

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 Ms. Kirsten Coffman
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 958 East High Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Hicksville State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 43526-1258

County Defiance

Telephone (419) 542-7475 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://www.hicksvilleschools.org E-mail countrymank@hicksvilleschools.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* Mr. Keith Countryman E-mail countrymank@hicksvilleschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Hicksville Exempted Village Tel. (419) 542-7665

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. Galen Methvin
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	46	41	87
1	43	37	80
2	35	41	76
3	29	32	61
4	44	33	77
5	0	0	0
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	197	184	381

*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 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 85 % White
 - 9 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 11%

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

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

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	33
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	20
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	53
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	488
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
15 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 33 %

Total number students who qualify: 124

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 24 %
91 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>4</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>36</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>5</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: 8
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.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
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 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	96%	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.

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

We believe that every student is a person of worth and our legacy to the future. We believe that each student can learn when given enough time, assistance, and opportunities. We are committed to providing a positive, safe environment where respect is fostered. We will encourage students to be active participants in their own learning in order to realize their full potential. We will provide opportunities for our students to become responsible, productive members of society and to make a successful transition from school to work and/or higher education.

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

<https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/hickoh/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

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

Hicksville Village Schools is a premier, public school district located in Defiance County in northwest Ohio. Hicksville, Ohio has an approximate population of three-thousand-four-hundred-ten residents. The school district is one of the area’s oldest and most established, serving the people of Hicksville since 1878. Approximately one thousand kindergarten through twelfth grade students attend one building.

The school district's success is a result of the intentional involvement of our parents and community members, the continuous commitment of staff members, and the unwavering spirit of the student body. The elementary school has strong partnerships with families and community businesses. The teachers are second to none when it comes to an attitude of providing “over and beyond” opportunities for the students at Hicksville Schools. More than eighty percent of the faculty members hold advanced degrees. Students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade are continuously engaged in their learning through relevant, student-centered instructional strategies resulting in a deeper understanding and higher achievement of standards. In fact, the Ohio Department of education regularly rates Hicksville Schools in the top ten percent of all public schools in the state. Students in the district score higher than similar districts and higher than the state averages on state tests. Large-school curricular offerings with a broad array of academic disciplines and course offerings are part of our small-school setting.

Three years ago, the district made the transition to include a true middle school model for Hicksville students and staff.

The elementary school has been composed to a kindergarten through fourth grade model. Currently, there are three-hundred-eighty-one students in kindergarten through fourth; two students are identified as Asian, eighteen students are identified as thirty-seven and forty-three are identified as multi-racial. The remaining students are identified as white. Ninety-one students receive Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 services. Thirty-eight FTE staff serve our kindergarten through fourth grade.

The 2021-2022 school year district goal is to re-energize the Hicksville Initiative and to improve student development academically and socially. The goal aligns with the building goal; to provide students with data-driven, research-based, engaging instructional approaches that allows students to reach a year’s worth of growth or more for the current school year. Regular, almost weekly, grade-level collaboration at Hicksville Elementary allows teachers to study student data, guiding them in the development of meaningful lessons and grade-specific assessments that measure students’ mastery of state standards helps to make this goal successful.

Hicksville Elementary, like many other schools, has a variety of challenges. The school has a substantial population of low-socioeconomic students. Thirty-eight percent of the kindergarten through sixth grade student population qualifies for free/reduced lunches. Statistically, disadvantaged families come with additional challenges, including higher academic needs, more frequent discipline issues and poor at-home living conditions which can cause adversity for students in the school setting.

To better address some of our challenges, Hicksville Schools began an Initiative in the fall of 2013 that continues to thrive today. This initiative has helped set us apart from other districts in the surrounding area. Since that time staff, students, parents and community members have taken a great buy-in with this program.

There are three goals for the Hicksville Initiative. One is to improve the culture and climate of our building by creating the most positive environment possible. Two, we expect total student engagement. It is expected students will participate in daily lessons within the classroom. Participating in extracurricular events is an added bonus. Third, we have very high academic and behavioral expectations for all students and employees at Hicksville Schools.

As part of the overall Hicksville Initiative, The Hicksville Essentials were introduced and implemented school-wide in 2014. These twenty-three Essentials we adopted from Ron Clark’s book entitled The Essential 55. The Essentials are a list of rules and expectations for students to follow. The Hicksville

Essentials are specific to the needs of students and are reviewed often through announcements, newsletters and student assemblies. In elementary school, each grade level focuses on a skill or two and these skills continue to be reinforced and modeled as the student progresses with each grade level. We expect students and staff to model, practice and live by these Essentials as we see them as an integral part of the daily life at Hicksville Schools.

To help with student and community buy-in of the Hicksville Initiative, The Hicksville Shake competition began in 2013. Students in sixth grade practice professional, social skills all year long in the classroom. These skills include shaking hands properly, maintaining eye contact when speaking with others and effective conversational skills. These skills, added in with other Hicksville Essentials are tested by giving the students scenarios where they are judged on how they carry themselves and handle the situation. These skills continue to be honed throughout middle school and into high school where an additional competition takes place and senior capstone projects are presented. Collectively in the course of a student's education at Hicksville, they are provided a tremendous opportunity to develop soft skills that we believe will separate our students from others when applying for colleges or employment.

In 1873, Hicksville Schools was a four-room schoolhouse with students from multiple grades learning together in one of those four rooms. Those four rooms were referred to as the Four Houses. The staff at Hicksville Schools believe reinstating concepts from the 1873 style will strengthen our students and employees as one family. In the fall of 2014, Hicksville placed every student and employee in one of four Houses called Amitié, Coragem, Esemplare or Setia (ACES).

Classroom instruction is still implemented in the traditional way; however, activities and assemblies are often held, kindergarten through twelfth grade, with the focus of one family, the ACES. Students who will remain in their House until graduation should always represent Hicksville positively and support each other. The "Four Houses" will allow all students to work together across grade levels and to grow as a united Hicksville family. The staff often implements House competitions to reward the students who represent their House and Hicksville to the best of their ability. It is our belief, as it was our founding members of Hicksville Schools, that the four houses will help set apart our community and school from every other school in the surrounding area.

Staff are always researching ways to continually improve Hicksville Schools and truly appreciate the community support shown with this initiative. Staff realize that some of this may seem different to what people are used to, but we are dedicated to preparing graduates to pursue any path they may dream of, and staff think this is the way to help accomplish that goal. Staff believe that together, the school and community, can work together to take a school and community, that is already a special place, to another level.

Amitié is the "House of Friendship." It has the Heart shape which represents love. The House color is red. The Amitié House is full of love, energy, power and determination.

Coragem is the "House of Courage." It has the Club shape representing education and intellect. The House color is black. The Coragem House is full of power, sophistication and elegance.

Esemplare is the "House of Excellence." It has the Spade shape representing wisdom and acceptance. The House color is gray. The Esemplare House is full of security, reliability, intelligence, dignity and practicality.

Setia is the "House of Loyalty." It has the Diamond shape representing values, security and responsibility. The House color is white. The Setia House is full of humility, simplicity, peace and perfection.

The A in Amitié, the C in Coragem, the E in Esemplare, and the S in Setia spell ACES and the colors are our current school colors, which represent one House, one family.

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 2021-2022 district goal of re-energizing the Hicksville Initiative and to improve student development academically and socially aligns with our building goal; to provide students with data-driven, research-based, engaging instructional approaches that allows students to reach a year's worth of growth or more for the current school year.

Teachers are provided multiple professional development opportunities throughout the school year to stay current with best instructional strategies. Although no specific curriculum, for any core curriculum, is strictly followed, vertical alignment of standards and instruction are discussed during weekly grade-level collaborations, in-service opportunities, as well as vertical alignment and data-driven meetings with the local Educational Service Center consultant.

The Response to Intervention team meets quarterly to discuss academic concerns. Tier II and III interventions are utilized to meet the variety of needs and concerns of students. First through fourth grade utilize classroom teachers, Title I teachers and grade-level intervention specialists to conduct a daily, thirty-minute skills group for small group, targeted instruction. Tier II students are consistently assessed by classroom instructor to assure that students are in the most effective group. Tier III students are weekly progressed monitored by Title I teachers using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS).

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

Staff believe building relationships with students helps students to respond positively with high, academic expectations. Hicksville Elementary strives to improve kindergarten through third grade, at-risk readers. The school recently implemented the Wilson's Foundations curriculum in grades kindergarten through second grade. It is our belief that it is imperative to offer a multi-sensory and systematic phonic, spelling and handwriting program to reach a variety of learning needs. Foundations is designed as a whole-class, general education program used for Tier I prevention purposes. Students identified in the lower thirty percent are provided small group intervention.

^[1]_[SEP]The utilization of daily, thirty-minute skills groups in first through third grades helps to target and to provide small group, more individualized instruction. Tier III students are progressed-monitored weekly and benchmarked three times a year to ensure they are participating in the most effective small group instruction. Short-cycle assessments are provided weekly to all students in skills groups. Groups are changed on an as needed basis. The goal is to have special education qualification numbers decrease.

^[1]_[SEP]Most kindergarten through fourth grade teachers utilize Learning A-Z. This resource ensures that every student, at every level, has access to the appropriate, developmental resource needed to improve their reading scores. Every leveled text has been carefully written, edited and designed to provide the right standards-aligned opportunity. This curriculum is utilized for all elementary students and any kindergarten through twelfth grade students that are identified as English Language Learner, ELL. This resource allows our teachers to utilize data to navigate instruction. The program places students according to their abilities and grows them from that point.

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

Hicksville Elementary does not utilize a specific math curriculum but uses a variety of resources to meet the state standards. Most grade-levels utilize guided math stations to navigate instruction. This process allows teachers to differentiate instruction and to provide small group, targeted instruction. A variety of online resources are utilized, as well. Teachers utilize weekly collaborations to discuss student needs and concerns.

Teachers also utilize weekly, short-cycle assessments to collect data. The state Benchmark assessments is administered at the beginning of the school year with check-point assessments throughout the school year to assess needs prior to conducting another Benchmark assessment a few weeks prior to the state test.

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

A specific curriculum for science is not utilized; it is a teacher-created curriculum. The Ohio state standards drive instruction. Whole group, experiential learning and small-group instruction is utilized. Third-grade has been successful in utilizing Science as a cross-curricular area to help reinforce writing skills. Teachers collaborate and work in partnership with the English language arts (ELA) teacher. The third-grade teacher also uses I Excel (IXL), Brain Pop Jr. and Teacher Pay Teacher resources to supplement instruction.

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

The social studies curriculum is also teacher-created. The Ohio state standards drive instruction. Whole-group and technology-based instruction is utilized. Fourth grade utilizes social studies as a cross curricular unit by having students reading “Little House in the Big Woods.” At the end of the unit, students celebrate with a Pioneer Day, attending school in nineteenth century attire, as well as square dancing, playing games of those times, and enjoying snacks of that era. Students later take a field trip to Sauder’s Village, a place that replicas that time period.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Non-core subjects within the elementary school include technology, art, music, physical education and library services. Each grade level receives instruction in each of these areas once a week; twice a week of the special falls on a Monday. Each of these areas of instruction offer students a diverse approach to learning.

Technology services at the elementary school are second to none. Kindergarten through fourth-grade students have one-to-one devices. Students in grades three and four utilize Chromebooks. Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade students have access to laptops and have one-to-one iPads for various instructional needs. The technology instructor spends time addressing internet safety, keyboarding skills, and beginning coding skills just to name a few.

Art is often a student favorite. The art teacher uses a wide variety of mediums to engage students. Additionally, each month student art is selected to be displayed around the community. Each year, there is also a district art show that truly highlights the work that students do within the classroom. Each student has, at least, one art project displayed for the community. The art teacher also does an excellent job partnering with local businesses.

The elementary art teacher relates instruction to the visual art standards and often incorporates aspects of art history and actual artists in content as much as possible. Different styles and techniques of artists help drive student learning. The use of technology for digital art is used to help students learn outside of drawing, painting and ceramics. Assessments for elementary students are rubric-based to help students understand teacher expectations.

^[1]_{SEP} Music classes invite students to learn more about singers and songwriters. Students are encouraged to explore their voices and instrumental talents. The elementary music program helps develop a very strong foundation for an excellent band, chorale and drama departments in the middle school and high school

levels. Each grade level conducts a music program.

At the elementary level, students focus on group singing, performance skills, and individual music literacy skills based on the Ohio Music standards. The teacher assesses by observation, summative and formative observations to determine if students are singing properly, playing correctly and demonstrating proper technique. Other music literacy, history, and appreciation skills are assessed through in-class assignments that expand from lessons.

^[1]_{SEP}As in most elementary schools, physical education is one of the favorite classes of students. From fundamentals to physical fitness, movement and a healthy lifestyle are encouraged each and every day. At the start of the school year, kindergarten and first grade activities and games focus on spatial awareness. Concentrating on this early helps when building more complex skills through kicking and throwing activities. Second grade is evaluated throughout the year and the data is used for state assessments. Fitness tests are conducted with third and fourth grades. Students are evaluated on pushups, setups, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. In fourth grade, the Frequency, Intensity, Type and Time (FITT) principles are introduced. Each grade levels spends four classes on rhythm and movement patterns utilizing dance. All grade levels are assessed throughout the year.

Hicksville Schools has a fully staffed library with a certified librarian and a full-time support staff person. The certified librarian is a trained INFOhio iCoach since 2016. During the 2021-2022 school year, she has taught classes of media literacy and research skills for projects to third-grade students. She also teaches how to use the online catalog to find books for fourth grade students.

^[1]_{SEP}It is important to note that Hicksville Elementary supplements the academic and non-core subjects with guest speakers and programs. Second grade students participate in a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program put on by the sheriff's department. A local organization provides access to Dinosaur School for students in grades kindergarten and first. The Dinosaur curriculum is a prevention program for an entire classroom of students. The curriculum is a thirty-minute, six-week program, delivered once a week by a licensed instructor in the classroom. Topics include problem-solving and managing anger. Fifth-grade students participate in a twelve-week DARE program that focuses on accurate information regarding drugs and alcohol, teaching students' decision making skills, showing students how to resist peer pressure and help students develop alternatives to drugs.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Hicksville Schools utilizes data to track students. All kindergarten through third grades are assessed at the beginning of the school year. Hicksville Elementary utilizes STAR Early Literacy, STAR Reading and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, DIBELS, to identify students who are not at grade level. Students who are identified as off-track are placed on a Reading Improvement Monitoring Plan, "RIMP," and provided Title I and tiered services (Tier I, Tier II and Tier III, as needed). Students in Tier II and Tier III are progressed-monitored weekly. Title teachers provide structured, consistent and systematic intervention. For the last two years, grades three through six has utilized the benchmark assessments provided by the State as a guide to track students.

^[1]_{SEP}Currently, Hicksville Elementary utilizes four Title teachers to provide Tier II and Tier III intervention to identified students. Two paraprofessionals are also utilized to help with small group intervention. The Title I teachers work directly with classroom teachers, the principal and the school psychologist to provide effective intervention. These students are also provided intervention through parent volunteers, paraprofessionals, high school students, the Wilson curriculum and short-cycle assessments in the classroom.

^[1]_{SEP}Title I teachers are also involved in the Response to Intervention, RTI, process which meets quarterly but academic concerns are discussed weekly in grade-level collaborations. A team of qualified teachers and support staff meet quarterly to discuss identified, at-risk students in the area of academics. Kindergarten

through fourth grade teachers and support staff meet quarterly to discuss identified, at-risk students in the area of English language arts and math.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

All second graders are given the opportunity to take the IOWA and Cognitive Ability tests. These vendor assessments are designed to identify students who may be gifted in specific areas. Based on these scores, students are given Written Education Plans if applicable. This information is shared with families and teachers. Many times, teachers will go above and beyond to continue to challenge these students in their areas of strength. However, many times, and more often than not, a teacher will recognize students that are participating above grade level and make the necessary adjustments to the student's schedule to encourage and to promote the expansion of skill set.

3c. Special education:

Almost twenty four percent of Hicksville Schools are identified for special education services. At the elementary level, intervention specialists are assigned to students by needs, rather than grade-level assignments, to ensure that students are receiving the most efficient and effective help. Students in grades first through fourth participate in inclusion instruction and are only pulled for small group instruction outside of the core-class instruction.

IEP students are included in a majority of core classes, unless classroom data and evaluation data by the school psychologist deem it appropriate for a student to receive direct instruction in the intervention classroom by the intervention specialist.

The majority of the special education students at Hicksville are placed in English language arts and math co-taught classes. Depending each student's individual educational plan, students may be pulled into small groups to work on specific goals in areas of guided reading instruction, decoding, writing, math skills, re-teaching, extra assistant with classroom work, test and quiz accommodations, as well as individual goals identified on that student's specific plan.

Hicksville Elementary strives to provide students the least restrictive learning environment by placing them in the general education classroom with intervention assistance to provide accommodation and modifications. Team teaching allows students to stay with peers, providing grade-appropriate rigor, while still meeting the needs of each individual student.

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

Because of local agriculture employment needs, the English Language Learner (ELL) population continues to grow. Most of the families are from Guatemala and Puerto Rico and speak no English. Data-driven resources are utilized to identify individual student needs and to monitor progress. The resources included, but are not limited to, Imagine Learning, a Lexia subscription for the most-intense needs and Learning A-Z for ELL. Other resources that don't track data but provide enrichment include, English as a Second Language Library, and a Scholastic subscription to Nation Magazine.

^[1]_[SEP]Currently, a highly qualified instructor provides three periods per day of one-to-one and/or small group instruction to students with more intense needs. Most elementary students stay in the classroom and are provided an enriched, creative curriculum. ELL students participate in Tier III intervention with Title I teachers and are progress-monitored weekly. A full-time ELL teacher will service students at the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

^[1]_[SEP]The ELL teacher utilizes data to navigate instruction. Hicksville Exempted Village Schools offers two Family Literacy Nights throughout the school year. This opportunity encourages families, local agencies (The United Way 'Dolly Parton Imagination Library' and our local library) and the school to form a partnership that encourages the importance of reading. This is also an opportunity to connect with our ELL

families. Translators are in attendance. Transportation for Family Literacy Night is also provided to any family in need.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Hicksville Schools makes conscious, intentional efforts to build relationships with students and families. At morning drop-off, students are greeted by administrators and counselors before they even walk in the building. Good morning greetings and smiles are the first interactions students have in their school day. Once students walk through the doors, they are greeted by teachers and staff that are in the hallways. Students are continually greeted by their first name as they navigate down the hallways. It isn't uncommon to see hugs and high-fives given between teachers and students. These types of interactions carry on throughout the school day. The cafeteria and custodial staff also make it a point to greet students and to chat with them about how their day is going.

Within the classrooms, teachers are intentional to get to know the students and to incorporate their interests into the lessons and activities. Teachers are encouraged to reach out to parents prior to a school incident to make a positive connection. It is not unusual to see a classroom decorated as a campsite during a social studies lesson or a classroom transformed into a hospital to do some thematic math and reading lessons. Teachers fill the hallway bulletin boards with student work and pictures of success. Administration also displays hundreds of framed photos of students working, playing, and learning throughout the hallways. The pictures are changed every August. This personalization truly creates an environment where students feel included.

Teachers truly understand the thought behind Maslow over Bloom. School personnel will help families in need without hesitation. From weekly food bags to new clothes, when a student and family is demonstrating a need for assistance, the necessary steps are taken to help. If a student is tired, hungry or not groomed appropriately for school, staff does their best to solve the problem. A variety of families are adopted and supported at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Social emotional learning is also a priority at Hicksville Elementary. All students in grades kindergarten through fourth participate in Zones of Regulation lessons. Each classroom has a Zones of Regulation check-in area where students are able to freely choose their zone based on how they are feeling. There is a lot of reinforcement with students about choosing tools and strategies that are appropriate for the zone that the student is feeling. Additionally, students participate in Mindful Monday activities where they engage in mindfulness activities.

Sensory integration and emotional regulation interventions are also provided to our students, as needed. Through a grant, a classroom was converted into a sensory lab. Throughout the day, students come and take part in structured, sensory activities based on a sensory profile. This is an area of the school that is safe and calming for many students and these structured breaks have proven to be beneficial to the student and to the classroom when the student returns from the break.

Additionally, gym space is utilized in the morning for students who have trouble transitioning into the day. Treated like a sensory break, these students have more room to engage in gross motor activities to wake up their bodies and to get them ready to return to the classroom. To date, over forty students have taken advantage of these spaces.

Throughout the school year, Hicksville Elementary establishes many ways to recognize positive behavior and accomplishments with the underlying goal of engaging students in the classroom. Each month, deserving students are nominated by their teachers for Student of the Month. Additionally, each month students that meet a reading goal are recognized and celebrated. After four times of a student reaching their goal, they are then given a gift certificate for a personal pizza donated from a local restaurant. Roughly six times a year, students have the opportunity to show off their math fact knowledge to the principal for a chance to get into the Principal's Math Club. This is an opportunity to participate in a dance party at lunch. Weekly, students can be nominated for a Friday Facebook Shout-out where a student is recognized at lunch with their peers and then their picture and positive comments from the teacher are posted to Facebook.

Additionally, teachers have the ability to send Positive Office Referrals at any time. Students can also earn “Brag Tags” which are necklace charms that students “show off” on Fridays as part of our Brag Tag Friday. Students have had the opportunity to earn a variety of charms through reaching goals, working hard and even participating in school-wide activities like Red Ribbon Week. Incentives that are established in the classroom and for the elementary as a whole help connect student behavior with student academic success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Hicksville Schools provides a variety of opportunities for family engagement with the purpose of building relationships and encouraging a partnership between the school and family. Families are invited into the school a variety of times throughout the year. These opportunities include Open House, sporting events, music events, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) activities and Reading Literacy Nights. Hicksville Schools is fortunate to have the support from many of the community businesses who graciously partner with the school. Most elementary teachers send home weekly newsletters to stay in constant communication, as well as making weekly Facebook posts.

^[1]_[SEP]Hicksville’s unique location situated in between the larger cities of Bryan, Defiance, Paulding and Fort Wayne gives us the ability to access resources and to build relationships with community organizations. These connections help in the aid of families when in need. When tragedies happen, staff are typically able to assist in a quick manner because of the connections and partnerships we have established. When students feel loved and valued, they are more likely to buy-in and want to succeed.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Creating a professional, positive culture has been the Superintendent’s mission since taking the position nine years ago. Students are our product, but the success comes from the top down. Over the last eight years, all staff members have attended training at the Ron Clark Academy located in Atlanta, Georgia. Each year, new staff members are sent to the academy along with a handful of current staff members who earn another trip as an incentive from competitions throughout the school year.

^[1]_[SEP]Teachers are provided professional development opportunities through the local Educational Service Center, the ESC, to stay current in best instructional strategies. Hicksville also partners with an ESC consultant four days a week. Teachers are also encouraged to attend their grade-level/content area conferences. A variety of two-hour in-services are provided throughout the year in which the most current instructional trends are focused.

^[1]_[SEP]Although Hicksville School’s mission is to build relationships with students, it is the administrator’s focus to build relationships with the staff. It is not uncommon to step in a classroom for coverage when needed. On the elementary side, being able to meet with the teachers weekly helps to strengthen relationships and to build trust.

4. School Leadership:

The elementary administrator meets weekly with each grade level to discuss any academic and/or emotional student concerns, as well as meeting quarterly (Response to Intervention) to assure the Title I interventions are effective and showing growth. Title I teachers and administration collaborate often to discuss progress monitoring and benchmark assessments.

Administrators meet weekly as a Team and make a conscious effort to show their appreciation to the staff throughout the school year with various tokens of appreciation such as supplying homemade cinnamon rolls and treats at an inservice meetings, providing meals for parent teachers conferences, and conducting a variety of potlucks. This year, the Superintendent encouraged the building administrators to recognize up to five teachers from each building at each inservices throughout the school year. Students help recognize ‘Teacher of the Quarters.’ Small gifts to the teachers at the beginning of the school year and at Christmas are always given.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

One of the most culturally responsive things Hicksville Elementary does is to build relationships. Regardless of a student's background, ethnicity, gender, or sexual preference that relationship is important between the student and the staff member. Students are given the opportunity to share about their own personal experiences in order to help educate others. Our counselors make it a point to provide safe spaces for students to express their feelings and concerns. In the fall, Hicksville hosts an evening meeting, with translators present, to answer any questions or concerns. School information, sent home or through the instant alert system, is translated into their language. Hicksville can conduct meetings by utilizing a translator through the Educational Service Center.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

With the constant support of stakeholders, staff members at Hicksville Elementary School prides itself on keeping students engaged and motivated. Staff believe building and fostering relationships is the district's biggest and strongest component for student engagement, motivation, and success. Staff members are strongly encouraged to build meaningful relationships with students. Students who feel safe are able to take chances, ask questions, share their feelings, and learn. Staff commitment to the students, families, and the community of Hicksville is to provide a safe, positive, rigorous learning environment that will empower students to become creative problem solvers, critical thinkers, and inspired learners.

^[1]_{SEP}A portion of the principal's statement on the school's website reads; I intend to continue fostering meaningful relationships with the Hicksville staff and our community members. Our school is fortunate to have a community that takes immense pride in its educational institutions. They ceaselessly partner with us by providing assistance that helps implement special programs and additional incentives for our students that few districts can offer.

^[1]_{SEP}The principal has no doubts that Hicksville Schools, the Hicksville community, and parents will continue to partner together to support the Hicksville Initiatives, encourage teachers to remain conscious of data-driven instruction, and research innovative ways to direct instructional strategies, all while providing a positive learning atmosphere. Students deserve quality education.