

***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) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 650 125th Avenue NE  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Blaine State MN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 55434-3199

County Anoka

Telephone (763) 506-5800 Fax (763) 506-5803

Web site/URL https://www.ahschools.us/rms E-mail greg.blodgett@ahschools.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. David Law E-mail david.law@ahschools.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Anoka-Hennepin School District Tel. (763) 506-1000

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 Ms. Marci Anderson  
(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):
- 26 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 7 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 14 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 48 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	141	110	251
7	137	134	271
8	171	134	305
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	449	378	827

\*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7.2 % Asian
  - 7.1 % Black or African American
  - 3.9 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 73.3 % White
  - 8.3 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

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

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	26
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	38
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	827
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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

Arabic, Cambodian, Cantonese/Chinese, French, Hmong, Lao, Cebuano/Ilocano, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Amharic, Somali, Swahili, Albanian, Tibetan, Oromo, Gujarati, Tamil, Urdu, Serbian, Ewe, Mandingo, Urhobo, Grebe

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %

Total number students who qualify: 182

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %

105 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>33</u> Autism	<u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>20</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>3</u> Developmental Delay	<u>32</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>10</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</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: 16

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	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	40
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	9

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 21:1

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	92%	95%	95%	95%	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.

<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.

It is the primary mission of Roosevelt Middle School to effectively educate each of our students for success.

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.

The school year was delayed two weeks to provide detailed training for staff on new digital tools and instructional model. All students started the first two weeks in an all-distance learning format. Then it shifted to a rotating hybrid model with many families keeping their students in distance learning. Two months later the state shut down again and learning went to all distance learning again. In March 2021, the students returned to the building full time with approximately twenty percent of families choosing to stay in a distance-learning format. This combination of teaching in the classroom and to online students at the same time has made teaching more challenging than ever before.

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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Roosevelt Middle School (RMS) is located in Anoka County and is one of six middle schools in the Anoka-Hennepin School District, the largest district in the state of Minnesota. RMS serves families in the Blaine and Ham Lake communities and lies within a commutable distance from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The area offers a state highway and an interstate that provide easy access to both employment opportunities in the metro and outdoor recreational activities. In the school's neighborhood, families have access to numerous parks, walking trails, golf courses, and an outdoor activity center. Roosevelt students matriculate to Blaine High School and enthusiastically share in a strong sense of pride in school athletics.

The Blaine and Ham Lake communities are seeing an increase in the construction of single-family homes. As a result, the Anoka-Hennepin School District redrew school boundaries in the spring of 2019, causing RMS to experience a temporary decline in student enrollment. Roosevelt turned this into an asset during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the smaller student population and the ability to enact smoother transitions between different learning models.

The mission of Roosevelt Middle School is to effectively educate each student for success and the vision acknowledges the importance of students' academic, social/emotional, physical, and life skills. The hub of Roosevelt's work to foster growth lies within their mascot, the Royal, and its guiding principles: open communication, collective responsibility, and continuous improvement. Two such opportunities for growth are Royal Wake-Up and Royal Junction.

Royal Wake-Up is a program where students receive academic support, can build positive team relationships, and engage in physical movement before the school day begins. The program opens 90 minutes before the school day and offers breakfast. Royal Junction is an after-school program that provides one-on-one, small group, and guided support for students, as well as access to technology and media center services. A snack and transportation are included in this drop-in program.

Following a tenet of effective middle schools, RMS starts each day with a 25-minute advisory period that offers both teacher-led and student-elected activities. Throughout the school year, advisors devote time to college and career readiness, cultural proficiency, upstander (anti-bullying) topics, and emotional wellness. On scheduled days, students may also receive academic intervention or enrichment support through the Royal Rally program. Royal Rally has two teachers per grade level who provide academic intervention to students who are recommended at the bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings.

Prior to the school closures in the spring of 2020, RMS curated another use of advisory. In recognizing the importance of building relationships and having fun, several times a year the advisory schedule is altered for WIN (What I Need) time. Unlike the common iteration of WIN, Roosevelt chooses to focus on new experiences rather than academics. WIN is an opportunity for staff to share their hobbies and interests with students. The staff creates small projects/experiences/topics from which students choose. On the appointed days, students report to their WIN teacher for advisory. Along with the new experience, students are with different peers and/or in a multi-grade level group. Topics range from a CSI Crime Lab mystery to exploring comics to a dance party.

In understanding the importance of social-emotional learning and the stress that many students endure on the first day of school, Roosevelt students participate in the First Day of School experience. Instead of following their regular schedule, students spend the majority of the day with their advisory. Under the guidance of the school counselors, activities were created to help students manage new information, get to know their teacher and classmates, and transition into the school year. The activities are tailored for each grade level and include things like having student pictures taken, playing class building games, and reviewing the student planner. The COVID-19 pandemic presented a challenge for what has become a tradition for the first day of school at Roosevelt. In the fall of 2020, students started the year in a distance learning model, and teachers had a steep learning curve as they adjusted to the demands of synchronous learning. To help everyone make a successful transition, the First Day of School experience was extended into three days with students continuing to spend most of their time with their advisory learning the new

expectations and technology. Teachers were provided complete lessons via Google Classroom, freeing them to focus on students and navigating the technology associated with synchronous learning. Students and teachers grew their comfort with Google Classroom, Google Meet, Screencastify, PearDeck, and EdPuzzle, with more to follow in the coming weeks. Under the adage of “go slow to go fast,” this extension of the First Day of School experience honored what RMS knows to be best practice while also sprinting to stay ahead of the curve.



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

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

Roosevelt staff use the Minnesota state standards as our curriculum for our students, utilizing School Board-approved materials. They are taught with fidelity across our middle schools. We pride ourselves on teacher autonomy to ensure all students learn the standards over the course of their middle school careers. The consistency across our system ensures the use of formative and summative assessments while allowing teachers flexibility in how they assess for learning, especially throughout the last school year with our changing learning models.

During the Spring of 2020, our teacher teams and curriculum specialists envisioned a dramatic change in the format of our students' learning. We quickly modified adopted materials to be utilized in a digital format; we scrambled to provide electronic devices for students in grades six through twelve; and we shifted to Google Classroom as our learning platform across our secondary system. Teachers gave students instruction through videos, electronic applications, virtual explorations, and online learning platforms. Teachers learned how to use Google Voice and other digital tools to communicate with students and families and had to pear down what they expected of students in a typical school year setting. We emphasized functional expectations such as responsibility, providing feedback, honesty, and advocacy. The shift to full distance learning provided opportunities for staff and students to learn about new skills and deficits that existed in our school systems. School counselors and administrators learned how to communicate with families who might not have normally been on their radar. We learned about our shortfalls, and worked together to find solutions and modified our expectations to meet the needs of students across all of our settings. This shift in instruction was by far the most challenging adjustment many school professionals ever had to make.

After this dramatic shift, the fall of 2020 did not disappoint in teaching us additional skills. While full distance learning was new to everyone, shifting to a hybrid learning model was just as foreign to our students and families. Our school district adopted a hybrid learning model where secondary students and teachers followed a regular bell schedule four days per week with students changing classrooms and teachers every forty-six minutes. Students attended eight classes per day either in person or from a distance using google meets. Families could opt for their child to be a full-time distance learner for the trimester or an in-person hybrid learner. Hybrid learners attended school in person two days per week while attending online the other two days per week. This allowed for maximum social distancing and more interaction and engagement than the spring of 2020 had provided.

Instructionally, our classroom teachers adjusted their curriculum expectations once again, now providing in-person instruction to students in both a digital and non-digital format. Many teachers provided learning activities where students would interact with one another during the class period using Google Meets, regardless of where the student was learning from. For example, teachers used PearDeck to engage students at home and in the classroom simultaneously. They built classroom communities between students and among classmates. They learned about students' strengths and weaknesses and taught simultaneously to students at home and in front of them. Classroom teachers adjusted when they gave assessments, allowing optimal processing time for students as they worked from either a distance or in person. Teachers learned to ask in-depth questions that could not be "Googled" to truly assess what students know and are able to do independently. These shifts required an enormous amount of time and effort, resulting in one day per week when all students worked on asynchronous tasks from home. This allows more planning time for teachers as they embark on this new way of instructing and modifying their existing curricular materials to meet the needs of the students in our hybrid learning model.

Certain subjects, such as our science, math, and technical education classes, experienced drastic changes during the hybrid learning model. Where most of their existing classroom activities were geared towards problem-based learning, explorations, and hands-on experiments, these teachers had to shift student responsibilities while still meeting the state academic standards. Mathematics state standards look for student thinking and discovery rather than providing students formulas to memorize. Without simultaneous learning occurring, these sorts of problem-based learning experiences could not occur. Our technical education classes were not able to create a wooden clock; students could only watch videos of how to do

this, and identify possible problems and solutions for the classroom project. This shift showcased how certain skills must be done hands-on, and cannot be replicated using a computer.

The hybrid model allowed for some demonstrations, experiments, and real-world problems, but was still lacking for some students. Without all students in the classroom at some point, electronic substitutions had to be made a necessity. This was a powerful lesson for school professionals alike as we yearned for all students to return to our classrooms in the spring of 2021. No matter the curricular focus or the learning model, students were able to learn new and viable things throughout the learning models from the spring of 2020 until now. The curriculum does not change, but the focus shifts, and instruction must shift to meet the needs of our students at Roosevelt.

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

Roosevelt Middle School offers a selection of courses intended to expose students to a variety of career options: Art, Business Education, Family Consumer Science, Health and Wellness, Music, Project Lead the Way (computer science, engineering, and biomedical sciences), Technology Education, and World Languages. Between sixth and seventh grade, students are enrolled in an introductory course in each of the elective content areas, and seventh-grade students have room in their schedule to choose additional electives based on their interest. Eighth-grade students are free to choose in which elective areas they would like to take further courses.

Students may earn credit towards high school graduation in two areas: World Languages and math. In World Languages, students have the option to learn French, German, or Spanish.

Anoka-Hennepin School District offers advanced courses in middle school in English Language Art (ELA), math, and science for all three grade levels. In the past, students were placed in these above grade level courses based on standardized test scores and teacher recommendations; however, starting in the fall of 2021, students may self-select advanced ELA and advanced science courses.

Roosevelt's Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program consists of two courses that serve as an introduction to the nationally recognized Center for Engineering, Mathematics, and Science (CEMS) program at Blaine High School. These courses are open to all students and have been updated for the 2021-22 school year.

RMS has a student council with elected representatives from all three grades. This group organizes events such as food drives and after-school activity nights. Part of the planning for these events includes presenting to and seeking approval from the school's site council. The work of student council representatives includes seeking information from their grade-level peers and using it to inform the work of the group.

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

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

At Roosevelt Middle School we believe that this middle level is an exciting time for students to explore different types of courses and learning to develop knowledge and skills to be successful in high school and beyond. Our art department has a required course in sixth grade and electives in both seventh and eighth grade. The art teachers work hard to weave their art projects into the grade-level curriculum while adhering to the state standards for art class. For example, they have selected Minnesota Native American art projects when our Minnesota Studies teachers are teaching the Native American unit. We have a vigorous and popular music program at Roosevelt. It starts with music being a requirement for all our sixth graders and then becomes an elective in the seventh and eighth grades. Students may choose between choir, band, or orchestra. Public concerts are the highlight of each grade-level music course, but the highlight of the middle school music career is definitely our spring RMS Rocks concert. Our Physical Education (PE) classes again start with it being required in sixth grade, followed by elective courses in both seventh and eighth grade. In addition to there being traditional PE classes for electives, we also offer seventh and eighth graders a fitness

class. This class has a more individualized approach, much like you would see at a gym and fewer group activities and games. This class was created with our female students in mind, but has been very popular with all of our students. We require a Health class in the sixth grade and have an eighth-grade elective Health class where students receive their cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate. For our seventh and eighth graders, one elective option is Exploring World Languages and Cultures. Students learn some common words in a handful of different languages and explore many cultures around the world. If students choose to further their language education, they have the option to learn German, French, or Spanish. These are high school level classes, meaning high school credit is received upon course completion. Our seventh graders take a required Family and Consumer Science (FCS) class with a curriculum, that includes cooking, sewing, finance, and child development. Eighth-grade students have the option to take an FCS elective if they desire to further their knowledge in that realm. We are a one-to-one building with technology, so teachers in all courses intertwine technology education as part of their curriculum. In our technology department, we have an entry-level Technology Education class that is required for all seventh graders. We have a Creative Innovations elective where students study a vast array of what they will offer at the high school like digital photography, photo/video editing, and creating with a 3D printer. Design & Manufacturing is also an option in eighth grade where students get hands-on with building, blueprints, architecture software, and more. We offer a Computer Exploration course that allows students to explore and learn what software is available for academic and personal growth. We offer two different pre-engineering classes as electives for seventh and eighth graders using the Project Lead the Way national technology curriculum. These courses all tie in very well with the high school that our students feed into as Blaine High School is a Center for Engineering, Math, and Science (CEMS) campus.

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

At Roosevelt Middle School we work hard to place students in an appropriate class for the upcoming school year. We feel that appropriate placement is the key to a student making as much progress as possible. That work starts in December for the following school year. We administer the nationally normed Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test to all students in the fall of every year. If a student is currently in support or below grade level class, they will also take a MAP test in the spring to ensure that our placement for the following year is accurate. Our large district uses both local norms and the MAP national norms to place students. For reading and math proficiency in all three grades we use as much data as we can gather for each student, using the MAP score, standard district common summative assessments, grades, Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) scores, and/or teacher recommendation. We work with grade-level content teachers to create the correct placement for each student. For reading, we offer an additional Reading Strategies course that can be every day for 46 minutes or every other day for 46 minutes depending on the need of the student. For math, we offer an additional 46-minute daily block of intervention that is in addition to the grade-level math course. The curriculum allows for filling knowledge gaps, pre-teaching upcoming difficult topics, and ongoing regular curriculum support. Again, in this class, we have seen large gains for most students. For students that have data above grade level, we have Advanced classes in all three grades for ELA and for Science. In those classes, the regular learning targets are supplemented with more in-depth dives and more rigorous learning on the topics already in the curriculum. Many students enjoy the challenge and rigor of these classes.

Our building's MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) team supports learners that are struggling with any aspect of middle school. We use the tiered system of supports for all students - supporting academics, behavior, and social-emotional learning. Results are as varied as our students but often result in students needing only a few interventions or accommodations to be successful. This team also writes and supports students on 504 plans. When we are unsuccessful with supporting a student we use our documentation to refer the student to our special education department for evaluation. Students, who qualify for Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), have many different classes and levels of classes to support any individual-based need that is

indicated in the evaluation of that student. These classes range from academic, communication, social-emotional, executive functioning, life skills, adapted physical education, and more. We have many students with specific learning disabilities who receive support in the mainstream classes or participate in a class with an alternate curriculum. Again, this is totally individualized and depends on each student's needs. We are home to a center-based program for students with the most Cognitive and Developmental needs and a Launch program for our students who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). At Roosevelt, we are proud of our ability to support all students in the mainstream classes for as much of their day as possible.

We have a very small program for English Learners (EL) at Roosevelt Middle School. Our EL department offers reading and writing instruction for new to country and beginning level students. When students test into the developing level, we then move students into grade-level content classrooms and continue to offer them support with an additional EL class.

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

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

Roosevelt’s staff work incredibly hard to engage students with positive support for their academic growth, social-emotional needs, and motivation to thrive in our changing society. During advisory, many of our engagement strategies are fulfilled pertaining to academic and social engagement.

Academically, we have engaged learners through our MTSS process. Collaborative academic teams of teachers instruct students using first-best instruction, and then if necessary, through an intensive tier two or tier three support. Interventions are intentionally designed for individual students on particular academic skills and concepts. Students are required to receive intervention during advisory if the collaborative team of teachers identified them as having the academic need. Academic growth is achieved through consistent support and encouragement. Students understand that academically failing is not an option; learning may take longer but is always the goal.

At RMS we believe that social-emotional growth is just as important as academic progress. Above and beyond the relationships that are built during our seven academic class periods, we utilize advisory to build strong friendships over the course of the school year. During the 2020-21 school year, amid the changing learning models that we have held, our advisory time still offers a chance for building relationships and checking in with students on a regular basis. Our advisory time has engaged learners whether they were in the building or learning from a distance. Our announcements each day were delivered through a YouTube link, and advisory activities were engaging for all students during all learning models (distance, hybrid, full in-person).

In addition to helping students learn about social-emotional health, we also have had an opportunity to engage and motivate students during this school year. By creating a culture of belonging that values relationships, we helped students learn how to reflect on their behaviors during this time of change. Students completed surveys at the end of each trimester to identify areas of strength and growth for themselves as they approached a new trimester. Keeping our focus of encouragement and growth helps motivate students to improve and self-reflect continuously.

The communities, that were built during this past school year during advisory and beyond, show how important the staff at RMS feel that relationships are. Regardless of the many changes and hurdles that we have overcome, building relationships with and among our students has been our priority. As our students return to the school building this spring, we look forward to engaging, motivating, and strengthening our existing relationships through face-to-face interactions, as well as digital connections that we have withheld all school year.

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

Roosevelt Middle School has multiple strategies to engage families in improving student success. Teachers maintain online classroom calendars to communicate what students are doing each day, dates for assessments, and deadlines. Most teachers also include links to resources which is particularly helpful when a student is absent. In addition, teachers use Google Classroom to coordinate student work and instructional videos. Parents or guardians can sign up to get a summary of student work daily or weekly from their child’s Google Classrooms. Teachers also can send email blasts to students and/or parents/guardians from our student management system. Parents/guardians and students also have access to teacher live grade books. These tools continued to provide great ways to engage families during the COVID pandemic distance learning.

The Principal communicates with families by using a Blackboard product that delivers voicemail, text, and email blasts, resulting in quick and direct communication. There is a bi-weekly electronic newsletter that can go out to anyone in the community that signs up for it. These communication strategies, as well as direct family communication from administrators, increased during COVID to try to keep families up to date with

what was happening and changing. Prior to the pandemic, other ways that the school has engaged parents/guardians and grandparents is through our Parent Involvement program and the school site council. The site council is a major decision-making group for the school made up of staff representing different subject areas, parents/guardians, and the Principal.

The connection with the community, local businesses, and organizations has been developed using various strategies. The head Principal has been a member of the local Rotary Club and has made meaningful business connections that have benefited the school in many ways. Each year the building holds a week-long celebration of all staff appreciation. During the months prior, the administration works hard at contacting local businesses for donations to raffle off to their staff during that week. Typically, there are over 50 donations collected to be given away to staff. For many years, local restaurants have donated food for an all-staff lunch, which continued in a slightly modified manner during the COVID pandemic.

Finally, the school recognizes the wonderful work of its students during their Arts and Academics Celebration. Families and the community are invited to this event which showcases thousands of student assignments, live music, art, and industrial technology demonstrations. This event is extremely well attended and hopefully will be able to happen again in the future with students returning to the building.

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

About a decade ago, Roosevelt Middle School started building a Professional Learning Community. This process has evolved over time, and has included staff development on formative and summative assessment, student interventions, and enrichment. For the past number of years, the building has structured its staff schedule to give teachers who teach the same course the same break period to allow for collaboration. This time allows for staff to plan common lessons, strategies, assessments, and student interventions. Resources have been allocated for a professional learning community coordinator who attends collaborative meetings to assist with reviewing data, sharing strategies, and acts as a staff development leader. This was a key position that allowed for successful shifts of learning models during the COVID pandemic.

The school operates with multi-level leadership groups that allow for staff to provide input. The administrative team meets weekly to plan and review various data. The building has a department leader that attends district curriculum meetings and supports the department, as well as meets monthly as a group with the Principal. That team also views grade and summative assessment data. Additionally, each grade level has a teacher leader and meets weekly with their grade level team and Assistant Principal. One of the items that are discussed at these meetings is struggling students. Data on the student is reviewed and interventions for the classroom are planned and implemented. A team of administrators, counselors, and other support staff meet weekly to review students that need a higher level of intervention. The team tracks grade-level intervention data, and, when needed implements an individual intervention plan that may include some small group or one on one instruction from a teacher who has a period in their schedule to deliver student interventions.

Another area of staff development that has been implemented over the past five years is Culturally Responsive Training (CRT), leading to the overall improvement of professionalism and culture within the school. The personal growth that has come from this critical training has created a better understanding and provided opportunities to make the school a better place for our diverse student population. These structures continued even when instructional models changed with COVID.

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

Roosevelt Middle School is a collaborative, supportive, stable community that begins with the administrative team that has been together for nine years. The Principal and Assistant Principals have their own responsibilities but share in the work collaboratively while meeting weekly. The team conducts regular classroom walk-throughs and observations to observe what is happening in classroom instruction and provide feedback to staff.

The school involves all staff and parents/guardians in several tiers of leadership. The school has a site

council consisting of the principal, staff representatives from different grades, courses, and employee groups, as well as a couple of parents/guardians. This provides the opportunity for staff and parents/guardians to have a voice and play a role in the decision-making. The school has a department leadership team that meets to review data and make curricular decisions, determine budgets, and represent the school on their various district department teams. Each grade level has a team that meets weekly with its core and elective teachers and the grade-specific Assistant Principal. This pod does planning for its team activities and discusses consistent interventions that the team can implement across the school to assist struggling students. When classroom intervention data is showing interventions are not effective, they can recommend the student to the school's multi-tier system of the support team (MTSS). The MTSS team meets weekly to review struggling students and analyzes their previous classroom interventions. This team then implements more intervention through the use of support staff and intervention teachers.

Finally, each course taught at Roosevelt Middle School has a team of teachers that meet with each other a couple of times a week. These collaborative teams, along with a specialist position that meets with them weekly to support and guide their work, focus on instructional strategies, planning lessons, assessments, and reviewing data. Some of the elective teachers, who do not have others who teach the same course at the school, meet with common teachers across the school district.

When the COVID pandemic began, the district canceled school for a week to provide time for teachers to plan and learn online instruction tools and content. Teachers used Google Meet to provide instruction and Google Classroom to provide classwork. All buildings were closed, and all staff worked from home. During this time, administrators met with teachers to check-in, provide support, review attendance data, and reach out to families to provide assistance and access to technology needs. Administrators also labeled the hallways and lunchroom for social distancing before students returned for the hybrid model.

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

Roosevelt Middle School is committed to embedding culturally responsive teaching throughout our school as we enhance the cultural proficiency of administrators, teachers, and staff. As a building, we have used professional development and staff meeting time to provide staff with knowledge, reflection, discussion, and training for implementation and differentiation using the Seven Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching.

In 2019, the Anoka-Hennepin School District adopted an equity achievement plan that supports equitable learning environments for all students, providing access, representation, meaningful participation, and positive outcomes for students. The strategic priorities of the equity plan are focused on school climate, student engagement and outcomes, and the development of culturally inclusive curriculum and assessment systems. At Roosevelt Middle School, we place a high value on equity and create a safe and engaging environment for all students. This is evidenced by the continued investment in training for the Roosevelt Middle School administrative team. In the middle of the summer of 2020, during the height of the pandemic, the Roosevelt Middle School administrative team embraced a 16-hour training with the YMCA Equity Innovation Center where we immersed ourselves in rich conversations around race, workplace culture, implicit bias, and the development of a leadership roadmap. The team also completed the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a cross-cultural assessment of intercultural competence. The challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have limited our ability to fully implement all aspects of this training, but we will carry over the knowledge and skills to our equity work in the future. The Principal then hired the YMCA Equity Innovation Center to provide six hours of this same training for the entire staff.

An important goal we have set as a building is that every student should feel comfortable and represented in their school. Students and staff should feel comfortable with taking risks, with the overarching goal being closing persistent achievement gaps. Roosevelt Middle School staff have

an understanding that diversity in the classroom improves critical thinking skills and encourages students to look at things differently. We have many examples of this in the building; however, the instance that has had the greatest impact on our students occurred during the summer of 2019 when a teacher received a grant to buy book club sets of graphic novels representing diverse perspectives. During the school year, David Walker, the comic book author of Luke Cage, joined the class to meet for a question and answer session with students. This was an outstanding opportunity to expose students of color and white students to a strong representation of people of color and a successful author such as Mr. Walker. This grant has encouraged us to purchase books with protagonists of color for our building library.

The current events linked to the trial in Minneapolis have resulted in intentional communication to staff, students, and families. Students and staff will navigate through conversations and discussions about racial equity, social justice, and policing. Our school will continue to be a safe and welcoming environment for all students who may be experiencing trauma or strong emotions as a result of current events.



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

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Roosevelt Middle School has had a history of strong instructional strategies and student success as evidenced by MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment) scores and comparison data conducted amongst similar school demographics across the state. This success was built on a history of teacher collaboration, strong curriculum materials and pacing guides, a shift to a better assessment of learning, reteaching and re-assessment, and a priority on building relationships with students.

When the COVID pandemic hit following spring break of 2020, schools were closed, teacher collaborative teams spent the first week training on electronic tools (primarily Google Meets, Google Classroom, and YouTube) and meeting to plan for a change in instruction. Many materials had to be adapted to be in a digital format. During that week, the school distributed Chromebooks and other curriculum materials to families. Once school resumed in a distance learning format, students completed asynchronous tasks on Mondays and had synchronous classroom learning the following four days of the week. Instituting Monday as an asynchronous day, allowed for teachers to meet in collaborative teams, department teams, grade-level teams, and conduct staff meetings.

School counselors and administrators focused on student digital attendance and technical support of internet access. There was tremendous support needed for staff and families dealing with the fears of the pandemic and this new, challenging way to teach and learn. During this time, teachers and support staff never lost their focus on social and emotional support. There were many fantastic stories of how staff found ways to personally connect with their students, as well as connect their students with their classmates.

At the start of the 2020-21 school year, the school district delayed the start of the year by two weeks to further train staff in even more robust online learning tools. This provided staff time to prepare digital lessons and prep for the first days of training students on the technology skills needed for distance learning. The staff learned new tools, such as Screencastify, Pear Deck, Edpuzzle, and content-specific digital resources. The students began online, and then the district shifted to a hybrid model - with some students attending two days a week in a rotation and some students remaining in distance learning each day. When the state shut down schools again from November through January, the students and staff were already well prepared for the shift to full-distance learning. Whichever model of instruction shifts occurred, students continued to learn, and the staff focus on strong supportive relationships continued to meet the needs of students.