

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2022 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 Ms. Caroline Fields  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Thomas S. Hart Middle School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4433 Willow Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pleasanton State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 94588-8520

County Alameda County

Telephone (925) 426-3102 Fax (925) 460-0799

Web site/URL https://www.hartmiddleschool.org E-mail cfields@pleasantonusd.net

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. David Haglund E-mail dhaglund@pleasantonusd.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pleasanton Unified School District Tel. (925) 462-5500

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. Mark Miller  
(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 signatures 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 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

**The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.**

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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                     | 193        | 179          | 372         |
| 7                     | 199        | 186          | 385         |
| 8                     | 222        | 195          | 417         |
| 9                     | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 10                    | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 11                    | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 12 or higher          | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| <b>Total Students</b> | 614        | 560          | 1174        |

\*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):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 60 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 27 % White
  - 0.7 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 5%

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

5.3 % mobility rate. (not able to fill field above)

N/A

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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year   | 35            |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year | 27            |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]  | 62            |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020   | 1167          |
| (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, Armenian, Bengali, Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese – Mandarin, Farsi, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Marathi, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %

33 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %

Total number students who qualify: 7

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 8 %  
96 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 with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>12</u> Autism                 | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>1</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>52</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>4</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: 3
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   | 3                      |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.  | 52                     |
| 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.   | 10                     |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 7                      |

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

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

| <b>Required Information</b> | 2020-2021 | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance    | 99%       | 98%       | 97%       | 98%       | 98%       |
| 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 2021.

| <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.

The Hart staff is committed to creating an environment for our students that fosters integrity, responsibility and respect for others. In partnership with the parents of Thomas S. Hart students, we strive to prepare ALL of our students for continued academic success, to become respectful and accepting of our increasingly diverse society. With multi-leveled system of supports all our students will achieve individual growth and success.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

Nondiscrimination policy: (URL LINK)

[https://www.pleasantonusd.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=297157&type=d&pREC\\_ID=1763277](https://www.pleasantonusd.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=297157&type=d&pREC_ID=1763277)

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

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Thomas S. Hart Middle School is located in the northern region of Pleasanton in Northern California and serves students in grades six through eight following a traditional calendar. For the 2021-22 school year 1,185 students are currently enrolled. We have an extremely dedicated staff, talented students, and a supportive parent community.

The goal of the dedicated staff at Thomas Hart Middle School is to form a partnership with parents/guardians and students that will create an educational atmosphere that promotes academic and social preparedness for the 21st century. The comprehensive Common Core curriculum is designed to foster academic achievement, encourage responsibility and student agency, teach organization, and develop self-esteem. We recognize that middle school is a transitional educational and emotional period for students and parents alike. We are committed to facilitating and supporting this transition.

Hart offers a myriad of opportunities for parent communication and involvement, including unique programs such as principal coffees, parent workshops (topics such as vaping, student stress, etc.), and family nights for AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination), STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math), Study Skills for Math, ELA (English Language Arts), and Science. We also provide fun family events such as our Ice Cream Social, ELAC (English Language Advisory Committee) PotLuck, Book Fair, and other events.

Hart Staff is committed to creating an environment for our students that fosters Husky P.R.I.D.E.: Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination, and Empathy for others. In partnership with the parents of Hart students, we strive to prepare our students for continued academic success, to become respectful and accepting of our increasingly diverse society. Since staff have returned to campus full-time from the COVID pandemic, we have experienced challenges in discipline especially with some students. As a result of this, we developed an action plan that includes continuing to reteach our schoolwide norms, and holding parent-teacher conferences for those who are still struggling. We have seen a positive shift in their behavior since implementation of these practices.

Some of our students are still experiencing some lingering effects emotionally from the disruption of in-person learning; and, our counselors, the psychologist, district social workers, and parent liaisons continue to support and provide additional resources to students and their families.

During COVID, Hart teachers made a phenomenal shift to remote learning, utilizing both technology support on site and five days of district provided training. Our team provided a block schedule of classes, provided instruction via Zoom in the mornings, and then transitioned to instructional on-line activities and support in the afternoons. In addition, we returned to a Hybrid model in February 2021, where approximately half of our students returned to school. Teachers taught live online and to their in-person students simultaneously in the morning, and then provided additional support in the afternoons. This was a tremendous undertaking and our team did an amazing job.

We have been in-person since the start of school this year. Our campus has been wearing masks inside and outside until just recently. We have followed county mandates for our site's safety including having student and staff quarantine at home as needed. Our teachers have accommodated students who have been out for extended time by being flexible and providing extra help when they return to campus. All of this time, our teachers used their essential standards to guide streamlining instruction in order to provide students with appropriate curriculum so they would be ready to move to the next grade level by the end of the year.

All of our programs provide standards-based curriculum and rigor so that all of our students are challenged appropriately. Our Theory of Action states: If all students are engaged in collaborative learning opportunities across all content areas that are rigorous, stimulate critical thinking, and foster academic conversations, with multi-tiered levels of support, then all students will leave Thomas S. Hart Middle School prepared for success in high school and beyond.

Hart's daily schedule allows for an eight-period day, which includes one period for lunch. In addition to the regular day, we offer an A period class, which allows for students in intervention classes and lab classes to be scheduled and have the option to still take electives. We want all students to have the opportunity for these valuable classes. We also include time every day for schoolwide announcements which are broadcasted by our Media and Leadership classes. This communication is vital to our school culture.

At Hart, we provide a Multi-Leveled System of Support for our students. Part of the efforts at the Tier 1 level are for school wide behavior expectations, attendance, rewards, and recognition. This is our PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) system of support which include the following Schoolwide Norms that are posted in each classroom. The norms include such items as to be in the classroom before the tardy bell rings, be ready to learn with materials out, use the AGENDA (organizer) daily, respect yourself, respect others, and respect our school.

Hart's positive climate is obvious throughout the campus through our Husky P.R.I.D.E. character education matrix for positive behavior. Our school-wide PBIS system encourages positive academic and social behavior. We have numerous activities throughout the year to reach out to all students including: Red Ribbon Week, Diversity Week, STEAM Student Showcase, student-led broadcasts twice a week, PAWSOME pop up parties to redeem P.R.I.D.E tickets, 'New Student' lunches, 'We Dine Together' lunches monthly, Math Counts, and Swing/Line Dance Competition. Mile March Madness is an event where more than 50% of our students participate and run a mile daily for the month of March. We also have numerous clubs, athletic teams, and a robust music program. We established a new intramural program that had 500 participants this year.

As a Professional Learning Community, our teachers meet regularly in departments and grade level teams. These teams work together to identify essential standards and learning targets, discuss how to best support students not meeting the learning targets, and plan for reteaching and retesting opportunities. These opportunities usually occur during ACCESS time and ensure that sufficient, effective resources are available to provide Tier 2 interventions for students in need of supplemental support beyond the classroom instruction. Teacher teams use data to prepare ACCESS period offerings that will address the needs of students not meeting standards as well as exceeding standards. Additionally, teacher teams meet regularly to discuss and share best instructional practices.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have provided time for an ACCESS period as part of our Response to Intervention (RTI/MTSS) system. This time allows for students to receive additional help (reteach, retest, guided study) and enrichment (academic and social-emotional) opportunities which supports all of the growth in our students.

Part of the school and district vision is to make students college and career ready through such opportunities as AVID (which includes RSP and English Learner (EL) students as applicants), college information ACCESS presentations, Study Skills night for parents and students, and the practice of providing all eighth graders the opportunity to take the PSAT 8/9 practice exam.

Hart offers several levels of support to students in need through our English Language Development (ELD) program, AVID classes, math and reading skill classes, and small group counseling support.

Students benefit from extensive research-based academic enrichment programs such as: Khan Academy, Open Source, NoRedInk, LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention), National Geo Inside, Amplify, AVID, targeted intervention classes, and a variety of enrichment classes.

In addition to a variety of visual and performing arts electives, students benefit from a wide range of Career and Technical Education (CTE) options, supported by Project Lead the Way and other initiatives. These CTE/STEAM opportunities provide college and career readiness skills for students in the areas of technology and engineering. Hart offers a myriad of opportunities for parent communication and involvement including unique programs such as principal coffee's, parent workshops (topics such as vaping, student stress, etc.), and family nights for AVID, STEAM, and Study Skills for Math, ELA and Science. We

also provide fun family events such as Open House, the Ice Cream Social, ELAC Potluck, and the Book Fair, among others.

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

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

#### **1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:**

At Thomas S. Hart we have done extensive work around our core curriculum. We have worked in department and grade level teams to identify Essential Standards and have created learning targets that help to support students' learning. Our teachers routinely use common formative assessments, summative assessments, and anecdotal evidence to determine individual student progress. When students do not meet learning targets, teachers will provide reteach opportunities during ACCESS periods that meet twice a week for thirty minutes each session.

In addition to formative and summative assessments in the classroom. We also use a monitoring system (NWEA by Northwest Evaluation Association) for reading and math.

We administer these school-wide assessments in the fall, winter, and spring and use this data concerning reading levels and math skills to inform instruction and to identify students who may need additional help. We also utilize the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) yearly to assess students individual progress and to evaluate trends.

The goal of the faculty and staff at Thomas Hart Middle School is to form a partnership with parents/guardians and students that will create an educational atmosphere that promotes academic and social preparedness for the 21st century. The comprehensive Common Core curriculum is designed to foster academic achievement, encourage responsibility, teach organization, and develop self-esteem. We recognize that middle school is a transitional educational and emotional period for students and parents alike. We are committed to facilitating and supporting this transition. We continue to promote our character education and digital citizenship through our Husky P.R.I.D.E. (Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Empathy) alongside the instructional program.

We believe if all students are engaged in collaborative learning opportunities across all content areas that are rigorous, stimulate critical thinking, and foster academic conversations, with multi-tiered levels of support, then all students will leave Thomas Hart Middle School prepared for success in high school and beyond.

#### **1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Hart's ELA team firmly believes that literacy is the foundation for success across all subject areas. Our ELA teachers have a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of literacy instruction which includes speaking and listening, reading, writing, and grammar. Hart's ELA teams develop lessons that build on foundational skills with readings that focus on compelling topics and writing opportunities that allow for student choice and challenge students' thinking. A continued emphasis on grammar and mechanics integrated into our writing instruction, underscores our commitment to developing well-rounded, literate students. A focus on academic vocabulary, both Tier 1 and content specific vocabulary, is also a key component of our ELA program, which allows for transfer of skills in other core classes.

Our ELA teachers provide students feedback on their grammar and writing, utilizing the Writer's Workshop model, conferring with students weekly about their writing skills. Hart ELA teachers provide ways to personalize assignments and utilize rubrics and graphic organizers to grade and assess writing more easily. They encourage students to flex their creative skills and express their style through digital and pen & paper activities.

AVID Schoolwide instructional strategies focus on Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading and teachers are provided multiple opportunities throughout the year to be trained on these 'WICOR' (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading) strategies, emphasizing the

importance of integrating these key points into non-ELA content classes.

Our teachers have worked as teams to identify Essential Standards and have created learning targets that help to support students' learning. They routinely use common formative assessments, summative assessments, and anecdotal evidence to determine individual student progress. When students do not meet learning targets, teachers will provide reteach opportunities during ACCESS periods that meet twice a week for thirty minutes each session.

Our ELA standards-based curriculum covers writing, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and reading. Sixth grade ELA curriculum focuses on short response and essay which includes writing clear coherent paragraphs with transitions and appropriate mechanics. The four writing genres include expository, narrative, argumentative, and literary analysis.

Students are routinely instructed in standards-based grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. In the sixth grade, students are exposed to a wide variety of text which includes selected core reading, a variety of short non-fiction text, core novels, and independent self-selected text. Our required core novel is *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry.

Seventh grade curriculum focuses on biographical and autobiographical narratives, expository essays, poetry, online media, drama, journalism, information text, and parody/satire.

Students are routinely instructed in standards-based grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. Core novels include 'The Outsiders' and 'The Giver'.

Eight grade curriculum focuses on research, with a particular emphasis on accurate citation of resources and argumentative writing.

Students routinely participate in Socratic Seminar/Philosophical Chairs which help them hone their speaking and listening skills, while building upon the research they have done on a variety of topics.

Students routinely read self-selected text, supplemental novels chosen at the teacher's discretion, and the core novel 'Christmas Carol.'

### **1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Staff are dedicated to ensuring that all students are properly placed in the appropriate math course. We want nothing more than to see them progress, build confidence, and succeed. Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD) middle schools are aligned in their math course placement criteria. We use multiple measures including our district MAP assessment, CAASPP scores, a student's overall grade and assessment scores in their current math course. We also consult their current math course teacher if needed to confirm appropriate placement. To ensure a fair and equitable math placement process, our math teachers administer our district assessment, MAP, during the first two weeks of school to help determine if any placement adjustments are needed.

In Hart's math program, students master computation and problem solving with rational numbers, such as fractions, decimals, and percent, as part of the process of algebra readiness—preparing for first-year high school algebra (Algebra I). Our main text book is GO MATH and workbook

We also offer advanced math courses for students who are ready for the challenge. Our course selection ranges from Algebra I to Honors Geometry.

We provide for students who need more help with our math skills classes. Many students start middle school with gaps in their mathematical foundation. These skill classes assess students and determine a course of action to remediate their gaps in mathematical computation and reasoning.

This assortment of levels creates a solid mathematical foundation for future subjects such as Algebra II,  
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Geometry, Trigonometry, and pre-Calculus.

Our math team works as a PLC (professional learning community). Mathematical classroom routines offer detailed guidance for developing students into mathematical thinkers. We use exit tickets and learning targets to facilitate and assess students' ability to understand the math essential standards.

Discussion-filled classrooms beget deeper learning. Our materials encourage student communication, collaboration and to hone the development of problem-solving and reasoning skills.

Math 6 curriculum covers integers, factors and multiples, rational numbers, operations with fractions and decimals, ratios, rates, percent, equivalent numerical expressions, algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, relations in two variables, area and polygons, distance and area in the coordinate plane, surface area and volume of solids, analyzing data

Math 7 curriculum covers proportions; equivalent expressions; solving numerical and algebraic equations; geometric figures and relationships; angles; area, surface area and volume; sampling and probability grade level and includes: proportions; equivalent expressions; solving numerical and algebraic equations; geometric figures and relationships; angles; area, surface area and volume; and sampling and probability.

Math 8 curriculum builds on the topics of the Math 7 course and introduces many topics in the Algebra curriculum. The Math 8 course provides a strong foundation for success in the Algebra course that follows Math 8.

Algebra and Geometry courses are also offered for our advanced students. These courses align the curriculum with our district high schools.

Math Skills courses are offered at all three grade levels. These courses meet daily and offer additional support math class for the students that are not meeting math standards. Math skills courses offer homework help, the reteaching of concepts, skills practice, and front-loads/pre-teaches regular course lessons. These courses have a maximum enrollment of sixteen students. Students can enter and exit the skills courses throughout the year based on the criteria established.

#### **1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Hart's science curriculum is built in alignment with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and is constructed with three-dimensional, inquiry-based instruction at its core. Every Amplify middle school lesson is strategically structured to fully engage students with anchoring phenomena, with hands-on experiments. AND lesson investigations.

Our curriculum includes Life Science which includes topics such as cells, genetics, adaptations, and ecosystems. We also study Earth Science topics such as space, planet Earth, weather and climate. We also cover Physical Sciences topics such as matter, waves, forces and energy.

6th grade curriculum focus on the microscopic world and its impact on humans, Metabolism, how the human body utilizes molecules to stay alive and Traits and Reproduction, how traits are passed from parent to offspring.

We also focus on what is thermal energy and how energy is transferred.

Ocean, Atmosphere. We study the climate and what role do oceans play in determining the climates of Earth, including what causes storms and the weather we experience.

Earth's Changing Climate. We specifically look at how molecules in the atmosphere change the way energy behaves.

Seventh grade curriculum focuses on Earth Science related to plate tectonics and rock transformations. We

study basic Chemistry including atoms and molecules, phases of matter, and chemical reactions, including the Law of Conservation of Matter, and the flow and cycling of Energy and Matter. We look at Ecology related to populations and resources, the flow and cycle of matter and energy within ecosystems, and the impact on humans. We also look at health in terms of social and emotional well-being.

Eight grade curriculum focuses on Forces in Motion including Newton's Laws of Motion and Forms of Energy. We study Energy in relation to Wavelength and Frequency and Sound and Light. We study Astronomy, Gravity, Earth, Moon, and Sun cycles. We study Evolutionary History In relation to Genetic Inheritance, Variation and Natural Selection. We include Human Impact on Earth Systems.

We are in the process of reworking our Health curriculum as the state of California has released new standards for Health. We have a team of three Hart science teachers who are working with other middle school teachers in our district to develop appropriate curriculum and learning standards.

#### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Our history department focuses on history/social science standards-based instruction, emphasizing a balance between lecture and hands-on project-based learning.

Sixth grade history curriculum is an introductory course of Ancient Civilizations, focusing on Early Humans, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Israelites and the Near East, India, China, Greece, and the Rise of the Roman Empire. Students learn about these civilizations through the lens of Geography, Religion, Achievements, Politics, Economics, and Social structure (G.R.A.P.E.S.). This helps students to determine importance about the multiple facets of each civilization. Additionally, it helps students to utilize the metacognitive strategy of 'determining importance' as they begin to refine their notetaking skills.

Seventh grade curriculum covers the Fall of the Roman Empire. Medieval Europe, the Arab World and the Rise of Islam, West Africa, China, Japan, the Americas and the Age of Exploration, Renaissance Europe, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution. Seventh grade also uses the G.R.A.P.E.S. organizational system to filter important information about each civilization.

Eighth grade/U.S. History curriculum covers Early American Civilizations, Exploration and Colonization of the Americas, the Thirteen Colonies, the American Revolution, the U.S. Constitution, A New Nation, Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny, Reform, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Industrialization. An option to participate in the annual National History Day Project is open to all students.

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

At Hart Middle School we prepare our students for the rigors of high school, and college and beyond. We also introduce our students to the concepts of career pathways through numerous programs. Additionally, our teachers per subject matter introduce students to possible career choices. We are careful not to overemphasize particular careers but rather focus on ways to expand students' understanding of the multitude of choices they might have in regards to future employment.

As part of our ACCESS enrichment program, we arrange for weekly guest speakers to come and present about their careers. These guest speakers are mostly our parents. We have had a wide range of career topics including pediatricians, set designers, police officers, paramedics, marketing executives, physicians, nurses, artists, biotech, cartoon graphic organizers, etc.

Our Counseling department is beginning to utilize a blended program (Zello) that helps students explore careers. They meet with classes a few times throughout the year to provide information and tools for students to begin to consider career pathways. Thomas Hart Middle School offers AVID, Advancement Via Individual Achievement, as an elective for 8th graders who qualify according to the guidelines of the AVID program. The AVID elective follows the prescribed AVID curriculum, with tutorials on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the year. Additionally, a field trip to local colleges and universities are held throughout the year in order to expose students to possible post-high school learning opportunities. Hart has

an active AVID committee that consists of representatives from all grade levels and departments, including special education. The AVID site committee meets quarterly to support our ‘schoolwide’ AVID plan, which includes professional development on ‘focused note taking’ across all subject areas and an emphasis on academic vocabulary.

Finally, we celebrate higher education and the achievements of every member of the Hart community by spotlighting alma maters and work experience. Most classrooms have ‘college corners’ highlighting the teachers’ alma maters.

For Career Technical Education we offer a variety of choices for students to pick from and Hart is a STEAM School. Gateway PLTW\* (Robotics) - Students explore the principles of construction, electronics, robotics, design, and other engineering related topics such as coding and programming. Utilizing both curriculum and hands-on projects, students develop their problem-solving and analytical skills, working both individually and as part of a group. \*Gateway PLTW courses use the Project Lead The Way Curriculum California State curriculum. Gateway B PLTW\* (Engineering) - This hands-on, project-based engineering course engages students on multiple levels, providing them with a solid foundation and a proven path to college and career success. This course is heavy on math and physics concepts. Computer Art students will explore traditional elements of artistic expression using digital media. Graphic arts software will be employed along with the Internet, scanners and graphics tablets to provide students with an introduction to the world of digital graphics. Computer classes learn about the science of computer hardware and software. Students learn how to write code, make their own apps and video games.

Advanced STEAM provides a combination of the middle school technology and art courses that will expose students to the interconnected nature of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. Students will create collaborative, hands-on projects using computers, internet, hands-on art techniques, programs and applications. Primary focus is placed on the commonality between the Eight Studio Habits of Mind and the Engineering Design Process. Media/Communication students engage in projects from many areas of media, including broadcasting, graphic design, photography, digital editing, interviewing, and storyboarding. Students are responsible for the production of the daily television program.

Consumer skills classes examine what it means to be a conscious consumer in today’s changing world. Students learn to see beyond advertising and social media to create an intentional life of healthy habits. Students learn basic cooking and design skills while creating projects focused on Nutrition, Fashion and Interior Design, and Child development.

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

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

Hart’s Unified Arts program offers a wide selection of enriching and rigorous courses. Our 6th and 7th graders have one period of elective choice, and our 8th graders have the opportunity for two periods of electives daily. We have a variety of semester and yearlong classes. All of our classes in the visual and performing arts (VAPA) and our career technical education (CTE) follow the framework for CCSS.

For the Visual Arts we offer a variety of choices for students to pick from.

Studio Art (2-D) students explore many artists and art projects and use a variety of art techniques and mediums. Students are encouraged to expand their creativity through drawing, painting, and design. In Studio Art (3-D) students explore several artists and projects and use a variety of art materials and mediums. Students expand their creative abilities using construction, sculpting, and design techniques. They further develop their technical knowledge and production skills by designing and developing three-dimensional artworks. Studio Art 7—Students are introduced to the Elements and Principles of Design and encouraged to expand their creativity using a variety of art materials and techniques and reflective practice. Examples of artworks are examined and discussed.

The Performing Arts department offers a rigorous curriculum aligned with the California State Standards in the performing arts. We are performance-based in our approach. The music program gives regular performances and drama presents shows periodically. Drama incorporates concepts through skits and theater games. Music offers a comprehensive performance-based program including two levels of chorus, four levels of bands, three levels of orchestra and a jazz band. Music classes incorporate performances (school, community and festival performances), music theory, playing tests including rhythm and scales, and improvisation/composition. Students learn music history and world music in the context of playing repertoire. Sixth grade students get a strong foundation of good vocal and instrumental technique and music literacy (including use of solfege in chorus and instrumental classes). Seventh and 8th graders build on this foundation, learning major and minor scales, and more complex rhythms in several meters, along with more advanced concepts (articulation, dynamics, form, and expression). Current music instructors include a musicologist who holds a doctorate in world music and an active composer who writes and arranges music for the ensembles. Parent volunteers and the Thomas Hart Music Boosters support music needs and help organize field trips. Thanks to Booster support, we bring coaches to help with the jazz band, jazz combos, and string quartets for advanced students. Instrument coaches (percussion, vocal, brass) supplement instructor expertise. Our Speech and Drama classes help students increase their self-esteem, gain composure, and express creativity in front of a group through theater. After exploring oral interpretation, pantomime and improvisation, students learn stage techniques and participate in the production of selected plays.

Our Physical Education (PE) Department focuses on California Standards for Physical Education instruction. Students rotate through a series of units ranging from our beginning of the year 'dance unit' to basketball, track and field, hockey, among other sports. P.E. teachers emphasize the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including appropriate sleep and a well-balanced diet as part of their comprehensive physical education curriculum.

Our World Language classes provide students the opportunity to earn a year of high school credit by completing two years of middle school World Language. We offer Spanish and French. This two-year curriculum follows A-G Spanish ;1 and covers the basic of language acquisition including alphabet, numbers, days of the week, months of the year, weather, greetings and introductions, expressing likes and dislikes, school, food, and healthy living, location of places in the community, after school activities, and accepting and declining invitations. We practice developing our listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiencies in the present tense of the target language. Our students are ready to take year two of Spanish or French in High School.

### **3. Academic Supports**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level:**

Thomas Hart Middle School has a system to provide students with multi-levels (three tiers) support. An 'Intervention Flow Chart' outlines the protocol all staff follows when developing support for all students. Sometimes, students attend 'reteach' and 'guided study.' And Access sessions if they are still experiencing difficulty grasping the material. These students are identified by teachers, Intervention Specialists, and counselors. A digital 'on the radar' form is completed and the data is analyzed at weekly ADCO (Administration-Counselor) meetings on Wednesday mornings. Two students are identified every other week and assigned to our 'Intervention Team.' The 'Intervention Team' consists of members of our Guiding Coalition along with all the students' teachers. At this bi-monthly (twice a month) meeting, teachers describe the concerns, provide data, and develop a plan for the student. After the Intervention Team meets, sometimes it is decided to place students in an additional level of support. Below are the current Tier 3 supports:

1. ELA -LLI - Leveled Literacy Intervention by Fountas and Pinnell. Small group targeted intervention program which focuses on fluency, decoding, comprehension, and writing.

2. Math Skills - Targeted intervention for students who are not proficient in identified grade-level essential

standards. Math skills courses offer homework help, the reteaching of concepts, skills practice, and front-loads/pre-teaches regular course lessons

3. Academic Support focuses on executive functioning skills, self-advocacy, goal setting, time management, and student accountability. Weekly grade checks are required.

At Hart we support our students who are performing below grade level with the least restrictive environment. Our teachers utilize differentiated instruction to support all students. For students with disabilities, we have an extensive Special Education program and 504 plans as appropriate. Additionally, through our RTI ACCESS period students may receive additional help weekly. Teachers are able to offer targeted support and pull students who need that support into these classes during the school day. This immediate response to students struggling with a learning target will help them to catch up.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level:**

At Hart we support our students who are performing above grade level with extension and challenge level options. Our teachers utilize differentiated instruction to support all students. For students who excel we have advanced level math and world language course options. Additionally, through our RTI ACCESS period students may elect to sign up for enrichment opportunities including career exploration through our guest speaker series, math challenge game, science expansion topics, art, mindfulness activities, etc. The Intervention Specialists help to monitor the overall offerings and seat count so that students are able to find classes that support their current needs or interests.

### **3c. Special education:**

Here at Hart Middle School, we have a variety of special education programs and services available to our middle school students. We currently have a Resource and Special Day Class (Mild to Moderate) Program. Within our Resource program we offer tiered levels of support. We currently have a self-contained model in the subjects of both Language Arts and Math. These courses parallel the general education classes in the curriculum and are taught by a credentialed Special Education teacher with a paraprofessional. In addition to our core subjects, our special education program also offers a self-contained Resource Lab/Study Skills course in which the special education teacher teaches executive functioning and organization skills using AVID approaches and materials. Students also receive content support and are able to take assessments during this time.

We also offer a co-taught model with push-in support by either a special education teacher or a paraprofessional in Language Arts and Math courses. Hart Middle School additionally offers the following special education services: Adaptive P.E, Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Assistive Technology, Behavior Support, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Counseling, and Mental Health Counseling.

### **3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:**

Hart's growing Emerging Bilingual (EB) population requires three levels of E.B. classes: Newcomer level, E.B.2.0, and E.B. 2.5. Placement in each of these levels is determined by multiple factors: English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) results, arrival date in the U.S., universal screener results, teacher recommendations, and informal and formal assessments.

Our Newcomer class is geared towards those students with an ELPAC levels of 1-2, and utilizes materials aimed at beginning levels of language acquisition and heavily incorporates visuals, rhyme and chants, picture clues, etc. Newcomer students are exposed to a plethora of activities that increases their opportunities to utilize the language. Our adopted curriculum begins with basic commands and vocabulary which lowers the affective filter which enables students to feel comfortable in their new environment.

Our E.B. 2 and 2.5 program focuses on our 'expanding Emerging Bilinguals.' Content becomes increasingly complex, with the ultimate goal of placing students in regular ELA grade level classes when multiple measures prove they are ready to do so. Students in our level 2 and 2.5 classes receive the appropriate

scaffolds and support they need prior to being placed in English Only ELA classes. Teachers use a variety of materials from graphic organizers, frontloading vocabulary, visuals, and sentence stems.

Our E.B. students are constantly progress monitored, and students are moved into higher levels of classes when data suggests they are ready for a higher level of rigor. The master schedule is designed for horizontal movement to minimize schedule disruptions as students' progress through the English language acquisition process.

Hart's Emerging Bilingual teachers have ongoing collaborative conversations within their department and with content area teachers, providing support as needed to those teachers regarding ways to scaffold curriculum and integrate appropriate supports for our emerging bilinguals.

When students are reclassified, we hold a 'Reclassification Ceremony' acknowledging the hard work and perseverance these students have accomplished in order to reach the distinction of earning the 'seal of biliteracy'.

**3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:**

In addition to our tiered supports, we have a number of additional supports to help our identified homeless and foster youth students and their families. We have after school student cohorts that staffed with credentialed teachers and classroom aids. These students are assisted with transportation home as needed. Additionally, our district has Parent Liaisons and social workers who have connections with each of these families and helps to provide resources as family situations evolve and change.

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

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

Thomas S. Hart is a great school to attend and it is a fun place to learn. We hear often from our alumni and their parents as to how much they loved it at Hart and miss it! Our students are engaged learners who collaborate with peers and use critical thinking skills to research and problem solve.

We have a positive school culture that promotes kindness, acceptance, and a growth mindset. Before school starts in the fall, our counselors and leadership students host a HUSKY WELCOME event. All of our sixth graders and any student new to Hart receives a welcome tour of the school and is able to participate in some fun icebreakers and get-to-know-you activities so that every student already has a connection on day one. Our leadership students also work to decorate the school and are out on our first day of school to welcome everyone and to help students to find their classes. Additionally, throughout the year our leadership and ASB (Associated Student Body) students offer a variety of activities and events including Fun Fridays and Spirit Days, Diversity Week, etc.

Our teachers and staff ‘dig’ middle school students and have all had some PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) training. Our response to students is positive even if the student has made a no-so-positive choice. Our staff and administrators use alternative discipline activities whenever appropriate and we use these opportunities as teaching moments. We are consistent in our response, we do not ignore behavior concerns, but rather respond with kind enforcement.

In the classroom our teachers are energized and use many teaching strategies to engage students. Our teachers have been trained in blended learning programs and use technology to also captivate their students' attention. Our teachers use differentiation to individualize student needs. With our Multi-tiered level of support our students are provided opportunity for reteaching or additional help twice weekly during our ACCESS period. We strive to not allow any student to fall behind. Teachers use formative assessments to continually provide feedback to students so they know where they may need to improve and have time during school during ACCESS to receive more help.

Our ACCESS periods also provide enrichment opportunities for students who are doing well. Our team provides many such options for students including book clubs, writing clubs, guest speakers, therapy dogs, yoga, meditation, body conditioning, math games, art projects, extension science experiments, etc. These activities are very popular with our students.

We do, however, have students who may need additional support. If a student is struggling, we have tiered levels of support and teachers can refer a student with academic or emotional concerns to our COST team. This team consists of Counselors, Parent Liaisons, Social Workers, Administrators and Child Welfare (attendance), and Administrators. This is an effective team that considers how to help these individual students in need. Sometimes we may need to hold an SST (Student Support Team) meeting with parents. These meetings may determine a student has appropriate needs for a 504 plan. In addition, we have a fantastic and highly trained Special Education team who work in partnership with our general education teachers. We strive to provide the least restrictive environment for learning with appropriate support for success.

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

One of the biggest reasons Thomas S. Hart is such a great school to attend is the support from our parent community. We have an active Parent-Teacher-Student- Association (PTSA) that consistently supports our students and school.

We have a high participation of our parents in a variety of events. We have many volunteer opportunities throughout the year including chaperoning field trips, and parent education nights (guest speakers addressing concerns such as school anxiety, school safety, etc.). We also hold a number of family events

including our Book Fair, Ice cream Social, and Open House. We have a large group of 8th grade parents who volunteer to plan a Promotion Party which is a special evening of activities for each 8th grade class.

Our PTSA also helps us to host our STEAM night. We have vendors from local businesses in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math who set up booths. We have such organizations as The Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Laboratory, and the Foothill and Amador High School Robotics Club, etc. participate. Many of our teachers also showcase their students work and provide fun activities. We open this event to all of our elementary and middle school families to attend. We have had as many as 250 families attend.

The PTSA has established a classroom grant program that supports teachers, thus providing for students. These grants have been in place for a number of years. These grants support some creative and engaging projects for students as well as some very practical enhancements to provide better instruction. One recent example of grants received was new ergonomically enhanced kitchen tools that would benefit our students with fine motor skills challenges (i.e., rubber bottom mixing bowls). This not only benefited many of our Special Day Class (SDC) students but many of our general education students as well.

Hart also has a robust instrumental and chorus program. We have many events and have tremendous parent support. Our students perform beautifully and are given many opportunities to showcase their talents because of our parent participation. We have parents helping with our sports, clubs and other activities as well. Family support is key to our HUSKY success.

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

In 2020, Hart Middle School was recognized as a School to Watch for the state of California. The Schools to Watch recognized Thomas S. Hart Middle School for our work implementing RTI (Response to Intervention) as part of our MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Supports) we provide to our students.

Our team works as a Professional Learning Community. We provide professional development to our staff during collaboration approximately twice a month. The topics for these trainings are developed during our collaboration council monthly meeting which gives input as to what we need to help our teacher best help our students. Sometimes we have guest expert speakers, sometimes our staff brings back information from conferences, and/or members of our own team share best practices. We have a number of teacher cohorts that meet to explore topics of students need. These include our Guiding Coalition (Response to Intervention leaders), our Department Chairs, and our Grading for Equity Cohort, etc. We collaborate on what our students need now and we also look to the future as to how we can adjust school systems, teaching practices, etc. to best help all of our students succeed.

As a Professional Learning Community our teachers meet regularly in departments and grade level teams. We have identified essential starts and have learning targets. These teams work together to support students not meeting learning targets and provide reteach and retest opportunities. This usually occurs during ACCESS time and ensures that sufficient, effective resources are available to provide tier 2 interventions for students in need of supplemental support.

On Wednesday we have allotted time to provide staff with weekly collaboration time (50 mins.) as part of our Professional Learning Community. Teacher teams to discuss our guiding questions: How will we know if they have learned it? What do we do if they don't? What do we do if they have?

Teacher teams use data to decide ACCESS period offerings and best instructional practices. ACCESS time provides reteach, retest, study zones, and enrichment opportunities. ACCESS time provides extra supports for students built into our schedule.

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

At Thomas S. Hart we have a collaborative team approach to leadership, this includes the adults and student leadership on campus. We are open to input from all stakeholders. We use a variety of surveys to gather

input.

Our staff consists of one principal, two vice principals, 52 teachers, nine instructional aides, three counselors, one speech therapist, one school psychologist, 13 support staff, and six part-time campus monitors. Students receive core instruction in English, Social Science, Math, Science and Physical Education. Additionally, students have elective choices in Foreign Language, Art, Culinary Skills, Drama, and STEM/STEAM programs

We have many teams, including an Administration team, a Front Office team, a Department Chair team, department teams, a Guiding Coalition, and several Cohorts of staff working on specific topics, such as a Safety Team, a Green Team, a PBIS team, etc. We have student leadership teams including our Associated Student Body and School Student Leadership team. We also have our parent organization (PTSA) who we consult with regularly and our School Site council that has representatives from Administration, teachers, staff parents and students. They advise us on developing our school goals through the lens of data.

Critical to our curriculum instruction is our instructional leaders in our Department Chair Team, Guiding Coalition, and, of course our individual department teams. Our Department Chairs not only work on nuts and bolt items to help our school run smoothly, but they also contribute greatly to overall vision of the school and use data to make decisions. Our Guiding Coalition concentrates their efforts on Response to Intervention and help to plan what our next steps to fully implementing RTI at Hart. Our department teams do divide into grade level per department teams and work on best practices to deliver curriculum and support student during ACCESS period. These teams continue to refine essential standards, learning targets and develop common formative assessment to guide their teaching and reteaching. What do we want our students to learn?

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

Thomas S. Hart middle school has a diverse population of students and our team continues to grow our culturally responsive teaching practices. Our teachers are empathetic and caring who want to help and support students anyway they can. We are continuing to learn about the cultures we serve and have an inclusive campus. Our teachers are using activities to activate student's prior knowledge and experiences. We are all learning from each other: students from teachers and teachers from students.

As part of our response to intervention as a whole team, we have been looking closely at grading practices and how we can make them more equitable for all our students. This is no small matter because it requires that teachers transcend their own biases and preferences to establish and develop new patterns for learning and communicating that engage and sustain student participation and achievement. We have a small cohort of our teachers who have been participating in some district trainings and discussions on equity in grading and they have brought back information and discussion back to our team.

We have a growing population of English Learners; and, we have focused in on best practices which supports these and all of our students. We have excellent teachers who provide two periods of English Language and one period of Sheltered History. Our emerging bilinguals are progressing very well.

This year we have invited our struggling EL learners to a special after school student cohort that have supportive staff who speak a variety of languages and give student 1:1 or small group instruction. They work on math and science primarily, but will help students with all subjects. This cohort is on Wednesday after school for two hours and we have found transportation home to those who need it. During the 20-minute break we have been teaching these students playground games such as 4-Square and Horse, so that student can know how to join games at lunch. These students are also doing share outs about themselves and their games which our staff has learned many insights.

We have now started an additional cohort for our Socio-Economically Disadvantaged and Foster youth. This cohort is one-hour a day after school three days a week as we found this format would best help these families. This cohort is also staffed with teachers and aides who are able to assist 1:1 on in small groups. We have seen significant progress with both cohorts. Our parent liaisons work closely to support all of these

families.

This is the eighth year Hart has held a Diversity Day. This day celebrates our diversity and provides lessons in empathy and understanding for our students. This year our day includes guest performers from the High Schools Diversity Group, a talent show of our own students and grade level appropriate activities that provide windows and mirror activities. We have expanded these types of culturally sensitive to other inclusive lessons such as having an assembly for The Wheel Chair Foundation.

Additionally, Hart currently uses time several times monthly for Character Strong activities that help our student and staff learn to be more sensitive and tolerant and to continue to show HUSKY P.R.I.D.E. (Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Empathy).

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

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Our most instrumental practice we have at Hart is our two-day a week ACCESS period. We began using ACCESS period in 2019 and it has made a huge difference for our students.

As a team our teachers meet regularly in departments and grade level teams. We have identified essential starts and have learning targets. These teams work together to support students not meeting learning targets and provide reteach and retest opportunities. This usually occurs during ACCESS time and ensures that sufficient, effective resources are available to provide tier 2 interventions for students in need of supplemental support.

On Wednesday we have allotted time to provide staff with weekly collaboration time (50 mins.) as part of our Professional Learning Community. Teacher teams to discuss our guiding questions: How will we know if they have learned it? What do we do if they don't? What do we do if they have?

Teacher teams use data to decide ACCESS period offerings and best instructional practices. ACCESS time provides reteach, retest, study zones, and enrichment opportunities. ACCESS time provides extra supports for students built into our schedule.

With our Multi-tiered level of supports, our students are provided opportunity for reteaching or additional help twice weekly during our ACCESS period. We strive to not allow any student to fall behind. Teachers use formative assessments to continually provide feedback to students so they know where they may need to improve and have time during school during ACCESS to receive more help.

Our ACCESS periods also provide enrichment opportunities for students who are doing well. Our team provides many such options for students including book clubs, writing clubs, guest speakers, therapy dogs, yoga, meditation, body conditioning, math games, art projects, extension science experiments, etc. These activities are very popular with our students. Our ACCESS periods provide intervention and extension to all our students, and is one of the most impactful practices we have at Thomas S. Hart Middle School. What do we want our students to learn?