

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Lake Avenue Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 126 Lake Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Saratoga Springs State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 12866-2431

County Saratoga County

Telephone (518) 584-3678 Fax (518) 583-4778

Web site/URL
<https://www.saratogaschools.org/lake-avenue-elementary/> E-mail a_elsworth@saratogaschools.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Michael Patton E-mail m_patton@saratogaschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Saratoga Springs City School District Tel. (518) 583-4700

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. Tony Krackeler
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	29	30	59
1	22	40	62
2	42	35	77
3	32	29	61
4	33	35	68
5	31	36	67
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	189	205	394

*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
 - 1.5 % Asian
 - 4.6 % Black or African American
 - 3.6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90.3 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 9%

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	21
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	32
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	372
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 21 %

Total number students who qualify: 81

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 14 %
54 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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</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>1</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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: 22
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.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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. 2012

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

Following our district's desire for unity, Lake Avenue adopted the Pathways Mission and Vision of the district stating the Lake Avenue Elementary School community will empower all learners in an engaging, collaborative environment to discover their personal pathways to the future. Our vision is rooted in the following four core beliefs: equity of opportunity, collaboration, community, and personalization.

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

<https://saratogaschools.sharepoint.com/sites/SSCSD-Website-Files/Shared Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FSSCSD-Website-Files%2FShared Documents%2FEquity%26 Inclusion%2Fdei-regulation%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FSSCSD-Website-Files%2FShared Documents%2FEquity %26 Inclusion&p=true>

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

Head south from the picturesque Adirondack High Peaks and you find yourself in Saratoga Springs, recognized as one of the most beautiful small towns in the United States. With multiple natural mineral springs and the only active spouter geyser east of the Mississippi, Saratoga was a health resort destination for much of two centuries and gained fame as the “Queen of the Spas”. Known also as the site of the “Turning Point of the Revolution”, Saratoga Springs lays claim to a legacy of passionate patriots. Home to one of the longest running horse racing tracks in the country, Saratoga has been a premier venue for 158 years. This trifecta of health, history, and horses is the foundation upon which Lake Avenue Elementary continues to build.

In the center of the sprawling space, Lake Avenue rises three stories high as a celebrated hub of this stunning city. By all accounts, Lake Avenue is not just the neighborhood school, it is an integral part of the neighborhood itself. Nearly half of the students reside within walking distance creating a close-knit culture. The other half of students arrive in buses from a diverse range of urban to suburban to rural-like areas. All come together for the unifying experiences that only Lake Avenue can offer.

Under the leadership of our principal since 2000, Lake has cultivated a culture of unity with the community, continuously working to define needs and meet them with a vast array of programs. Students are challenged to explore themselves and the world around them through the Arts in Education program which brings authors, illustrators, composers, residencies with Homespun Dance, and workshops with the Saratoga Opera and storytellers. Parents, staff, and community volunteers offer numerous programs of choice including Drama Club, Swing and Salsa, and a host of “March Madness” selections for students to explore their interests at a deeper level.

Lake Avenue is a trailblazer on many fronts. We were the first elementary school in the district to institute video announcements hosted by students from the on-site television studio, the first in the district to adopt PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), and the first to host annual bike rodeos to promote safety and physical activity. The Digital Citizenship Family Night, an event hosted by teachers partnered with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), was first hosted at Lake to educate families about the issues of digital citizenship and initiate dialogue between home and school. Thanks to the dedicated staff and volunteers, Lake remains the only school in the district to offer a four-day, three-night outdoor education experience for all fifth graders at Camp Wakpominee. Perhaps the most profoundly unique element of Lake Avenue has been its Science Lab. Until COVID, the lab inspired and challenged students and adults alike with full-sensory science experiences.

As recipients of so much community generosity, the students of Lake Avenue are instilled with the value of giving back. Led by student groups, outreach is held annually for Juvenile Diabetes, toiletries are collected for backstretch workers at the racetrack, and Halloween candy is collected for our military troops. Individually, students exchange their Blue Streak Bucks, paper reward incentives, for real merchandise to donate to a local pet shelter.

During the COVID challenges experienced around the world, Lake Avenue changed dramatically as we moved to virtual school, but the dedication and creativity of our staff remained our highest priority. During the Spring 2020 closure, teachers made home deliveries of books and materials and made daily deliveries of food to students in need. Quickly training in new software, teachers and families teamed to provide consistent, meaningful interaction with students each day. During the 2020-2021 school year, whether fully in-person or hybrid, students not present in the building Zoomed into the classroom. By November of 2020 all students had the option of returning to full-day in-person instruction. With one-to-one devices, software, creative use of Zoom, and document-sharing students were able to resume group work. The commitment by all staff to stay focused on nurturing the whole child at Lake Avenue helped maintain positive relationships and a strong community despite the physical distance.

The school’s honor as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2012 prompted a surge of pride that flowed through the community and inspired greater involvement of an already active parent and business community.

Specifically, the award inspired the PTA to seek the PTA School of Excellence Award which they received in 2019. In addition, this recognition led to a survey of parents to question how to continue this legacy and better serve the diverse population. According to local realtors, the prestige of the award and the pride in our community has made the Lake Avenue zone a preferred location for purchasing a home. In essence, the greatness of Lake Avenue continues to drive it toward even greater success.

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:

The teachers at Lake Avenue Elementary School offer enthusiasm and passion through various academic methods. Teaching to the students' individual needs is the top priority of educators at Lake Avenue demonstrated by collaboratively generating a mission that guides student learning each school year in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. The goal-creating discussion is driven using Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-based Goals (SMART Goals). These goals establish an outline that guides progress of curriculum and student learning across subject areas for the academic year. Topics involving curriculum approaches, formative and summative assessments, and student learning are discussed consistently in Professional Learning Teams (PLTs). During the weekly meetings, grade-level teachers and support specialists create a community of collaborators who support one another through lessons, relationships, and experiences. PLTs have strengthened teachers' connections with curriculum, essential standards, and enhanced student learning. During PLTs, teachers pose ideas for students accomplishing specific standards and offer suggestions for students who require additional support in outlined areas. These learning goals align with specific formative assessments defined through curriculum.

In addition to the meaningful lessons and relationships forged at our PLTs, teachers analyze student progress and growth through additional data meetings. Math and ELA data meetings provide a collaborative environment with colleagues to dissect student growth and progress, in turn creating individual student plans. Summative assessment results using diagnostic programs guide the discussion of student progress and individual needs during the data meetings. Productive analysis of student growth patterns continues to lead the instructional practices of teachers. The opportunity to evaluate patterns within grade levels fertilizes an environment that analyzes instructional practices and potential deficiencies of the program. Lake Avenue teachers offer curriculum and assessment rooted in collaborative efforts and clear vision, granting the continued prosperity of young learners.

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

For the last eight years, our ELA curriculum was designed using the resources from the Engage New York Modules and Core Knowledge Language Arts Skills (CKLA) program. Within the daily lessons, teachers use tiered Response to Intervention (RtI) supports for small group literacy instruction designed to support the needs of individual students. At the Primary level, curriculum combined phonics instruction, reading strategies, and reading groups within the daily ELA block. Intermediate teachers approach reading comprehension through quality literature and close reading skills. Teachers expanded reading units into Project Based Learning experiences in response to workshops provided by the Buck Institute. Units were redesigned to create real-life understanding with overarching questions that guide student learning and instruction. Employing diverse methods, teachers allow all students pathways to becoming writers regardless of their personal story. In addition, writing instruction is complimented by taking inspiration from Lucy Calkin's Writer's Workshop model. Writing instruction offers a deep dissect into the creation of narratives, informational text, response to reading, and argument.

The District's ELA Renewal Committee recently adopted the American Reading Company (ARC) with the supports of the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) data collection system for the primary grades. The program combines a standards-based framework for student assessment, text leveling, and curriculum and instruction. Students are provided with high-quality curriculum and dynamic, culturally-sound instructional materials that are accessible in many languages. The addition of software has provided a consistent mode to import data on student conferences related to reading and writing skills and supports individual goal setting for students based on their current reading level. The ARC and IRLA programs will be adopted for all elementary grades in the 2022-2023 school year.

Reading and Writing assessments accommodate a consistent purpose to check student understanding, plan subsequent instruction, and provide teachers with data on the attainment of content knowledge. Formative assessments are teacher-created after careful analysis of essential standards. Many formative assessments are rubric-based and are edited annually to improve efficiency and effectiveness in assessing progress toward student goals. Summative assessments are established by the district and are used to assess the performance of students. Lake Avenue prides itself on using data-driven instruction to support the needs of individual student success. For the past several years, reading assessments were generated from the Reading Inventory through Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and Fountas and Pinnell, allowing analysis of longitudinal progress from kindergarten through college readiness. Responding to identified strengths and weaknesses, teachers provide small-group, supplementary research-based interventions. In 2021, the district adopted the iReady online assessment. The diagnostic test provides feedback using grade-level and nation-wide percentage scores. Students attending the before-school program, Beyond the Bell, are then provided with individualized instruction through the online software, a programmed path for proficiency and growth in reading.

General education, special education, and Academic Intervention Specialists (AIS) collaborate in discussions on student assessments and progress monitoring data. The cooperative efforts between educators allow for constant communication and support of both the teacher and student to provide quality instruction for academic success.

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

For the last three years, our elementary buildings have implemented the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) program Into Math. Instruction through the HMH program supports development of conceptual understanding and develops procedurally fluent mathematicians. The mathematics curriculum integrates a comprehensive number sense acquisition approach that provides resources with clear, intentional purpose to support effectiveness. Teachers throughout our building deliver instruction with creative whole group and small group instructional strategies to support the needs of our student population. Students build conceptual understandings through strategic Math Talks and with activities that scaffold the growth from conceptual to procedural application. Protocols such as the three-reads, a systematic approach to problem solving, provide a common language for students from kindergarten through fifth grade. Conversations, reasoning, and justification of mathematical thinking are routine in all classes and the focus is firmly on a growth mindset.

Assessments have become a major guidance for student success within our math curriculum and daily instructional supports. Formative assessments, which occur daily, allow teachers to determine students' knowledge of mathematical concepts, identify gaps in understanding and guide direct instruction accordingly to ensure understanding. These assessments include discussions, entry/exit tickets, classroom games, and student self-reflection. Summative assessments vary in frequency, task, and content throughout the unit of study and time of year. These assessments are teacher created, and materials assess performance in mathematics. These measurements include Module and Unit assessments which gauge student procedural and performance knowledge of mathematics content. Diagnostic testing through the iReady math software occurs three times throughout the school year. Reports gathered through the assessment provide teachers with data about student performance in relation to other students at the school and national level.

In addition to the curriculum and varied assessments, teachers at Lake Avenue embed strategic technological software to support math understanding and create an environment of enjoyable academics. Software for fact fluency is embedded into scheduled What I Need Times (WIN Time) using Reflex Math, an adaptive, game-based software. Reflex has become an effective system for supporting mastery of basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division for our students. Teachers also provide personalization of the curriculum through the Into Math learning management system, Waggle. Teachers develop exciting, interactive, and engaging online math courses to further understanding of curriculum content. The program is designed to support individual needs of student mathematical knowledge and builds understanding as the year progresses.

progress monitoring data through assessments and daily student performance. Additionally, a math coach in the building works with teachers to build their effectiveness, develop additional instructional strategies, and partner in data analysis. The cooperative efforts continue to drive the support and instruction for each grade level and individual student in mathematics. The mathematics curriculum and instruction continue to blossom through collaborative efforts, direct, explicit, and small group instructional techniques, and a passion to enhance the skills of all learners.

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

Science is given a special emphasis in our school as we recognize its vital role in preparing students for their futures. Acting as a pilot school for the new K-5 Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch program, Lake Avenue teachers have provided project-based learning experiences through Science, Technology Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) instruction for all students since 2014. These transformative learning experiences are engaging, hands-on, and empower students to develop knowledge and skills needed for the 21st century using the engineering design process and the scientific inquiry process. In addition, students use Video Editor for XML (VEX) construction and robotics materials to solve problems and build their understanding of content kinesthetically.

Using a variety of resources, teachers work to enhance science standards with learning kits through Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). Examples of these kits include exploration of the plant cycle through observations of growing seeds, and the developmental process of chickens, where students observe the hatching of baby chicks from eggs in their very own classrooms! In addition to the hands-on lessons and activities, technology is leveraged to target standards. Mystery Science (www.mysteryscience.com) incorporates hands-on, standard aligned, lessons that explore science concepts and contain a central mystery, discussion questions, supplemental reading, and hands-on activities.

For eight years prior to COVID, Lake Avenue was home to the Science Lab. In this entirely donation-sourced lab, classes learned each week to observe their environments and always question what they see and know as they study hundreds of fossils, billion-year-old rocks, and authentic skeletons of skunks, cow, mice, rabbits, and even a saber-toothed tiger on their lab tables. Using Next Generation Standards, the scientist's life experiences, and vast materials in the lab, lessons were designed collaboratively by teachers and the volunteer, a retired educator who devoted her life to the instruction of science for young learners. In partnership with the Garden Club, classes investigated weather, plants, and animals in the on-site garden whose produce was used to benefit families in need of food. By design, the lab initiated hands-on learning to inspire a love for science and appreciation for knowledge and nature.

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

Social Studies curriculum is largely integrated in cross-curricular studies. Lessons in history and civic learning challenge students to explore the world and expand student thinking beyond their community. Embedding elements of ELA and science in the Inquiries available on the Engage New York platform, teachers designed units of study that allow students to develop their understanding and skill while taking positive action to understand and impact the world such as when the second grade educated the community about the impacts of feeding the ducks in Congress Park in response to their research about that local problem.

Many areas of history are also rooted within the content of the ELA curriculum at all grade levels. Module lessons for third through fifth grades use literacy resources to focus on building students' literary skills as they develop knowledge about the world through historical periods like the Revolutionary War and deep dives into the Rights of Children. Primary grades use anthologies to support understanding of historical events while emphasizing the value of reading and writing. Videos from Brain Pop and Brain Pop Junior allow academically sound information to be presented in a technologically savvy manner adding variation to instruction. The local history outside the walls of Lake Avenue comes alive as a rich part of students' experience with field trips to the New York State Military Museum, Saratoga Battlefield, Canfield Casino, High Rock Park, Olde Bryan Inn, and so many more, often within walking distance from the school.

In addition to the adopted curriculum for social studies, teachers work together to create student resources that explore current events and engage students in news articles at developmentally appropriate levels. Holidays and topics of study such as Martin Luther King Junior Day, Juneteenth, Black History Month, and Women's History Month have continued to add significance to the social studies curriculum.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All students receive 40 minutes of weekly instruction from each of our art and music teachers and a library media specialist and 80 minutes from a physical education instructor as part of the regular school day schedule. There are many additional experiences with this curricula that enhance and complement the core academic programs. BOCES works in partnership with the school to support and encourage the incorporation of Cultural Arts in the curriculum and programming for students. Arts education has been shown to improve both literacy and critical thinking skills resulting in improved performance in other subject areas. Scheduled art events and visits are jointly planned with the PTA, building principal, and grade-level representatives.

In conjunction with the teachers and academic curriculum, our Lake Avenue PTA works to add value to student experiences in school. Collaborative programs for areas of technological study include Lego Club and Robotics Club, which incorporates engineering and cooperative skills for all elementary-aged students. In addition to the creation of technology clubs, the PTA offers additional programs for six different foreign languages. The PTA and teachers also dedicated an entire school year to delivering lessons about Digital Citizenship and Cybersecurity for all students.

Health and wellness have continued to take precedence in our ever-changing lives. Programs to support mental and physical health have continued to strengthen over the last several years. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum has been established with the use of Second Step. The SEL course equips our students with the tools to excel in and out of the classroom. Second Steps supports all students in emotions management, situational awareness and academic achievement. With a common language and strategies for kindergarten through fifth grade, the program aids in individual development and is also helpful in rebuilding classroom communities following the trauma of shutdown.

Inspiring positive mental health is just the beginning of the wellness that is taught at Lake Avenue. Parents and teachers have designed the School Wellness Action Team, known as SWAT, that establishes school-wide programs promoting physical activity and wellness. Some programs include a Running Club for all grades and ages, as well as a baseball program for intermediate levels. The mental health and physical well-being of students is fostered by the district-wide Family Life curriculum. The developmentally appropriate concepts for self-care and safety add to the character skills as well as the mental and physical health of students.

To ensure students receive additional opportunities with technology and experiential learning with mathematical computation skills, coding instruction has also been added into weekly schedules. Classroom teachers and the Library Media Specialist collaboratively developed curriculum to build coding skills using apps and activities.

Additionally, students are offered an opportunity to enrich character skills through Student Council. Student volunteers involved with the program are inspired to create change for the students and staff at Lake Avenue. The students establish school initiatives and foster connections to the community. A Student Mentorship Program among varying grade-levels was developed as a student-led initiative to foster

friendship and empathy across grade levels. The catalogue of opportunities is molded each year to nurture the changing student body most fully in our ever-evolving society.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Lake Avenue Elementary offers many opportunities to support students who are performing below grade level. These systematized supports include Data Days, AIS, morning program, and Beyond the Bell.

During Data Days classroom teachers meet with the school principal, ELA and math AIS teachers and the K-12 Director of Humanities and Elementary Instruction to analyze student data collected from I-Ready, Individualized Reading Level Assessment, Reading Inventory, Fountas and Pinnell, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels), Pre and Post Into Math assessments, and Math unit tests. We then determine which students need extra services from our AIS teachers and which require additional support from their classroom teachers. PLTs follow up on these decisions to brainstorm strategies and best practices for assisting those students.

AIS services at our building function as responsive programs that allow students to fluidly test in and out of the program throughout the school year. Students who receive these intervention services usually work in a small group setting outside the classroom. The AIS teachers also send home progress reports each trimester and routinely communicate informally with families.

We also offer two before-school programs. The Morning Program for K-3 students focuses exclusively on early reading skills using various software programs and is offered to those that evidence gaps. Beyond the Bell, a tutoring program for grades 2-5, is offered to struggling or at-risk students to work on the standards and content of most need based on the diagnostic data. Classroom, AIS, and special education teachers work with students two to three times a week based on individual needs. Providers frequently collaborate and communicate with classroom teachers. Students are chosen for this program following teacher recommendations, classroom performance, and I-Ready diagnostic scores. Students often benefit from being tutored by their own classroom teacher. For those tutored by other professionals, communication and collaboration between Beyond the Bell providers and teachers is frequent to best support the learners.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Lake Avenue offers many opportunities for students who are performing above grade level. In third grade, all students take the Cognitive Abilities Test, abbreviated as the CogAT, which determines their eligibility for the Scholars Program in fourth and fifth grades. The CogAT test results are used to comply with state requirements to identify students of gifted capabilities. Fourth grade Scholars focus on a range of interdisciplinary studies including a humanities unit through literature, a PLTW investigation of the input and output of the human brain and simple machines. The fifth-grade scholars undertake a humanities book study reading the book *Fever 1793*, a project studying Mars Exploration, and a PLTW biomedical module called Infection Detection.

In the 2019-2020 school year, Lake Avenue piloted a more inclusive design for the Scholars program, making it available to all fourth and fifth grade students. Partnering with the librarian and AIS providers, classes were smaller in size to promote active discourse and deeper learning. The expanded program targeted the district's Pathway vision of promoting "access and opportunity for all." Project Based Learning (PBL) was used with the Scholars program for students performing above grade level offering engaging, real-world projects that allowed meaningful inquiry over an extended period.

The Lake Avenue PTA supports the enrichment of all students, offering a menu of opportunities that support students. Covering physical, academic, and emotional channels, the various clubs include Morning Physical Education, Ski and Snowboard Club, Lego Club, Art Club and a Book Club.

Students are also offered BOCES Enrichment courses through the Enrichment Resource Center of
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Washington, Saratoga, Warren, Hamilton, Essex Counties BOCES and are designed to provide students with additional experiences that teach new skills while building curiosity and motivation. With good academic and social standing a requirement, above-grade-level students are often the participants in these programs known as Project Enrich and the STEAM Academy.

3c. Special education:

Please note that in Part II Section 8 above, we have 54 students with either IEP or 504. The 44 IEP students are classified under the 13 conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and listed in this application. However, the 10 students with 504s have medical diagnoses or disabilities provided for under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which do not align with the IDEA conditions. Therefore, our number of conditions reflects only the IEP students. Due to privacy laws, the specific diagnoses of each child with a 504 is not being shared.

Special Education students at Lake Avenue are supported by a dedicated team made up of a host of professionals. Honoring the least-restrictive mindset, most special education students receive their services from a special education provider in the classroom setting. This support model benefits students as they work at a manageable pace with modifications necessary for their success while maintaining their socialization and belongingness to the classroom community. Students often receive modified work and adaptations to achieve their goals. Special Educators utilize small groups for spiral review of taught content and pre-teaching to aid students in this population to reach their individual goals.

This year a co-teach model is being piloted in our kindergarten and first grades with plans to extend it to other grade levels based on outcomes. Special programming is not new to Lake Avenue. The building has been home to a Strategies Program for six years. These classes operate with an 8:1:2 model which includes 8 students, 1 teacher, and 2 teacher aides or teacher assistants. These classes are composed of students with emotional and behavioral needs from around the district. The program is focused on equipping students with the strategies necessary to be successful in the mainstream classroom. As they progress, strategy students join the general education classrooms. When fully mainstreamed, students receive a minimum of 30 minutes of resource room, along with other services to help close the achievement gap.

We also provide additional services such as occupational therapies, counseling in school with our psychologist, outside counseling with agencies affiliated with our program, speech services, and physical therapy to help with their diagnosed needs. To make access more equitable, assistive technology is increasingly leveraged across curriculum for special education students. Programs like Seesaw, Kurzweil, and Kami provide students with alternative paths for reading and writing. Our team of professionals work together to support student behaviors and learning habits as well, routinely sharing and expanding the toolkit of techniques for offering intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for students.

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

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

Lake Avenue students are supported in multiple ways when experiencing trauma such as homelessness. Students receive aid through programs like Snackpack Nutrition Assistance for Children, Project Lift, Franklin Community Center (FCC), and Parsons. The Snackpack program, run by community volunteers including teachers from Lake Avenue, provide backpacks full of food to students and their families who are experiencing food insecurity. These food bags are delivered directly to the children each Friday. Lake Avenue also has an active partnership with the FCC, a local, nonprofit human service agency which offers necessities, furniture, and services to families and individuals in our community. Working collaboratively with individuals and other agencies in the community, this partnership is aimed at helping improve quality of life and fostering a sense of neighborhood and community for all people. Franklin Community Center also delivers the Project Lift program to students in our school, supporting referred students after school with social and emotional skills. The program helps students build self-esteem and realize their self-worth

while setting appropriate boundaries. Lessons in the program center around confidence building and bullying. Families are also supported by the program for holiday assistance, summer camps, school supplies, clothing, and Halloween costumes.

Additionally, some of our students receive services from The Parsons Child and Family Center clinic. Students and families can receive counseling, insights on psychiatric evaluations, medication management, and psychiatric evaluations. Many of these services are delivered at school, and those professionals communicate with teachers to act as a voice for families and a bridge between home and school.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Teaching the whole child requires engagement with each child. Lake Avenue teachers intentionally seek to make each child feel an important part of the school community. The principal shares the names of students at-risk for feeling disengaged and tasks all staff throughout the building to greet these children by name with a smile every time they encounter them. This simple effort is one of the powerful ways adults strive to engage and motivate students with positivity daily. Providing a visual expectation that students should pursue their passions and explore many opportunities for their futures, bulletin boards in both hallways and classrooms share inspirational and growth mindset messages. The custodians contributed to this by painting positive messages that promote curiosity and self-esteem in each of the hallways.

Though COVID restrictions changed operations, this commitment to engaging students never wavered. Teachers quickly completed professional development courses in numerous technology platforms to support student learning and make personal engagement possible. The attendance clerk recorded daily video announcements for students with the pledge of allegiance, celebration of birthdays, messages of encouragement, and other announcements about the school to preserve connection during shutdown. The teachers, staff, and bus drivers created a video montage of positive messages to sustain these crucial relationships. Teachers recorded read-alouds for their students and scheduled face-to-face contact time more often than required by the district.

Once back to the in-person model of learning with social distancing a concern, picnic tables and a portable Smartboard were secured to provide outdoor instruction with increased safety. Assemblies that could no longer be held in the exquisite auditorium unique to Lake Avenue were held via Zoom with grade level video contributions about character education to keep all students connected. We continued to maintain connections virtually with a spin on our traditions. Leopard Day, a celebration of positive behaviors that occurs three times each year, was accomplished via activities over Zoom. We also took to our outdoor space where we help engaging activities including the annual Turkey Trot, Minute to Win It games, and a bounce house. During the winter of Leopard week, PE classes took an excursion to the town park for a sledding experience. The annual Science Fair pivoted to a live virtual mode utilizing break out rooms for parents and community to hear the presentations of each group, ask questions, and interact with the students, further supporting their belongingness and their career readiness skills. Despite the creative solutions it requires, students at Lake Avenue are assured an unmatched environment of support and engagement.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

With a long history of parent and community involvement in the school, Lake Avenue makes collaborative efforts to constantly nurture and grow that involvement, to diversify the experiences for students, and to best represent the multiple voices of our society. One notable new program is the Steamposium hosted in 2019. Over thirty businesses and individuals from the community came together to showcase the Science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematical elements of their careers and organizations for students to explore with hands-on experiences. Nurses and physicians brought x-rays, tools, and skeletons for students to manipulate. The Naval Nuclear Propulsion and Global Foundries demonstrated and modeled computer chips and energy simulators. Firefighters brought their latest safety technology for students to handle while a local homestead brought their duck with a 3D- printed prosthetic leg. Though interrupted by Covid, this incredible community connection will return as guidelines allow.

In addition, the PLTW curriculum that is part of the science curriculum has led teachers at Lake Avenue to make connections with local and national community members including The Snakeman and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Teachers from our building partnered with the National Racing Museum, developing extensions for each of the Science units in the curriculum that tied directly to the local racetrack in meaningful, experiential lessons. Each year the fourth-grade partners with a playwright and producer to write and film anti-bullying public service announcements for the entire school. Skidmore, a nearby college, partners with the Student Council on their mentoring program to coach older elementary

students in working with younger children. They also assist the student council members in the creation of welcome messages and virtual tours for new students. The Tang Museum, also part of Skidmore College, hosts student groups and offers outreach to classes to promote cultural awareness and provide experiences promoting equity.

Lake Avenue is more than a school as we host continuing education classes for adults, indoor basketball and volleyball through the City of Saratoga Springs Recreation Department, and the Amateur Athletic Union Hoop Foundation youth basketball. Girl Scouts routinely hold their meetings in the building, and First Night Saratoga events take place at the school on New Year's Eve. Geographically and culturally, Lake Avenue Elementary School functions as the center of this spectacular community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Lake Avenue Elementary is beloved by both parents and teachers. Though morale across the world has slumped for educators with the recent changes and increasing pressures, Lake Avenue's teachers find comfort in knowing they are valued by their principal, students, and community. Each month the PTA draws a name to give a gift basket to a teacher or staff member. Each week they leave healthy, and some indulgent, treats in the faculty room with little notes reminding staff of their appreciation.

The principal leads with a care, realism, and connection that makes teachers feel supported through even the toughest situations. In addition to her leadership, the entire school population takes part in fostering morale. The Sunshine Committee offers support with cards, emails, and sometimes flowers for special occasions and difficult situations. Students and staff birthdays are celebrated each day on the daily bulletin. The Professional Learning Teams provide a built-in support system, building the capacity of teachers to educate their students as well as the psychological health and well-being of one another. Prior to COVID the staff organized events to bolster a sense of belonging with Superbowl Soups Day, Dessert Bake-Offs, and grade-level monthly breakfasts. During the time when those were not safe, Staff Mingles were held on Zoom to preserve the sense of community and support one another. When we returned to school in-person, the physical education teachers and custodial staff hosted an outdoor barbecue on the last day of school to bring everyone together.

On a district level, teacher morale was protected as the instructional technology department pushed out one-to-one devices for all elementary students years ahead of schedule to facilitate teaching and learning. This difficult financial decision required support at every level of administration and the school board. The fact that they accomplished this monumental task was a major factor in boosting morale as teachers recognized the underlying support and respect for teaching, learning, and the work that we do.

Although the professional development model for the district has incorporated teacher trainers for years, the sudden need to successfully support our students during shutdown demanded more. The teachers at Lake Avenue answered the call, teaching and attending countless training courses in recent technology and best practices. The principal noted that Lake teachers eagerly jumped to volunteer, speaking volumes about the positive spirit and morale of teachers.

4. School Leadership:

With a strong belief that the purpose of schooling is a warm welcome and sense of belonging, the principal has fostered a teacher-led structure in the building to address and maximize student achievement at Lake Avenue. The 2012 Blue Ribbon award was a defining moment in recognizing and solidifying our purpose and role as partners in leadership. The results of the 2015 Building Leadership School Survey resulted in the identification of five areas of focus which have evolved and meshed brilliantly with our district's four core beliefs and continue to serve as the umbrella of focus on student achievement. Evidence of our work on digital citizenship, decreasing bullying and exclusion, improving outcomes for students with disabilities, increasing student time engaged in physical and outdoor activities and providing enrichment opportunities can be found throughout this Blue Ribbon application.

but more critically, to share. Understanding and caring for school in the face of difficult odds are characteristics of the Lake Avenue leaders who bring their best selves to school each day with stamina and determination to make each day better than the one before. The principal acts as the premier model of this resilience, commitment, and positivity as she moves throughout the building to interact with teachers and students each day, leading by example.

Along with the principal, faculty, staff, and parents chair and serve on building and district committees such as the Building Leadership Team, Response to Intervention Team, and the Research and Development Committee. Together, they also sponsor clubs, participate in pilot programs, examine and explore data, participate in professional development and engage in healthy dialogue, all aimed at boosting student achievement. As partners with the principal, each group looks critically at both data and individuals to identify areas of need within the school and respond with information, resources, supports, and avenues for meeting those needs.

Creative thinkers who design instruction and support our students and their stories are applauded for their sense of leadership. Differences of opinion, perspective and a clash of ideas are healthy and respected in this community of leaders who not only teach but learn every day. These potentially challenging conversations and actions are possible because of the high expectations and established culture the principal has nurtured and, at the same time, her willingness to share leadership and trust with the many stakeholders.

Our journey toward success in student achievement continues to build confidence and a willingness to take risks in our collective quest to provide the ultimate learning experience. Teachers as leaders remain determined to examine and dissect instructional skills, experiment with the latest research, and share best practice with one another. Never has this been more tested than in the COVID chaos of the last two years. The strength of Lake Avenue is strong because of the shared leadership of its members.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

A largely homogenous student population statistic may suggest that Lake Avenue lacks diversity; however, the cultures, backgrounds, and living situations in the community give our school a richness that cannot be represented on a demographic map. It is the school's articulated goal to not only provide an equity of access to opportunity, but opportunities that represent a diverse palate that are guided by the interests of all students instead of a single mainstream idea.

The respect for honoring and cultivating awareness of culture begins immediately at Lake Avenue. When you walk in the front door, a welcome sign in 27 languages greets all entrants. In the classrooms, teachers consider the lessons from numerous workshops with our Cultural Responsiveness Trainer to ensure equity and inclusivity in classroom routines, procedures, and delivery of curriculum daily. From simply refraining from the use of "boys" and "girls" in attention-getting or lining up to sophisticated classroom lessons, remaining alert to, and mindful of, diversity is a mission at Lake Avenue. The expansion of Black History and Women's History curriculum at every level has increased the depth of sensitivity of students to one another and to the larger world outside our walls. To further promote student learning with other cultures, language programs in Russian, Chinese, French, Spanish, and Latin are available for all students in before-school programs. Although there is a nominal fee for these programs, the PTA provides scholarships for any student in need, allowing everyone an equal chance of participating. Similarly, in recognition of the diversity of experience, The New Family Mentoring Program provides a conduit for being heard and navigating a new place for all families new to our building. Our school psychologist works with families to connect them to supports and resources when they join Lake Avenue and in response to any changes families experience.

Lake Avenue seeks to be the hands and feet of the community to support its students, families, and the world as current events unfold. For example, recently a family from the school with ties to Poland asked students to make cards for the refugees to be personally delivered as they traveled to assist with the humanitarian crisis in Poland. Teachers quickly adjusted lessons to guide students emotionally through this developing world event and empowered them to become active supporters for the Ukrainian people. Students created 594 cards of inspiration that were brought with donations also collected from the Lake Avenue families.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

If asked to describe Lake Avenue in a single word, many people would agree that teamwork is the best choice because the individuals that make up this tremendous school labor in concert with one another to provide the richest and most complete place for nurturing and educating its students and supporting their families. While this might sound cliché, it is truly the common denominator in each of the initiatives, programs, and successes at Lake Avenue. We are convinced that the formula is not sorcery, though it is enchanting. This practice of collaboration is the foundation of every decision that is made at Lake Avenue and pivotal in responding with unity of purpose to the initiatives and events outside our control. Building a collective mindset to grow the culture of collaboration is the most instrumental strategy in our school's success.

Each of the components highlighted in this application boil down to a collective decision arrived at through careful thought, difficult conversations, and a mutual agreement that the emotional, academic, and physical well-being of our students is the ultimate goal of all that we do. That is not to say that everyone agrees all the time, but the culture built in the school does not expect conformity. Instead, it demands honesty and openness and expects earnestness in drilling to the core of our mission and making decisions in the best interest of children and their families. Functioning jointly with the many stakeholders in a school begins with an agreement that it takes the "whole village" to accomplish our goals. With a constantly changing populace by the very nature of a school, the teachers, staff, principal, and parents must work together on a constant basis to continue this legacy of collaboration, and many of the programs and structures in place are designed to do just that. Lake Avenue has a firmly established belief that every voice matters, that our school is not just a place for academics, but a home for providing experiences and connections that meet the whole child, nurtures them, and works together to create the best version of each individual child's self. We recognize that our job is never done and are devoted to constantly analyzing our strengths and weaknesses to make continuous improvements, additions, deletions, and enhancements. Because Lake Avenue Elementary School is deeply committed to the idea that we will never have arrived at the best we can be, we are satisfied that this school is the ideal place to call home.