

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 90 Claremont Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Colonia State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07067-2999

County Middlesex County

Telephone (732) 596-4153 Fax _____

Web site/URL

https://www.woodbridge.k12.nj.us/o/claremont E-mail Joanne.Shafer@woodbridge.k12.nj.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Joseph Massimino E-mail Joseph.Massimino@woodbridge.k12.nj.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Woodbridge Township School District Tel. (732) 602-3200

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Brian Molnar
(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.

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

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):
- 17 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 26 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	0
K	49
1	49
2	57
3	51
4	55
5	54
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	315

*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
 - 32.7 % Asian
 - 6.1 % Black or African American
 - 20.4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 40.8 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 19%

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

Claremont Avenue School is an ESL/Bilingual magnet school with bilingual instruction in Urdu. Students return to their native countries for various reasons for periods of time throughout the school year. After 10 days of absences, students are dropped from our enrollment register and reregister upon their return to United States. Students who successfully exit the ESL/Bilingual program are transferred to their home school within Woodbridge Township School District. In addition, Claremont Avenue has one special education class; therefore, students who become classified and need a specialized program, may transfer to another school within the District.

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 to the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	39
(2) Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	23
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	62
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	319
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.19
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	19

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

Arabic, Hindi, Malayali, Marathi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Persian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, French, Gujarati, Creole, Haitian Creole, Bengal, Twi

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 23 %
73 Total number ELL

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

Total number students who qualify: 73

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 9 %
Total number of students served 27

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>3</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 5 %
Total number of students served: 15

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 5

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.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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 19:1

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	94%	98%	97%	96%	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 ☐ No ☒

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

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

To develop, through a technology-infused curriculum, life-long learners who are responsible citizens prepared to make positive contributions to the global society. Every day counts at Claremont Avenue. We are dedicated to engaging members of the community in the process by providing a learning environment that fosters interdependence, embraces change and values diversity.

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

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1584/WTSD/2916523/Policy_4111_Nondiscrimination.pdf

18. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Claremont Avenue is an ESL and bilingual magnet school within Woodbridge Township School District. All students who register in Woodbridge Township School District who speak Urdu as their home language and identify as multilingual learners feed into Claremont Avenue School's Bilingual Urdu Part-time Program. Any student eligible for ESL services from four designated district schools are placed at Claremont Avenue School for high-intensity ESL instruction. As multilingual learners exit either of the two programs, they return to their home school within Woodbridge Township School District.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Claremont Avenue School is a hidden gem nestled in the community of Colonia. Our staff ensures that from our students' first day at Claremont Avenue School, they feel seen, heard, and accepted. Our increasingly diverse students and families work hand in hand with our principal and faculty creating a community of trust and academic excellence. This trust allows for students as well as staff to reach their highest potential in and out of the classroom. Many of our families have several generations who have attended Claremont Avenue, resulting in a lifelong sense of community.

Our school's foundation is built upon our school motto: Color Claremont With Kindness. This philosophy begins with our three core rules that build a strong foundation for our students to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially as they play a pivotal role in each child's well being and educational success. Through an original, schoolwide positive behavior reinforcement program, Cougar Compliments, students receive a Cougar Token from a staff member when they exemplify kindness and supportive behavior. These tokens are exchanged for a Cougar Paw, as the paw on our Cougar mascot, which is decorated by the student to represent themselves. The pawprints are displayed throughout the school hallways, and provide a positive, school community feel as the display expands throughout the school year. In addition, all students who received a token are entered into a monthly raffle which is celebrated by a schoolwide drawing. One student is selected; however, that student's entire class is announced over the loud speaker and receives a class reward of the student's choice. These rewards promote social growth through activities such as extra recess, physical education class, or time outdoors in the fresh air. This creates an environment of peer encouragement within the classroom each time a student receives a Cougar Compliment Token. The climate of care created by this program is immeasurable.

With 22 languages within our walls, our staff collaborates to ensure that lessons are engaging, rigorous, and differentiated to meet the needs of all of our varied leveled learners. Whether using technology, STEAM, music, movement or hands-on materials our teachers strive to reach the multiple intelligences of our students. These lessons become our driving force to promote individual student growth within the NJ Student Learning Standards. This expands to our evening programs in the areas of math, writing, and science which encourage family participation led by teachers in the school setting.

Claremont Avenue School Community has participated in the Kids Heart Challenge through the American Heart Association. It has evolved over the past 20 years into a solid, interdisciplinary activity that incorporates art, physical activity, music, and community service. Claremont Avenue School was recognized by the American Heart Association by receiving the National Heart Healthy School Award in the 2020-2021 school year. In addition, Claremont Avenue School was recognized as a Heart Hero School for achieving the Principal's Challenge: #1 in Middlesex County and top school in the state for 2021-2022 school year. This year, Claremont Avenue School surpassed last year's donation and contributed over \$28,000 to the American Heart Association. Beyond our donations, all students learned the importance of good heart-healthy habits and practiced the skill of jump-roping to promote physical activity.

This further promotes to a spirit of giving to our community. Our National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) leads our school in educating the student body on the needs within our school community. Through schoolwide food collections for our local food pantry, our NEHS collects, sorts, and donates the food collected from the classrooms. In an effort to gain an even deeper sense of community, our classes participated in schoolwide research projects, displays, and presentations on cultural holidays and traditions around the world. This fostered a sense of unity and understanding as all classes absorbed other cultures represented within our school and district. This unity and understanding is enhanced with the assistance of our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). They are an integral component that extends and enhances the school experience for our students. Through the PTO, our students are afforded family events outside of the school day. We invite parents and community leaders into our school to strengthen the bond within our shared educational and social emotional vision.

In conclusion, our staff takes immense pride in our school and the climate we have created. It is our

teamwork, trust, and shared love for learning that promotes our devotion and passion for creating the best elementary school experience for all students, staff, and families.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Teachers at Claremont Avenue strive to create classroom environments that foster students' love for reading and writing, and produce lifelong learners. All grades follow the Benchmark program, which provides a cohesive structure for the development of literacy skills and content knowledge. We support a wide range of reading skills which includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension through whole-group and small-group instruction. Through vertically aligned units, we foster deep engagement with topics to build skills within and across grades. At any given time, students at Claremont from grades K-5 are working on common literacy concepts and reading text on a common theme. These topics are knowledge-based, expanding both general and academic vocabulary in support of reading, writing, and constructive conversation. Our teachers differentiate and scaffold instruction to ensure all students are successful in reaching grade-level standards. In our upper grades, departmentalization is utilized, allowing one teacher to solely focus on teaching all students the grade-level standards. Each year, our teachers strive to further develop the background knowledge students are bringing into their reading comprehension. This promotes schoolwide conversations and collaboration amongst students and staff. Our Kindergarten classes use a carefully structured phonics and spelling curriculum called Wilson Foundations. Foundations focuses primarily on phonics, spelling, and handwriting as it instructs students to be successful in areas of phonemic awareness and word study. This program contributes greatly to our students' growth in fluency and vocabulary development, providing them the foundations they need to become readers and writers.

As a way to create a connected and collaborative learning environment, all of our classrooms are equipped with ViewSonic ViewBoards. These boards allow the teachers to present material while engaging students, promoting collaboration, and driving attention to the topic at hand. Each classroom has their own way of creating a unique atmosphere, where teachers are able to be responsive to the students' needs and provide meaningful practice to address those needs.

Our students are assessed through observation, anecdotal and running records, and various assessments. The goal of these assessments is to identify students' academic strengths and weaknesses and use that information to guide future instruction, and support success on later summative and high-stakes tests. In grades 2-5, the students are given Weekly Tests and a Unit Test at the end of each unit. Our teachers generate an array of reports based on students' scores. Small groups can then be created based on standards that need to be addressed.

In addition to our Language Arts program, we also utilize the LinkIt! platform. Through LinkIt!, our teachers are able to facilitate classroom-level formative assessments, including tests and progress monitoring, along with district-level assessments. The results of these tests allow teachers to monitor student progress, identify standards that need to be addressed, and create small groups based on those specific needs.

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

At Claremont Avenue School, all grade levels follow the Everyday Mathematics curriculum. It is a research-based and field-tested curriculum that focuses on developing children's mathematical foundation in ways that produce life-long mathematical thinkers. This program focuses on concrete, real-life examples that are hands-on and relatable to students' everyday lives. As educators we trust the daily spiral of this program to repeat concepts and skills that will help ingrain mathematical processes into everyday thought processes. Through frequent practice of basic computation skills, students build mastery of procedures and quickly recall facts, often through games and verbal exercises. With the use of multiple methods and problem-solving strategies we are able to foster true proficiency and accommodate different learning styles. Several of our teachers also incorporate spiral activities into their daily routine, such as Math Mats which focus on multiple mathematical skills through repetition and review. In our upper grades, departmentalization is

utilized, allowing one teacher to solely focus on teaching all students the grade-level standards.

Our teachers work together to design lessons, which build and expand upon students' mathematical proficiency and understanding. Through the implementation of our teachers' lessons, we build powerful mathematical thinkers.

Our students are assessed through progress checks, oral, slate, and written assessments, open response tasks, as well as student self-assessments. Teachers are continually taking opportunities to assess whether a student is on track to meet their grade-level goals. In addition to our Everyday Math program, our teachers utilize the LinkIt! platform and programs such as IXL, Reflex Math, and Frax to monitor student progress and growth within the state standards. IXL is an online program tailored to our students' individual needs. The program provides access for students to practice different skills and topics within a given subject area aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards. IXL adapts and adjusts questions continually as our students progress through the program. Frax and Reflex math are programs that are designed to help students develop their math fluency in a way that is both fun and effective through the use of games. Reflex Math focuses on the students' ability to recall their math facts in all four operations, while Frax focuses on the students' knowledge of fractions.

A key component that leads to the mathematical success of our learners is hands-on opportunities through math-based games. Many of the games are traditional board games, which provide chances for students to work together and take turns using multisensory materials that correlate with their daily math lesson. The classrooms' Viewsonic Viewboards provide engaging, interactive moments for our students to collaborate, strategize, and compete while playing games focused on key grade-level concepts.

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

When the teachers of Claremont incorporate 21st Century Skills into their lesson plans, we shape our students to become successful 21st Century citizens. Prior to each lesson, there is an Inquiry activity that sets the purpose for learning. These activities are hands-on and get the students interested for the new chapter.

All science lessons begin with a Big Question. Students are encouraged to think critically and rely on prior knowledge to answer this question. As the lesson continues, the answer becomes apparent and our students are more engaged with partner collaborations and whole class discussions. STEM activities and additional inquiries are also provided to continue the learning process and to keep students engaged. Our write-in student editions provide vivid photographs and diagrams to help our students become familiar with the topics and non-fiction text. Various topics such as plants, animals, habitats, and the solar system come alive through the write-in readers and our teacher eText that can be projected on our ViewSonic boards. Content Leveled Readers also offer four levels of support to teach science concepts, vocabulary, and reading skills.

Our fourth and fifth grade classes are departmentalized to focus on specific science skills and projects. Project based learning and formative assessments are a part of all of our classrooms. In addition, we incorporate Science Spin, an edition of Scholastic News, into our curriculum to further enhance our informational text skills, as well as current science topics. Also, our 4th grade families and students participate in fun and engaging STEM activities as part of our after school Family Science program. We provide our families ways to continue the learning of science topics outside of the classroom. Communication skills, problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking guide our lessons and create successful students and citizens here at Claremont Avenue School.

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

In order to help build tomorrow's citizens, Claremont helps teach our young learners the important role they play in our communities and world. Our younger students engage in topics such as towns and communities, and the growth and changes that can occur within our environment and school. The importance of the similarities and differences between people is addressed and is apparent in our text as we follow a diverse group of citizens that expose the children to different cultures and communities. As our children evolve, the

lessons evolve. Fourth and fifth grade classes are departmentalized to focus on specific social studies skills and projects. Graphs and diagrams are introduced, and geography and history of our state is explored.

The 5th grade students examine the events that shaped America. Hands-on activities with maps and globes are utilized to enhance social studies lessons.

To help develop multicultural awareness, Claremont students participate in district wide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lessons. These specific topics are researched and the end product results in murals, reports, collages, and projects that are proudly displayed in our hallways. Along with the rest of our district, our school collaborates and completes a DEI showcase. Currently, Claremont students are researching the Ronald McDonald House and ways in which they can help those in need. Character Education is also an important part of our Claremont way of teaching. We participate in monthly lessons such as respect, responsibility, kindness, and citizenship. We incorporate Scholastic News into our curriculum to further enhance our informational text skills and to keep our students informed with the most current events.

Project based learning and formative assessments are a part of our classrooms. With this rigorous curriculum, our Claremont children are given the knowledge and skills to become the most caring and active citizens of tomorrow.

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

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

The instrumental music program is comprised of fourth and fifth grade students. These students receive a small group lesson, once a week for half an hour. They are grouped based upon instrument, grade, and experience level. Vocal music meets twice each week and are grouped by class. Our music program supports students' acquisition of knowledge in the fine and performing arts. It does so by providing an opportunity to acquire a completely new skill set consisting of instrument-specific technique, individual music performance, group music performance and the reading of music notation. These skills incorporate both physical and mental aspects. As the performance and notation skills are acquired, they are blended. This results in the knowledge needed for basic instrumental and vocal music performance.

In preparation for the annual Winter and Spring concerts, the students meet for full ensemble rehearsals. The full ensemble rehearsals provide the students with a large group performance experience. This experience supports team work, as they learn to perform with different instruments. While performing with the large ensemble, they learn to consider their performance in conjunction with the other musicians of the group. They also learn to correlate and perform their musical line with contrasting musical lines as they are being performed simultaneously.

Students meet once each week for 30 minutes for art class. The students complete a variety of art projects that culminate in a schoolwide Art Show to showcase student artwork to families and the school communities. In addition, our art education teacher goes above and beyond to connect her expertise with the district provided curriculum in grades 2-5.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

In the health curriculum, K-5 students learn about character development, wellness, diseases, medicines and drugs, and personal safety. Students understand that good daily health habits are a personal responsibility. Other important topics taught are about the importance of mental, physical, social, and emotional health. They understand how family, peers, technology, and culture influence thoughts, feelings, health decisions, and behaviors. In addition, students identify ways to cope with stressful or unplanned situations and understand the importance of making healthy choices, which include choosing healthy food, the nutrients and vitamins in foods, and the benefits of eating healthy and exercising to benefit themselves and their needs. Students develop short-term and long-term goals. Throughout this course, students are reminded of the importance of family values and communicating with their parents and/or guardians when making decisions.

The physical education program is planned and organized to allow all children to participate in physical education two times each week. It provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activities, taking opportunities to engage in activities from around the world. The key objectives of the program are to instill in all, the motivation and desire to keep oneself physically fit. Students also learn basic movement skills; lead-up activities that are essential for participation in individual, dual and team sports; rhythm and dance; as well as basic tumbling activities.

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

At Claremont we are committed to exposing our students to the language and culture of other countries. Our district adopted a technology-infused foreign language curriculum, which prepares our students to be responsible citizens in our global society. Students are introduced to the Spanish language through puppets, songs, interactive videos, flannel boards, picture cards, and posters. This unique program utilizes iTunes University to show clips of the language being brought to life within familiar settings in the students' own neighborhoods. They may also be surprised to find their very own teachers starring in the instructional videos. Teachers practice this skill organically during the day integrated in calendar routines and centers. This ensures the student engagement needed to build conversation, comprehension, and word recognition skills. Students are also given opportunities to learn about the culture and traditions of Spanish-speaking countries. During our Hispanic Heritage month we bring our learning to life with immersive experiences in order to create displays to demonstrate and turn-key our learning. Our world language program is an important tool in reaching our mission of providing life-long learners who are able to thrive in our rapidly changing and diverse world.

2d. Technology/library/media

Claremont Avenue is able to expand on classroom learning through the use of various technologies. One of the best technologies we are able to provide our students is the use of their own Chromebook and Google account. This allows students to safely and easily access educational websites and tools, while simultaneously providing teachers the ability to monitor, record, and assess student success. In addition to a laptop, teachers are provided an iPad which gives them flexible options and additional resources in creating an optimal learning environment. Every classroom is also equipped with a Viewsonic Viewboard. This tool not only allows for interactive learning, but also acts as a powerful whiteboard which teachers and students can utilize for writing, diagraming, and sharing examples of work. The Viewboard is a tool that in collaboration with a laptop or iPad can also work as a projector or document camera. This resource enables teachers to open up learning opportunities and encourages students to take ownership of their learning. Another unique tool we have access to is the use of Pocketalk voice translators. This is especially helpful bridging the communication gap for newer ESL/Bilingual students and helping them get acclimated to our school.

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

At Claremont Avenue school we keep a finger on the pulse of our students' academic abilities and needs. Based on collected student data, we saw a need for further development in Language Arts, specifically in the area of working with non-fiction texts. Based on this data, Claremont Avenue implemented schoolwide research-based extensive projects to better our students' progress in applying reading skills and strategies

within non-fiction texts. Our principal and staff work diligently to tie in multi-faceted topics to expand students' knowledge base of content and skills needed to comprehend non-fiction texts.

Project displays decorated our hallways for periods of time and showcased our students' progress in non-fiction text and graphic features. Topics included habitat, cultural holidays and traditions, Native American tribes, as well as a community service project for Ronald McDonald House. After a staff meeting at which class topics were selected, teachers and students spearheaded their own research and displayed content to address the needs of our individual learners.

Classes toured our hallways to admire and learn from the content displayed. In addition, the displays sparked student discussion amongst grade levels and fostered pride amongst grade levels as they shared a common goal.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Claremont Avenue has a diverse population, which varies in their academic needs. We address these needs through a variety of programs such as, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), Benchmark Phonics Intervention, and Orton-Gillingham (OG).

By first grade, students are initially assessed in reading through the Oral Reading Record (ORR) in order to determine students' independent reading levels. If it is found that a student is reading below grade-level, they receive reading intervention through LLI or Benchmark Phonics Intervention. Following assessments, students are placed in homogenous groups, and they meet daily for thirty minutes to target skills such as letter/sound recognition and decoding. On average, students receive support for about twelve weeks. At that point, the ORR is given again to determine if the student can exit the program or if further intervention is needed. If it is determined that a student is still below grade-level, the student can remain in the program. Although these programs' primary focus is reading, the success of these programs lies in the confidence gained by readers. This confidence propels them to read more and even enjoy reading. There are times where reading intervention is not enough, and our teachers seek additional strategies. For this reason, our school has an in-house committee of teachers in the building called the Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS). This committee meets with the classroom teacher and parents over academic or behavior concerns. In some cases, it is determined that a student qualifies for a 504 Plan due to a dyslexia diagnosis, and OG is implemented. This multi-sensory program allows students to use strategies to learn spelling rules and apply them to reading and writing. In the end, no matter what program is implemented, our students and teachers relentlessly work until a sense of success is reached.

Claremont Avenue strives for its students to achieve their own successes in all areas of academics. Through the use of Linkit! data, classroom observation, and anecdotal records, our classroom teachers are able to keep abreast of the strengths and weaknesses of our students through analysis of specific skills. Just as we address the needs in Language Arts, we are equally focused on growth in mathematical skills.

Implementation of our Reteach, Teach and Enrich (RTE) lessons gave our teachers the opportunity to tailor lessons to students' specific mathematical needs. Each classroom teacher chose a skill to focus on with their class based on the areas most in need. The teachers then divided their students into three homogenous groups (below level, on level, and above level). Lessons were conducted in a variety of ways centering around the concept of being in a classroom surrounded by peers with similar abilities in the given standard. This created a supportive climate which built students' confidence, allowing each child to personally excel. In the Reteach phase of RTE teachers created engaging lessons that used materials from prior grade-levels to reinforce previously taught skills. Thus, allowing students to acquire necessary skills while boosting their self-esteem. The Teach component of this program targeted our on-level learners engaging in activities that correlate with the current math skills being taught daily. Students in this group were able to collaborate and share knowledge showcasing their prior knowledge. Our last group, Enrich, allowed for our above level learners to be challenged by using materials and math skills taught in the next grade level. These tasks challenged and motivated our emergent learners. Keeping the levels of the students in each group discreet was of highest importance to the success of this program.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students performing above grade level have the opportunity to participate in the district Gifted and Talented Program for a half-day pull out, once a week. Students can attend either enrichment or the arts program, which focuses on music, visual art, or creative writing. The program centers around four key goals: problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communications, and self-direction.

High performing 4th grade students are selected for Elementary Honor Society based on student grades, behavior, and teacher recommendations. Students become leaders and organize projects that support our school's motto, "Color Claremont With Kindness" by researching, organizing, and advertising our school's volunteer efforts. The program's goal is to foster a sense of altruism while allowing the students to practice their academic, leadership, public speaking, and technology skills. These projects incorporate visual arts, math, language arts, and technology while instilling a sense of humanitarianism, community, and responsibility in our school's young leaders as they grow to become future citizens of the world. Projects have included organizing multiple food drives, creating a video and lessons on Diwali, making calming glitter bottles for classrooms, publishing an end of the year newsletter, and regularly assisting with the hallway displays of diversity. Currently, our Honor Society is assisting with our school's end of the year project, bringing smiles and support to the families at the local Ronald McDonald House.

Teachers design their lessons, assessments, and learning environments to encourage exploration and discovery. One-to-one technology allows teachers to differentiate in all subjects. In math, students take diagnostics in September to allow students to learn and practice on IXL, Frax, and Reflex Math at an individual pace that provides enrichment opportunities. Teachers utilize reading groups to differentiate instruction with advanced open-ended questions. Fourth grade above level students participate in book clubs and projects through more complex text. As a school community, we provide students with multiple avenues, which help them reach their optimal potential based on their individual learning styles.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Claremont Avenue School tailors instruction, interventions, and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of the various student populations in many ways. Multiple modifications are put into place according to each student's IEP. Students may have their work, questions, and answers modified to suit individual needs. In small groups, students have tests read aloud and receive extended time to assist students in achieving their goals. Students may also use manipulatives, technology aids, organizers, and sentence starters when completing an assignment. Claremont Avenue is in its third year of having one In-Class Resource classroom. Students who qualify also get speech instruction with a speech teacher at Claremont Avenue. At Claremont, we take every student's needs into account. We take pride in always putting our student's feelings and privacy first and foremost.

When 504 plans are needed due to medical recommendations, the development and implementation are handled with the utmost care. We take into consideration the individual as a whole and look into all aspects of the student's needs when establishing a 504 plan. In order to do this, we encourage parent participation and are always open to their suggestions and input. Our school nurse seeks advice from current and previous teachers, as well as health professionals, to gain additional insight into the needs of each student. This allows us to ensure the most effective and productive learning environment, one in which our children are comfortable and safe.

3d. English Language Learners:

Claremont Avenue School is an ESL/Bilingual magnet school housing 21 languages in the program. The Title III program offered at Claremont Avenue helps English learners by assisting students in becoming fluent in English, helping close the achievement gap of student academic achievement standards.

The achievement gap that persists across diverse linguistics, stems mostly from the buffer between a student's personal experience and a missed connection in their education. Our school chiefly broadens the learning experience so that each student's diverse educational aspect can become an opportunity for the

whole, instead of a gray area that leaves students a step behind.

During registration, families complete the three-step process for English Language Learners (ELL) identification. Parents complete a survey and questionnaire that helps schools identify potential ELLs who will require assessment of their English proficiency to determine if a program is needed. It is vital that teachers at Claremont Avenue be apprised of each student's background and acknowledge their personal efforts. The bilingual program at Claremont Avenue School offers instruction in Urdu, as well as English, to help interpret their thought process and engage their families without facing a cultural lag. Students are brought into smaller class sizes to promote collaboration with each other and pace themselves with their shared experiences. Language translators are available for both students and teachers to ensure proper communication takes place. Extra instructional time from the ESL and Bilingual teacher focus on the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening), allowing students to hear lessons equitably and ask questions directly.

Lastly, our ESL and Bilingual teachers communicate and collaborate with classroom teachers and the principal to provide tailored instruction. For example, each classroom displays academic word walls to introduce and reinforce academic vocabulary that are most crucial and beneficial to English Language Learners. Through combined efforts, we try to acclimate our ELL students to our school culture, while still embracing their own.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

We are fortunate to have a warm community made up of students and staff. Our motto here—Color Claremont with Kindness— is weaved into our monthly featured character trait which fosters a sense of family within the building. We kick off each month wearing a color for that trait. Throughout the month students are exposed to examples of that trait in all their classes. Students who exemplify that positive behavior are rewarded with a Cougar Compliment which they can wear proudly around their neck. They also receive a cougar paw to decorate which gets displayed in the hallway for all to see. This “badge of honor” is a way to promote confidence, self-esteem and motivates our students to replicate these positive behaviors.

Claremont also offers many opportunities to help students grow socially and academically, such as the Math Club and Reading Club. These two programs are offered optionally during lunch periods. Students are recommended by their teachers so that they can reinforce skill-building in a fun and engaging way. Students socialize, play games and create projects all while learning important concepts. It is a way to reach students in a positive way so that they get the skills they need without feeling overwhelmed or embarrassed.

At Claremont, we are constantly finding new ways to engage the students. New assemblies and fun days are incorporated into the school year. We make it a priority to show how learning can be fun. Our students look forward to programs such as the Brain Show, The Grand Falloons, and Lead U. All of these activities promote learning, all while having a blast. In recent years, we have shifted from traditional class parties to schoolwide seasonal STEAM days. This makes the celebrations inclusive to all as we have students who may not participate in certain holidays due to their cultural and/or religious beliefs. Some of these include Harvest Fest and Winter Wonderland. Students plan, design, build and create. It is such a wonderful way for all the students to learn and celebrate the seasons!

As a school, the greatest way we engage students is through the relationships we foster. The staff takes pride in getting to know our children and their families. It is not unusual to find the staff at extracurricular activities and events to support our students. We engage students in meaningful conversations that lead to mutual trust and respect. We know that through this respect, students are willing to be engaged and learn.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Working with family and our community is something we deem extremely important. We believe in open communication and having partnerships is what makes our students and school stand out from the rest. Over the years, Claremont Avenue has had students who have experienced great losses. Death, loss of residency, homelessness and sickness are just a few of the unfortunate circumstances our children have had to endure. Without hesitation, our staff comes together, along with our community, to provide comfort and resources to those in need. It is important for us to make our students feel like Claremont is their home away from home.

Our Parent Teacher Organization plays an active role in our school’s success. They provide a variety of fun and educational assemblies and activities. This year the school held several events like Trunk or Treat, Pumpkin Decorating Contest, Harvest Fest, Winter Wonderland, Gingerbread House Making, and Glow Party to name a few. They also offer families and students various ways to send kindness to others through small fundraising events, like Boo Grams and Bee Kind Grams.

We also provide family programs to students in grade levels 2 through 4. These programs include Writing, Math and Science. Students and their families enjoy coming back to school after hours to continue the learning process through a variety of hands-on activities, such as creating their own book, engaging in Math games to review their skills, and completing STEM projects.

We even have close ties to our community. The sheriff’s office runs the DARE program for our fifth grade students, teaching them the importance of being drug free. The Woodbridge Police Department also comes

into our classrooms to read and build positive relationships with our students. The Colonia Fire Department has come for years to teach our students about fire safety. They show the entire school their vehicles and the important tools they use to keep our community safe. In addition, the community librarian has visited classrooms to read and encourage students to visit our local libraries. Finally, our school honors and shows gratitude toward our local veterans by conducting a poster and essay contest. We welcome our local heroes into our school with open arms and give the students an opportunity to learn from their experiences.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The professional staff at Claremont Avenue School is built on a foundation of trust, support, and a passion for helping children. Our beliefs are synchronized amongst administration, certified, and non certified staff understanding that each person feels a sense of value and worth in their position at Claremont Avenue. The principal promotes open communication and well-rounded support to provide staff with the resources necessary to deliver high quality performances in and out of the classroom. Staff are secure in their abilities to take risks in their teaching and be supported while doing so. It is the belief that through consistently enhancing lessons and implementing new teaching strategies, our students receive superlative academic instruction in a caring, nurturing atmosphere.

All classrooms are equipped with Viewsonic Viewboards and all staff are in continued training on the functions and applications of this innovative tool in executing the curriculum in the most relevant and meaningful ways. The boards were brought in by grade level, and staff did not hesitate to share ideas and enthusiasm with other colleagues to turnkey strategies for immediate use.

Our faculty has integrated Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) into our ongoing professional development. Reflection and inquiry are at the heart of our PLCs. Teachers meet in small groups, monthly, to go over data, explore new concepts, share insights from their experiences, and develop plans for student success. While our PLCs are usually created with grade-level colleagues, teachers also meet with other grade levels to problem-solve and address needs that need to be met across the grade-levels. While our formal PLCs are once a month, many of our teachers are meeting weekly, and sometimes daily, to improve and enhance their instruction. This also helps promote a vertical professional learning community, which creates a spiral for future learning and has added to our overall success at Claremont Avenue.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are a major component of our collaborative lesson planning. Teachers receive continuous training on a variety of topics within DEI initiatives. Claremont Avenue has infused these initiatives into class and schoolwide learning activities. We have a shared mindset of how crucial acceptance and understanding is at Claremont Avenue as well as the world around us. We soundly stand behind instilling in our children the values of embracing others and their beliefs.

4. School Leadership:

Claremont Avenue School has one principal and 46 faculty and staff who have designated roles in the school. Aligned with the Woodbridge Township School District Policies, Regulations, and Mission Statement, our principal promotes a climate of safety, respect, kindness, academic excellence, and cooperation. This value system is followed by our staff who works together to foster relationships with students, families, and with each other. Our principal promotes open communication and well-rounded support to provide staff with the resources necessary to deliver high quality performances in and out of the classroom. Staff are secure in their abilities to take risks in their teaching and be supported while doing so. There are committees within the school to promote teacher leadership and ultimately, student success. For example, Claremont Avenue School formed a school data committee to work with the principal to analyze student data on assessments and formulate and execute goals and activities aligned to promote student growth in reading and mathematics. Through multiple measures, these goals were evaluated and tailored to promote student growth. The data team assumed leadership roles amongst the staff to educate and guide them through the implementation of goals and activities. In addition, Claremont Avenue has a successful Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee which is now lead by a chairperson and assistant chairperson to promote inclusion and acceptance. There are also Family Programs lead by staff in the evenings after school to foster skills in STEM and bridge communication between home and school as a computer liaison

who works with staff on the implementation of our school's chromebooks, interactive boards, and other technology needs. The principal and staff have fostered strong relationships with parents and stakeholders that demonstrate trust and support on a daily basis. Our parents know that the Claremont faculty and staff have the best interest of their children in mind. Safety is paramount to all that we do at Claremont. When students, parents, and staff feel safe, learning and growing can take place.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Claremont Avenue is an ESL and Bilingual magnet school serving families all over our township. Twenty-two languages are spoken within our school and as such, maintaining a culturally aware and responsive classroom is integral to meeting our students' needs. Our teachers communicate high academic and behavioral expectations, advocate for student growth, and provide resources for success.

Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Team plan celebrations of diversity and evaluate our equity plan and practices. Their goal is to ensure that we work to eliminate achievement and opportunity gaps, school community members feel seen and accepted for who they are, and to foster a sense of appreciation and respect through open communication. The DEI Team attends meaningful and relevant District offered professional development and plans for success by evaluating our NJSLA scores, Student Climate and Culture Survey, and their colleagues' input through a lens of equity to identify our strengths and areas of growth.

Our District has made written and live translation services available to our teachers to better facilitate communication with our parents. In addition, we have arranged for teachers to have hand held translation devices for daily use. Our teachers also pair English language learners with fellow students that speak their same language. Our DEI projects center around highlighting different cultures and traditionally underrepresented groups. Students learn about the topic being highlighted each month and create art displays, research projects, and participate in discussions following read aloud stories and non-fiction texts. Rather than celebrating for only one month each year, our teachers focus on that topic during that particular month then continue to weave that topic and previous topics into their regular lessons. Our students see the hallway displays of diversity expanded upon throughout the year, rather than being displayed only that month. Our DEI Team's regular meetings allow us to grow the program to address needs. A discussion with students gave birth to a multicultural holiday research project and hallway displays. Families were invited to create quilt squares which served as an opportunity for artistic expression of ideas, family bonding, and open dialogue. Our celebrations of diversity provide genuine opportunities that spark open discussions for students and teachers to learn about each other's experiences and cultures. This expands students' worldview and instills respect for others, one of our core values. Through promoting open discussion, students feel safe and confident in sharing their prior knowledge and experiences in all academic areas.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Claremont Avenue School has many practices that makes our school stand out as an exceptional learning environment. The one practice that makes Claremont Avenue successful is our enthusiastic commitment to implement our shared Claremont Vision each day. The Claremont School community is committed to providing every child with a safe, nurturing, and academically enriching school experience that provides our students with a strong academic foundation and skills to foster respect for themselves and others. Using a shared vision as our backbone for success, our faculty and staff work together as a unified team to support each other in providing our students with the best possible learning experience. Our staff builds bonds with our students and families which last far beyond their time at Claremont. With open communication and trust amongst colleagues, we learn the students' needs both academically and emotionally as we work together to meet those needs daily.

From the opening of school, the students in each class introduce the day through leading the Pledge of Allegiance and reciting the school rules. At the end of the announcements, students put their original stamp on our school motto, Color Claremont With Kindness, while the entire school chorally joins in.

In addition, teachers are encouraged to take risks in their teaching by implementing new strategies and tools with confidence knowing that they have the full support of each other and their principal. This fosters creativity in the classroom and outside-the-box thinking, which inspires our staff to create excitable teaching and learning moments with the supportive freedom to take risks within their classrooms. In turn, there are no limits to students' successes in achieving NJ Student Learning Standards. For example, we developed a schoolwide project based on one theme: cultural holidays and traditions. Each class chose one country, and the only directive given was to research and present while fostering the skills and strategies to support non-fiction text. The project was a blank canvas for teachers and students to develop and design a uniquely styled display. The entire school decorated our hallways and united cultures from within our community and around the world.

Every day counts at Claremont Avenue. The effort put forth by our students, the collaboration amongst colleagues, and the support of our principal makes our climate second to none.