

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 2370 Shermer Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Northbrook State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60062-6729

County Cook County

Telephone (847) 400-8900 Fax (847) 272-0979

Web site/URL https://www.district30.org/maple/ E-mail skurtz@district30.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. Brian Wegley E-mail bwegley@district30.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Northbrook/Glenview School District 30 Tel. (847) 498-4190

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. Nancy Artz
(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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	67	67	134
7	77	71	148
8	74	59	133
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	218	197	415

*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
 - 38 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 58 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 3%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	409
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Bengali, Bulgarian, Cantonese (Chinese), Chaochow/Teochiu (Chinese), French, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Mandarin (Chinese), Marathi, Mongolian, Pilipino (Tagalog), Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Taiwanese/Formosan/Min Nan, Tamil, Telugu (Telegu), Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %
7 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %

Total number students who qualify: 18

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
46 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>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. 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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	95%	96%	95%
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.

Maple School is committed to providing the optimal learning environment, curricula, and supports to ensure each student has every opportunity to reach their potential.

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.

Maple School has had students and staff in the building through a hybrid model since the first scheduled school day of the 2020-21 school year. Families have the option for students to remain fully remote or attend in-person every other day. A select few students with IEPs or within the ELL program have been identified to attend school in-person daily to promote their growth and offer them the necessary support. In order to allow enough space for the elementary schools to offer every day in-person instruction for their K-3 students while maintaining social distancing, the fifth grade students from both elementary schools in District 30 currently attend Maple School.

Maple provides each remote and hybrid student with daily synchronous instruction for a full school day. Students attending in-person are placed in a cohort model in which they remain in their classroom with the same students throughout the day, while teachers rotate throughout the building to provide instruction. Scheduling students in this model required that placements be dictated by Math and ELA levels so that all students in the cohort are prepared to receive the same instruction from the teacher entering the room. The goal of keeping the students together is to minimize any unstructured time and remove opportunities for clustering during passing periods. Additionally, the use of cohorts minimizes student exposure to other students, which reduces the risk of spread and allows for more manageable close contact tracing. Student desks are spaced six-feet apart, masks are worn at all times, except during lunch when clear barriers are used at each student's desk, and hand washing or sanitizing is done frequently. The safety of our staff and students will always

remain our top priority.

Remote students follow a full schedule of synchronous learning via Zoom on their school-issued iPads in which they join their hybrid classmates for the same instruction they receive. This requires teachers to instruct two different groups simultaneously, those in-person and those remote.

Maple's teachers are heroes and have overcome this herculean challenge throughout the year with incredible success. Similarly, families and students have been flexible, gracious, and engaged in the learning process from the start. The Northbrook/Glenview School District 30 administration and School Board have done an incredible job of planning, collaborating, and supporting our teachers through this entire pandemic. The District has committed over one million dollars of reserve funds to provide electrostatic sprayers, additional custodians, hand sanitizing stations, and more teaching and support staff to ensure the safety of each stakeholder and the success of our model. This year has been a collaborative effort that is being executed nearly flawlessly by an outstanding team.

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

Maple School has demonstrated sustained excellence and consistently serves as an exceptional and safe space promoting student learning, leadership, and care. Students and their socio-emotional and academic well-being guide our work and are at the forefront of all decisions. In the Northern suburbs of Chicago, we serve an affluent, intelligent, well-educated, and invested community with caring, creative, and intrinsically motivated students. Many families share an expectation of high levels of academic achievement, and they willingly and graciously partner with us to support students with creative and innovative learning opportunities. The resources and connections offered through collaboration with our community allow for meaningful and real world experiences that shape our students and push learning forward.

Maple's community is very supportive of the academics, activities, and directions of the school. Cemented within Maple School's culture is an understanding that decisions are made following deliberation and collaboration among stakeholders, and that we move forward unified and with mutual trust and respect. The development of committees for community input, such as the Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC), and the involvement and partnership of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) have allowed Maple to consider various perspectives and progress with the support of the community. During the 2018-19 school year, a brand new Maple School building was constructed. This new facility provides Maple staff and students with spaces and resources that align with our innovative practices that have occurred for years. Passing the referendum for this state-of-the-art facility was a team effort among all stakeholders, generating nearly 76% support.

Maple's approach of being data-informed and student-centered has promoted intentional and knowledgeable decision-making. Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) data and formative assessments guide us in creating goals for our students to reach their academic potential. Quarterly "Data Days" offer teachers, school psychologists, interventionists, and administrators an opportunity to collaborate and develop plans for students who would benefit from additional tiered differentiation. Honest and frequent communication with families surrounding student progress ensures students receive the support they need. Standards-based reporting that minimizes homework's impact on grades provides an accurate reflection of a student's understanding.

Innovative practices are found throughout Maple School and contribute to our development of leaders, creative thinkers, problem solvers, and emotionally stable students. Maple utilizes curricula that challenge students to explore content, ask questions, analyze text, and think critically. Engaging students in an active learning process enhances their retention, promotes intrinsic motivation, and inspires creative thinking. Students are given a voice in the classroom to share their questions and concerns and become leaders of their learning.

Many other student leadership and engagement opportunities exist within our extracurricular and interscholastic programs, such as Student Council and Philanthropy Club. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities that evolve based on student interest. Students advocating for new clubs have led to the introduction of many wonderful student opportunities.

To foster socio-emotional learning and provide leadership opportunities, students engage in an Advisory program that opens communication lines among their peers and teachers. Select eighth-grade students join our sixth-grade students during Advisory through our Peer Partners program to provide an older perspective, help alleviate fears or concerns, and serve as role models of what is expected of students at Maple and within our larger community.

Furthermore, Maple School has committed to the Character Counts! framework, in which the six pillars of character are expected to be exhibited. Middle School is an opportunity for students to discover who they are and learn about what they may want to be as adults, which may spur insecurity and lead to mistakes. Maple encourages students who encounter obstacles to fail forward by learning and growing from their missteps with adult coaching and support.

Maple's inclusive school environment cares for and welcomes all students. We are very fortunate to house a program for students with profound disabilities. Their integration into our school community, and the acceptance, care, and joy shared among all students as they interact perfectly captures the well-rounded, empathetic, kind, and incredible community that we foster each day.

The COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened our resolve to serve our students and community. Maple teachers are heroes, and the efforts and collaboration of staff, community partners, and administration have allowed Maple to remain open for the entire 2020-21 school year.

Extensive safety mitigation measures protected our students and staff. The District committed over one million dollars toward personnel, electrostatic sprayers, custodial crews, and more as safety remained our highest priority. Maple students receive daily synchronous instruction and attend school in-person every other day or as fully-remote students. When students physically attend school, they do so in a socially-distanced cohort and remain in the same classroom throughout the day. Teachers move throughout the building with carts during passing periods to meet their next class. All students have a school-issued iPad, and our new facility furnishes the technology required for teaching the students in the classroom and on Zoom simultaneously. Understanding of the burden and stress placed on our students during this pandemic, time in Advisory was doubled, allowing for more frequent and thorough supportive conversations.

The complications involved in scheduling students and coordinating school while enforcing the safety protocols were immense. Our educational model development took months of collaborative planning. We could not have achieved success without recommitting to why we chose to be educators and why we are passionate about Maple. Even during the most trying times, Maple's stakeholders always return to the philosophy that students' well-being drives all decisions.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Maple School’s innovative instructional practices engage students in active learning, asking questions, applying knowledge, and building a foundation to be a productive member of society. Inquiry-driven instruction, standards-based assessing and reporting, and student choice guide our practice as curriculum regularly is audited and revised for relevance and to pique student interest.

When schools first closed in March of 2020, students moved to a fully remote model in which students received a few hours of daily asynchronous work. Since the Fall of 2020, Maple has provided each student with full school days of live instruction. Each Maple student has a school-issued iPad used to maximize learning through Zoom. Our teachers continue innovating to recreate experiments, discussions, performance-based assessments, and Socratic seminars to engage remote and in-person students simultaneously. Practices have been modified to ensure social distancing and maintaining engagement with all students. The use of breakout rooms to provide collaboration and individualized support has allowed us to continue offering rich opportunities for inquiry and exploration.

ELA does not facilitate instruction through a textbook. Beginning with the standards, teachers and consultants collaborate to identify power standards and essential questions as their foundation. Within the daily 80-minute accelerated “Navigate” and core grade-level courses, literature is taught primarily through a “book club” approach in which students have a choice when selecting their texts. Nothing is taught in isolation, and the application of skills, such as grammar and writing styles, are refined through activities and reflections. Teachers at all three grade levels collaborate in establishing cohesion as the rigor and themes advance through time.

Math utilizes Big Ideas as their primary resource for engaging students in authentic problem-solving and learning. This resource offers a wide range of differentiation and support tools for students, including videos, tutorials, and practice puzzles. Students who indicate that they are struggling on an assignment are directed to similar problems and offered guidance for solving them. Additionally, when assignments are submitted, students receive immediate feedback to learn from mistakes and practice correct skill development.

The Math department uses a tiered model of instruction, similar to ELA, in which three levels are offered at each grade. Students can be placed in a Core grade-level course, an Advanced course (one grade level ahead), or the Navigate course (two grade levels ahead) for 80 minutes of daily instruction. Matching our philosophy that students will grow when challenged, two-thirds of our Math course offerings are Advanced or Navigate classes. Our teachers are well-versed in the standards and have structured the order in which content is delivered to provide a logical sequence and ensure that students are given the best opportunity for success.

While Math and ELA each provide leveled instruction to offer students appropriate enrichment and support, the Science and Social Studies departments offer heterogeneous classes and differentiate for all students within a single class. With one course level, all students, including those who do not take a mainstream Math or ELA course with typical peers, engage in 80 minutes of Science or Social Studies each day.

The Science department implements an inquiry-driven storyline curriculum built from IQWST and OpenSciEd. Maple has piloted IQWST, which boasts as one of the first NGSS-aligned curricula, since 2009, prior to its publishing. Receiving professional development directly from the Northwestern and University of Michigan authors, Maple has long been viewed as a model and touring site for schools across the Midwest region.

In sixth through eighth grades, students engage in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science storylines. Teachers construct a story for each unit and ensure that lessons and phenomena are explored in a logical sequence and dictated by student inquiry. Assessing and reporting align with NGSS, and teachers offer feedback and challenge student ideas to reinforce the importance of gathering and analyzing data to

support claims.

As is the case with all subject areas, the learning opportunities taught within Social Studies span far beyond the content. Through teaching about ancient civilizations, U.S. history, U.S. government, and global studies, Social Studies offers social discourse and inquiry opportunities while promoting critical thinking and global citizenship. The teachers emphasize tolerance and an understanding that there is more than one perspective, as students develop curiosity and substantiate their views through research. The heterogeneous groups offer authentic opportunities for learning and perspective sharing, and the philosophy of encouraging multiple correct answers for a single question is paramount in class discussions to validate student ideas.

All departments thrive at promoting student voice and engaging students in their learning, which begins by developing positive relationships with students. Maple teachers are genuine, caring, and student-centered, offering everything to support student learning. Standards inform instruction and allow teachers to assess students and report accurately on their strengths and challenges. In accordance with professional development on formative assessments by Jan Chappuis, teachers value data gathered and offer timely feedback and appropriately challenging growth goals. Maple teachers recognize that learning is a process and that not all students progress at the same rate, which motivates the practice of offering students opportunities to retake assessments and assignments to demonstrate further learning.

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

Maple School offers innovative learning opportunities that promote problem-solving and inquiry skill development. Through all instructional areas, Maple expects students to explore content, think critically and creatively, and practice twenty-first century skills that will prepare them for their future impact as productive members of society.

To follow are a few examples of how Maple's existing curricula prepare our students with the skillset to pursue emerging careers. STEM, Applied Technology, Science, and Math hone students' ability to analyze and apply data to ask deeper questions and solve challenges. The Arts, Music, and ELA encourage creativity and ask students to express themselves through their writing, performance, and product development. Social Studies engages students in inspiring conversations around current events and prepares them to participate in appropriate discourse and develop and articulate their views. P.E. and Family and Consumer Science provide the knowledge and skills to live a healthy and productive lifestyle. Each of these course offerings serves a valuable function in developing our well-rounded students and preparing them with the skills to apply toward any of their career aspirations.

In conjunction with daily goals of promoting essential skill development, Maple's eighth-grade students engage in a thorough Career Day experience consisting of weeks of preparation in resumé development, practicing interview strategies, and learning about various fields directly from professionals in the community.

Students' opportunities to contribute to their school and the greater community as leaders exist within our Service Learning Club and sixth-grade civic learning project. Through these opportunities, students engage in philanthropic efforts to support those in need and reflect on the positive impact they can have. Additionally, students can serve as mentors to younger Maple students through Peer Partners, a supplemental branch of the Advisory program, and as leaders in the Operation Snowflake event, which promotes making healthy choices.

Maple School embraces and promotes innovation, creativity, inquiry, communication, critical thinking, and being a productive and healthy lifelong contributor to society in all aspects of daily learning. Through our approach, we teach and support the whole student, preparing them with the knowledge, skills, and character to positively impact the workforce.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Maple School offers a wide array of programs to support well-rounded, creative, and thoughtful students. Many of these programs experienced significant schedule changes as a result of the pandemic. However, their role in our educational model remains essential for offering students an outlet to express themselves, explore new opportunities, promote healthy living, and develop new skills and interests.

The Creative Arts program consists of Music, Art, Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), STEM, and Applied Technology and is offered to all students each day. Students rotate through the various courses each year on a quarterly basis, allowing them to take each course at least twice during their middle school career. After being exposed to the classes, students are offered a choice in prioritizing which classes they'd like to continue. Section sizes are smaller than in core classes, allowing teachers to develop positive and long-lasting relationships quickly.

This year's model of operation has forced teachers to rotate into rooms, eliminating the ability for students to have a choice in their course selection. Despite this limitation, Maple teachers have developed variations to their activities to engage students remotely and in class. FACS has offered opportunities for students to cook at home and submit videos for assessments. Art utilizes design programs on the iPad for drawing and creation. Music has incorporated Garageband to create music at home, and Applied Tech offers opportunities to go outside and learn about aerodynamics. Maple teachers have not allowed the pandemic to hinder their ability to engage students and inspire creativity.

Physical Education (P.E.) and Health are taught on a trimester rotation in which each student receives one trimester of Health each year. P.E. stresses sportsmanship and adhering to the six pillars of Character Counts! each day. Through physical activities, students develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Students engage in flexibility, strength, and cardiovascular activities led by master teachers well-versed in the state and national standards. Our new facility offers incredible opportunities to enhance physical health with two incredible gymnasiums and a fully outfitted fitness center. Safety is always the highest priority, and extra steps have been taken this year to ensure that equipment is not shared. Proper cleaning with electrostatic sprayers also occurs throughout the day.

Maple's Health program builds on the message of promoting mental and physical health by studying the impact of drugs and alcohol, body systems, CPR, first aid, navigating social relationships and challenges, and puberty. This class spends four days in the classroom and one day in the fitness center each week, and is also when programs to raise awareness of sexual abuse and depression are explored.

Maple School offers Spanish, French, and Mandarin to all three grades five days a week. Teachers offer a nearly fully immersion experience for students by speaking in the target language 90% of the class. This unique curriculum focuses on meaningful and authentic learning opportunities, preparing students to engage in real-world conversations in the target language. Content and performance standards align with the three modes of communication - interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. The materials used are created by a native speaker and designed for native speakers, ensuring the high quality of resources. Because students are clustered this year based on Math and ELA placements, the World Language class is currently only offered to students while they are learning remotely every other day.

The LMC is the heartbeat of the school. It is a learning and creativity hub with soft seating and opportunities to explore literature, research tools, and various puzzles. Glass-walled collaborative rooms line the perimeter, allowing students to work together or complete assessments without disturbing others. The LMC also houses our technology coordinator and is equipped with a "Genius Bar" if students need support with their school-issued iPads. The LMC is open to all students before, during, and after school, and teachers utilize the space for personal and class purposes as well.

3. Academic Supports:

Maple School offers an inclusive, safe, and accommodating learning environment that meets each student's individualized needs. With a philosophy that all students must feel safe, regulated, and connected to access curricula, Maple prioritizes and addresses students' socio-emotional needs to enhance their availability for learning. Academically, students are supported and challenged according to their individual learning needs. Staffed with a gifted coordinator/differentiation specialist, two school psychologists, a speech pathologist, an ELL teacher, a dedicated special education teacher at each grade, reading and math interventionists, and multiple instructional assistants, Maple utilizes these specialists to ensure that each student feels connected with at least one trusted adult within the school. Dedicated programs such as Erika's Lighthouse, Snowflake, and a thorough Advisory program address various socio-emotional needs and promote student advocacy to ensure student safety. This focus on building relationships and supporting the whole child extends beyond the school, as we also collaborate with families to help their students at home.

The Maple staff prioritizes collaborative time to support students. Built into the schedule are weekly problem-solving meetings for teams to identify students that need additional socio-emotional or academic support. Our two school psychologists, who possess diverse training to support our students' academic and socio-emotional challenges, facilitate these meetings and lead problem-solving efforts. Maintaining a focus on solution-oriented conversations, the team determines the next steps to differentiate for identified students within or outside the classroom. Students who excel in class are also addressed during these meetings to determine how best to engage them in furthering their learning and nurturing their growth. Students who would benefit from executive functioning assistance and student skill development may be placed in a support class called "Guided Studies," during which a teacher offers strategies for managing their workload and organizing and prioritizing responsibilities.

Maple's effective and dynamic MTSS program addresses reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing, and math. Each trimester the teachers and interventionists meet to discuss MAP, classroom data, and progress monitoring as students are identified for interventions. Students who enter middle school with a significant skill deficit may receive Tier III support in the "ELA Skills" course, where they receive targeted reading and writing intervention five days a week in addition to their daily 80-minute ELA class. This program is designed to close gaps quickly and can be reduced in frequency as a student demonstrates skill acquisition.

Students with IEPs or identified with language barriers receive targeted support from their case managers and instructional assistants. Students work toward personalized goals in the "Study Strategies" course and are mainstreamed into general education classrooms when possible. The grade level special education and ELL teachers lead small group classes for students who need more individualized attention in Math or ELA.

Maple is proud to host an Educational Life Skills course for students with low-incidence disabilities. These students attend Maple through a cooperative program and are integrated into Maple's Creative Arts and general education classes when beneficial to the student. Maple is a safe space for all learners, and it is a benefit to house the Life Skills program in our building. This is another example of the inclusive, caring, supportive, and nurturing environment offered to each student in addressing individual academic and socio-emotional needs.

While our rigorous curriculum and support services meet the needs of most students, we also provide programming for students who exhibit academic aptitude and/or achievement significantly beyond their peers and demonstrate high-level thought processes on a consistent basis. The Navigate Program is for students who are gifted in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Maple's Navigate math curriculum exceeds middle school standards, providing Geometry and

Algebra courses to students. Students also have access to math courses at the high school level and may attend high school classes in person if eligible. Additionally, we offer enrichment courses during our summer school, which offer creative and engaging opportunities to stretch students' learning and promote intrinsic motivation within our high achieving students.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Northbrook/Glenview District 30 has had a steadfast commitment to providing students with uninterrupted learning opportunities, including in-person and remote instruction during the pandemic. Our goal has been to recreate the in-school experience as much as possible, including routines, traditions, and our robust curriculum. Maple's educational model was created collaboratively with stakeholders working tirelessly over the summer months. The hard work allowed for school to open on day one, with students in the building.

Maple School's educational model is unique, creative, and successful. This year Maple opened its doors to include elementary 5th-grade students to provide classroom space for our youngest students (K-3) to attend school in-person daily. Grades 4-8 follow a hybrid model, attending school in-person every other day. Students follow the same schedule, whether in-person or via Zoom, during their home days. To maintain safety protocols, students remain in cohorts, and teachers rotate into classrooms. A fully remote learning model of daily synchronous instruction is provided for those who opted out of in-person learning.

Our students' social and emotional learning and well-being are at the forefront of everything we do. This year more than ever, students are navigating uncharted territory and are vulnerable to experiencing feelings of fear, anxiety, isolation, and sadness. We enhanced and extended our Advisory program to deliver a dynamic curriculum promoting self-awareness, self-management, positive relationships, responsible behavior, decision-making, and coping skills. Time is provided for students to breathe, relax and socialize safely, including movement breaks and going outside for recess. A check-in system is in place for students to reflect on their learning, self-assess how they are feeling, and ask for help when needed. Text-A-Tip, an anonymous 24/7 texting system, is another resource that links students to professional counselors when necessary.

Efforts to maintain as much normalcy as possible have been a priority. We intentionally sustained the most important traditions and activities. On the first day of school, we held our Opening Day Ceremony virtually. In fact, we had two opening days to accommodate our hybrid model. Students also participate in Student Council and Yearbook Club. These activities provide amazing leadership opportunities to students and are woven into the fabric of our school culture. Our students have generous hearts and are always looking for ways to give back to the community. Hundreds of toys and food items were collected this year to provide for those less fortunate. Other celebrations that positively impact our climate and culture include Halloween dress-up, spirit week, an awards assembly, concerts, career day, speaker/author visits, and door decorating contests.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Effective parent and community collaboration has always been a staple at Maple School. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the relationship and communication between school and the community to be much more heavily relied upon to ensure our students are appropriately supported and served. Beginning last Spring and continuing into the summer months, community members were called upon to share insight and problem-solve strategies to safely and optimally reopen school this Fall. The results have been astounding, and we continue to re-think and shape our school offerings as we receive feedback and hold committee meetings. From our schools' phased operations to the socio-emotional supports established to aid vulnerable students learning remotely, the community has been integral in establishing routines and thinking creatively.

Regular meetings with the Parent Teacher Advisory Council and Parent Teacher Organization have offered beneficial insight into students' experiences at home. With slightly over half of Maple's students remotely learning from home each day, the school's partnership with families to communicate and identify needs is crucial. Readily available technology has allowed for collaborative problem-solving and student services meetings to be held over Zoom with minimal disruption to other routines.

Similarly, the middle school and high school township principals and superintendents have banded together to share ideas, express concerns, and move forward as a unified team, offering similar experiences for all students and learning from each other as we attempt to optimize educational opportunities. Frequent communication between administrators and districts has allowed us to share our knowledge and promote progress more efficiently. With one of Maple's primary drivers being collective efficacy, each student's success in our township is now the responsibility of all administrators on this team. We are united in supporting each other in serving our students.

Despite Maple being a high-achieving school in an affluent and supportive community, needs do exist among our stakeholders and neighboring communities, and it is our responsibility to do all we can to assist each other during this time of hardship. Maple's Student Council led an annual holiday toy drive in which hundreds of toys were donated to the Northfield Township Family Service Center, providing gifts to hundreds of children. Additionally, as members of the Character Counts! organization, Maple partnered with neighboring districts to raise over five thousand dollars in food and gift cards to donate to the Northfield Food Pantry.

The care, selflessness, and partnership of the Maple stakeholders to provide for all are inspiring and consistent with the excellence Maple School demonstrates regularly.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Maple's teachers are exceptional and an irreplaceable piece that sets Maple School apart from others. Their commitment to our students and families and willingness to go above and beyond to differentiate and support our students' growth is inspiring. As is consistent with Maple's practice, teachers are valued stakeholders who have an essential voice and contribute to decision-making, problem-solving, and innovating processes.

Following the Spring of 2020, when schools first closed and the socio-emotional needs of all were compromised, teachers were an integral partner in Summer committees charged with re-thinking our school's operation the following Fall. Teachers were particularly vocal and beneficial when considering safety protocols, student needs, and scheduling challenges. Our incredible teachers helped design the hybrid model that has served us so well thus far during the 2020-21 school year. Sacrificing their routines and comforts to provide optimal and safe learning environments for students, their new normal includes simultaneously teaching through multiple modalities to serve in-person and remote students, traveling with carts between classrooms to teach cohorts of students, supervising lunches within classrooms, and assisting with student drop-off and pick-up before and after school.

To support our teachers, the administration and Staff Leadership Team (SLT) brainstormed various ways to demonstrate appreciation for their efforts, supported their professional and emotional needs through these stressful and atypical times, provided opportunities for a reprieve when possible, and periodically re-established a focus on our mission. Beginning as early as the first Institute Days in August, our staff received targeted professional development with our technology department to learn how to effectively and efficiently navigate the hybrid model's technological needs. Opportunities such as a Teacher Support Group and visits from Doug Bolton, a community partner and outside psychologist, were offered to ensure that staff felt safe expressing their concerns and worries and could process their emotions safely and effectively so as to not interfere with instruction or student interactions.

As the year has progressed, so too has our stamina for conquering challenges. Maple's teachers participated in a team workshop in which we all recommitted to why we serve as educators. When faced with developing and implementing an entirely new and untested form of education during an unpredictable time, Maple's teachers rely on colleagues to remind each other why they committed their careers to the most important and impactful work. Serving our community and supporting our students with innovative and engaging learning opportunities to promote the whole child's growth is what drives our efforts. Maple School's professional and caring culture will guide the teachers through this challenge and those in the future as well.

4. School Leadership:

Maple School's leadership philosophy embodies the characteristics of Shared and Servant Leadership. The principal and the assistant principal are committed to serving the students, staff, and parents in our school community. In words and actions, the principals are devoted to promoting a culture of collaboration, capacity building, mutual learning, and trust. Socio-emotional well-being is front and center, as it is of paramount importance and linked to student outcomes and achievement. The principals are always available to listen, motivate, provide hope and build community spirit, particularly as we navigate these trying times.

Our Administrative Council consists of district administrators and principals. We meet weekly, focusing on the Strategic Plan, Phased Operations, review metrics, and make data-driven decisions. Safety is the primary focus of daily operations. The Administrative Council works collaboratively to support the needs of each school. We invested an extra million dollars toward mitigation efforts to keep everyone safe at school during COVID-19. Our district office has been instrumental in helping schedule vaccinations for staff. Flexibility in everything we do has been key to our success this year. Substitute shortages have been a significant challenge to navigate, and we have had an "all hands on deck" approach to coverage. At Maple, the principals are often seen substituting in classrooms. Each week we have a Mystery Mustang (sharing anonymous fun facts about a staff member and then guessing who it might be), and the winner has lunch duty covered by the principals as a reprieve, bringing fun and some relief to the workplace.

Maple provides a multitude of opportunities for leadership roles within our school community. At the building level, we have a School Leadership Team (SLT), which includes department chairs and grade level team leaders. They lead their respective teams and are a conduit for problem solving and communication. The SLT developed the School Improvement Plan consisting of two goals for this year: to meet student growth targets in reading and to support students and staff navigating socio-emotional wellness during a pandemic year. The SLT also plays a vital role in school-based decision-making and contributes to our collaborative school culture.

At the parent level, we work closely with our PTO executive board and volunteers to enhance and support students' school experience. Additionally, Maple's Parent-Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) provides feedback and support on various school improvement efforts. Our parents are highly invested, supportive and generous in their contributions to the school.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Maple School strives for inclusive and just practices for all. We are a Character Counts! School and embed the Six Pillars (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship) in our school curriculum, on athletic fields, and throughout the community. District 30 leads the Character Counts! Committee, hosting monthly meetings comprised of community leaders and dedicated representatives from local organizations and schools. Character Counts! is deeply ingrained in District 30's culture, touting the Six Pillars, reminding everyone of the importance of being an upstanding citizen. Teachers and administrators lead by example and serve as mentors and coaches to our students. Throughout the year, our students give back to the community in various ways, including an annual canned food drive and holiday toy drive. They also reflect on the pillars via creative outlets that include yearly poster, video, and essay contests. Our student council also exemplifies the pillars, and elected executive board members speak to each pillar in a special candlelight ceremony when they take their oath for office. By participating in Character Counts! programs our students realize that they really can make a difference in the community and the world.

We are a school community that cares deeply about every one of our students. We provide a continuum of programs and services for students to address individual student needs (MTSS, EL, Special Ed, Gifted, etc.). In addition, Maple is home to an NTDSE (cooperative) classroom for students with significant disabilities. As part of our brand new school building construction, the NTDSE classroom was intentionally designed with student accessibility in mind; to ensure space supports and accommodates students with complex physical, cognitive and socio-emotional needs.

The students in this classroom are valued Maple students and are a contributing part of our school community. The NTDSE teacher hosts a “Come On In” club for students to socialize, mentor, play, and learn from each other. We also have a new all-inclusive playground on our school grounds. The idea for the all-inclusive playground stemmed from student voice. Significant community support and fundraising efforts made this blueprint a reality. It is another example of our intentional commitment to inclusive practices both inside and outside of the classroom.

While equity, diversity, and social justice are being examined in all aspects of communities and governmental agencies across our nation, it is also being reviewed in District 30. We have invested in this vital work by allocating the necessary time, staff, and resources to training with a consultant who provides anti-bias, anti-racist, and coaching to our Social Justice & Equity Task Force. Our schools' equity journey is beginning with self-reflection, understanding our backgrounds, and understanding others' diverse experiences and values. Our curricular review is being examined through an equity lens. Maple School's Social Studies units are being reviewed for equity, social justice, LGBTQ+ inclusivity in history, events, and contributions.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The single most impactful component of Maple School is the high level of collective efficacy demonstrated by all stakeholders to ensure that students are cared for and engaged in learning. The dedication and high quality of the Maple School staff, coupled with immense community support and involvement, form a partnership in which student interests are at the forefront of all decisions and practices. While Maple School promotes and explicitly speaks to each individual student being the responsibility of all stakeholders during a typical school year, this mission has been amplified during this unprecedented time.

The Spring semester of 2020 was plagued with significant uncertainty, concern, and challenges as we navigated educating students through a pandemic about which we knew little. Despite the obstacles, the Maple staff and community banded together with an understanding that our students deserve an optimal education, regardless of the conditions. The socio-emotional wellbeing of our students served as the priority during fully remote learning. As the semester progressed into the Summer months, committees were formed with teams of stakeholders to gain insight into how to optimize the delivery of instruction moving forward.

Following months of collaboration, in which Maple staff and community members were integral voices on committees, plans were established to fully revamp the educational model for the 2020-21 school year. Details were configured for mitigation strategies to ensure student and staff safety and instructional practices to those learning at Maple School and remotely. All questions were acknowledged, and the outcome is astounding.

As a result of the collaboration and student-centered focus, Maple School opened with a hybrid model on time and has been delivering daily synchronous instruction to all remote and in-person students. Maple teachers have accomplished what has never been done before, teaching through a pandemic, and their herculean efforts are paired with a smile and gratitude for being able to support their students. The community voice has never been as critical as we strive to support the learning taking place at home and maintaining the socio-emotional stability of our students. Committees continue to meet, such as the Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC), to hear from families and adjust Maple's practices to meet students' needs.

The sustained success that Maple School has experienced over the years has motivated its stakeholders to continue to push forward, revising, experimenting, and innovating to enhance educational opportunities for all students. With great pride, I outline the countless hours of collaboration with the community, Maple Staff, and the District Office team that contributed to Maple's success during this pandemic. Because of the partnership between the school and community serving as a foundation of our culture, we were able to conquer the challenges posed by this pandemic and maintain our mission of supporting our students during these atypical times. Each student is every stakeholder's responsibility. This is part of the fabric that makes Maple School successful year after year.