

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Cliffside Park School 4
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 279 Columbia Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Cliffside Park State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07010-2499

County NJ

Telephone (201) 313-2340 Fax (201) 313-0397

Web site/URL https://www.cliffsidepark.edu E-mail jroussos@cliffsidepark.edu

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. Michael Romagnino E-mail mjr@cliffsidepark.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Cliffside Park School District Tel. (201) 313-2300

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. Joseph Capano
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The 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

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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	31	41	72
1	46	37	83
2	37	40	77
3	44	37	81
4	42	42	84
5	41	39	80
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
Total Students	241	236	477

*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
 - 8 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 46 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 43 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 14%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	37
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	38
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	75
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	531
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.14
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14

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

Albanian, Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, English, Farsi, Gujarati, Italian, Korean, Malagasy, Occitan, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Uzbek

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 13 %
60 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %

Total number students who qualify: 199

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 22 %
103 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>19</u> Autism | <u>7</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>21</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	25
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	26
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	11

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.

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	95%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To instill that we are all "Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow." We strongly feel that it is important for all stakeholders to realize that in order to be successful in an area of life it is important to always be open to learning. At School Four, we consider our greatest strength to be our rich cultural, linguistic and cognitive diversity. Our students speak many languages and hail from all over the world, but are all united in that they come from families who value education and work in partnership with the school community to create a bright future for their children.

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

<https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/DistrictPolicy.aspx?policyid=1550&id=04af9d2bb35b4bca9dee873ac8174dc4>

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

In the heart of Cliffside Park, the exceptionally grand and remarkably beautiful 279 Columbia Avenue, School 4 was constructed in 1911 and a beautiful addition followed in 1929. Our School 4 mission is to instill that we are all “Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow.” We strongly feel that it is important for all stakeholders to realize that in order to be successful in an area of life, it is important to always be open to learning.

School 4 educates students from grades K-5. Our unique, culturally diverse environment welcomes students to their first school experience. We also provide children with an education that exceeds the highest standards of student achievement, curriculum, instruction, community support and professional development.

There truly is no place like Cliffside Park. Strong morals and values from the staff, families, and the entire community allow students to have the emotional/foundational support with the motivation to be successful in all different paths of life. School 4 always puts our students first and will do whatever it takes to support all of our stakeholders.

At School 4, strategies are used to teach the whole child. Academically, teachers use strategies, such as inquiry-based learning through our Science curriculum by way of extensive labs. Literature response is a critical component within our Reading and Writing curriculum. This component better prepares our students to analyze texts, promote higher level thinking, and develop excellent habits to ready them for state testing.

Emotionally, our students have access to a school guidance counselor that works with conflict resolution. As a school community, we have partnered with JFCS (Jewish Family and Children Services) and Care Plus to support those in need of intensive therapy. The Health curriculum enables students to learn the skills to deal with bullying, self-esteem, and healthy habits of living. To help develop their social needs, teachers in the classroom are encouraged to have students participate in cooperative learning and group discussions in every subject. As a school-wide initiative, a Citizen of the Month is chosen from each class based on the monthly values that are part of the Pillars of Characters.

To broaden student scope in culture awareness, teachers guide them through a monthly focus including Hispanic Heritage, Black History Month, and Women’s History. During each of these months, teachers use strategies that involve technology, research, and role playing. The Social Studies curriculum also includes the study of relationships, and the study of the different cultures throughout the United States. The inclusion of all these elements helps in creating a whole child that is ready to progress and to become a citizen of a global community of learners.

To adapt to an ever changing world, School 4 has implemented programs that have helped to set it apart from other schools. To improve student academic performance impacted by COVID-19, the school partnered with the Cliffside Park Police Department and their PAL tutoring program for grades two and up. This service offers tutoring after school at no cost to the student. In addition, The Early Risers program was also put into action. A selection of at risk students were chosen based on formative and summative assessments. Four classroom teachers provide a standard based learning experience for grades three through five before the school day begins. Throughout the 45-minute session, students focus on test preparation, reading responses, problem solving, and critical thinking through math word problems. Providing these students with the extra support desperately needed.

To challenge students, School 4 also hosts a Spelling Bee open to all students. Each class hosts their own classroom spelling bee; and, a winner is selected to compete in the school wide Spelling Bee. The winner is then sent to compete in the Northern New Jersey Spelling Bee. To incorporate real world experiences in nature, classes study the life cycle of butterflies. To celebrate diversity, School 4 hosts an International Night where families bring food, perform dances, and share their culture. Our Read Across the America month also spotlights diverse authors. Students are exposed to stories that they can relate to on a more personal level, highlighting different types of families, countries around the world, and unique home

environments.

Supporting the socio-emotional well-being of our students, School 4 gives out Brag Tags to children that are caught making good choices and are then given an opportunity to get a book from the Book Vending Machine. Throughout the school year we have implemented various weekly celebrations that are dedicated to the awareness of bullying, respect, and autism. Students are exposed to books, speakers, and activities to help broaden their understanding of these topics. In addition, our students participate in lessons with our School Resource Officer who teaches all about mindfulness, social media safety, and how to work with peers. All of these creative endeavors have enriched and impacted the lives of our students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

School 4 is dedicated to instill in our students that we are all “Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow.” We strongly feel that it is important for all stakeholders to realize that in order to be successful in an area of life, it is important to always be open to learning. School 4 educates students from grades K-5. Our unique, culturally diverse environment welcomes students to their first school experience and continues to provide children with an education that meets and exceeds the highest standards of student achievement, curriculum, instruction, community support and professional development.

We plan to educate and challenge students to become skillful communicators, independent thinkers, and life-long learners. The Cliffside Park School District has developed curricula in accordance with New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). Our curriculum also incorporates important local initiatives to help our students excel and to provide them with a rich learning environment. Instructional approaches strongly support group work as well as meeting the individual learner and their needs. There is a variety of assessment and data that is used to drive instruction and meet the needs of the diverse learners. The Cliffside Park School District strives to achieve excellence by adhering to state mandates, aligning curriculum to state standards, and by offering a variety of programs that allow our teachers and students to continually progress. Strong morals and values from the staff, the families, and the entire community allow students to have the emotional/foundational support as well as the motivation to be successful in all different paths of life. School 4 always puts our students first, and will do whatever it takes to support all of our stakeholders. We stand firm on celebrating the many accomplishments of our students no matter how small or how big they may be.

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

The curriculum for grades K-5 is an integrated approach of multiple literacy instruction. To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements. By reading texts in History/Social Studies, Science, and other disciplines, students build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential.

The Reading curriculum for the K-5 grades is taught using the Schoolwide program. Lessons in each unit include Interactive Read Alouds that takes them through a diverse set of stories that teach certain elements of literacy specific to the unit. The second set are mini-lessons using the “I do, We do, You do” structure using components of the mentor texts from the unit. This program also includes an end of the unit assessment that has multiple choice questions and a short response. Teachers use this as a summative assessment. The Schoolwide program also gives questions for student conferring in order to monitor progress.

The district also assesses student reading progress through the benchmark assessment of the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). Each child is tested three times a year. This assessment helps teachers to place students into Guided Reading groups. A critical element of our district Reading program in which each child is placed in a small group and works with the teacher on an instructional level text in the hopes of helping the child to progress reading levels. The goal is to have each student reach on grade level or above in their reading level.

Phonics instruction is completed through the Foundations program. An intense daily lesson for grades K-3

involving phonemic awareness, phonics/ word study, high frequency word study, reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension strategies, handwriting, and spelling.

Teachers are also known to use district approved programs such as Storyworks magazines, and digital resources, such as Reading A-Z and CommonLit as supplementary resources to engage students in reading response,

The Writing curriculum for the K-5 grades is also taught using the Schoolwide program. It is structured to model the Writer's Workshop style. Each grade teaches four units which include a narrative, non-fiction, fiction, and unique writing unit for the grade level. The first few lessons of each unit include Interactive Read Alouds that takes them through a diverse set of stories that teach certain elements of literacy specific to the unit. The second set are mini-lessons using the "I do, We do, You do" structure using components of the mentor texts from the unit. Teachers use this as a summative assessment. The Schoolwide program also gives questions for student conferring in order to monitor progress.

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

The Mathematics curriculum used is the Pearson SAVVAS program as the primary focus for instruction. It is standards-based, and provides teachers with many resources to be used during their lesson. Each teacher is given a manual that includes a scripted lesson, differentiation options, standards, and visuals of the assessments. The element that teachers use daily is the digital component. Teachers are able to make a classroom within the SAVVAS database that gives them options to assign practice and modified assessments. In addition, a video that goes along with each lesson is also available. Teachers also can project the student workbook through the digital website for easier modeling. The website also provides a data bank of resources including spiraling reviews, reteach and enrichment options.

Teachers can also access the units in Spanish and across grade levels. With many Spanish speaking English Language Learners at School 4, this can provide teachers with an opportunity to teach the curriculum to the students. Especially since they are required to take part in state testing for Mathematics in their first year in the country. Teachers also have access to curriculum from other grade levels. This can help teachers understand what was done years prior, or to provide intervention for students. Every class is also given student workbooks that have parts of the lesson given by the teacher, a guided practice section, independent work, and a homework page. Each part includes factual problems, numerous word problems that require students to explain their work, and review questions.

The SAVVAS program also includes multiple assessment options for students. Teachers can assign quick checks for each lesson which includes five review questions. There is also an option for this check to be modified. These can be used to progress monitor students, and to guide instruction the next day. Students also take a topic test. This assessment can also be modified digitally. There is also a pdf version that is slightly less rigorous that can also be used as an exam.

While SAVVAS is the main portion of our curriculum, teachers work on fact practice in all operations. There is also an intense study towards tackling word problems and extending their explanations. To better prepare our students for state testing, School 4 also uses the digital IXL program which simulates questions based on the standards and through diagnostic testing of a student's ability to work with key strands. It also helps to group students based on these results. Giving the teacher a better snapshot of the needs in their classroom. Teachers use this resource as a key assessment. After the initial diagnostic test that students take at the beginning of the year, a 20-minute weekly assessment is then done to maintain their individual program.

Informal assessments are also done in the classroom using whiteboards and class participation. Guided math groups are also initiated throughout the year to work on skills based on level. Title I Math services are also provided for students who qualify that are at risk.

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

The Science curriculum used is based on the series, FOSS (Full Option Science System), a research-based science curriculum for grades K-5. The FOSS Program provides students and teachers with meaningful experiences through engaging with this active participation in scientific practices.

Every year teachers are provided with a case of drawers for three units full of experiment supplies. Kindergarten's three units are materials/motion, trees/weather, animals two by two." The first grade units include Sound/Light, Air/Weather, Plants/Animals. The second grade units include Solids/Liquids, Pebbles/Sand/Silt, Insects/Plants. The third grade units are Motion/Matter, Water/Climate and Structures of Life. The fourth grade units are Energy, Soils/Rocks/Landforms, and Environments. The Fifth grade units include mixtures/solutions, earth/sun, and living systems.

Lessons are inquiry-based during experiment days. However, FOSS provides teachers with an extensive digital component that breaks down how to set up labs, and slides presentations of how to guide it. Videos are also provided as an extra resource to demonstrate the critical elements of the lab. At the start of the unit, a pre-assessment is given to drive instruction based on the student knowledge base of the topic. Students all have lab books that they write down their observations, draw sketches, answer focus questions, and review vocabulary. Students also have textbooks, which the teacher can project on the smartboard. The videos from the digital copy are also interactive. There are section review questions that teachers can assign to students to progress monitor. After the unit is complete, an assessment similar to the pre-assessment is given to students.

Many teachers choose to collaborate with other classrooms for each unit. Helping one another to set up labs and monitor students. Circulating is more feasible, with groups being created to complete the labs.

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

The Social Studies curriculum uses different texts. Grades K-3 works with Social Studies Alive. The units for these grade levels vary. For kindergarten the units are My Family, My School, Everybody Works, Where We Live, Our Traditions, and Life Then and Now. For first grade the units include My School, My Community, Work in the Community Grade, Looking at Our World, Traditions We Share, and Our Past/Our Present. The second grade units are My Community, My Country, Working to Meet Our Needs, The World Around Us, Celebrating Our Traditions, and Grade Two Our Nation Past and Present. Grade three units are Our Communities, Our Environment, Communities Build a Nation, and U.S. Government and Citizenship. Grade four is unique as it focuses on the study of New Jersey. This grade level uses a book from Pearson titled New Jersey and has an additional resource in a consumable. Fifth grade units include Early Human Societies, Mesopotamia/Egypt/Kush, Civilization in India/China, and Foundations of Western Ideas.

Integration with Reading and Writing also occurs with short texts and reading responses. Digital resources such as videos are also included in the Social Studies lessons. Assessments are typically done by chapter. However informal assessments include student participation and responses to section questions. Alternative assessments are also conducted such as oral presentations, group projects, and slides presentation.

Each grade level also participates in the study of Hispanic History Month, Black History Month, Holidays Around the World, and Women's History Month. Literature is shared, research is completed, presented, and displayed for the school to enjoy.

To celebrate different cultures, School 4 also hosts an International Night in which families bring food, present dances, and items from their culture. These experiences broaden student schema and expose them to a more global outlook.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

School 4 has a broad range of other curriculum areas that our students are exposed to throughout their experience. Each “special” which is what it is referred to in our program is given to each class in each grade once a week for 40-minutes covering multiple units with each grade level.

For Arts, projects align with the elements of art including line, shape, color, value, space, and form. The unique projects for each grade level help to expose them to the different types of art that can be included within those elements. Some examples of projects in Kindergarten include Butterflies, Henri Rousseau Tigers, Guess Who Self Portraits, and Mexican Sun/Moon. First Grade projects include Radial Design Tiles, Colorful Fish, Sugar Skulls, and Native American Landscapes. Second grade includes People in Motion and Castles. Third grade does Klimt Trees, Pop Art, and Freedom Quilts. Fourth grade projects include Bubble/Block letters, Graffiti Names, Pop Art, Snack Ad Poster, Whimsical Trees, Laurel Burch Cats, Moonlit Landscape, and Weaving. Then fifth grade projects include Graffiti Names, Cardboard mosaic tile, Egyptian Pharaohs, Tessellations, Mesopotamian Vases, and Japanese handscroll illustrations.

Students participate in the gym for physical education, and when the weather allows outside in the courtyard. The Physical education teacher teaches them how to play cooperatively, and the basic foundation of fitness and skills. Assisting them to establish their own fitness goals is a priority. Students participate in a variety of games and activities that challenge fitness and game concepts, both physically and mentally and emotionally. Learning how to use appropriate terminology, vocabulary for fitness, participate in sports, dance and character education. Students are challenged to control body movement, perform fitness skills appropriately, and with purpose.

The foreign language taught is in Spanish. Different grade levels participate in unique units. Kindergarten to third grade is an instruction to Spanish with early conversation elements, describing the classroom and their homes. Then moving towards holiday celebrations and more depth cultural history in the upper grades.

Library class has students learning research methods, checking out books of interest, author studies, and an integration of Reading/Writing for each grade level in a mini-lesson. Computer classes are held in the classrooms, since our student population has a 1:1 ratio with Chromebooks. How to write emails, work with google suite, create videos, and coding are all elements that are covered in this special. Finally, Music is also offered where students learn the elements, learn about famous composers, and practice songs for the yearly performances.

During the pandemic, our special teachers held classes remotely for the entire grade level in their Google Meet. While collaboration has been limited with in-person learning, the curriculum has again started to pick up speed. Students are now able to participate more fully with special teachers, and are now able to work in small groups once again on group projects. Teachers have also been able to integrate their lessons with what classroom teachers are instructing in their own classrooms.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Students performing below grade level have an opportunity within their classroom to have differentiation in every lesson using a variety of instructional strategies, such as varying the levels of difficulty or using Bloom's Taxonomy. In addition, accommodations are also used in order to provide equal access to the task. Students with accommodations are graded the same way as those without. Some accommodations may include changes in content, instructional level, and assessment/performance criteria to meet the needs of the academic strength of the child. Each teacher provides a detailed list of the types of accommodations they are making for students in every subject area within the lesson plan.

School 4 is also eligible for state Title I services. To provide students with a greater chance of improving,

selected students participate in the The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention System (LLI). This is an intensive, small-group, supplementary literacy intervention program. Students meet five times a week for 45-minutes in Title I classes. The goal is to lift the literacy achievement of students who are not achieving grade-level expectations in reading in grades K-5.

To improve student academic performance impacted by COVID-19, the school partnered with the Cliffside Park Police Department and their PAL tutoring program for grades two and up. This service offers tutoring after school at no cost to the student.

In addition, The Early Risers program was also put into action. A selection of at risk students were chosen based on formative and summative assessments. Four classroom teachers provide a standard based learning experience for grades three through five before the school day begins. Throughout the 45-minutes session, students focus on test preparation, reading responses, problem solving, and critical thinking through math word problems. Providing these students with the extra support desperately needed.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Participation for students performing above grade level include enrichment opportunities in every lesson given by the general education teacher. Providing a more complex text that requires higher level thinking is a practice done by our teachers. Literacy circles were created for higher level readers in order to discuss what is being read with their peers and extend their thinking. Giving students an opportunity to also collaborate with their peers to discuss literature helping them to apply real life skills. The Math program,, SAVVAS, has enrichment opportunities for each topic to stretch student thinking that includes problem-based learning. FOSS, our science curriculum, has our students conduct experiments.

Special programs during the school year include the annual Spelling Bee that challenge students to excel. Every month, students are selected from each class based on their academic achievement for recognition as the Student of the Month.

In addition, students can also be tested to participate in the Gifted and Talented program. At School #4, we strive to give our gifted students extensive growth opportunities beyond the classroom. Our 3rd through 5th-grade pull-out program revolves around STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects that reinforce and expand upon classroom materials, mostly related to math and physics. This year our 3rd-grade students have learned about the area by working with pentominoes and tangrams, and built catapults with rubber bands. Our 4th-graders have dissected owl pellets and built bridges. The 5th-grade students learned about and built their own exploding volcanoes, and have grasped how to solve a Rubik's cube.

Class lessons are always centered around reinforcing and expanding upon material they learn in class and are based on the NJSLs of the respective subject area. Our gifted program seeks to support the growth and development of the whole child, including their intellectual, social, and emotional self.

3c. Special education:

Students in the special education program each have their own Individualized Education Program (IEP) to determine the best setting for them. Many students are mainstreamed into classrooms with a pullout resource program, others are placed in a type of classroom that better suits their needs.

There are three resource room teachers that pull out in each general education classroom that provide English language arts (ELA) and Math supplementary support to students with an IEP in a small group environment. These teachers are in constant communication with the classroom teacher so as to follow the same pacing. In addition, the PAF (Preventing Academic Failure) program is a structured language program for teaching reading, spelling, and handwriting using multisensory techniques. It helps to prevent reading failure in children at risk for learning difficulties.

School 4 has a diverse population including four Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) classrooms that use discrete trials as their assessment. Teachers also use the Applied Behavior Analysis to work with these

children. Providing assistance to encourage the desired response from the child. The aim is to use the least intrusive prompt possible that will still lead to the desired response. Prompts include verbal cues, visual cues, physical guidance, and modeling.

Additionally, classroom teachers and ABA classrooms have teacher assistants who can be assigned to work with students in a 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3 setting. These assistants work closely with the classroom teacher, and support students throughout the day in various ways.

Students with an IEP are closely monitored by their teachers and by the child study team. A yearly meeting is held to review progress and to discuss any changes. Samples are shown of student work from the team and shared with administration and parents in order to become more informed, to provide feedback and to decide what is in the best interest of the student.

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

Every lesson given in the general classroom includes a modification to better support English Language Learners (ELL) at every level. Under teacher supervision, students are given the opportunity to invite a friend to have lunch and play games during their lunch period. Students are encouraged to invite non-ESL (English as a second language) students so that they can broaden their circle of friends. "Lunch Club" provides the students opportunities to practice their English and develop friendships.

A professional learning community (PLC) was created where teachers meet during lunch to learn about strategies they could use in the classroom to help their ELL students succeed. Each meeting discusses different focus topics such as: social emotional strategies, making students feel welcome, the various stages of second language learning, differentiation strategies, games, translation apps, and other technology resources.

Our students and staff painted murals throughout the school. In order to facilitate friendships among the ELL and non-ELL students as well as provide opportunities to develop speaking skills, ELL students were allowed to choose friends to invite to paint with them. During the painting sessions, students bonded and were able to develop friendships beyond the project.

Students that are new to the country are given "Communication Cards" that they can keep with them to facilitate communication with the teacher. The cards have pictures and simple sentences or single words that they can read or show the teacher to say what they need or want. Examples can include: A picture of a tissue box with the words "I need a tissue." Students have the opportunity to practice their writing skills by partnering with students in a different state. In the process they learn about letter writing, parts of a letter, addressing envelopes, asking questions, and making conversation through writing. As a culminating activity, students meet each other through a Google meet facilitated by the teachers.

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

For students who are homeless, migrant, or low-income, there are a variety of supports offered to this population. The district liaison works with families in sharing community resources for families and assists with making referrals to community supports.

Perform Care, along with resources recommended from Bergen County Head Start and The Center for Food Action District, are all given to the families so they can access clothing, food, and other supports. If they are not able to follow through with accessing these resources on their own, we provide one-to-one guidance.

Free breakfast and lunch is given by the school on a daily basis. Our partnership with The Center for Food Action also provides students with a bi-weekly snack pack which provides for extra food at home and on weekends. School 4 hosts both food and coat drives which these families can be recipients of. Busing for students can also be offered depending upon living situations.

To continue to support any learning loss or need for confidence building in the academic area due to a
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student's situation, we offer our Early Risers Program or Extra Help in small groups from the classroom teacher. Not only does this build upon academics it also nurtures the students to feel comfortable and safe in their new environment.

Through our 21st Century Grant we offer an After School Program where students are offered assistance with their homework along with an enrichment program. This program is offered at a minimal to no cost to these students to help with adjusting during such trying times.

As staff we focus on keeping in mind that students come to school with this “invisible backpack,” so we do our best to provide the emotional, social and academic support to make everyone feel comfortable and safe.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

School 4 strives to keep students engaged and motivated in a positive learning environment that supports all of the key components of a social, emotional, and successful academic experience. In March of 2020, when schools suddenly shut down, every member of the school community jumped into the unknown and did what School 4 does best! We came together, combined our knowledge of best practices and technology, and gave our School 4 students everything we could. Educators came up with meaningful school activities, such as “Everything Will Be Okay” where students mimicked the Rainbow Projects from Italy. Additionally, the CP (Cliffside Park) Virtual Spirit Week allowed all stakeholders to participate in daily themes, such as Superhero Day, School Color Day, and Jersey Day. We then put together a video montage of these activities and posted it to all School 4 social media accounts to share with the wider community. These are just some of the community building activities we did to continue encouraging positive morale and provide support in these trying times. The importance and gratitude for essential workers was ever so relevant, and all stakeholders took part in making videos, banners and signs thanking them.

As the lockdown continued, teachers worked tirelessly to modify and enhance instruction. This included utilizing Google classroom, meets, and breakout rooms to improve both whole-group and small-group instruction. Guidance counselors and educational support staff continued to service their students. The office staff made arrangements so that all instructional materials and supplies, including individual chromebooks, were delivered to students’ and their families. Even when faced with tremendous loss and uncertainty, the efforts of the School 4 community were unwavering.

The Principal, educators, and other educational and support staff continued to find safe, yet creative and innovative, ways to keep in touch with our students and their families through virtual meetings, phone calls, and distanced drive-bys. To prepare for the reopening of schools, we set new expectations with preexisting values. Plans were in place for the safe return of both staff and students. Again, safety and social emotional learning was at the forefront of our reopening plan. School 4 approached this new way of teaching and learning with unity and determination. All staff were provided with professional development (PD) opportunities, including teaching with document cameras, utilizing Google meets and breakout rooms, and teaching in hybrid mode. School 4 continued to instill that we are all “Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow.”

2. Engaging Families and Community:

School 4 values the relationship between families, communities, and the school. A deep understanding exists that all parties have an influence on student lives. Therefore, bringing together the three parties to help our students has taken place on many occasions. When the school was put on remote learning, action plans were put into place. One was working with the local Habitat for Humanity. In this initiative, desks were provided for students during virtual learning. Many of them did not have a desk of their own, and were participating in virtual learning on their kitchen table or in closets. These desks allowed for students to feel a sense of normalcy in a very difficult time

The Center for Food Action, a community resource, also provided our students with a weekly abundance of breakfasts and lunches from March 2020 until June 2021. Due to our school’s high free-and-reduced lunch rate, this was a heavy burden that was lifted from our families. Many families could not work, and food was scarce. This initiative gave our students the fuel they needed to put forth the effort in a different school experience with their bellies full and their minds ready to learn. Starting in September of 2021 The Center for Food Action has also provided School 4 students with “Snack Packs” that included pantry items, such as macaroni and cheese, granola bars, canned raviolis, cereal, and boxed juices every two weeks. With many families struggling to still make ends meet, having these extra snacks over the weekend has continued to make the burden lighter for School 4 families. Hearing about the assistance given, the local supermarket also donated gift cards to be given to families in need from School 4.

When students returned from remote or hybrid learning, many had socio-emotional needs that had not been

met. To offset the effects, Jewish Family and Children Services (JFCS) a local organization was brought in to assist with counseling services for our students, and provide family counseling as needed. In addition, a Lunch Bunch group was developed so that students could be taught social skills, participate in cooperative learning, and assist in building self-confidence.

The partnership that School 4 has with families and the community has made it possible for our students to become the ultimate priority. Taking care of their physical, emotional, and social needs, helped them through a very turbulent time.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

School 4's faculty and staff were the glue holding everything together in this trying time. Thinking of creative ways to build morale and encouragement was important to make sure all social, emotional, and professional needs are met. New technology and instructional practices were always important to make sure to provide many in house professional development opportunities for teachers. Topics included how to utilize Google Classroom, Google Meets, and Breakout Rooms. We also offered teachers the opportunity to learn how to use virtual manipulatives and tools to support the learning and their needs in the virtual setting. Classroom management was truly a brand new challenge in the hybrid environment. Our school began using GoGuardian which allowed teachers to remotely see what each student had on their computer screen, and, therefore help them with their work or any technological issue they were having.

Students had the option to come in person or participate remotely. Therefore the teacher taught in a hybrid model. This was challenging because in different settings, different expectations were appropriate. To reduce the amount of planning time during the 2020-2021 school year, teachers were asked to run two half-day sessions. Teachers taught Reading, Writing, and Math. Science, Social Studies, and Health were integrated into the ELA block or taught once a week. Assessments were given digitally, or in paper format. Common preparation times were key for teachers to collaborate on instruction, but also support one another emotionally. Peer observations were key for support in learning new practices and techniques while utilizing the hybrid model. Teachers and staff who required specific accommodations were provided with what was needed, such as plexiglass partitions and specific personal protective equipment (PPE). Faculty, team and parent meetings were also given through Google Meet instead of in-person to allow for social distancing and to maintain a safer environment.

September 2021 brought all of our students back to in-person learning. The curriculum pacing guides were altered to reflect learning loss for the last two years. Giving teachers a cushion to modify lessons based on the level students returned to school. In addition, to support new staff, attendance to a New Teacher Academy was encouraged. Teachers reviewed how to complete district documents, classroom management techniques, report cards, and how to conduct parent teacher conferences. This serves to better prepare teachers, and to lower the anxiety of their year.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy of School 4 leadership is to motivate teachers with the understanding that they are lifelong learners who make a difference in the students' lives each and every day. By continuing education and participating in professional development in/out of the district, the teachers stay current with educational techniques/strategies to implement in their teaching. Fostering this continuing education is truly being a role model for our students. Showing our students that having an education is powerful and crucial for the success they will achieve in life.

School 4's structure includes grades kindergarten through fifth grade. There are three kindergarten classes and four classes in every grade level. The fifth grade is departmentalized. There are four resource room classrooms, and four tiered Autistic classrooms along with one Multiple Disabled class. Classroom teachers are responsible for teaching curriculum, and overseeing students in their class. Communicating with parents to discuss student progression. Teacher aides are used in a 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3 setting in classrooms with students who have an IEP and need academic support. Title I teachers also provide students with remediation in order to reach those students at risk in Reading and Math.

There is a School Principal whose priority is the well being of the student, provides teachers with support, communicates with parents, and oversees the entire structure of School 4. District content area supervisors are present in the building that provide curriculum and classroom support for teachers. In addition to giving support to the principal as needed. A school guidance counselor provides students with emotional support and mediates conflicts that may need a higher intervention with administration.

We are committed to implementing a curriculum that addresses the New Jersey Student Learning Standards along with the Cliffside Park School District goals. To ensure that policies and programs are focused on student achievement, informal walkthroughs are done weekly. Administration is able to see the classroom environment on a regular basis, talk with the teacher on important class events, and be able to have more of a personal contact with students. Monthly lesson plans with reflections are submitted to supervisors and principals for review. Personal comments are added to maintain communication with the teacher. A Google Classroom is also established to share policies. In addition, professional development is provided to assist teachers in growing in areas that would assist students to feel supported academically, emotionally, and socially.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Diversity awareness is a priority at School 4. To ensure equity, cultural awareness, and respect is addressed the curriculum has been shifted. The curriculum units have been modified to include exposure to raise cultural awareness and provide respect for different populations. Students in K-2 grades learn that people live differently in different places, and that they can help care for the world. Units are supported by a culturally responsive pedagogy and content that is presented from a holistic perspective that addresses relationships and interactions of diverse groups. Students are given opportunities to create a community of learners who respect, listen to, share, and respond to the thoughts and ideas of others. Third grade students learn the fundamentals of geography and explore different cultures and public service roles. Teachers learn about students' individual cultures and life experiences and provide a safe and respectful environment. Fourth grade students begin a deep dive into the history of our nation and region. They learn about the creation of our nation and its founding principles. Topics also include cultural heritage and immigration. Content is inclusive and accurate, without stereotype or bias, and includes varied biographies and perspectives. Fifth grade students begin their journey in their study of global history and issues. Social studies classes cover the origins of civilizations through Ancient Greece. Throughout, content is inclusive and accurate, without stereotype or bias. Students are encouraged to listen to and respect multiple viewpoints and to analyze how diverse groups were treated throughout history.

A variety of books have been included in classroom libraries to celebrate diversity and equality. Some examples include Number the Stars, Henry's Freedom Box, Women Athletes Who Made a Difference, Planting the Trees of Kenya, Albert, Tomas and the Library Lady, Jalapeno Bagels, The Rough-Face Girl, Gu Dong Is Coming!, Babushka Baba Yaga, and A Picture Book of Me.

To address current events and social movements, several School 4 teachers have voluntarily attended the diversity training workshops with the BCEA (Burlington County Education Association) including Collaborating with Colleagues on Issues of Race and Diversity, Workshop with Author Frederick Joseph, Collaborating with Students on Issues of Race and Diversity, and LGBTQ + Curriculum, Building Respect for Diversity. Professional development has been offered to staff; a committee has been developed to address bullying cases; and, classes have been provided. All components have continued to enrich the diverse community that allows School 4 to embrace all students from the many different paths of life.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In life there are both good times and bad, but what gets us through these life events is knowing we are in a safe, trusting, loving environment. School 4's strongest asset, and the foundation on which this learning community is built, is the socio-emotional climate. The needs and success of each student, educator and staff member is considered and attended to. Every stakeholder is well-versed in understanding that students come to school with an invisible backpack and that School 4 is a safe haven. Keeping the student's best interest in mind in all decisions.

From the day a student walks through the door of this learning community, we strive to build positive, trusting relationships where morals and values are paramount. Meaningful conversations about decision-making and conflict resolution are facilitated, so that students become better prepared, informed, and empowered to act in a socially responsible manner. This strategy is at the forefront of the School 4's pursuit of students' social and emotional growth.

Knowing the community of students and being able to relate to what they are exposed to allows the leaders of School 4 to contribute to students' feeling safe and valued. This, in turn, allows for academic learning environments to thrive and to meet the diverse learning needs of their inhabitants. With curriculum in place to provide students even more support, through classroom projected Health lesson plans and character development. School 4 went a step further to bring in a Student Resource Officer that teaches about conflict resolutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified students' needs for emotional support. Several school-based clearances have been conducted due to students indicating thoughts of self-harm or attempts of harming themselves. As a school community, we have partnered with JFCS and Care Plus to support those in need of intensive therapy. These resources have been at times life changing for our students and their families. Providing professional support when needed and putting into their hands the contacts that will help them the most through the crisis.

Our priority has been to provide these students with a safe, trusting and nurturing environment that is equipped with the help and support they need and have been longing for. School 4 students know that they are supported, cared for and protected. Furthermore, they know that at School 4, the door is always open and they will always have our unwavering support wherever their journey takes them.