

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

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

Official School Name James B Eads Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8000 Jackson Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Munster State IN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 46321-1199

County Lake County

Telephone (219) 836-8635 Fax (219) 836-3217

Web site/URL https://jbe.munster.us/ E-mail lmbevil@munster.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. Bret Heller E-mail bsheller@munster.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name School Town Of Munster Tel. (219) 836-9111

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

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Dr. Ingrid Schwarz Wolf  
(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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	40	35	75
1	44	38	82
2	40	36	76
3	43	54	97
4	52	29	81
5	43	54	97
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	262	246	508

\*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
  - 7 % Asian
  - 10 % Black or African American
  - 32 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 45 % White
  - 6 % 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: 11%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	23
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	33
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	56
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	513
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish, Urdu, Polish, Vietnamese, Gujarati, Punjabi, Kannada, Serbian, Mandarin (Sichuanese)

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 8 %  
39 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 23 %

Total number students who qualify: 118

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 12 %  
62 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>7</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>1</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>51</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
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 20:1

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	96%	96%	97%	97%	97%
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.

Help students demonstrate academic growth and social responsibility in a supportive and intellectually challenging learning environment. Vision for the School Town of Munster is a district of national distinction (Supporting Every Child Every Day)

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

<https://www.munster.us/Portals/0/Popovich/Non-Discrimination.pdf?ver=2020-06-03-211620-817>

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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The mission of James B. Eads Elementary School (Eads) is to help students demonstrate academic growth and social responsibility in a supportive and intellectually challenging learning environment. We develop core values, goals, and initiatives that drive our school improvement efforts in partnership with our families and the community.

Eads is one of three elementary schools located in Munster, Indiana, near the Illinois state line and 15 miles south of Lake Michigan. Munster has a population of approximately 23,000 people and has been experiencing a gradual and consistent increase in poverty over the past decade. Eads School services the highest percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch assistance in the school district, with 23 percent of our students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. Our families are involved in their children's educational progress, and that parent support has been quintessential to the school's overall success. Despite socio-economic hardships, our students have demonstrated academic and personal success. In 2017-18, Eads School was nominated for the Title III Distinguished School Award based upon data analysis of student performance.

The professional staff at Eads includes thirty-two full-time certified teachers, two certified administrators, one full-time reading specialist, and one full-time Title I teacher. To encourage and challenge all students to develop to their fullest potential, Eads has dedicated resource personnel to support students with learning exceptionalities. The Title I teacher supervises five instructional assistants who work with at-risk students. Further, Eads uses both push-in and pull-out interventions to support students with exceptional needs: two full-time exceptional needs teachers pull students into resource labs, and four instructional assistants push into classrooms. In addition, as a Kindness Certified school, Eads has a full-time social worker who works with individual students and groups of students to provide support and lessons on social-emotional learning. We also have a Response to Intervention (RTI) program that serves all grade levels based on student needs.

Professional development for instructional staff is aligned with the school improvement plan and the district strategic plan. Goals for professional development are based on student achievement needs as indicated through data points like Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Indiana Learning Evaluation Readiness Network (ILEARN), Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD) and building-based assessments. Further, Eads School has been a professional development site in partnership with Purdue University Northwest. College students have worked in Eads classrooms in the areas of math and science, and many teachers host student teachers whenever the opportunity arises.

The curriculum is aligned with the Indiana State Academic Standards. Our students have displayed tremendous academic growth, as demonstrated on the ILEARN assessment. Our pass rate exceeds the state averages in all areas. In addition to academics, Eads School seeks to develop student leadership through several student-centered educational opportunities that enhance academic knowledge while also teaching and modeling the life skills necessary for participating in a global community. For example, Eads has adopted a life skills program through our partnership with C.L.A.S.S. (Connecting Learning Assures Successful Students). Further, the Eads Leads student leadership team teaches 4th and 5th graders leadership skills to model for the school and build upon as they move up to secondary education. Other programs within the school include D.A.R.E.; state competitions such as Science Bowl, Math Bowl, and Spell Bowl; Robotics; and KKids (Kiwaniis service organization).

In March 2020, the world closed down to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, and schools faced the unprecedented challenge to provide quality instruction while students remained at home for virtual instruction. For the entire 2020-21 school year, synchronous learning was provided to all students every day, with at-home students receiving the exact instruction as those who attended in person. Teachers, parents, and staff partnered to provide students with quality instruction, and they worked tirelessly to ensure students continued to learn and receive personal and academic support. Although the 2021-22 school year began with Covid protocols, there were fewer restrictions than the previous year. All students were in school but wore masks and were spaced apart according to social distance requirements. If a student was home due to Covid, he or she began remote learning synchronously in all subject areas. Teachers taught both at-home learners



and in-class students with great success. After Covid restrictions were lifted in February 2022, our students rejoiced when they could collaborate in small groups and play together at recess.

When guests enter Eads School, they comment on the positive energy in the building. Whether the personnel is office staff, cafeteria staff, custodians, instructional assistants, or teachers, everyone is greeted with kindness. James B. Eads School provides a diverse, fun, and academically challenging environment that contributes to fulfilling the district vision—A district of national distinction.

## **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 Eads School, we believe that all students can learn, and the school community is obligated to ensure that they do. The primary focus of our curriculum design and instructional implementation is directed toward achieving this goal. The curriculum is carefully selected by teacher committees for each subject area. Committees evaluate curricula based on Common Core Learning Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and Indiana Academic Standards. Each content area curriculum reflects the cultural needs and values of the community and applies research on how children learn. Eads teachers use curriculum mapping and resources to develop rigorous and engaging lessons.

Eads stakeholders view assessment as a vital part of an effective instructional program. All students are benchmarked in fall, winter, and spring using NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). Students in grades 3-6 take the state-mandated tests, Indiana Learning Evaluation Readiness Network (ILEARN). Third grade students take the state-mandated Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD-3). Using the data from these sources, teachers collaborate with specialists to review data and determine tiered instruction in and out of the classroom.

Assessment drives our instruction, and research-based instructional practices are imperative to accomplishing our goals. Classroom teachers guide students in setting personal academic goals based on MAP data. Student data folders are used to collect and organize data from MAP, reading levels, and math fact fluency. Students create goals based on this data that are monitored at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. During student conferencing teachers provide feedback and coaching to encourage students to take ownership of their learning.

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

Eads uses the Indiana Academic Standards to design and teach English language arts in the classroom. Teachers use the Wonders reading curriculum during their required 90-minute reading block to design and teach small group instruction and practice reading and writing skills. Our reading instruction focuses on the five literacy components: phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Using the Daily Five components, we incorporate read-to-self, read-to-someone, listen-to-reading, word-work, and writing. Guided reading groups are structured using student data. Teachers use guided reading groups to target specific skills needed to help students grow as readers and writers. We believe phonics is a foundational skill that is essential for students to become strong readers, spellers, and writers. Therefore, we have implemented the Heggerty Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Curriculum in grades K-2. Targeted skills are spiraled throughout the school year so students have many opportunities to achieve mastery.

To accelerate learning in response to Covid-19, data supported the need for additional support in guided reading. The instructional coach provided training and professional development on best practices to support teachers and specialists. Our reading data showed that we had exemplary growth, even though 85% of our students were in-person learning and 15% were learning remotely during the 2020-2021 school year.

An Eads first grade teacher wrote a grant for a leveled bookroom. This bookroom houses additional reading materials to supplement guided reading instruction. Over 410 titles and multiple copies of each title (2,460 total) were purchased and organized by reading level. Teachers and specialists were trained to use the various text levels within their classrooms.

Eads current third grade students demonstrated a 91% pass rate on the Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD-3) assessment. The state of Indiana developed the IREAD-3 assessment to measure

the foundational reading skills of students at the end of their third grade school year. This achievement is attributed to our commitment to rigorous and responsive reading instruction.

Eads teachers believe that writing about reading is essential for deeper comprehension and vocabulary building. Teachers make daily writing practice a priority using Smekens 6+1 Trait Writing strategies. Teachers assess student growth using quarterly writing samples and grade-level rubrics. Peer writing examples are used to model strong writing skills, and this process encourages students to revise and improve their work.

In addition to the core reading program, students that are not progressing at grade level are provided a literacy intervention to help them close the gaps. Teachers progress monitor reading levels to determine intervention needs and continually differentiate instruction.

Our commitment to literacy education is evident in our finish in the Indiana Association of School Principals Spell Bowl statewide academic competition in 2020 and 2021. We consistently finished in the state's top ten each year.

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

Eads uses the Indiana Academic Standards for Mathematics to design and teach math. Teachers use the Everyday Math curriculum, developed by the University of Chicago, to focus and guide their math instruction. Everyday Math benefits our students' learning through spiraling skills throughout the year, a variety of teaching strategies, and methods for problem-solving mathematical computation. Eads teachers believe that for students to be successful mathematicians, they need to have hands-on experiences, build strong number sense, have access to real-world applications, explain their mathematical thinking, be fluent with basic facts, ask and answer math questions, and struggle with challenging mathematical problems productively. Students use manipulatives, play games, justify reasoning, and engage in mathematical conversations daily during the 90-minute math block. Teachers have received extensive training in Everyday Mathematics and inquiry-based best practices.

At the same time, a blend of digital and print resources keeps students involved in the lessons. Digital resources can be used by students at school and at home to reference and practice daily skills. All students have access to hands-on manipulatives for use in the classroom and at home. Parents connect to math instruction via a unit newsletter and daily Home Links.

To identify students in need of additional support, teachers use the beginning and end of year assessments, end of unit assessments, classroom performance, and observations. Helping students become stronger problem-solvers has been a focus during weekly grade-level team meetings as teachers discuss strengths and trends in student work on problem-solving tasks. Each unit has a two-day problem-solving lesson that encourages students to share mathematical justifications and explore the thinking of their peers.

The ILEARN data in grades 3-5 indicates that our students are consistently performing above state average scores, and our MAP data in grades K-5 indicate that our students are consistently performing above national norms. We are continuing to build upon our strong math foundation by developing opportunities for students to practice their skills in more rigorous problem-solving experiences.

In addition to the core math program, students that are not progressing at grade level are provided a math intervention to help them close the gaps. Teachers use formative and summative assessments to determine intervention needs and continually differentiate instruction.

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

The Indiana Science and Computer Science Standards guide our focus from kindergarten through fifth grade. We use the Pearson Elevate science curriculum which provides interactive lessons that engage students in scientific inquiry, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) activities, and problem-based hands-on learning. Using a blend of digital and print text and experiences allows students to

meet Next Generation Science Standards. Teachers model and provide opportunities for students to create questions and answer them through research and experiments. Students learn with partners, in small groups, and in whole-class activities. Students take formative and summative assessments to demonstrate their understanding of scientific concepts.

Our One-to-One computer initiative allows students to actively engage in learning Computer Science Standards. The devices move fluidly between school and home so learning can extend beyond the school day. Students use their technology skills in all curriculum areas.

Eads school collaborates with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to maintain an up-to-date stocked science lab. Parent volunteers have donated their time and efforts to furnish rolling science carts to each grade level so that STEM resources are always accessible. These STEM carts support each unit's hands-on explorations. Examples of STEM activities include clay for building models, measurement tools, legos, rock samples, robotics, and circuit pieces.

Our commitment to science and technology education is evident in our finish in the Indiana Association of School Principals Science Bowl statewide academic competition in 2019, 2020, and 2021. We consistently finished in the state's top ten each year.

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

Social Studies lessons and activities are aligned with Indiana Academic Standards. Grades K-2 use the Studies Weekly program that is cross-curricular and developmentally appropriate for young learning. Grades 3-5 use the Pearson My World curriculum. Each grade level covers essential topics and questions that are addressed throughout the year: kindergarten learns about living and learning together, first grade focuses on home and school roles and responsibilities, second and third grades learn about the local and regional community, fourth grade learns about Indiana, and fifth grade learns about the foundation of our nation using the We The People curriculum.

Students make connections to the world around them through meaningful discussions and activities. Third grade students research indigenous peoples native to the region and share that learning through Google slide presentations. Fourth grade students focus on the history of Indiana. Students learn about the history of Indiana's people, places, and events, and how they have shaped Indiana as a state. Students also learn about the government of Indiana, including the branches of government, as well as the rights and responsibilities of Indiana citizens. As a culminating activity, fourth grade students travel to the Central Till Plain, to visit the Tippecanoe Battle Ground, the site of the 1811 battle between U.S. forces and representatives from the Native American confederation. Next students travel to our state capital to tour the Statehouse and visit all three branches of the government. Finally, students travel back to the 1800s and visit Conner Prairie, a living museum that shows what pioneer life was like during the 19th century.

Before Covid restrictions, we welcomed visitors such as the director of the Munster Historical Society, actors that role played historical figures, lawyers who assisted with We the People, and numerous community members that taught economic lessons from the Junior Achievement Program. Junior Achievement's lessons are taught in Kindergarten through fifth grade. These lessons focus on financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship.

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

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

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

At Eads School, students in kindergarten through grade five engage in art, music, physical education, and library programs. These programs are an essential extension of our core curriculum, as they nurture physical wellness, creativity, growth mindset, curiosity, and student strengths.

All grades participate in creating art that allows students to problem solve, think critically, and express themselves. Students are exposed to various art mediums and diverse artists through their art-making. Each student has a personal online gallery on Artsonia, which showcases their growth as an artist. In recent years, the art department hosted a school-wide art show.

Students develop a greater understanding and appreciation of music through general music classes and varied activities and experiences. Age-appropriate musical literacy is the core of the music classroom, hoping that the students will also develop a love of music that will inspire them to continue participating in music throughout their lives. Students build their musical skills through singing, reading and listening to music, playing instruments, moving to music, and creating/composing music. Instrumental performance is used to reinforce student music reading skills and hand-eye coordination. Students work as a community to create musical performances and foster teamwork in each group. Third and fourth grade students focus on developing recorder skills while fifth graders are introduced to keyboard skills. These skills develop music literacy and give students the chance to build self-confidence and grow at a pace that works best for them.

Physical education promotes each student's optimum physical, emotional, and social-emotional development through carefully planned activities. Students participate in an environment that allows them to develop their physical skills, teamwork, leadership, sportsmanship, and self-esteem. In the spring, students in fourth and fifth grade participate in a field day, where they can compete in events of their choice. Students in the younger grades participate in a physical activity-focused fun day.

Students in the fourth and fifth grades who enjoy singing can join the elementary Treble Makers Choir. Fifth grade students interested in the orchestra have the chance to begin studying an instrument in the second semester of the year in preparation for middle school. Our art department offers fourth and fifth grade students an opportunity to participate in the Art Club. Girls on the Run promotes physical and emotional support for students in grades 3-5.

Each specialist teacher awards a student of the month award to a student in each grade level. The Music Maestros, Artists, and Athletes of the Month are those students who exemplify the life skill we are studying that month.

Finally, our school library provides a diverse collection of high-interest books. Students in all grades utilize the library to check out books and listen to books read by the library instructional assistant. In partnership with our community library, Eads School takes part in the Lake County Read-a-Thon every year. Donations are made to support our county and local libraries.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

All grade levels have a daily thirty-minute reading and math intervention time. Intervention time is used for students needing small group differentiated instruction and is funded through Title I grants. Identification for intervention is determined by triangulating data such as classroom performance, standardized assessment data (MAP, IREAD, ILEARN), and current reading levels. Teachers track reading levels, reading fluency, sight word recognition, and math fact fluency and MAP assessment data collected in August, December and March to help inform decisions about intervention needs. Using MAP test scores and percentiles each grade level records student data on our digital data dashboard. The data dashboard is used for data team meetings to determine students' eligibility to enter the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.

Due to the importance of early intervention, students in K-2 receive reading support from the reading specialist. The reading specialist uses the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention system to instruct students who are reading below grade level benchmarks. Students are grouped according to reading

levels and areas of weakness. Data-driven decisions are utilized to move students within groups to address learning gaps.

The Title I intervention teacher and instructional assistants provide reading and math support. The intervention curriculums include Leveled Literacy, Tier II/III materials from the Wonders reading series, Focus math, VMath, and IXL. Students in the RTI process are monitored more frequently and intensively using easyCBM. Progress for intervention students is continuously monitored, and teachers work collaboratively with the intervention teachers and RTI team to discuss student progress and next steps. This year we have supported 93 students in reading (18% of our student population) and 67 students in math (13% of our student population) through our Title I program.

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

High ability support is designed to address the diverse needs of students with high academic or cognitive potential. This year, 74 students in grades 1-5 receive high ability instruction. Enhanced learning opportunities are provided to challenge and enrich beyond the traditional curriculum.

The School Town of Munster has developed a high ability handbook that outlines best practices for identifying and serving high ability students. It is accessible on our district website to all stakeholders and used as a framework for our high ability program. Our school corporation has an unbiased identification process based on measurable criteria. Cognitive Abilities Test and MAP assessment percentiles identify students who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate extraordinary capability in verbal and quantitative reasoning. High ability instruction is designed with inquiry-based learning at the forefront and includes strategies that cultivate critical and creative thinking and encourage problem-solving.

High ability students are clustered in classrooms where teachers are licensed or trained to respond to their specific academic and social/emotional needs. This clustering allows students to receive high ability services continually and consistently. Content is rigorous and accelerated, promoting the achievement of maximum growth for all students. Grades 3-5 utilize the Center for Gifted Education curriculum at the College of William and Mary. The curriculum includes the William and Mary Literature Units and Jacob's Ladder, which targets high ability learners' reading comprehension skills.

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

Eads students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) receive instruction in general education or resource classrooms. Currently, twenty-two Eads students qualify to receive special education services, which is 5% of our student population.

Instruction or support is provided by the special education teacher or instructional assistants. Students work on individual IEP goals and state standards within the school curriculum. Student progress is monitored quarterly, and goals are revised as needed. The special education teacher works collaboratively with the classroom teachers and provides adapted materials for students according to individual needs.

When creating an IEP for goals and accommodations, the team of experts (special education teacher, general education teacher, related service providers, and instructional assistants) come together to discuss what is working well with the student and what is still an area of need. Student data review occurs at targeted points throughout the year to ensure progress toward individual goals is being met.

Eads school has a Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) program. The PASS program teacher provides service to students with an IEP needing behavioral support due to the impact on academic performance. Students check in and check out, moving continuously between the PASS and general education classrooms to ensure that instruction is fluid and consistent while maintaining necessary behavioral supports. The special education teacher collaborates with the general education teacher to model behavior management tools for a successful learning environment and creates behavior plans that are utilized both in the resource and general education environments.

The Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) provides direct service in small groups to students with Speech and Language processing goals. The SLP collaborates with parents, teachers, and other professionals to provide interventions for speech and language disorders.

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

English Learners (EL) participate in a fully inclusive classroom experience while receiving additional pull-out or push-in support each day. Eads currently services 53 students with nine different native languages, which accounts for 10% of the student population. EL learners take the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) state test each year to determine present levels in the four domains of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Their score is used to create an individual learning plan shared with all stakeholders. Communication with EL families is ongoing through contact in their native language if necessary. Parent conferences and school events allow EL families to strengthen partnerships with teachers, peers, and community members.

English Language learners receive support and classroom/assessment accommodations based on their current WIDA levels and areas of individual need. Classroom teachers and the EL teacher work collaboratively to meet the unique needs of EL learners by implementing supports and accommodations that best contribute to each student's success. The EL teacher will push into classrooms to adapt materials and work with small groups of EL students. Teachers take part in the professional development of best practices for teaching EL students.

EL students participate in all local and state assessments. As with all students, we consistently monitor growth to determine how best to assist students with achievement gaps, recognizing that each EL student with different cultural backgrounds and experiences will progress at different rates as they acquire English language proficiency. Through the support of differentiated needs and English language acquisition, over 90% of our EL students reach the fluent level in their yearly WIDA assessment before entering middle school.

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

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

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

Creating a positive learning environment at Eads School is essential to building relationships and engaging students. The school day starts with greeting students at the door each morning, establishing routines and daily expectations, and fostering a sense of community in the classroom. Students are encouraged to do their best through Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). Classrooms earn Colts Strips for demonstrating monthly life skills, following procedures, and showing kindness to others. Once a classroom builds a Colts Chain, they earn schoolwide recognition and rewards that foster a positive school climate.

The social worker provides classrooms with social/emotional lessons every month. The curriculum is based on Indiana Academic Standards for Health and Wellness. Lessons include topics such as self-regulation, self-awareness, mindfulness, positive mindset, respecting diversity, and anti-bullying. Students also receive social skill lessons individually and in small groups. In addition to monthly lessons, a student sensory room has been created to provide a calming, reflective environment for students who need breaks throughout the day.

The Eads Leads program showcases our commitment to engaging students in leadership opportunities. Eads Leads is a group of fourth and fifth grade students who take an active leadership role in our school and community. Eads Leaders meet for ninety minutes after school each week to plan daily announcements, monthly assemblies, and ways to help our Munster community. Eads Leaders also teach monthly character lessons to all classrooms. The Eads Leaders work in partnerships on lessons by providing examples and discussion. Character lessons include topics such as respect, active listening, and self-control. This opportunity has changed the dynamic of our school.

Kiwanis Kids (K-Kids) provides 4th and 5th-grade students the opportunity to spread kindness and perform acts of service for our school and community. For the past three years, Eads has participated in The Great Kindness Challenge, and K-Kids has led the way in planning service projects for our school. One of our parents that was employed as a recess aide passed away suddenly. The K-Kids organized a fundraiser to purchase a bench for our playground in her memory.

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

Our school's commitment to building relationships extends to families and our community. Getting families excited about school builds a positive relationship between all stakeholders. Working together as a community, our school seeks opportunities to include stakeholders in decision-making and funding special projects. The PTO raises funds to provide grants to supplement classroom activities. The PTO partnered with the Munster Education Foundation to purchase new playground equipment for the school.

The Eads staff have been able to make connections and build relationships beyond the school day through our involvement in One Book, One School. During the summer of 2020, the PTO provided each family with a copy of the book, *The Lemonade War* by Jacqueline Davies. To support the school-to-home connection, teachers recorded themselves reading chapters, planned engaging activities, and encouraged participation through social media. The culminating project was to host a lemonade stand at home. The lemonade stands raised \$4,295 (exceeding our goal of \$400), which was donated to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation to support curing childhood cancer. During the summer of 2021, the families read *The Wild Robot* by Peter Brown. In addition to the reading initiatives, the teachers held a drive-through free dinner pizza kit pickup for all families. Families were also encouraged to participate in a STEM Egg-Drop contest. The Munster Fire Department launched the egg contraptions from 75 feet in the air. The One Book, One School program gets families excited about reading, which extends into the classrooms.

Our longest-standing community connection has been through our Community Readers program. For the past 20 years, we have had various members of our community, such as bankers, medical professionals, police officers, firefighters, school board members, and other community workers come in to our school to



read and discuss books about our monthly life skills(character traits like kindness). We continued Community Readers during Covid by recording our guest readers and sharing those recordings with our students. Hearing a community member explain how they use respect, kindness, or any other life skills at their job helps students understand how and why character traits are important in their lives.

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

The administration works to ensure all teachers feel valued and supported at Eads School. During the 2019-2020 school year, teachers were included in the decision-making process regarding remote learning for students who stayed home due to Covid. Teachers were involved in planning how to manage attendance, researching and developing how to implement our district's online curriculum resources, and deciding which collaboration app to use to communicate with students and families. This effort and resilience carried over into 2020-2021 when the district transitioned to the hybrid model of education.

After assessing how Covid impacted our staff, the administration and school social worker helped design a staff sensory room. The staff sensory room is a place where teachers can go to listen to relaxing music, smell essential calming oils, and sit in a massage chair to reduce stress and anxiety in the workplace. Teachers appreciate a place to decompress and rejuvenate during the workday.

Administrators demonstrate their appreciation for teachers each month with acts of kindness such as treats delivered on the JOY cart, positive messages, mailbox surprises, luncheons, staff celebrations and breaks from the classroom. These acts of kindness frequently remind teachers that they are valued and appreciated.

Eads has an instructional coach that supports the professional growth and development of teachers by providing knowledge and resources to improve the quality of lessons and implement current technology. She serves as a mentor and role model for new teachers.

All teachers are part of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The PLCs meet regularly to determine their needs for professional learning. Professional development is provided once a week to the staff on delayed start Thursdays. Administrators and the instructional coach follow up after the weekly professional learning collaboration to support the teachers as they apply their new learning.

Finally, to extend teachers' professional learning, the PTO provides funds for teachers to attend professional workshops and conferences aligned with our school improvement goal. Teachers who attend these professional learning opportunities bring the information back to train others in the building.

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

Student success at Eads reflects how leadership qualities of vision, problem-solving, and communication are woven throughout the building and shared among professional stakeholders. The Eads leadership team consists of the principal, a newly added full-time assistant principal, and a teacher from each grade level. The team shares a collaborative approach that ensures that the school's diverse culture feels safe and supported. The leadership team guides our PLCs with their work in cross-grade level meetings to develop and implement our shared vision and goals for Eads School. The PLCs then analyze student work to determine the impact on professional and student learning.

Late start Thursdays afford the leadership team time to work with teachers on our shared vision and goals. Teachers are guided through student data analysis and use the results to drive instruction, remediate, and enrich all students. For example, our instructional coach uses professional development time to model best practices in guided reading. Teachers learn classroom strategies and apply them to enhance their instruction. The administrators and coaches follow up after the weekly professional learning collaboration to support the teachers as they apply their new learning. Decisions made by the leadership team are driven by student data to improve student learning.

The principal encourages teachers to take on leadership roles. Five teachers have earned their administrative licenses while working at Eads. Several of our teachers serve as leaders on district committees such as

District Strategic Plan and the Evaluation Committee. In addition to serving locally, some teachers have served on state-level curriculum and assessment committees. Lead teachers help build collective ownership, which empowers teachers to take risks, try new strategies in the classroom, and engage more extensively with colleagues.

Leadership during the health pandemic required shared decision-making to keep our school safe. During the 2020-21 school year, 85% of the student body were in school, while 15% were remote learners. Instructional shifts happened quickly, and teachers learned to teach students in the classroom while a quarantining student participated remotely from home. The administration supported teachers by extending team collaboration time and finding the necessary resources such as cameras and sound equipment for the shift in instruction for remote learners. Communication with families last year and this year as we returned all students to the building required frequent and concise information from the principal so that parents could prepare their children if they were learning from home.

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

Eads is diverse in culture and socio-economic backgrounds. We celebrate diversity and focus on building equity among students, staff, and families. Our diverse educators welcome students from many different cultures each year. Parent communication is vital to the learning process. We are happy to have several new staff members this year who are bilingual in English/Spanish and readily available for parent phone calls and meetings. Our EL teacher uses available online translations to ensure that EL families can review important correspondence from school to home. The EL leadership team meets regularly to discuss the specific needs of bilingual students and how to implement strategies in instruction.

Our curriculum is carefully chosen to reflect our students' diverse backgrounds and interests, and the staff ensures that all literacy materials are representative of our student population. All considerations for curriculum adoption are closely examined for English learner materials and support. Teachers work to expose students to an array of classroom literature containing stories about diversity, and our library is updated with culturally responsive literature. Students celebrate Black History Month and Women's History Month and learn about different cultures and traditions. Students are encouraged to share the holidays they celebrate throughout the year during class discussions. In art and music classes, students learn about art and music from around the world. In response to recent world events, guest speakers from the Ukraine visited our fourth and fifth grade classrooms to share about their lives in Ukraine and to teach about governments in other countries.

To ensure equity, every student receives a web-enabled device to enhance learning. Depending on their grade level, students are issued either an iPad or Chromebook to use both at school and at home. For students whose families require access assistance, our district provides internet hotspots. This ensures that all students have equitable access to technology and curriculum, regardless of whether they are learning in person or at home.

Eads School strives to maintain a positive school climate that embraces diversity and equity. Student and parent climate surveys are used to inform staff about areas of celebration and growth to support the needs of all families. This stakeholder feedback helps us to reflect on current practices and establish new school goals to promote inclusion.

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

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At Eads, we strive for a strong sense of community and connection within our building and individual classrooms. Our greatest strength is our commitment to social and emotional learning. We believe it is the foundation for academic success.

Through our partnership with the C.L.A.S.S (Connecting Learning Assures Successful Students) program, we have implemented many brain-based learning strategies that foster collaboration skills and develop strong character. All students are welcomed every morning by an Eads staff member. The school day begins with teachers greeting students at the door and continues with morning announcements, led by one of our student Eads Leaders. The announcements highlight our mantra that we are happy, healthy, and will do the right thing and treat people with dignity and respect. Our lifeline pledge also reinforces our growth mindset and belief that we are getting better and better every day. Community Circle is incorporated into our morning meetings, where students are encouraged to share their ideas, feelings, and questions of the day with their peers. We establish a sense of calm and an absence of threat by using daily agendas, schoolwide procedures, and hallway greetings.

As a staff, we consider how building community and making connections impacts planning, implementing, and assessing learning each day in the classroom. The Social and Emotional Coordinator provides guidance to support the district's mission of academic growth and social responsibility in a supportive and intellectually challenging learning environment. After analyzing the Student Perspective Survey results, teachers celebrated favorable responses which included positive teacher and student relationships. Emotional regulation was an area that students indicated a need for growth. The social worker led an intervention to support teachers, students and parents regarding emotional regulation. Our shared beliefs unite us in our pursuit of bridging social and emotional development between school and home.

Supporting students socially and emotionally while providing challenging intellectual opportunities contributes to our students' overall academic success. We encourage students to invest in their learning by setting goals and celebrating progress. By making connections between academic growth and social responsibility, students are empowered to make positive choices about their learning and behavior every day. We feel that learning goes beyond academic achievement and should be about developing the whole child, which will influence them now and in the future.

As stated by Benjamin Franklin: "Tell me and I forget; teach me and I may remember; involve me and I learn."