21st-century grant when it opens again.

The move to the new school, the sudden closing of school, and now the hybrid model impacted several of our school programs that are unique to the heart and soul of our school including recycling, male support group, and art docents.

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

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

Rehoboth Elementary School’s high-quality core curriculum selections all contain a digital component that made the curriculum accessible to the teachers and students when the building closed in March 2020. Some aspects of the curriculum provided opportunity for students to have digital access right away (Math) and other aspects such as interactive graphic organizers (ELA) are in developing stages. With district support, we were able to provide an iPad for each student with preloaded learning management systems and any possible programs prior to student distribution.

We strive for a personalized, student centered approach to learning aligned with the Common Core State Standards. We use data/evidence to guide decision-making and planning for professional development. We look for trends, surprising attributes, and gaps for adjustment. Last year, we analyzed data for our African American students with support plans by reviewing successes, challenges, and benefits of the plans, and what we could change in connection to our School Success Plan goals.

We use common assessments and other classroom data to inform and adjust instruction. We use Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) as a learning opportunity to analyze our practice. We conducted PDSAs for writing and supporting claims as evidence after reviewing data. We use on-going formative assessment with feedback tied to the standards.

We address literacy standards through implementation in the content areas of ELA, Science, and Social Studies with a balance of literary and informational texts across the content areas. Students support claims with evidence in writing and speaking. We provide students the opportunity to have a transformative literacy experience by making personal connections and real-world applications through purposeful open-ended frameworks that generate practice and later mastery skills based on Jeffrey Wilhelm’s Inquiry as Cognitive Apprenticeship. We use math and science to teach the standards of mathematical practices.

We want our students to experience reading in a structured and frequent manner, which encompasses reading practice, student conferences (at least once every 10 school days) and reader engagement. Students who are experiencing challenges are met with more frequently. Students read 30 minutes per day in school and families are to read 150 minutes per week. Student goals, conferences, and progress are recorded in a data platform at least bi-weekly to show longitudinal progress. Teachers use specific toolkits to meet the needs in flexible strategic small groups. Each grade level completes four units of high-interest topic research labs, in which the students are viewed as the expert after reading, listening, and discussing a complex text. Students respond to a text-dependent writing prompt using a rubric to score their answers.

Our Science curriculum is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards and revolves around students using systems thinking and modeling to explain phenomena and to give context for the ideas learned. Students write journals, reports, posters, and media presentations to explain and argue. We want our students to question and investigate to gain a deeper understanding of core scientific ideas. We use the formative assessments to boost reading writing, and math connections and overlaps. We follow the Delaware Recommended Curriculum for Social Studies with cross content implementation whenever possible. Teachers follow the scope and sequence and make real world connections to the economic and civic impact of historical events.

We use a variety of assessments throughout math instruction. These range from tips to help teachers elicit student thinking to comprehensive written assessments at the beginning and end of each unit. Unit screeners and pre-assessments help teachers make informed decisions to help students access the content. Teachers analyze the data for flexible grouping or reteaching needs or interventions as well as student collaboration at Work Places. Teachers have a bank of re-engagement activities to help support students who lack the proficiency needed to successfully access the rigor of the units.

Students also use the pre-assessment data to set goals for the learning through the use of reflection sheets. Checkpoints and Checkups help teachers make quick decisions about how to improve student performance

and to look for developing misconceptions. This data helps teachers determine their students' current proficiency and ongoing understandings of the key concepts and skills without waiting until the summative assessment.

Using a math data platform, teachers analyze assessment data through item and/or standards analysis and growth over time with specific standards. In data meetings, teachers analyze pre-assessments, unit checkpoints and post-assessments and develop targeted intervention plans to support students who are struggling. Teachers use assessment data to design enrichment opportunities for students who are proficient or advanced. Assessment data is used to determine how to assign "gap" standards using a supplemental resource.

While students are engaged in Work Places, teachers are provided with observational charts to take notes on what to reteach, provide intervention if needed and challenge students who are ready to go deeper. Teachers make informed on- the- spot decisions about differentiation using the observational assessment tools.

We use our PLC meetings to review, discuss and act on data results for all subjects. When we review common assessments as a team, we ask a series of questions including trends, surprising results and attributions, and what if any adjustments need to be made. We host separate data days to create our response to intervention tiers and to select intervention strategies.

**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:**

Rehoboth Elementary School's Related Arts Program consist of five classes (Art, Library, Physical Education, Music, and Computer) using a daily rotation for all students. During COVID-19 to minimize student movement, we use a weekly rotation and the teachers travel to the classrooms with the exception of gym which is held outside

The art class has been developed to be thematic, cross curricular with an emphasis in cultural diversity, world geography and global awareness. Students experience the world through art. Students not only learn art making techniques using a variety of art media and technology, but they are also encouraged to apply critical thinking and problem- solving skills when creating their art. Rehoboth Elementary School's art is never frivolous. It is always purposeful and meaningful. Students always have the opportunity to make decisions about their art creations and are encouraged to take risks and experiment. Student artwork is also displayed throughout the building. The RES art program is involved in the community. Students have created award-winning pieces in numerous photography and art show exhibits including the Village Improvement Association of Rehoboth Beach, the Dewey Beach Arts Festivals, the Rehoboth Art League Young at Art Shows, and the City of Rehoboth Beach. We have at least two school-wide art shows each year. Our art program offers something for every child. Every child will experience success.

Our music class recognizes and utilizes the talents of all students. Students experience a multicultural history of genres including jazz, pop, classical, and contemporary through movement and instruments such as recorders. Students in the upper grades learn to read notes in preparation for Grade 5 band. We have the only elementary jazz band in Sussex County. The musicians practice outside of class time and perform twice a year. Performances include the local news stations and the Rehoboth Beach Grandstand. This is the 28th year for the Grade 5 Chorus.

The Physical Education class is about a healthy heart, sportsmanship and learning about the history and techniques of various sports units. The Health Smart curriculum is also used. The class has participated in NBRS 2021

the Jump Rope for Heart Challenge and raised thousands of dollars for the American Heart Association for the past 9 years. The teacher is a Champion for students who need extra support by providing a peaceful and fun environment outside of regular gym time to shoot hoops.

The Computer Class facilitates great learning experiences with quality and safe on-line resources. The self-paced learning experiences are presented according to grade and skill level, embrace diversity, and are often available in multiple languages. Students learn how to be safe on the internet, how to be good digital citizens, how to use Calendar to schedule events and plan, how to use Pages and Keynote to create presentations, and how to play Chess and Code to foster creativity, critical thinking skills, and problem solving.

Pre-COVID 19, students were able to collaborate on given assignments, including robotics. RES believes in the power of computer and technology to transform learning.

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

In order to enact equity and inclusion as an integral part of meeting the learning needs of our diverse populations, we use guided decision-making, intentional planning, and data and evidence from our reading and math data platforms.

All of our high-quality curriculum materials provide supplemental tool kits to address the learning of students performing below or above grade level. The reading and/or math specialist collaborate with teachers to determine the best classroom interventions. Teachers keep track of intervention data using an online platform.

We use the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) protocol to identify students who are not meeting grade level academic standards and/or behavioral expectations, and to create action plans to determine how to support the teacher and students. how to take the next steps, and to plan interventions. We create watch lists within the first marking period and develop support plans with interventions. We discuss data during PLCs and/or the Problem- Solving team meetings. We review the watch lists each marking period for celebrations or additions. We use a three-tier intervention system. We have used both models with specialists working with the Tier 3 students and classroom teachers providing the one-on-one or small group instruction.

We designate a special education teacher for each grade level. It was beneficial to have dual-certified teachers when we began offering both remote and in-person learning. Each special education student's case manager is responsible for ensuring that the students receive the services, accommodations, and supports before, during, and after learning activities identified in their individualized education plan (IEP). We carefully evaluate the least restrictive environment for placement and monitor accordingly. Progress monitoring tools are used and shared with parents each marking period. If a student received double N's on a progress report, we have a meeting to discuss and possibly revise the IEP goals. We examine inclusive and non-inclusive practices.

ELL student data from annual ACCESS test scores is analyzed among classroom teachers and the EL teacher at the beginning of each year to provide classroom teachers will background information and students' needs at the start of the year. This allows classroom teachers the opportunity to understand classroom accommodations needed to support the language acquisition.

ELL students meet with the EL teacher several times a week focusing on providing background knowledge, academic language and content language to support students during core instruction. ELL students that are well below grade level are given individualized interventions based on their needs during Tier 2/Tier 3 instruction. Additionally, assignments and assessments are adapted to meet the needs of EL students. Visuals to support questions, shortened assignments, and sentence

framed paragraphs for writing prompts are a few examples of academic adaptations make for EL students.

We closely review our common assessments to identify any trends or patterns for our special education, African- American, and EL populations. We expect our teachers to be prepared with current data platform information during discussion. We create support plans to keep us focused on interventions and resources to ensure equitable opportunities. We want to increase student success without automatically moving to a special education option.

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

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

We are dedicated to being a connection- before -content learning environment. When students enter the building each morning whether from bus or car, they are greeted by at least three staff members before they reach their classroom. It is expected that students know that we see them, and we are there to listen if they have something to say before they reach their teacher. Before the learning begins, there is a school-wide character education focus of the day for all learners. Community circles are held a few times a week. Learning time (whole group, small group, individual learning, and independent work) is maximized with minimum disruption. We tailor interventions. We take the time to acknowledge student success via parent contact and/or school recognition, to connect the learning to student interests, to display fairness and use restorative practices, and to show there is value to learning. We utilize the elementary counselor, social worker, and school psychologist to facilitate with parent permission individual and/or group support for grief, social skills, etc. We sponsor monthly PBS activities to build school community.

On March 12, 2020, we held a red-carpet event for all of our students in celebration of previous state testing success and in preparation for the upcoming testing the next week. Our doors closed March 14th until September, but we made a commitment to keep in touch with as many students as we could within that time. The remainder of the school year, teachers held weekly gatherings with creative activities to keep students engaged and to maintain relationships. We taught reading and math lessons remotely using an adapted curriculum without the grade stipulations. Our counseling team and administrators conducted home and community visits to check on hard-to-reach families. We worked with other agencies to connect families with resources. We had teachers report on any students who were not participating regularly, and we followed-up with a phone call or visit. Our Related Arts teams provided pre-recorded or live lessons for extracurricular interests. Teachers made a commitment to check in with certain students even after June. When the district surveyed parents if they wanted their children to return to school in the Fall, we had 67 percent who wanted to return. We welcomed them on September 14 with confidence and comfort. Since that time, we have welcomed almost 70 more. We have continued the check-in and home visits for remote families.

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

The most successful strategies that Rehoboth Elementary School uses are inclusivity and accessibility. Teachers publish newsletters or weekly postings to inform families of academic happenings. We offer numerous in-school and after-school opportunities for our families including parent-conference nights several times a year, curriculum night, K-5 publishing parties, K-5 art shows, a science fair and two music concerts per year for Grade 5. During these functions parent can see the academic progress of their children or witness the students perform based on their learning. Last year, we began the implementation of student-led conferences in some grades. During COVID 19, we have held the parent conferences, publishing parties, book fair, and science fair virtually. Our music teacher provided a solo winter concert.

We are a school that welcomes partnerships with local non-profit organizations and community-based groups. We have long standing relationships with the community using our facilities for various functions during non-school hours, so our families view our campus as their campus. The YMCA hosts a before/After school program. Our Mentoring program consists of over 60 community volunteers who visit the school weekly to work one-on-one with students. The local fire department provides fire prevention education each year, provides tours of the fire stations, and gives our kindergarten students the ride of their lives on the fire truck. We collaborate with the local library for a summer reading program and learning activities. The Save The Day-partnership with local banks helps students learn to save. Our PTO coordinates the Classroom Community Partner Program in which local businesses and/or families donate \$200 per classroom teacher. We post the name of the sponsor on the classroom door. Our social worker works with several groups to address student and family needs. An organization donates fast-food gift certificates to distribute to families in need or to recognize students. A group donates funds to purchase shoes for students. Another group provides brand-new clothes for students in need. We usually (not in 2020) have 80 plus families participate

in the weekend Backpack program sponsored by the Delaware Food Bank. Two local dentist offices donated toothbrushes and dental education kits this year. We sponsor an Arbor Day with the City of Rehoboth Beach. During COVID-19, organizations and parents have donated masks, thermometers, keyboards, and recess equipment. Our students have also conducted shoe and food drives in the past.

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

Rehoboth Elementary School maintains a family-like environment with very little teacher turnover in the past years. Most of the teachers have worked together for more than 10 years, although they may have changed grade levels. The staff embraces our pledge of respect, responsibility, excellence, and safety. Our staff values communication, shared decision-making, problem-solving, and acknowledgment.

Frequent group and individual check-ins (What do you need? How is it going? How can we help?) occur during staff, school improvement team, PLC meetings, as well as individual encounters. Moreover, teachers are comfortable with approaching administrators with a need, concern, or idea. This has been very evident this year with the re-opening of school with teacher input and reflection regarding self-care, academic pacing, logistics, remote learning participation, and technology use.

During COVID 19, there was an immediate need to support teachers with new technology training (Zoom, SeeSaw, Schoology, etc.). With district support, teachers were provided live and recorded technology sessions based on what they needed or wanted. From mastering new digital tools to troubleshooting technology over Zoom with students and families, our building tech and district instructional specialists worked together to support our professional development plan for remote learning. They continue to meet with our staff both online and in-person to provide training and support with various software and hardware technologies. They publish weekly tech tips called “Tech Tuesdays,” where they offer support in ways to refresh, refocus, and re-engage students in learning.

There was a need to support the staff emotionally as some were directly impacted by COVID 19. We held informal updates via Zoom during the summer. When we returned in August, our school psychologist and social worker coordinated re-entry group sessions for staff. During the winter, teachers were invited to participate in a six-part weekly wellness series before school. We have provided access for confidential counseling support groups outside of school. We provide a regular platform for the school nurse to speak directly with staff regarding COVID 19 concerns and procedures that change from time to time.

All teachers have participated this year in professional development for Leader- In -Me, Racial Literacy, Equity, and Trauma-Informed Teaching in support of our school and district strategic goals.

We support our teachers growing as leaders. Three teachers were recently admitted to the Principal Training Program. We provide professional learning and growth opportunities with the expectation for information to be shared with others when possible. Individual or teacher clusters have participated in additional state or national conferences for English Language Learning, Spanish Immersion, Social Work, School Psychology, reading, physical education, reading and math curriculum, Racial Literacy, and a Women’s Leadership. Some teachers have assumed coordinating roles for cafeteria monitoring, bus arrival and departures, morning announcements, Science Fair, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, etc. Some teachers have roles within the district and community in coaching, minority recruitment, event planning, and the education foundation.

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

Rehoboth Elementary School’s leadership style is purposeful and intentional in setting and reaching our strategic goals of a healthy school climate, educational excellence, and equity for all students and staff.

Our School Success Plan is created, implemented, and monitored regularly by administrators, faculty, and support staff. We use faculty and committee meetings to reflect and redefine if needed. We use specific key performance indicators to evaluate our effectiveness. We have key teams to monitor.

Our School Improvement Team consists of representatives for each grade level, reading and math

specialists, para-educators, the education association building leader, and the special education coordinator. We meet annually to set and review the Success Plan goals, then we meet monthly to monitor the goals including achievement data.

Our school -level CHAT (Cape Henlopen Action Team) meets monthly with the role of monitoring our curriculum and assessments implementation in accordance with district expectations.

The Problem- Solving Team meets weekly to discuss concerns about students inclusive of academics, attendance, wellness, parental support, and social emotional needs. Teachers submit a request after answering a series of questions regarding their efforts to support students. The elementary school counselor facilitates this meeting.

We have the PBS/ Leadership team that oversees the school climate for both students and staff. The social worker and the assistant principal facilitate these monthly meetings. We have a student leadership team that provides feedback on school climate.

The Immersion/EL team meets monthly to discuss learning strategies and to provide ways to incorporate more Spanish into our daily school routines.

Both new administrators served on separate district Re-opening Schools committees (academic and health) that assisted with a safe and positive transition in September. The principal and the nurse have worked closely with monitoring COVID-19 cases. The principal has worked with the remote teachers, the Immersion teachers, and special education teachers to problem solve pacing, scheduling, and classroom support concerns. Both administrators worked with custodial staff to ensure safe distance markings, proper signage, and reconfiguration of space allotments. The assistant principal has worked closely with teachers and parents regarding mask-wearing expectations with the sharing and implementation of the guidelines for mask-wearing training when students have difficulty.

Both administrators have worked closely with the counseling staff to address social-emotional needs of both in-person and remote students. We want our remote students and parents to feel supported as well. During COVID 19, our reading and math specialists were reassigned roles, so the administrators became the facilitators for the weekly professional learning communities. The mutual and critical engagement and feedback from students and staff, and community involvement allow us to positively impact the lives of our students

## **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

We address the diverse backgrounds and needs of students and staff in a variety of ways. For example, we focus on two sub areas which are disproportionality and best practices for instruction. Once we identify the subgroups, we then engage in critical thought using key indicators outlined in our School Success Plan, to develop action plans and next steps.

In order to identify any disproportionalities in number of referrals and students placed in special education, we analyze various data points to determine next steps. For example, we consider six weeks of behavior intervention plan, classroom intervention, and discipline referrals data to create an action plan to provide accommodations, recommendations, and interventions to support student growth and success. We also meet weekly to review MTSS data. At these meetings, we recommend students for special education evaluation, create action plans to support struggling students, and provide guidance for Tier 1 instructional practices to ensure every child is getting what he/she needs.

Best practices are identified and reinforced for the instruction of English Language Learners (EL), special education students, and Spanish Immersion Learners. Our EL teacher provides guidance to increase the skills and confidence of teachers to incorporate strategies through the professional



learning community. For example, we schedule the amount of EL instruction by students' English proficiency level. If ELs are pulled for EL instruction, we do not remove them from whole group instruction.

During Special Education PLCs, our special education coordinator provides training on identifying the existence of inclusive and non-inclusive practices for students with special needs. Data is used to provide accommodations, recommendations, and interventions to promote student growth.

Spanish Immersion teachers are provided opportunities to increase their skills and confidence incorporating the strategies around the Spanish Immersion Program Assurances and "Look for" practices.

We recognize the need to honor and acknowledge the community norms of our culturally diverse population. Whenever possible, we provide our school communications (Alert Now, and important events, etc.) in native languages. Our curriculum partners American Reading Company and Bridges provide resources in Spanish. Students are heterogeneously placed in classrooms. Students are provided diverse cultural experiences through classroom instruction, projects, art, music, library, and assemblies.

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

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Learning resumed five days a week for all students in mid- September. Daily in-person participants begin with a mindset of success while honoring the three Ws (Wash Your Hands. Wear Your Mask. Watch Your Distance.) Each day remote participants begin with a mindset of success while honoring the three Cs (Camera on, iPad Charged, and Calm Body). Each day we begin as ONE (Open to Change, Never Give Up, and Everyone Contributes). Upon entering campus, people see the RES ONE signs, but the culture here is about more than the signs. Open the door, and you will see everyone contributing to the daily learning and social-emotional needs of students and our staff.

Advocacy has been the most instrumental practice in our ability to successfully educate and support students. Although the advocacy focus changed over time, it was always our intent to do what was best for students.

From March to June, teachers made frequent connections and continued classroom circles. We provided iPads to families when requested and offered technology training to staff. In April, with the support of district-wide weekly Remote Professional Workshops (RPWs), we modified curriculum and removed grading stipulations, but continued to assess learning. We monitored attendance and student engagement. As teachers shared experiences, we adjusted the pacing and differentiation. We continued reading conferences and small group sessions when possible. The administrators visited as many remote classes as we could. Classes had fun learning activities once a week. Virtual PBS activities, lunch bunch dates, and some cross-grade/class visits took place. Telephone calls and visits were made to students who were not signing on.

In June we reflected and gained feedback on the remote experience. Teachers advocated for student accountability and to return to the regular curriculum with accommodations for remote learners. The companies provided remote modules. Parents advocated for consistent learning management systems for grade levels. Now, K-2 students use SeeSaw and Grades 3-5 use Schoology. Parents advocated for a choice of in-person or remote learning. Technology specialists advocated for 1:1 devices for K-5 students to reduce sign-on issues. Nurses advocated for clear COVID-19 procedures. The EL teachers advocated for in-person learning for first-year students. The administrators advocated for long-term substitutes to provide consistency in learning during staff absences. The district provided substitutes who reported daily to the school. The technology team gained access to hotspot devices for those without consistent internet. The counselors requested that the outside counseling agency be allowed to return to conduct student sessions. Each act of advocacy required reflection, critical listening, teamwork, flexibility, and creativity.