

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 128 Elydale Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Ewing State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 24248-8787

County Lee County

Telephone (276) 445-4439 Fax (276) 832-0321

Web site/URL https://sites.google.com/leecoschools.com/elydale E-mail nicole.ayers@lee.k12.va.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. Brian Dean E-mail brian.dean@lee.k12.va.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lee County Public School District Tel. (276) 346-2107

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 Mr. Mike Kidwell
(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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 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	33	19	52
6	26	19	45
7	20	18	38
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	79	56	135

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 99 % White
 - 0 % 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: ≤1%

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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	0
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	0
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

None

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 56 %

Total number students who qualify: 75

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %
19 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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</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: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	9
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	93%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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.

Students are envisioned in a modern competitive world as productive adults who possess a respectful, strong moral character with positive self-esteem. We strive to instill characteristics of patriotism, good citizenship, community service, personal responsibility, and an understanding of world diversity in each student, as well as a solid academic foundation. Traditional and technological learning resources are used to help students attain the expected proficiency on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL).

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.

During the 2020-21 school year, Elydale Middle School has used an altered operating schedule. The students have attended fully remote, hybrid, and in person. This schedule changed depending on the status and case numbers of the Covid-19 pandemic. When case numbers were high or increasing, the students attended fully remote. As case numbers started to decline, Lee County Public Schools transitioned to a hybrid model, which consisted of half the student body attending in person two days and remote two days alternately. Each Friday was designated as a remote-learning day which was used for deep cleaning of the school. Now that the numbers have consistently declined, all students attend in-person four days a week, with Fridays remaining as remote-learning for the purpose of deep cleaning the school. At the beginning of the school year, parents were given the option for their child to come in-person or fully remote learning for the whole year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

Elydale Middle School is located in the small town of Ewing, in Lee County, Virginia. The surrounding community is very rural, with few business opportunities, farming being the main source of income. Most professionals are either educators or commute to work in surrounding areas that offer more varied industries and businesses. According to the Census Bureau (2019), the Ewing population is roughly 436, while the entire county population is 23,423. The population of Ewing is predominantly white at 94.5%, with Black or African Americans making up 3.7%, American Indian and Alaska Natives 0.4%, Asian 0.3%, and Hispanic or Latino at 2.0% (Census Bureau, 2019). Twenty percent of families in Ewing are below the poverty line.

A high number of students are either being raised by their grandparents or are in single-parent homes. Also, several students are in foster care and have relocated from various areas. The community is tight-knit, with a majority of residents who identify with Christian-based values and traditions. Most parents support school activities and functions and express a desire for their children to excel and graduate on time with hopes of continuing education or achieving some vocational training to ensure employment opportunities.

Elydale Middle School was consolidated in 2012 and transitioned from a K-12 school to a nontraditional middle school serving students in grades 5-7. Students from three surrounding towns attend Elydale since it is the only middle school within a 25-mile radius. Elydale is located approximately 7 miles from the state line, resulting in students also attending from Tennessee and Kentucky. The school community consists of middle school students, grades 5-7. The student body comprises of 52 fifth graders, 45 sixth graders, and 40 seventh graders. The population is 99% white, with only 1% Hispanic. Due to the large percentage of students coming from low-income families, free breakfasts and lunches are provided to all students.

Elydale Middle is a Title I school, which allows funding for Reading and Math Specialists and tutors who are available to work with all students if there is a need. There are four students in the self-contained classroom and eighteen who receive inclusion services due to an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or 504 plan. There is a 1:1 student to Chromebook ratio. Technology was provided by a recent grant that provides the installment of fiber optic lines in the community.

Elydale Middle School is small, with only six total classroom teachers for the three grade levels served. Classes are departmentalized by subject, with two teachers for math and reading, one teacher for all the sciences, and one teacher for all the history/social science classes. Students participate in PE daily. Fifth-grade students participate in a rotation class, which allows for extra remediation in math and reading with the specialists weekly. Music and art classes are also provided during this block. Sixth and seventh graders are offered electives in art, band, chorus, and computer solutions.

The small number of student to staff ratio is a definite advantage; it allows teachers to collaborate within departments easily. Teamwork has resulted in excellent SOL scores, with students having the advantage of one-on-one remediation time to master skills in which they are deficient in the regular classroom. Reading and math specialists work closely with classroom teachers, which allows specialists to understand students' needs so they can target necessary skills. After-school tutoring is also offered to students.

School facilities include a library, two computer labs, a music/band room, a therapy room, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, and a softball/baseball/football field. School clubs include the Junior Beta Club, Underwater Robotics, 4-H and 4-H Livestock Club, and First Priority, a nondenominational, Christian leadership club. Elections are held each year for classroom representatives for the Student Government Association. Representatives meet with the principal and the superintendent to discuss concerns and ideas brought to them by their classmates. The fifth grade can participate in the Booster Basketball and Cheerleading Program. Sixth and seventh grade are offered all middle school sports, including basketball, football, softball, baseball, tennis, golf, volleyball, cross country, and track.

To meet the challenges of COVID-19, teachers participate in training to develop their skills in many remote learning options. Google Classroom, Canvas, Loom, and Nearpod are among the many opportunities for

training made available. As teachers become more familiar with the navigation of their program of choice, they work with students to ensure their understanding of how to use various programs. Remote-learning has remained an option for students throughout the 20-21 school year. To provide interactions with these students, teachers participate in zoom meetings to offer instruction and answer questions.

The faculty of Elydale Middle School consists of strong, cohesive members of teachers and support staff who are willing to work together to ensure their students' success. Collaboration is key with everyone going the extra mile to offer any and all help necessary to provide every student with opportunities to grow and become productive members of society.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Elydale Middle School’s core curriculum includes 5th, 6th, and 7th-grade English/Language Arts, math, science, social studies, and civics. English/Language Arts incorporates skills in reading, writing, research, and communication. The mathematics curriculum focuses on the following goals for students: becoming mathematical problem solvers, communicating mathematically, reasoning mathematically, making mathematical connections, and using mathematical representations. Science allows students to use scientific investigation, reasoning, and logic to understand living systems, force, motion, and energy, as well as matter, interrelationships with Earth and space systems, patterns, cycles, and change, and the importance of our resources. Students in 5th and 6th-grade social studies are taught skills to help develop historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision making, and responsible citizenship. Students in 7th-grade Civics build on the prior years of studies as well as developing an understanding of the foundations of American constitutional government. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction has been provided in-person only with supplemental online instruction when appropriate. Over the course of the last year, however, we have adapted the curriculum to accommodate online learning by using many online resources and programs such as Google Classroom, Loom, Nearpod, Myvrspot, Quizizz, CIP, Kami, and IXL.

Teachers completed training provided by Lee County Public Schools Instructional Technology Resource Team (ITRTs), which helps them integrate lessons with online programs that allow sharing content with students to be efficient and manageable for both teachers and students. All classes have set up their own Google Classroom in which material is assigned, and content is shared. Each student is provided with their own Chromebook, and teachers instruct and guide students on how to navigate the online programs successfully. Google Meet sessions allow students to meet with their teachers and interact with their classmates. Students can meet with their teachers remotely to ask questions and have assignments explained in a one-on-one setting either by phone, through Google Meet, or even in person. Teachers also utilize video and screen recording technology, such as Loom and Screencastify, in the classroom to record informational videos of lessons and assignments for students who do not have internet access at home. Also, we offer in-person tutoring for students who are struggling with the online format and lessons. Students can come in on remote learning days and meet one-on-one with the teacher to facilitate understanding of the content and skills.

Teachers use the Comprehensive Instructional Program (CIP) pacing guide and online materials to ensure they are consistently and thoroughly teaching the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) SOLs. This approach is chosen to ensure uniformity of curriculum throughout the district and region for ease of transition for students transferring schools during the course of the school year. CIP is organized by grade level and standards. Teacher-made materials are included and are adapted for use in Google Classroom. Teachers in the district can collaborate with other teachers region-wide to develop lessons that meet and teach SOL as prescribed in the VDOE framework.

Teachers use differentiated instruction for students with an IEP by assigning reduced and modified assignments. Tutors also work with these students to provide simplified and clarified instructions. In math classes, teachers use problem-based instruction by giving students real-world problems to solve, such as determining the best unit rate for a product, which teaches students how to select the most cost-effective price for an item. In the science classes, the teacher invites professionals to zoom chat with her in-person classes to discuss science topics such as weather and watershed systems. Reading teachers use online books the students can download and read at their own pace and programs that enable the books to be read aloud to the students. In history, teachers use Kahoot and Quizizz programs to enable students to compete against each other or as a team to reinforce topics and practice skills.

At the beginning of each school year, teachers give students growth assessments to determine each students’ academic level of learning prior to any instruction. This helps the teachers decide where to begin building skills and encourage learning with students. The growth assessment is also given at the end of the year to determine the students’ academic level after instruction is completed. These assessments provide teachers with information on students’ strengths and weaknesses and where students would benefit the most from

remediation.

Teachers also give formative assessments through Google forms, practice SOL tests, and formal assessments in the classroom. The data collected is used to assess learning and to direct instruction and remediation. Students who need more support in particular areas work with remediation specialists and tutors to increase their knowledge and success in the skill with which they are struggling. Students can also attend after-school tutoring sessions and work with teachers on skills they feel are difficult to master. Special education teachers use the Achievement Improvement Monitoring System (AIMSweb), which gives the teacher a snapshot of each student's skill level and strengths. The school also uses summative assessments, such as benchmark tests, each quarter to assess cumulative student performance in required SOL areas. The teachers use the data collected to determine if remediation is necessary before moving forward with the next quarter's skills. Using practice SOL tests, the teachers can identify if the students have mastered the required skills or if they need re-teaching before being assessed again.

Students and teachers are faced with many struggles throughout this school year. Still, with parent, staff, and community support, Elydale Middle School can promote learning and facilitate growth in students' achievement.

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

Elydale Middle School's curriculum supports college and career readiness through Career Technical Education (CTE), the United Way of Southwest Virginia Ignite Program, and instructional classes on the use of technology and digital learning. CTE classes in keyboarding and computer solutions are offered to both the 6th and 7th grades. Students receive instruction daily in the computer lab in both keyboarding skills and computer literacy for preparation for secondary school.

Elydale uses the United Way of Southwest Virginia Ignite Program to help students to develop a career path. Sixth and 7th-grade students complete the MajorClarity component of IGNITE, including a personality and learning style assessment. The results of these assessments provide possible occupations that correspond to the students' personalities and learning styles. In 6th grade, students take a personality assessment, explore two career paths, watch an interview, complete an activity, and explore two occupations. Seventh graders are expected to explore three career paths, watch three interviews, complete three activities, explore three occupations, and ultimately create a personal plan of study detailing the courses required to reach their occupational goal. This plan of study follows the student throughout their high school career and can be modified and adjusted as necessary. Parents must approve and sign before this is implemented.

Elydale Middle School students are digital learners. Students are provided access to instruction in the use of current and developing technologies in a rotating, instructional classroom. Students are introduced to the different facets, tools, apps, and applications that enable and support educational and personal advancement. Digital learning empowers students to improve their functional literacy as digital citizens in an ever-increasing digitally complex world.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In order to provide students with the opportunity to acquire skills in electives, Elydale Middle School has multiple staff members who have sought additional specialized endorsements. Students are provided the opportunity to participate in art, computer solutions, physical education, chorus, and band.

The 5th grade has a rotation period daily in which they are given the opportunity to participate and explore interest in art, band, chorus, and technology/library/media. They also receive remediation during this period. Students are given a schedule based on individual interests and remediation needs. Students who are targeted for intervention participate in scheduled remediation during the rotation period. The amount and

intensity of remediation are based on individual student needs. The curriculum is adapted to increase remediation and technology instruction to meet the current hybrid operating schedule's needs.

Art, chorus, and band are offered to all students in the 6th and 7th grades. Students who participate in these electives are provided an opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge of the visual and performing arts while developing and strengthening their literary skills. The incorporation of these skills provides students' completion of individually chosen research, research reports, and special projects. Although the pandemic has limited some areas of these electives, students have still been able to participate in online activities showcasing their achievements.

Computer Solutions is offered exclusively to 7th-grade students. This program incorporates technology and network activities into the curriculum. Students utilize multiple research sites, programs, and technology applications to research career interests, life skills, personal interests, health, current events, and finance. Further development of technology skills through specialized training for identification and differentiation of diverse informational resources is provided.

Physical education, health, and nutrition are offered to all students. This course offers students a chance to participate in physical activities, team building, real-life scenarios, math, research, and writing. Students are expected to develop a health plan that promotes the use of math to complete calorie counts, average calorie-burning activities and develop a meal plan to incorporate the number of calories needed to promote a healthy lifestyle. During remote-learning, students participate in a daily journal to track their physical activity and diet.

Technology/library/media is available to students to enhance the academic experience by providing students specialized training to recognize and utilize informational resources, access information from various sources, identify and evaluate credible sources, and adapt to current and emerging technologies. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have promoted an increase in media literacy.

Students can participate in multiple activities, clubs, and athletic teams in a typical school year. Participation in these extracurriculars allows for personal growth, promotes character development, and provides an exploration of individualized interests. Elydale Middle School staff also sponsors a 4-H Club, 4-H Livestock Club, Junior Beta Club, Underwater Robotics Club, Student Government Association (SGA), and First Priority, a nondenominational, Christian leadership club. Upon indication of student interest in new club development, a sponsor will willingly emerge from the dedicated staff.

3. Academic Supports:

Eydale Middle School's academic plan is designed to maximize individual student academic development.

All students are provided quality instruction in the general education setting. Students are provided with either a teacher-created assessment, local or universal screening, and/or state assessment throughout the instructional period. The data collected from these assessments are utilized to identify class instructional needs and individual student needs. If indicated by the baseline score, students in need of additional remediation will be identified and targeted for a specialized plan provided within the classroom. The teacher closely monitors the class to determine the instructional plan for each student.

Upon completing each skill set, students are assessed to determine additional instruction to promote individual skill development and prevent deficits in specific areas. Students are provided differentiated instruction to promote academic success. Students with highly developed skills are provided opportunities to complete projects that require the application of these skills. At the same time, students in need of skill development participate in the academic task to build foundational skills.

Students who are provided intensive in-classroom instruction and remediation but continue to indicate significant deficits in academic development are placed in remediation/intervention. The remediation/intervention class focuses on skill-based instruction in a small-group setting.

Students who do not respond to the in-class and small-group intervention are referred to a prereferral committee. The prereferral committee consists of all stakeholders, including but not limited to teachers, principal, school counselor, and parents/guardians of the student. This committee considers the current interventions, reviews additional implementation, and decides on further actions. The committee can refer the student for an evaluation for Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) services. Upon completing the evaluation, a committee determines whether or not the student meets the criteria to receive services as a student who has a disability. Students who qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) have specialized designed instruction, modifications, and accommodations which provide an appropriate education. Students who do not qualify have assessments that may assist the educators in providing a more specific remediation plan.

Students identified for IDEA services are provided with an IEP that is specifically designed for the student. This academic plan is specific and specialized. Academic services may include inclusion, remediation, or self-contained instruction. In addition, these students may qualify for additional support services such as speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and/or assistive technologies. Students may also need to have modifications and accommodation to provide an appropriate educational plan.

Elydale Middle School has a number of students transferring in and out of the state, placed in foster care, and raised by grandparents or relatives other than parents. The Elydale Middle School staff incorporates a practice of developing a trusting relationship and positive rapport with each student. Staff members are aware of the needs of each student and provide a supportive environment.

Students transferring from other states are common occurrences at Elydale Middle School due to their close proximity to Tennessee and Kentucky. Different levels of academic performance are expected and anticipated for these incoming students. The school staff practices multiple adjustment strategies to accommodate the different learning needs of these students.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Elydale Middle School, we strive to give students opportunities that support their academic, social/emotional growth, and college and career readiness development. We want each student to have every chance available to achieve their academic growth. We have different clubs and activities set in place for students to show their academic progress. Every year we have a school spelling bee with the winner advancing to represent Elydale Middle School at the Lee County Public Schools competition. We also have a Junior Beta Club and Student Government Association. Students who meet the "A Honor Roll" or "A/B Honor Roll" requirements have their names published in the local paper. Students who feel they could benefit from extra one-on-one instruction, morning and afternoon tutoring are provided four days a week.

Our school participates in the United Way of Southwest Virginia's Ignite Program. This program helps students by showing the different career choices available to them after they finish high school. Every year, 7th-grade students participate in a job fair. While at the job fair, students get to see various career choices available in the area.

Elydale Middle School offers an assortment of opportunities for the social and emotional growth of our students. We extend opportunities to participate in several different sporting activities such as baseball, football, cheerleading, golf, cross country, track, volleyball, and softball. Besides sports, we have other activities for the students to interact with their peers. Throughout the year, there are themed dances, family nights, and other fundraisers, like the Spring and fall festivals, that allows the community and stakeholders an opportunity to have more school involvement.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Elydale Middle School provided students with opportunities to maintain engagement. When students are remote learning, they have the opportunity to contact teachers via live stream. This gives the students the ability to interact with their teachers regarding their assignments or have teachers answer any questions. This is not only important for the academic aspect but the social interaction aspect as well. Through our school live streaming, students can participate in organizations such as 4-H. Science classes can also participate in live meetings with meteorologists and participate in the Kids in the Creek Program, which teaches students about our local watershed system through hands-on activities.

By offering these opportunities, Elydale Middle School strives to motivate and engage students academically and socially, and emotionally. These activities are part of our school's mission to make each of our students a successful part of their communities.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Elydale Middle School jointly developed a parental involvement policy in consultation with school personnel, community members, and parents. Our parent involvement policy is made available to all Elydale Middle School parents and to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parent can understand. This policy is made available to the local community on the Elydale Middle School's website. A hard copy is also available in the school's Parent Resource Center located in the school library. If the Title I plan (application) is not satisfactory to participating students' parents, parent comments and concerns are submitted with the plan. This parent involvement plan is updated annually to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

Because Elydale Middle School is Title I school, monies are provided to fund two "Family Nights" during the school year. Parents are invited to bring their students to school and participate in fun and educational activities. These activities have included escape rooms which must be played by solving math problems, and "obstacle" courses have been offered as a challenge by completing English assignments. Snacks are offered to parents and students on these special "Family Nights" free of charge.

Elydale Middle School has also created a parent compact that outlines how parents, the school staff, and

students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The compact is sent home at the beginning of the school year for parents and students to sign and send back. The compact was developed to create a partnership that will help children achieve high standards. The compact states that it is the school's responsibility to provide a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment to ensure students meet academic standards. Student and parent responsibilities are also detailed and listed in the parent compact.

During COVID-19, Elydale Middle School has provided Chromebooks to all students. Parent training is offered for the use of these Chromebooks. This training was held during and after school to meet the schedules of all parents. Elydale Middle School also uses social media to communicate school information to parents. School information is posted on the Elydale Middle School Facebook page in addition to using the all-call system, which sends messages via telephone, email, and text.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At Elydale Middle School, teachers are valued for their abilities and knowledge of the content. Professional development opportunities are offered as well as reimbursements for furthering education and obtaining advanced degrees. Time is provided for department meetings in which teachers collaborate and share resources. Administrators are supportive and relate up-to-date information to all staff and students. District-wide in-service opportunities are available for teachers to communicate their ideas and provide input on the development of pacing guides and testing within the subject areas they teach. Teachers are also offered opportunities to participate in statewide meetings to provide input on the development of the SOL assessments. Encouragement of teacher involvement with these important areas of curriculum development leads to teachers feeling valued. With the adaptations required due to COVID-19, teachers have had to adjust to various types of instruction. Transitioning from a hybrid classroom to a totally remote classroom on very short notice is challenging. However, teachers can meet these challenges due to the many programs offered to support all types of instruction.

Teachers are provided with new, updated Chromebooks to ensure they can meet the technology needs both at school and home. Teachers are not expected to navigate the new world of technology instruction independently but are provided support through specialized training from the Lee County Public Schools Instructional Technology Team. Programs are also purchased to allow remote instruction to be as effective as possible. These programs include Google Classroom, Canvas, Nearpod, IXL, Kami, and Loom. Other utilized online sources available include Kahoot!, Quizlet, and Quizizz. Students are also provided with Chromebooks to be used both in school and at home. As teachers become familiar with new programs, learning is passed on to students with a "learning as they go" approach. While students become familiar with new technology, teachers are there to guide them. Scheduling is also adapted for COVID-19 issues to allow teachers extra time to manage students attending remotely. The school day is shortened to end at 2 PM, and Fridays are remote days for all students to allow teachers a full day to upload lessons to their online classrooms. Fridays are also used to provide much-needed time for teacher planning activities.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy and structure for Elydale Middle School concentrates on the success and safety of the students and staff. A safe and healthy learning and working environment is a priority at our school. This philosophy starts with the principal ensuring that the students, teachers, and staff are provided with everything they need in a timely manner. This helps ensure that both students and teachers can be successful. Another important aspect of our school's leadership philosophy is teamwork. From the school counselor monitoring grades and academics, teachers staying at school after hours for grade-level meetings, to the tutors and paraprofessionals working with and remediating students, our school works as a team to ensure that the students have every opportunity to be successful.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our school leaders have stepped up measures to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment. These measures include, but are not limited to, removing excess furniture to allow for social distancing, cleaning and disinfecting the desks after every class, and releasing one class at a time to prevent crowding in the hallway.

Every staff member plays an important leadership role in our school community. This includes our principal and educators and our cafeteria, office, and custodial staff. The cafeteria staff ensures the students are provided with a safe and healthy breakfast and lunch every day. They prepare meals when students attend school in-person; they also provide take-home meals to ensure that the students have a meal for the days they are not attending in-person learning. The office staff plays an important role by recording temperatures and providing masks to parents and guests who enter the building. Our custodial staff cleans and disinfects throughout the school day to ensure students and staff have a safe learning and working environment. Fridays are designated as fully remote days and enable the custodians the opportunity to give the school a deep cleaning and sanitization. When students and staff return on Monday, they know the building is clean and sanitized.

Everyone working cohesively as one unit with student needs as the priority ensuring students excel academically in a safe learning environment. When someone asks about our school's leadership philosophy, we have one word for our success: TEAMWORK.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

The administration and staff at Elydale Middle School strive to instill characteristics of patriotism, good citizenship, community service, personal responsibility, and an understanding of world diversity in each student and a solid academic foundation. These characteristics are modeled by teachers and are incorporated into the expectations of classroom behavior. Students are encouraged to bring any concerns of bullying or injustices to a teacher or other staff members, and those concerns are addressed immediately. Administrators and teachers are committed to cultivating a school environment that nurtures inclusivity and acceptance of diverse cultures.

Elydale Middle School is located in the small town of Ewing, in Lee County, Virginia. The surrounding community is very rural, with few opportunities, farming being the main source of income. Most professionals are either educators or commute to work in surrounding areas that offer more varied industries and businesses. Lee County's population is predominantly white at 94.5%, with African Americans making up 3.7%. Twenty percent of families are below the poverty line, making socioeconomic status our primary concern of diversity.

Elydale Middle School provides several programs to address food insecurity. All students receive free lunch and breakfast regardless of income. Lunch is offered to remote-learning students, and food items are sent home with students on the last school day for weekend consumption. Participation in the Summer Feeding Program allows lunch to be offered to students in the community at no charge. Partnerships with businesses and organizations in the community help meet students' material needs in crisis, such as home displacement. When natural disasters, such as flooding and fire, destroy homes, the school and community unite to provide food and clothing to families. Also, local businesses collect money that is given to families in need. Local churches collect food and create take-home bags for students whose families are in need. Ticket sales by the school and throughout the community for the annual ROHO Fishing Tournament also ensures students are chosen to attend the annual Christmas shopping spree field trip (sponsored by the tournament), where they are allowed to purchase clothing, shoes, personal hygiene items, and a small number of toys or other items.

Elydale Middle School utilizes the Student Assistant Program (SAP) to promote and support students' emotional needs impacted by a variety of mental health issues. A Therapeutic Day Treatment Counselor is also available for students who meet the criteria. Elydale strives to be aware of all students' needs and connect them to any available resources both in the school and in the community.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Teamwork is the one practice in which Elydale Middle School has always excelled, before the COVID-19 pandemic and especially after. Educationally, teachers work together within their departments and across their departments to share resources, provide encouragement, and assist each other for the betterment of the school and its students. When a challenge arises, teachers know they can depend on each other and on the entire support staff to come together and complete the task. Classroom teachers rely on the paraprofessionals assigned to help with one-on-one instruction and ensure accommodations are met for any student with an IEP or 504 plan. Reading and math specialists are available to pull students from the regular classroom setting to receive specialized instruction and to assist the classroom teacher in the actual classroom. Specialists also research available instructional materials for those to best facilitate learning. Title I Standards of Learning (SOL) tutors also help with one-on-one and differentiated instruction within the classroom. Due to COVID-19, technology has become an essential part of instruction. Teachers have worked together, sharing knowledge of various available resources, to provide students with the most effective learning environment.

The entire faculty also works together to provide the best possible setting for instruction. From the cafeteria staff to the principal, all are concerned with each child's well-being and strive to provide whatever is needed, instructional or otherwise. Elydale Middle School cafeterias are open so that students who are participating in remote instruction have the option of having a breakfast and lunch provided by their school. Fridays are remote-learning days for all students. However, if a student needs extra instruction or remediation, teachers work together to meet their needs. Classroom supplies are purchased by Lee County Public Schools at the beginning of the school year and dispersed to students as needed throughout the year. This is one way to provide an equitable learning environment for all students.

Teachers collaborate in more areas than just academics. By sponsoring clubs, coaching athletic teams, working ballgames, chaperoning dances and field trips, and assisting with fundraisers, teachers are involved with all aspects of student life. By being a consistent presence in multiple school areas, teachers form a team students value and view as their support system.