

U.S. Department of Education
2023 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. Melissa Paul

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

Official School Name Farmington Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7730 State Route 121 South

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Mayfield State KY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 42066-4945

County Graves County

Telephone (270) 328-4830

Fax (270) 345-2163

Web site/URL

https://farmington.graves.kyschools.us/

E-mail melissa.paul@graves.kyschools.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Matthew Madding E-mail matthew.madding@graves.kyschools.us

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

District Name Graves County Tel. (270) 328-2656

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. Ronnie Holmes

(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 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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 (2022-2023) 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	25
K	33
1	41
2	37
3	34
4	32
5	36
6	30
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	268

*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
 - 0.2 % Asian
 - 0.5 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 89.9 % White
 - 4.4 % 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 2021 - 2022 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, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	18
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	29
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	265
(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: 1 %
4 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 65 %

Total number students who qualify: 175

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 35 %
Total number of students served 94

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>11</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>30</u> Developmental Delay	<u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>45</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 3 %
Total number of students served: 7

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 10

11. 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.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

12. 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 17:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2007

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Striving for Excellence: No Exceptions, No Excuses

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.graves.kyschools.us/Content2/non-discrimination>

18. **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

Farmington Elementary is often described as a hidden gem in Graves County. It is hard to understand just what that means until you have walked through the doors yourself. A single hallway connects all of our students from preschool through sixth grade, which is something that has gone by the wayside in today's education world. So many school districts have opted for fewer grade levels in a building, but our students continue to thrive in an environment where relationships are built from ages three to thirteen.

Farmington is a small community in one of the largest counties in Kentucky. As the name implies, much of the community is centered around farming. We have had the privilege to educate many of those farmers and their children in our current building, which was built in 1983. We currently have chicken, cattle, and hog farms, as well as soybean, corn, and other row crop farms within the Farmington school district.

The churches in our little town are the backbone of the community. They meet any need that arises with our students. From providing school supplies to every student in our building to cooking a back-to-school meal for the entire school and their families, they constantly minister to our students and staff. They are involved in our school because they want us to be successful as anyone else.

The most important thing about Farmington Elementary and the one that people talk about the most is the relationships built inside (and outside) of that small school building! Every staff member genuinely cares about our students. Hugs, high fives, and fist bumps are commonly seen as students enter the classrooms every morning. On Monday mornings, nothing is more important than letting students share about their weekends. No classroom begins structured learning until every student has had a chance to tell something about the weekend. Some share a little, and some share much about their families. This time is sacred in our building, as some of our kids may have gone the whole weekend with little to no adult interaction. We want to make sure they know that they are loved and valued every, single day.

Excellent teachers are high on the list of reasons why Farmington Elementary is successful, but each of those teachers would quickly divert the attention to the support staff that helps the building run so smoothly. The bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, resource officer, secretary, school nurse, and instructional assistants are much of what makes Farmington Elementary a family. Every one of those people loves and cares about the students in our building to the point that we rarely even use the word "students," but instead talk about our "friends" and "our kids."

In addition to the attention given to each student by the teachers and staff, our principal makes it a point to interact with every student every morning. The first and most important part of her day is when she goes into classrooms in the mornings. She goes to every classroom and pats every student on the shoulder or back. While this may seem like a very simple thing to do, it greatly impacts our students. It gives them a personal connection with her to start the day. This type of relationship building can help them leave the worries of the morning behind so they are ready for a positive day at school. It reassures the students that she is there, which is very comforting to the students. The students look for her every day and know that they can not start their day fully until she has been around to say hello to each one of them.

Each year we have maintained an overall classification of Proficiency or Distinguished based on state and district measures. In 2019 we were classified as a five Star School by the Kentucky Department of Education. In 2020 star rating was not present due to Covid-19 crisis so we remained a five Star School. In 2021 we were recognized as a "Blue" school by the Kentucky Department of Education which was considered "well above average." Our teachers have high expectations for the students which makes us very successful. We take pride in our state assessments each year and celebrate small and large successes along the way.

When visitors and guest teachers come to our school, they often comment that they feel welcome and at home when they are at Farmington. This is the type of environment that we strive for. We want visitors to feel welcomed and want to come back to our school. While we may not have the fanciest school with the most up-to-date technology, we do have the school with the biggest hearts! Our love for our students is

obvious and contagious to those in our community. We love our Wildcat family, and we are so happy we get to share a little bit about it with you

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Farmington Elementary, Reading/English Language Arts begin in our Kindergarten program with all the curriculums we have to make these students successful. In kindergarten, our students are taught Sounds to Spelling, Lexia, Visual Phonics, and Sonday System. When students enter our kindergarten, we embrace the child where they are academically and grow them throughout the year. We have a small group and whole group instruction in Kindergarten that are designed for each student to help the student grow throughout the year. Sight words are another strong instructional piece that we use in Kindergarten to help students recognize common words so they can read more fluently. We have twenty-five words on each list and our goal is for every child to read at least four lists before they can go on to first grade. Many students exceed that goal and read up to eight lists and are rewarded with a field trip at the end of the year. We feel that this motivates the students to want to read more and be more successful. Our goal for our kindergarten students is that they are strong enough readers by Christmas to be able to take Accelerated Reader Comprehension tests on books they have read. We have many students who are able to meet this goal because of the great teachers we have here at Farmington, but also with the support system they have at home that helps them each night to meet these benchmarks. We also focus on the higher students in kindergarten and make sure that we are doing enough enrichment activities so these students will excel.

Response to Intervention is another huge success that we have at Farmington. We start in kindergarten by ability grouping our students for forty-five minutes a day to teach each group at their level. We focus on reading and math during this time. We do Kagan structures in our classrooms daily to help with our reading and all other content areas. This allows us to use different structures daily such as rally robin and round robin for students to read to each other instead of the teacher reading to them. Students sit in groups of four at a table and each student has a face partner and a shoulder partner. This allows for student discussion at all times in the classrooms. We start Kagan structures in kindergarten and continue them all the way through sixth grade.

Our first grade continues these same skill sets and adds even more sight words for the student and sets higher expectations and goals for individual student. We also add Simple Solutions into the curriculum for the students to be able to read grade-level content and work on grade-level math standards. This is just one more piece of the puzzle to making sure the child continues to grow as a student. As students enter second grade, they have more understanding of how to read and are much more confident as a reader. Therefore, their Accelerated Reading goal is set higher and we expect them to meet those goals every nine weeks. Their Accelerated Reading goal is set by the Renaissance STAR test that our students take five times throughout the year. Their reading goal is set based on how well they do on the STAR test. Their reading range is also set based on their STAR. This lets us know that their Accelerated Reading goal is achievable every nine weeks. They still continue to use Sounds to Spelling, Sonday System, and Simple Solutions in second grade as well as Story Works.

As students enter third-sixth grade we continue with Story Works and Simple Solutions for each child. We feel that their phonics needs have been met by the majority of the students. We also continue Accelerated Reading for these students. We reward students every nine weeks for their Accelerated reading goal and if a child meets their Accelerated Reading goal every nine weeks, then there is a field trip at the end of the year. We do continue to check fluency, accuracy, and rate throughout the year with our Curriculum-Based Measures (CBM) portion of the Renaissance program. Reading is a huge part of our day here at Farmington. We work hard every day to make sure that every student is on grade level by the time they leave the grade they are in. We know that each child will rise to the expectation that is set before them therefore we set the bar high here at Farmington.

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

The mathematics curriculum for our kindergarten through sixth grade is Illustrative Math. This is a rigorous curriculum that we feel helps our students to become successful in math. This curriculum aligns with the Kentucky Standards that are expected of each student. Illustrative Math is a problem-based curriculum that fosters the development of mathematics learning communities in classrooms, gives students access to mathematics through coherent progressions, and provides teachers with the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of mathematics, student thinking, and their own teaching practice. When visitors enter a classroom they will more than likely hear teachers asking students what they notice and what they wonder. This allows students to think outside the box and gets their minds wondering about the math lesson for the day. This curriculum allows students to discuss math instead of just a sit-and-get curriculum. The program has lesson assessments, cooldowns, and checkpoints for teachers to make sure that students are learning what is being taught. There are times when students struggle with the lesson for the day, and the teachers know to supplement instruction with other strategies to make sure the students are learning the concept. This may mean that we pause that lesson and pull out manipulatives to get a more hands-on approach to the lesson. Teachers have the flexibility to do whatever they need to ensure the students are understanding the concept for the day. Kagan structures are a big part of our math instruction that we do daily to facilitate discussion and make sure all students are engaged in the lesson. Kagan does not allow students to opt out. They are all held accountable which is one reason we love Kagan.

Response to Intervention is used weekly with our math instruction. Students are put into ability groups weekly to work on math standards that they are struggling with or standards that they are ready to learn. Our Response to Intervention time is a very important time that we set aside each day to make sure that we are doing what is best for each child. We use this time to reteach any skills that a student is lacking or it can be used as an enrichment time to accelerate students. The use of Simple Solutions in math allows students to be able to see grade-level content every day. Math Seeds, Reflex Math, and IXL are other online programs that we use to continue growing students in kindergarten through sixth grade. These online programs help with fact fluency and also help the students to become more confident in math. These online programs also allow students to move at their pace which allows them to learn better. All students are progress monitored using STAR math five times a year. This assessment allows us to see where students are and make sure that we are growing each student daily. We realize that not all students are great test takers so we look at STAR as well as classroom performance to make decisions about students. We take pride in our math instruction and feel that we meet the needs and improve the math skills of each child in our building.

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

Science content at Farmington is based on the Kentucky Academic Standards. These standards are taught to students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Teachers create their own lessons based on their grade level standards. Science is a hands-on subject that allows students to dive deep into learning while using their hands to learn. The learning environment provides the tools and opportunities that students need to succeed. Lessons balance the needs of every learner. We use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of our students. We use Simple Solutions in science to help review standards, and our online textbooks allow an opportunity to dive deeper into learning with simulations and opportunities to discover more. Hands-on activities that are related to the current topic of study are incorporated weekly. Students use critical thinking skills while working in teams to accomplish targeted learning goals. Students also use higher-level thinking skills when writing about what they have learned. Critical thinking skills are required when students think outside the box to solve real-world situations. The students also have learning opportunities through field trips and guest speakers. Students visit the Nature Station at Land Between the Lakes to learn about animals native to our area through animal presentations and activities. Fourth-grade students visit Mammoth Cave in the spring. They learn about the history of the cave as well as how the cave formed.

In addition to field trips, the mobile agricultural science bus is an excellent way for students to learn about animals and crops grown in our area. Students make ice cream and biodegradable corn plastic. Each year, third grade students either zoom or have a local meteorologist visit the school. Students learn how meteorologists predict the weather. They also learn important safety procedures for different weather emergencies.

traditional science curriculum and includes Next Generation Science standards-aligned instructional materials that revolve around figuring out an intriguing phenomenon. Students are motivated to figure out what is in front of them, as teachers guide the process to deepen science learning through problem-based learning using such strategies as notice/wonder, problem-solving, etc. Thoughtfully selected phenomena generate questions, explanations, and ideas for investigations that motivate learning. Teachers elicit these ideas, coordinate collaboration, support investigations, and guide learning to deep conceptual understanding as students form science circles with teacher-led discussion. Students work together and learn from each other as they ask questions, design investigations, and find solutions with the teacher as a facilitator. Students learn how to work together collaboratively and respectfully. Driven by engaging phenomena, students investigate their questions and wonderings as they incrementally build and revise their ideas/understanding of the science behind the phenomena. Instructional routines are designed to value every student's voice in learning science, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment for every student.

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

Including the public and community is very important to our school, as we host a Veteran's Day program yearly and invite our military family members and friends to share this special time with us. Veterans share how they have served our country, and each grade at Farmington Elementary shows them our appreciation in various ways. Our school also invites members of the community into the building every year for our Career Day, to instill future planning and success for our students by allowing these community members to share their career paths and what it takes to become a successful adult. To turn the tables and allow our students to share their knowledge with the community, we participate in a "Living Wax Museum" annually as well. This requires our students to participate in extensive research and write a biography, citing relevant sources they have found. When this is complete, the student dresses the part and gives a small presentation as that individual, sharing facts and information on how this individual affected the world. They then perform this for the entire school, as each grade comes and tours our "museum," learning more about these essential individuals. Parents, community members, and school employees from the district are invited to attend this special presentation.

Field trips to our community police station, the court system, and the mayor's office as well as to our state capital are ways that we use to help students better understand our local and state government. Students have also traveled to Washington D.C. to better understand our federal government system. Students have created their own models of Native American homes to fully grasp the understanding of how these homes were built using natural resources that surrounded them and how the homes had to be adaptive to their climate region and topography. In addition to this, students participated in Map Skills stations, where all students' learning styles were considered and students had to work interdependently. Students learn about the birth of America and how our government functioned then and today. A sense of American pride is instilled within the students as they learn how hard our founding fathers fought for our freedom and the trials they endured. Students participated in identifying and reviewing the 50 states through online games and large floor puzzles that met the needs of those visual learners and drove those with a competitive nature. These also served as an assessment tool. These types of tools are used frequently in everyday lessons to motivate students. We use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of every student.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

Our preschool program at Farmington Elementary is a blended state funded/Head Start program offered through Graves County and Murray Head Start. We offer half-day sessions on Mondays-Thursdays. We serve students that are three, four, and five years old and that meet eligibility guidelines for income, or students that qualify for special education. We offer related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and mental health services for all students that qualify. We use Creative Curriculum, Kentucky Early Learning Standards, Head Start Standards, Teaching Strategies Gold data, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum, Individualized Education Plan goals, and classroom

assessments to guide our lessons and planning.

All students are screened using the Brigance Early Childhood Screener after enrolling in preschool. If there is an area of concern, students receive Response to Intervention from the classroom teacher in the preschool classroom. Our daily schedule is broken up into both teacher-directed and student-directed learning opportunities. Teacher-directed activities include calendar time, where students learn about counting, cardinality, patterns, counting by 10s, classifying and sorting, counting on, subitizing 10 frames, measurement, and parts and whole. We also use small group activities to work with students on a more ability-based level. We are able to work with our students that will transition to Kindergarten on more Kindergarten-ready skills such as name writing, number recognition and counting, specific literacy skills, and more. Our younger students are able to work on skills that are appropriate for them, and we are able to differentiate more for them during this time.

During our free choice learning center time, students work with other students in art, science, math and manipulatives, block area, dramatic play, sensory, library, and music. Students work together in those centers and learn about cooperative learning when playing and working together. During learning center time, teachers move around the classroom so they can interact with students and guide learning and discussions. During this time, the teacher is also able to work with students with Individualized Education Plans on their specific learning goals and progress monitoring. Our speech-language impairment students also receive their speech therapy services from our Speech Therapist through Push In services during this time.

We place a strong focus on Kindergarten readiness and work to prepare our students for upcoming transitions. Our students participate in Kindergarten transitioning activities in the Spring semester where they shadow and visit our Kindergarten classrooms. During these visits, students participate in the daily classroom schedule and meet their teachers for the next year. Our students are screened using the Brigance Kindergarten screener in the fall of their Kindergarten year and if the results show that many of those students fall into the “Ready” or “Ready with Enrichments” categories.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Each year Farmington students perform a Christmas musical and play. Sixth-grade students learn speaking parts, several songs, and the elements of drama and performance. They learn how to effectively communicate their speaking parts and basic stage positions. Students understand the relationship between role and character, listening and responding, time and place, as well as focus and emphasis. Kindergarten through fifth grade students learn songs and movements to perform during the play. Students explore sound and music through singing, movement, and listening. They develop singing voices and build a repertoire of age-appropriate songs and how to perform on stage.

All students receive art twice a week. Many of the projects that students produce revolve around the visual components of color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value. Students also learn to identify basic principles, such as pattern and repetition. Students work on creative projects each week ranging from directed drawings to creating art with full creative freedom. Each year sixth grade students have the opportunity to create paper mache sculptures. This past year students brought in plastic bags to create a form of a pumpkin. Students learned paper mache techniques and how to add texture and lines to their paper mache. After the paper mache dried, students chose if they wanted to paint their pumpkins realistically or more abstractly. Paper mache allows students the opportunity to work with three-dimensional art forms as well as hands-on engagement. Another sixth-grade favorite art project is the Jordan/candy shoe creation. Students bring in their favorite candy and create a Jordan shoe that accurately represents their candy of choice. Students have complete artistic freedom to create their own individualized Jordan high top.

Kindergarten and first grade are introduced to various art mediums such as paint, glue, chalk, oil pastels, and

watercolor. They can experiment and create art pieces while learning about shape, line, texture, form, and color. Students also practice hand-eye coordination with cutting and gluing exercises. Kindergarten students also are encouraged to discover and share ideas for media artworks using play and experimentation. First-grade students expand on the visual arts and create many art pieces including animal units where they draw and paint many different animals, seasonal and holiday art projects, as well as basic line, shape, and form projects. They also learn basic color theory and are given the freedom to create some projects of their choosing. Second and third-grade students begin learning to develop multiple ideas for media artworks using a variety of tools, methods, and/or materials. They begin to organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Students begin learning how to draw landscapes, still life, portraits, and sketching. Fourth-grade students create underwater self-portraits after learning about artist Robert Wyland. This project is a great introduction to self-portraits and has a fun spin with the subject being underwater. Students get to create their swimsuits and decide on goggle and snorkel styles. Portraits can be intimidating for younger students but this project provides a fun way for all students to be successful. Each year we have a schoolwide talent show. Students are able to perform whatever talent they choose based on their interests. In the past, students have performed interpretive dance, sung, played musical instruments, and juggled. The talent show is a great way to showcase our student's talent while building confidence.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Our students in kindergarten through sixth grade have physical education (PE) twice a week for fifty minutes. Physical Education has never been more important than it is right now. Even before the outbreak of Covid, obesity, inactivity and increases in feelings of sadness and hopelessness were all on the rise in a major way. Forced isolation and quarantines only exacerbated an already worrisome trend. Physical activity enhances an individual's ability to think, concentrate, and focus. Physical activity is important for healthy growth and development. Physical activity prevents sleep deprivation and relieves stress and anxiety. Regular physical activity and its effect on students' brains and biochemistry leads to improved executive functioning and cognition. Students concentrate better, have better memory, and can process, store, and retrieve information more effectively. Farmington Elementary knows that physical education provides cognitive content and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for physical activity and physical fitness. It improves their self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as their emotional and social well-being.

All students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade receive physical education twice a week from a certified physical education teacher. Students receive twenty-five minutes on Wednesday and fifty minutes on either Monday or Tuesday, which equals to a total of seventy-five minutes a week of PE. The PE instruction resources or standards combine Spark PE and OPEN Curriculum. Locomotor and non-locomotor movements are taught early on and built on as they progress through their developmental stages. Students practice many manipulative skills to enhance their spatial awareness with an object and hand-eye or eye-foot coordination. Games are utilized to enhance competition and fair play so that students learn how to interact with others during a competitive setting. The following is a list of games, skills, and or sports students play while in PE class: rolling or bowling, tag games, chasing, fleeting, dodging, throwing, catching, jumping rope, striking, juggling, kicking a ball, dribbling a basketball, hula hooping, balancing, cup stacking, GaGa ball, parachute, dances, volleyball, archery, table ball, frisbee golf, pickleball, kickball, wiffle ball, cornhole, floor hockey, spike ball, soccer, and throwing a football. Physical education provides life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for life. It positively impacts students' physical, mental, and emotional health. Farmington Elementary strives to develop the whole child in all aspects so that they are ready for the game of life. We are blessed to have an amazing physical education program at Farmington.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

2d. Technology/library/media

Project Lead the Way is a special class that students participate in each week. This class provides a hands-on learning experience that empowers students to develop skills by exploring real-world challenges. Students

learn pathways in science, technology, engineering, and math. They learn not only technical skills but also 21st Century skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Students will be able to use these skills in school, on any career path they choose, or in their daily lives. This learning experience allows students to gain skills they need to advance in college, career, and the real world. As students progress through grades K-12, they will have the opportunity to explore career paths, engage in problem-solving skills, processing skills, develop technical knowledge and skills, and develop communication skills.

This year, Kindergarten students explored Animals and Algorithms using hands-on activities and technology. Students learned about animals and their habitats, then designed a program using simple digital animation about animals in their habitats. First-grade students explored Animal Adaptations where they learned how animals camouflage to protect themselves, obtain food, and mobility. Students learned how animals adapt to their environment and how those environments can be categorized. In Second grade, students learned about Living Things and the Diversity of Life. Students learned about the diversity of life in different habitats and the living things that grow in them. Students learned about the importance of different organisms in a habitat and how much water plants and animals need to grow in an environment. Third, fourth, and fifth-grade students learned about waves and the properties of light. Students observed the amplitude and wavelength of waves in a simulation. They learned that waves can move energy from one place to another, which can cause objects to move. Students learned that colors are determined by wavelengths of light by investigating the colors of light. Students explored how light interacts with different materials that are transparent, translucent, and opaque. They used the engineering design process to create a game that incorporated their knowledge and skills about light gained through this unit.

All grade levels K-six participated in the code.org program that provides content and courses using Javascript, one of the most widely used programming languages in the world. Students participated in courses using Blockly which uses visual blocks to drag and drop to write programs. Students learn the logic of writing programs such as how to repeat instructions or how to make the computer decide between two instructions. In visual programming, students used a menu of available instructions which can be dragged around and placed next to other instructions. Throughout the year, students had the opportunity to use code.org to program animations, interactive art, and create games in Game Lab. This program gave students the opportunity to use the same programming concepts and design process a computer scientist would use.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

Farmington Elementary is using the published social-emotional curriculum called the Sources of Strength. Teachers are teaching the lessons from this curriculum for thirty minutes every week. At Sources of Strength, their vision is To Empower a Well World. They provide exceptional training and curriculum for youth, utilizing a strength-based and upstream approach to mental health promotion and prevention of adverse outcomes like suicide, violence, bullying, and substance misuse. Sources of Strength has a firm commitment to providing evidence-based programming that is responsive to local community context and needs. At Farmington Elementary, we know students' academic needs cannot be met until their mental health needs are met. We are striving to have an open and fluid conversation about social-emotional learning. We are working to meet students where they are mentally and provide them with the coping skills they need to be able to be successful academically. Sources of Strength is a curriculum that allows us to do that by weekly teaching social-emotional skills needed for success. These are coping skills that will benefit students long-term, not only academically, but also socially.

Farmington Elementary offers a rigorous Gifted and Talented program. It starts when students are in Kindergarten through third grade. At this level, students can be identified as Primary Talent Pool. This is based on multiple sources such as, but not limited to, universal screening scores, teacher input, and parental input. Identification in the Primary Talent Pool allows for early enrichment for students who show potential in specific areas. The goal is to assist the students as they excel in certain areas. As a result of the enrichment they have received, we better prepare them for when they are old enough to qualify for Gifted and Talented. Once a student is in the fourth grade, formal gifted identification takes place. Students can be identified in the areas of General Intellect, Specific Academics (reading, math, science, social studies), leadership, and Visual/Performing Arts. Students who qualify for Gifted and Talented based upon universal

screening scores, teacher, parent, and student input, are then provided with extensive enrichment opportunities. Farmington works to harness the students' gifted area and help them to achieve their goals. This is done through school day enrichment services such as working on Public Service Announcements, Google Slides, being challenged with higher level work, and participating in the Leadership Team. This student-led team produces the weekly news and conducts the monthly assemblies. After-school enrichment opportunities are also offered. These opportunities include project-based learning. Students gain enrichment through developing websites, communicating with local businesses, and presenting projects.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Teachers work hard every day at Farmington Elementary to help meet the needs of all students. We first have to look at different assessments to see the needs of the individual student. STAR assessments for reading and math are a tool that we use to help identify students and their needs. We have meetings with staff throughout the year to see which students need extra instruction and make sure that we do what is best for each child. We realize STAR testing is not the end all be all, so we also look at the summative assessments and formative assessments in the classroom to make sure we are not missing any pieces. We realize that every child learns at a different rate and we have to do what is best for each individual child at all times. Students that are performing below grade level are considered Tier 2 or Tier 3 students and are provided with remediation during the week in the areas in which they are struggling. These groups are for reading and math only. Response to Intervention time in our building is a very strict time where we meet the needs of individual students. We set aside forty-five minutes each day for small group instruction of students on the same grade level. We work with different skills during this time to grow the students with which we are working. Teachers, the counselor, and the principal meet regularly throughout the year about the students who are not performing on grade level, making sure that we do everything that we can to help them. We allow input from all educators in this building because we are a team at Farmington. Teachers use many resources such as Reflex math, IXL, Simple Solutions, Sounds to Spelling, Sonday System, and Lexia to help each student. Every teacher at Farmington is on board to make sure all students grow. We are blessed to have amazing assistants that we treat like teachers in our building. They are no different than anyone else and they work just as hard as any teacher we have. They take their job seriously and they work hard to make sure students are growing. We realize that all students can learn, we just have to figure out different methods for different children. We also believe at Farmington that relationships are a big part of our success with all students. We want our students to know how much they are loved and in return, they want to work hard for us. We also strive to make sure each child feels safe while in this building.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We offer Gifted and Talented services for students who are identified as gifted and talented. We have an after-school program where the students stay and work on different projects each week. This is a time for the gifted students to work together to expand their knowledge and skills. We also offer an Academic Team that allows these students to compete against the other schools in our district in different content areas. This is a great time for students to shine and represent Farmington. During the school day, we use our Response to Intervention time to make sure we are reaching those students while also challenging them. We allow them to work on projects and fun activities that get their minds working while also having fun. Our gifted students are leaders in our building, and we use them to help the other students be more successful. We meet monthly to make sure that we are reaching those higher-level students and pushing them to their highest potential. Grade-level teachers also have many options available for students who finish their work quickly. These include silent reading, computer-based programs, and self-selected activities that help them progress to the next level. Reflex math is an individualized math fact fluency program that allows students to work at their own pace and accelerate their learning. IXL is another computer-based program that accelerates students at their own pace. IXL meets the unique needs of each learner. IXL can be used for reading, math, language arts, science, and social studies. It is just another great resource that helps grow each student. It seems like it is always easier to work with struggling students, but the higher students need just as much love, encouragement, and attention. We meet each individual student where they are and plan instruction based on

what they still need. This takes a whole team effort. The adults in our building strive to work every day to meet the needs of all of our students. We take pride in how hard we work and how hard our students work.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Farmington Elementary implements a wide variety of programs to ensure the learning of our students with special needs. Edmark, IXL, Reflex Math, Math Seeds, Lexia, Sounds to Spelling, Sonday System, STAR program, Visual schedules, visual phonics, and the check-in and check-out system. These programs are used by our special education teachers, assistants, and classroom teachers to meet the needs of our students. Our teachers progress monitor these students weekly and recognize that at any time they may need to adjust their schedule, lessons, or groupings to assist these students to be successful. We are blessed at Farmington to have wonderful special education teachers and assistants that love these students as if they are their own. We make sure that we include all special education students in everything that we do in the classroom daily. Our special education teachers and regular classroom teachers work hand in hand every day. You would not be able to go into one of our classrooms and tell which one is the classroom teacher and which one is the special education teacher. They all work with every child in the classroom to make sure that all students get the assistance needed, and special education students are not singled out. Very few people are aware of who the special education students are in the room. We pride ourselves on how well our teachers work together and as a team.

Our teachers are flexible and make course corrections when needed. We have high expectations for all of our students, and we recognize that students with disabilities can be successful when they have the correct support. The principal and guidance counselor are involved in helping make decisions on schedule changes and making sure that what we are doing is working. Our resource teachers utilize different ways to communicate with parents. The primary teacher uses Class Dojo, an online points system. Parents have access to their child's account and can check nightly to see if their child earned points or lost points that day. The intermediate resource teachers write daily in their students' assignment books, and the parents sign it nightly to show they have seen it. Our parents also know they can call to talk or request a meeting anytime they have questions or concerns about their child's education. We want our parents to know their child is our number one priority.

3d. English Language Learners:

Our English Language Learner (ELL) teacher is available to our students one day a week to help with any instruction or homework with which that child may be struggling. The teacher also helps with the language barrier between the school and parents. The ELL teacher is available during parent/teacher conferences as well as kindergarten registration. Our students are offered small group or one-on-one instruction with the ELL teacher each week. The ELL teacher will meet with the classroom teacher before they work with the child to better understand what the student is struggling with and what they can help them with. We also use the ELL teacher to reach out to parents about any events or meetings we need the parents to attend so that they know what is going on. We realize the language barrier can be overwhelming and the last thing we want is for our parents or teachers to feel overwhelmed, especially when it comes to their child's or student's education. The ELL teacher provides a bridge between the parents and the staff. It is comforting to know that we have someone who can speak their native language and explain procedures and expectations to the parents. Teachers also utilize the translation feature in Google to translate newsletters and other notices that go home in weekly folders. We do not have very many ELL students in our building, but the ones that we do have are treated with respect and included in all activities. We make sure that our ELL students do not feel different or treated differently in any situation. We are blessed to have teachers that go the extra mile to make sure communication is top-notch between school and home.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

At Farmington Elementary, we have an amazing Family Resource Center coordinator and assistant that makes sure that all students in this building have what they need so that they can come to school ready to learn and not worry about their home situations. Our Family Resource Center helps break the barrier between school and home. Our program helps to pay bills for families, send food home with students

weekly, reward students for great work, shop with students for clothes and toys for Christmas, help families find jobs and homes, and so much more. Our students know who Family Resource staff is because they are out in the building making sure they are building relationships with all students. Our students are comfortable going to them in a time of need and they know without a doubt that they will be taken care of with whatever it is that they may need. When students are troubled, conversations begin with the homeroom teacher. Other adults in the building are included when necessary. It truly takes a village to educate and love our students. We also have an outside agency that assists families with mental health needs. This agency has a full-time counselor in our building that works with students and their parents to help with any struggles they may have. The outside counselor can only work with students after parents have given permission. Therefore, our guidance counselor also meets with students to discuss issues when needed. Unfortunately in the society we live in, mental health is a big concern, and we are blessed to have a mental health counselor on staff with us every day. She is a much-needed piece of the puzzle for caring for the whole child. We view her as a part of our Farmington Family, and we are so thankful for her.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Rewarding students here at Farmington is something that we feel makes the student want to work hard each day. Whether it be intrinsic or extrinsic rewards, the students are excited. One way that our students are motivated is by following our learning expectations and being rewarded for their positive behavior. “Blue tickets” are given for many different reasons throughout the day. Students may receive one for being quiet in the hallway, completing all of their work, sitting quietly in class, following classroom rules, walking on the right side of the hallway, helping a friend at any time or just being a great overall student. Once a month, these tickets can be cashed in for prizes at the PBIS store. Every student looks forward to the PBIS store once a month. We also do a monthly assembly on the first Friday of every month where we reward students for different character traits that they exhibit which we also call our “Student of the Month.” These students are selected by their homeroom teachers and awarded a certificate during the assembly. Classroom teachers also reward students during the monthly assembly for working hard in the classroom. The Accelerated Reading program is a great incentive for students to read each nine weeks. Teachers set their goals every nine weeks and if they meet their goals, then they are rewarded with a prize. If the students meet their Accelerated Reading goal all four nine weeks, then we take those students on a field trip at the end of the year. It is a great time to celebrate their hard work and encourage the same thing for next year. We also reward students for perfect attendance. We realize that if students are not in school then they are not learning. We want to do all we can to encourage every student to come every day. So we offer a perfect attendance reward at the end of every nine weeks. At the end of the year, we take every student that has not missed a single minute all year on a field trip to reward them. It is a huge accomplishment for a student to not miss a minute. That means they woke up every day excited about school and wanted to come. Teachers offer many rewards and incentives in their classrooms weekly to get students engaged and excited about coming to school. We have learned that if students are excited to come to school, then they are excited to learn. We have to make sure that we are engaging all students, and we want to make learning fun and exciting.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Farmington Elementary is all about community! We receive immense support from the churches in our community. They do many things for our students and families each year. On our Back to School Night, members of area churches provide our students with back-to-school supplies and a meal. One of the churches has given “character” awards to students in each grade. These students, nominated by their teachers, are rewarded with a gift card at the end of the year for their exemplary character in the classroom. Every year, the churches honor our teachers with breakfast and lunch during Teacher Appreciation Week. We also have a benefit meal each year to help raise money for our Christmas assistance program, and our area churches help cook the food and deliver the meals for us. This not only helps us be involved with our community, but it also helps us purchase Christmas gifts for our needy families every year. When any need arises with our students or staff, the church members step into action. The local Masonic Lodge helps us encourage good attendance by providing a bicycle to one boy and one girl with perfect attendance at the end of the year. They contact us periodically to make sure that we do not need any money or assistance to help with a family in need. We have community members who reward students with pizza parties for good behavior.

We have numerous extracurricular activities that require parent volunteers to be successful. Without parent volunteers, we would not be able to have football, basketball, archery, and cheerleading teams. We also have parents that volunteer in the classrooms to assist the teacher by reading with students, assisting with small groups, or helping with holiday parties. Parents at Farmington Elementary love to visit our students for breakfast and lunch. We have special events geared towards our “moms” and “dads” (who we know can come in all forms). “Moms and Muffins” and “Dad and Donuts” are two of these special occasions that allow our students to bring special adults to school. We also have the best Thanksgiving lunch in Western Kentucky, and our families love to join us for that lunch! We have community adults and retired teachers who are always willing to fill in for our kids who might not have an adult to come to school to eat with

them. We make sure that no student feels left out when we have special activities with families because we know that our families are made up in all different ways. Not every family can come to school for events, but we can make sure that our students feel loved and important for these types of events. We are very fortunate to have a school in such a great community. We know without a doubt we can call on any community member at any time, and they will help. Just as the adults in our building want Farmington Elementary to be successful, so do the members of the community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Creating a respectful professional culture at Farmington Elementary is something in which we take pride. We have teachers and assistants in this building that all work hard and have the same goal in mind - do what is best for every single child, every single day. Teachers attend professional development days in the summer. There's professional development the district requires, but they always allow teachers to select some of their own. Teachers can choose topics that they feel will help them grow as a teacher. After attending, they share with their co-teachers new strategies that they have learned. One of our strengths at Farmington is that we listen to each other. When a teacher has an idea for improvement, the principal and other teachers listen attentively and respectfully. It does not matter if the idea is coming from a veteran teacher or a newly hired teacher. We work hard every day and pick up the slack where needed. Unfortunately, finding substitute teachers and assistants is hard to do, but assistants and other teachers are always willing to help cover a teacher's classroom to make sure the students have an adult available for them. Teachers have a say on the master schedule and make changes as needed. We usually start the year off with a schedule and then have to change it a few times until we have it right. There is never a time that something is asked of someone and it is not done. We are all a team and one big family. We all have high expectations and we expect the same out of our students. We all believe in relationships and realize that is what makes this school what it is. These kids have to know we love them before we can teach them. Sometimes what we think looks good on paper is not always the case. The principal backs up the teacher in any parent discussion and the teachers know that the principal is on their side at all times. The principal also realizes what it is like to be a classroom teacher and makes sure her teachers know she is willing to help at any time. She never wants to burden a teacher or ask too much for a teacher at any time. The principal wants the staff to know that she will step up when needed and for them to know they are supported at all times. We are one big family, and everyone is treated with the same love and respect.

4. School Leadership:

The principal sets the tone for the school. The principal at Farmington truly believes that it is her job to see that students feel loved when they walk through the doors. At the beginning of each year, she learns the names of all the students in the building. Every morning, our principal visits all the classrooms. She makes physical contact with each student by touching him/her on the shoulder or back. This lets them know that they are important, and she is aware that they are in school. This non-threatening contact is important so that there is already a relationship if the principal needs to step in and speak with the child about an issue. She also works hard to remember the names of every parent/guardian. This may seem small to some, but when parents walk into the building and the principal calls them by their name, they know they are important. We want every person that walks into this building to be recognized and treated with respect. The principal knows the homeroom teacher for every child and can quickly tell a parent which classroom their child is in. She also believes it is important for her to know which bus every student rides so that in the event of an emergency she can quickly grab a student off the bus. Relationships are very important to the principal and every employee of this school. It's important to know our students frontwards and backward and make sure that that child feels loved every day they are here.

Hiring compassionate teachers who also know their content is something that we find very important here at Farmington. We want the best teachers for the best students. We work hard to find the best and we do not settle until we do. We know that having the right people in the right position makes the school much more successful. We make sure who we hire have the same aspirations that we do. Hard work, someone who will show up every day to work and someone who will love our kids are just a few things that we look for in a teacher. Our principal works closely with our guidance counselor to analyze student data frequently to make sure we are growing all students. We all work together as a team with the school goal mindset. There is not

one individual person who does it all. It definitely takes everyone to make our village and we love our village. Overall, what we have at Farmington is definitely something that we are proud of.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Farmington Elementary believes strongly in culturally responsive teaching and learning. We strive to embrace each student's unique characteristics, perspectives, and experiences when planning lessons and activities so that each student's unique needs and abilities are addressed every day in every classroom. Things that are seemingly simple (such as learning how to properly pronounce a student's name) can make a huge impact on students who have never seen that kind of effort put towards them. Teachers intentionally use lesson objectives to provide students with a goal for the lesson. Teachers provide visuals, graphics, and other supplemental resources throughout the lesson that include multicultural materials in order to embrace our differences. Multimodal learning encourages students to be unique by catering to diverse learning styles via a combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning opportunities in lessons. While walking through our hallways you will see students' work displayed showing where students had an opportunity to express themselves in several different ways. That work may include art projects, written stories where students could share life experiences or tell a story, or group projects that allowed students to collaborate with one another.

Farmington strives for communication, collaboration, and consistency when it comes to involving parents/guardians and our community in our student's educational experience. We regularly communicate through our email distribution lists, classroom newsletters, phone calls, notes, meetings, and social media. No one knows a student better than their parent/guardian so by keeping a collaborative, cooperative relationship between the adults who support them at home and at school, we help students achieve their highest potential.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Over the years, Farmington Elementary has developed into a family atmosphere where strong relationships with teachers and school staff have dramatically enhanced students' level of motivation and therefore promoted learning. All teachers build relationships with students and take time to show them that they care for them both as individual students and as a person.

Teachers connect with students by making them feel valued and respected. Every Monday, our teachers allow every student to share about his/her weekend. We don't place a time limit on what they share; instead, we allow them to be heard. They can tell as much or as little as they want to share. We make sure that every child knows that we genuinely care about them and what happens when they are outside of our building. Some of these kids don't have a conversation with an adult all weekend, so we take time to make that happen. We have found that building these relationships with our students is much more important than any amount of content that we can teach them. We want our students to feel loved every day. Positive relationships improve student behavior and build trust. The more high-quality relationships students have with their teachers, the better their engagement in school. In addition, relationships provide a foundation for student engagement and belonging. They give the students a sense of belonging that some students may not feel in this day and time in society, especially those coming from troubled or broken homes. In turn, students perform better and excel in academics, and as becoming upstanding members of society as they grow. Once the students know that we love them, they will work hard for us. Our principal has taken the saying, "Students don't care what you know, until they know you care" as her motto. We work hard on relationships from the minute they enter our building until they leave us. We know that if they feel loved and safe, then academics will come easier.

We spend time each month in PLC's (professional learning communities) to discuss students and the progress they are making. It's a time when staff has a voice about what is effective and what is not effective, and we make changes. We look at the child as a WHOLE and make sure that we are doing what is best for that individual child. Sometimes it's not even academics that we are looking at. Sometimes it is making sure that what is going on at home is not affecting the child or their academics. We are a small school where all the staff knows the students. Teachers take an interest in all the students, not just the ones they have that year. One way teachers show their care is by attending activities the students have outside of school. Teachers go to ball games, performances, and other activities to support our students. We also have Response to Interventions meetings every six weeks where we look at student's data. We make decisions based on what is best for the students. Not every student learns the same way, so we need to make sure that we are using diverse strategies to reach all children. This is a time we sit down, put our heads together, and make any changes that are needed. We strive to instill a love of learning in every child in our building.

Relationships are what make our school so successful. We want everyone to feel welcome as soon as they enter our doors each morning. One way we do this is by greeting every child, every day. The school bus drivers greet their riders with a smile each morning. The principal is at the front door, greeting the car riders as they arrive. Our school is a safe place for all students where they are loved. Thus, Farmington Elementary is developing the whole child in each student that attends the school.