

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 [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Fort Recovery Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 865 Sharpsburg Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Fort Recovery State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 45846-9746

County Mercer County

Telephone (419) 375-2815 Fax (419) 375-4231

Web site/URL <https://www.fortrecoveryschools.org/> E-mail steinbrunnerr@fortrecoveryschools.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Anthony Stahl E-mail stahl@fortrecoveryschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fort Recovery Local Tel. (419) 375-4139

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. Don Wendel
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	0
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	0
6	56
7	63
8	67
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	186

*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 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 97 % 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: ≤1%

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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	204
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 21

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 7 %
Total number of students served 13

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>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</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: 3 %
Total number of students served: 5

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 3

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.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
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 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	96%	95%	96%	97%	98%
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 create a culture in which students, staff, and community work, learn, and achieve together to maximize student opportunities.

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

<https://www.fortrecoveryschools.org/Downloads/20222023MSSStudentHandbook.pdf>

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

Fort Recovery Middle School is located in the small, rural, and historic community of Fort Recovery in West Central Ohio. The town itself has a population of 1800 while the school district of 61 square miles has a population of 4300. The school serves a total of approximately 200 students yearly in grades 6-8. The community has deep roots in agriculture, manufacturing, and local family-owned businesses. The major employers are J&M Manufacturing (220 employees), Cooper Farms (478), and JR Manufacturing (175). The community is abounding in faith, as churches from seven different denominations serve the local residents. The community is committed to providing a high-quality education for its children and plays an important role in the success of our school. Its commitment is exemplified through many community-school partnerships and in active participation in school-related committees such as The Academic Boosters and The Athletic Boosters. The school is also the beneficiary of successful community fundraising events such as the Win on the Wabash Super Raffle. (WoW has raised nearly one million dollars over four years for school and community organizations.)

Fort Recovery's history dates back to the late 1700s following the American Revolution when the Ohio Country was opened for settlement. Here on the banks of the Wabash River occurred two of the most significant battles ("watershed moments") in American history. In 1791, a confederation of nine Native American tribes led by Miami Chief Little Turtle and Shawnee Chief Blue Jacket surprised the nascent U.S. Army of General Arthur St. Clair and nearly annihilated the entire American force on the banks of the Wabash. The future of the country lay in the balance. However under the organization of General Mad Anthony Wayne a new U.S. Army was formed, forts were built, including the fort of Recovery, and in June of 1794, the army successfully repulsed the native confederation – the largest ever assembled in U.S. history. The two Wabash battles were followed by the Battle of Fallen Timbers and then the signing of the Treaty of Greenville. Students throughout the grades learn about the losses, the victories, and the sacrifices made by both sides of these significant events. School and community events and activities revisit this rich history with the goal that all here, especially the students, will recognize and remember the significance of that history that took place where the Fort Recovery schools now stand.

One direct effect of the fact that Fort Recovery began as a fort town is that to this day, the town and the school still exhibit the characteristics shared by all fort towns – a diverse population reflecting the soldiers and officers who fought here. While other schools and communities in the area are quite homogenous, the student population of Fort Recovery is more diverse (see the comment about the number of church denominations above.) FRMS students may have heritages that go back to the 13 original states plus the territories to the south as they existed in the 1700s. Although diversity can set up more challenges for schools, it also creates an environment that can be more stimulating with more opportunities for learning and growing not only in academics but in other areas important for student development and understanding.

The FRMS culture is the heart of our school system. It makes Fort Recovery a special place to learn and work, and it gives it a unique advantage. Building and sustaining the Fort Recovery culture requires intentional effort from everyone in the district and community. The culture playbook, known as "The Indian Way", is part of that effort. It clarifies the specific behaviors and results we want from each of our beliefs. The behaviors outlined in The Indian Way are essential to how we engage our students in the classroom, and how we operate our school. Our goal is to create an educational environment where everyone consistently engages in behaviors that produce exceptional learning outcomes.

At the top of our culture playbook is our district mission statement. It reads "The mission of the Fort Recovery Local School District is to create a culture in which students, staff, and community work, learn, and achieve together to maximize student opportunities." It also includes our district motto "Better today than you were yesterday, better tomorrow than you were today." Fort Recovery Middle School's beliefs tie directly back to these statements, and while written statements help clarify the culture, documents do not build culture...our actions do.

Our school bases our culture in Growth Mindset, E+R=O and R-Factor, 20 Square Feet, and Above the Line qualities. Students who develop a Growth Mindset accept and thrive on the challenges presented to them and

grow academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. R-Factor provides steps for how to control the outcome[O] of events[E] based on the response[R] to them ($E+R=O$), including Pressing Pause, Getting Your Mind Right, Stepping Up, Adjusting & Adapting, Making a Difference, and Building Skill. 20 Square Feet is simply a metaphor that expresses that each person in the school has a sphere of influence, and it is not just part of our culture, but a creator of it. Above the Line, based on Urban Meyer's book, is a philosophy for more intentional and purposeful living through decisions made every day.

To teach and practice these beliefs, unique classes such as "Intro to R-Factor" and "R-Factor Leadership" are taken by all of our students in middle school. The formation of student tribes allows students opportunities to work together in multi-grade-level groups on a monthly basis to practice these beliefs through teamwork in engaging activities. After-school and summer activities such as sports, clubs, homework help room, the Beyond the Books summer reading program, and student council incorporate the beliefs into school activities and teaching. Most importantly, staff members model these beliefs and behaviors on a daily basis.

A local community member and past administrator of Fort Recovery Local Schools summarizes our culture best with the simple phrase "Fort, Family, Faith". In a town so rich in history, so ingrained in family values, and so devout in faith, Fort Recovery Middle School thrives on the model character of its students, staff, and their families. The curriculums, assessments, teaching methods, interventions, social-emotional learning programs, leadership philosophies, and unique programs all certainly contribute to the successes of our school, but at the base of it all are great people and meaningful relationships, which truly help make Fort Recovery Middle School a high achieving school.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The curriculum at Fort Recovery Middle School for English Language Arts (FRMS ELA) follows Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts. Teachers create engaging educational and instructional materials for 90 minutes of daily instruction from teacher-selected classroom novels, a textbook series, and other supplemental materials. Teachers use this time for independent reading, grammar, vocabulary, speaking and listening, and sustained essay writing.

Data analysis drives instructional changes and modifications. Each year, ELA teachers meet to determine questions and question types that students successfully answered on the previous year's Ohio AIR (American Institute of Research) Assessment, and which question types students answered less successfully. These data help teachers determine areas of strength and areas that may have gaps. At mid-year, ELA teachers administer the Ohio Restart Readiness assessment, which mirrors the Ohio AIR Assessment. Not only does this assessment give students much-needed practice using an online testing system, but it also gives teachers mid-year feedback creating helpful and pertinent data. Teachers can check in real-time which instructional modifications have been successful and areas that may need targeted improvement.

For example, through these assessments and classroom observations, FRMS ELA teachers identified two areas of concern: informative writing and nonfiction reading. Because of these areas of concern, ELA teachers collaborated to create a cross-curricular writing rubric to share with all Middle School teachers. This allows writing to be uniformly assessed by all teachers in the building, thus creating continuity in writing expectations. Additionally, teachers collaborated to create informational question stems for all Middle School teachers. All teachers, regardless of the content area, can utilize these question stems to more easily and effectively incorporate informative questions into their content areas.

Finally, one major emphasis at FRMS has been independent reading. Teachers created and implemented an independent reading curriculum that they named the Reading Roadmap, which was developed with the intention of promoting choice and a love of reading. The Reading Roadmap offers students a series of steps for each quarter to show understanding and comprehension of independently chosen novels. Students have access to the ELA teachers' rich and bountiful classroom libraries filled with diverse and high-interest, age-appropriate novels. To build excitement and exposure, teachers promote books through various in-class methods such as Must Read Monday, Book Trailer Tuesday, and First Chapter Friday. To further emphasize the importance of independent reading, fifteen minutes of instructional time each day is dedicated to independent reading. During this time, students read their independently chosen novels and teachers conference with students. These conferences not only help teachers check that students are comprehending successfully their choice novels, but it also helps our teachers create meaningful connections with students, which can lead to better book recommendations and stronger rapport.

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

Within Fort Recovery Middle School, math instruction is supported by data and driven by experienced educators dedicated to providing students with a high-quality education that meets Ohio Math Standards. Differentiated instruction is a key component of this approach. This method recognizes that each student learns differently and requires different strategies and materials to support their learning. By incorporating differentiated instruction and co-teaching into the school's approach to math instruction, teachers have been able to help students achieve higher levels of success.

The school's teachers work closely with students and tailor instruction to meet their individual needs. They incorporate student choice within the instruction to better support students. This approach fosters a more collaborative and supportive learning environment, which has a positive impact on student engagement and motivation. Co-teaching is also a vital component of the school's approach, enabling two teachers to work

together to provide students with the support and attention they need to succeed. Mathematics teachers have access to a gifted and intervention specialist to plan instruction and make adjustments to their lessons to provide the best possible support for the students. This collaborative approach is reflected in the documented student growth.

The classroom structure is at the discretion of the teachers, who use daily warm-ups, lessons, homework assignments, and technology in their approaches to math instruction. The school utilizes one-on-one devices to provide students with access to a range of educational math resources such as Delta Math, DESMOS, Edulastic, or pre-created videos. This interactive approach helps foster a love for learning and a deeper understanding of the material.

In addition to traditional assessments, the staff uses formative and summative assessments to measure student progress and ensure they are on track to meet their learning goals. Writing across the curriculum is emphasized to help students develop writing skills while reinforcing their understanding of the subject matter. The school uses data from the Mercer County Educational Service Center (MC ESC), Ohio AIR Test, and Restart Readiness to drive instruction and ensure students receive the best possible instruction. Our staff tracks High-Quality Student Data and uses this information to identify trends, improve instruction, and meet the needs of our students.

In summary, Fort Recovery Middle School's approach to math instruction is designed to provide students with the tools they need to succeed in the modern world. By emphasizing real-world problem-solving, using technology, and providing individualized instruction, the school is preparing its students for a future that demands both critical thinking and creativity. By utilizing data to drive instruction and embracing innovative teaching methods, the school ensures that its students are well-prepared for whatever challenges they may face in the years to come.

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

“Engaging,” “collaborative,” and “student-focused” summarizes Science at Fort Recovery Middle School. The science curriculum caters to an inquiry-based approach and meets the needs of all student learning styles and abilities while following the Ohio Science Standards.

In 6th grade, students learn about the differences between rocks and minerals and their influence on the lithosphere, the foundational concepts of matter, and how all life is composed of cells. In 7th grade, students study the patterns of the Earth and the Moon, the conservation of energy, and cycles of matter and energy through ecosystems. In 8th grade, students engage in topics including Plate Tectonics and Earth’s interior, Genetics, and forces and motion within and around Earth.

District-wide, our science department is reviewing and adopting new curriculum resources in the form of textbooks and online resources such as GIZMOS. This not only allows for collaboration among teachers but also provides a unified approach that supports seamless transitions through consecutive grade levels.

Every day is unique in the science classroom in which various instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of our students. Students learn best by doing and we, therefore, incorporate hands-on activities promoting collaboration and real-world connections. Through physical and virtual labs and simulations, students learn to be problem solvers, taking ownership of their learning. Differentiated instruction is an essential component of the science curriculum in order to support students and cultivate growth at various achievement levels.

Formative assessments are used on a weekly basis to plan for upcoming lessons that best meet the needs of our students. Exit tickets and bellringer tasks not only provide structure but also allow for the review of content and self-reflection. Eighth-grade students participate in the Science Restart Readiness assessment halfway through the school year, allowing teachers to identify achievement growth and areas of need. These areas of identified need then help to drive the planning of future lessons. Summative assessments at the end of large units can come in a variety of forms; from traditional assessments to binder evaluations and

projects. Projects can range from rock cycle game boards, to cell models, debates, and Pedigrees. Students are presented with choices. They have a multitude of ways to demonstrate understanding.

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

In social studies classes at Fort Recovery Middle School, the curriculum is based on the Ohio Learning Standards. Sixth-grade students focus on geography, economics, religion, and the government of ancient civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere. In addition to the regular curricular requirements, the teacher also periodically uses the local newspaper and a video program to arouse student interest in, and knowledge of, current events. Seventh-grade students continue early world history but with more concentration on the cultural aspects. In eighth grade, the students examine American history from the discovery of America through the Civil War concluding with the Reconstruction Period.

The mode of learning varies throughout each grade with more of a traditional style in the sixth grade blended with learning simulations to make the concepts more real to the students. Seventh and eighth graders take part in a combination of project-based learning as well as Modern Classroom personalized learning. Cross-curricular units that include engaging activities, choice menus, self-pacing, and hands-on activities all allow students the opportunity to hone collaborative skills and other 21st-century skills as they gain foundational knowledge of the content. Students' social-emotional awareness and growth are part of the learning objective when teachers incorporate the strategies of bell-ringers and ice-breaker questions at the beginning of classes.

A variety of assessments are used. Both pre- and post-assessments are a part of every unit in the social studies department. Peer-to-peer feedback through methods such as the Six Thinking Hats by Dr. Edward de Bono helps develop skills in collaboration, self-reflection, and providing effective feedback. Both formative and summative assessments are used throughout each unit of study to ensure and document that students are learning the content.

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

Students at Fort Recovery Middle School are offered a wide range of opportunities to support their long-term goals and dreams. Whether it be aspirations of a 4-year degree, a technical degree, or immediate employment, students and staff strive toward preparedness. At the Middle School level, there is an emphasis on career exploration, building marketable skills, and goal-setting.

Every student at Fort Recovery Middle School has a career portfolio. A career portfolio is a tool that the student will use until graduation. It includes, but is not limited to, a yearly classroom submission related to potential careers exploration. In addition to projects and research in the classroom, FRMS provides opportunities including field trips and a yearly health fair that allow students to see and hear about a variety of career possibilities. This includes tours of local manufacturing companies, presentations about various careers in the healthcare field, and exposure to STEM-related employment.

At Fort Recovery Middle School, students in 8th grade are eligible to earn high school credits. High school standards and rigor allow students to earn up to 2.25 high school credits with the completion of 8th-grade science, algebra, and physical education. Providing these advantages for students provides them more opportunity and flexibility in high school as they plan for their future college and career readiness pathways whether that includes CC+ courses, advanced placement classes, or TriStar Vocational School programs.

Lastly, the staff is aware of the importance of "soft skills" in today's society. Teamwork, problem-solving, time management, adaptability, and communication are rewarded monthly with "Above the Line" letters sent home and a drawing for an Indian Way t-shirt. Students are offered opportunities to work as classroom aides and yearbook staff providing endless opportunities for the development of workplace skills. Monthly tribe meetings have intentional opportunities to work on goal setting and teamwork. Students in the 6th and 8th grades are required to take courses that focus on decision-making and leadership skills. Fort Recovery Middle School guarantees an environment rich with opportunities to grow workplace skills.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

In performing arts at Fort Recovery Middle School, 6th-8th grade students have the opportunity to expand their musical talents and knowledge through electives in general music, vocal music, and instrumental music. Students expand on the framework learned in elementary music and apply it in performances for the school and community throughout the year. Drama club is an extracurricular activity that is offered to the students to expand their musical theater experience. In these electives, students make valuable and real connections to other areas of the core curriculum; breaking down rhythms into fractions, making musical connections to historical events, reading music, connecting sound waves to science and social-emotional learning, etc.

In visual arts, 6th-grade students do a thorough study of the elements and principles of art and how they are used in various media. Careful planning among staff members allows students to do several cross-curricular projects that coincide with core area subjects. 8th-grade students focus on Visual Literacy and how to read, write and create visual images. Social Emotional Learning Standards and Ohio's Visual Art Standards are combined to create meaningful lessons to help students become more self-aware and to have more control over their learning.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

All students in the 6th and 7th grades at Fort Recovery Middle School have the option to take physical education as an elective class for a quarter or semester, while all 8th-grade students participate in daily physical education for one semester and earn high school credit for the class. The physical education curriculum focuses on sport and physical fitness concepts. Students incorporate the use of technology to further their understanding of sport and fitness skills by using slide presentations and videos to show proof of learning in these areas. The curriculum also incorporates the school culture of the Indian Way and is an environment where every student is able to participate, learn, and grow.

A unique feature of the Fort Recovery physical education program is the archery unit where students learn archery safety and shooting techniques. (The archery class, equipment, and beginning instruction was brought into the school by Pheasants Forever, a local community organization.) Students have opportunities for independent learning in several other units such as a student game unit when students create their own games and teach them to the class, and in a fitness unit when students create and practice their own fitness plans at the student activity center which houses brand new fitness equipment. (The building addition and equipment were donated by two community members.)

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Technology plays an essential role in education. At Fort Recovery Middle School, state-of-the-art technology is integrated to help students in their acquisition of critical skills and knowledge. In 6th grade, the technology curriculum is focused on developing fundamental skills such as typing, internet safety, and computer literacy. Students also get to use a laser to cut out several projects they create. Every 6th-grade student participates in tech class for one quarter. As students progress through the grades, they build on these fundamental skills and are introduced to more advanced concepts. For example, students in 7th and 8th grades learn how to code, learn advanced digital media production techniques, and are creators of media

using different software instead of simply being consumers of media. Tech is a semester elective for 7th- and 8th-grade students.

FRMS' technology program also supports students' development of essential 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication. To promote real-life, relevant, and authentic learning opportunities, students routinely create projects that are used in the school by teachers, staff, and other students. Students manifest a great deal of ownership and choices in creating and publishing their work. These skills are increasingly important in today's digital world, and the FRMS curriculum is designed to help students acquire and hone those skills.

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

At Fort Recovery, students in the middle school have multiple innovative and interesting course options from which to choose, including Introduction to R-Factor, Leadership, STEM, STEAM, and Agriculture. Two of those classes truly unique to Fort Recovery are the Introduction to R-Factor and Leadership courses.

Introduction to R-Factor is taken for one nine weeks by all 6th-grade students and focuses on students developing better decision-making skills and becoming better people. These are taught through the discipline of pressing pause, getting your mind right, stepping up, adjusting and adapting, learning how to make a difference, and building skills. They watch videos, play games, do team-building activities, make skits, and start to develop new skills to reinforce the disciplines. Throughout all of these disciplines limiting BCD (blaming, complaining, defending) and thinking about your 20-square feet (controlling the controllables) is encouraged.

Leadership is taken for one nine-week period by all 8th-grade students. This class defines what leadership is, analyzes different leadership qualities and traits, incorporates growth mindset activities, encourages relationship building, and introduces other qualities that a leader would possess. These qualities could include such skills as refusal skills of alcohol and drugs and volunteering throughout the community. This class also brings in many guest speakers from various backgrounds such as authors, college professors who teach a leadership class, community members, high school coaches, and students who discuss leadership opportunities and ways to impact the school and community.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Meeting the needs of all students is an essential component of FRMS' success. Through a variety of class offerings, Fort Recovery Middle School serves a variety of groups such as gifted students, students with disabilities, as well as those identified as "at-risk."

The staff of FRMS has created a specific course called Quest designed explicitly to provide additional intervention and support for students performing below grade level. This course expressly targets students with language arts and math deficiencies but benefits the overall achievement in all classes. It provides students additional help outside of the regular classroom with strategies such as re-teaching, clarification, pre-teaching, and conferencing. Yearly, staff members collaborate and analyze individual student data from previous AIR testing, Restart Readiness Assessments, and testing projections to develop a list of students that would benefit from this course. The students selected typically are not identified with learning disabilities, but instead many have slower processing skills or gaps in learning that require reteaching of math and language arts concepts in anticipation of moving toward proficiency in grade-level content standards.

To help improve language arts skills, students along with the guidance of the Quest teacher read and discuss novels together as a group focusing on reinforcing standards and skills students are learning in the regular classroom such as characterization, drawing conclusions, making inferences, citing evidence, etc. Students practice applying vocabulary from their regular language arts classroom in sentence and paragraph writing. Using STAR individualized reading reports, Quest teachers are able to hone in on reading gaps and skills

and provide additional lessons that are needed for each individual student. In Math Quest, teachers use the time allotted to check for understanding of the current material being taught as well as using a supplemental program that addresses remediation to help close the gap on missing math skills. The majority of the time is spent re-teaching, modeling, and working one-on-one to gauge student growth and understanding. Quest teachers are also able to keep a close eye on this selected group of students and help improve organizational and study skills.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Fort Recovery identifies students as gifted in reading, math, superior cognitive, and/or creative thinking. In order to meet the needs of 20% of our student population identified as gifted, the Gifted Intervention Specialists (GIS) work to create Written Education Plans (WEPs). These plans highlight students' individual areas of giftedness and encourage them to strengthen their skills. At the beginning of the school year, students have the opportunity to reflect on the previous year's WEP. The opportunity is given to conference with the GIS and collaborate to select their individual goals for that school year's WEP. Throughout the year, conferences are held to discuss progress monitoring in regard to each student's goals. Adjustments and accommodations are made to ensure each student is achieving the items listed on their WEP.

Teachers at FRMS take pride in meeting the needs of all levels of learners. With this in mind, numerous teachers in the middle school either have a Gifted Intervention Specialist license or have completed at least 60 hours of professional development every four years specifically targeted for meeting the needs of gifted learners. Because of this, students are able to be cluster grouped in both language arts and math. With these groupings, teachers can intentionally create assignments and activities that target gifted learners.

In addition to cluster grouping in the regular education classroom, gifted students also receive services through an enrichment course entitled LEAP (Learning Enrichment Activities Program). For students to qualify for this course, they must have an IQ of a minimum of 120 and also be identified as gifted in math, reading, and/or superior cognitive ability. The course is designed to be a support system in a student-centered environment that challenges students to fully develop their abilities while addressing social-emotional needs. Extended challenges, enriching experiences that emphasize higher-order thinking skills (such as problem-solving, divergent and critical thinking, and logic) and creativity, and modifications to the curriculum as well as occasional specialized field trips are offered.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The special education team offers specialized support based on individual student needs and identified areas of weakness in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Inclusion classrooms include a co-teaching team of both a general education teacher and an intervention specialist and are offered across all grade-level language arts and math general education classrooms. Students in inclusion classrooms include students with identified disabilities in either reading and/or math, students that are going through the response to intervention process, and typical peers.

To support students across all curricular areas, an instructional aide assists the general education teacher in at least one section of science and social studies at each grade level. The instructional aide helps to ensure all students have adequate access to the curriculum but pays special attention to students with IEPs to make sure their individual needs are being met.

Resource room math and language arts classes are also available for students that require specially designed instruction outside of the general education classroom. These classes offer language arts and math instruction based on Ohio's Extended Learning Standards and have a low student-to-teacher ratio. Depending on student needs, occupational, physical, speech, and language therapies are also provided.

Intervention specialists work collaboratively with general education teachers to differentiate instruction for specific student needs. This happens bi-weekly during common planning time provided by the district. General education teachers regularly modify tests and assignments based on students' needs and IEP requirements.

Communication between students' families and the school is key to the success of intervention at FRMS. Intervention specialists communicate regularly with parents and general education teachers through Google Forms, email, phone calls, and progress reports. If a situation warrants more resources, the district's special education coordinator collaborates with staff to help solve difficult cases.

3d. English Language Learners:

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Fort Recovery Middle School stakeholders believe in engaging students through a positive and supportive atmosphere. From the first week of school, the staff works to build relationships and a culture of acceptance while demonstrating Indian Way Beliefs through various team-building activities. Staff members work together to provide a welcoming environment. Beyond this, teachers implement lessons focused on student-centered choice. Students also have the opportunity to participate in any or many of the clubs that interest them, such as Student Council, Yearbook Club, Book Club, Chess Club, and Homework Help Room.

To reinforce a strong work ethic, the staff rewards students' academic achievement and responsible behavior by providing the opportunity for students to enjoy an experience away from the traditional classroom. From roller skating to an amusement park, our students are motivated to hold themselves accountable to qualify for our Incentive program. An Academic Awards Banquet honors students that earn straight A's throughout the school year. This is a special night for students and their families as all gather to celebrate their hard work and determination.

In addition to striving to support students academically, FRMS also believes in the importance of social and emotional engagement. The staff achieves this by implementing mini-lessons and activities on core values such as empathy, gratefulness, and goal setting, as relationships are built during monthly Tribe meetings. Every middle school student belongs to a TRIBE. Tribes are led by one staff member who serves as a person that the students can seek for support throughout the year. Students are encouraged by staff to do their best, and the staff member leaders support this by monthly nominating individuals for the "Above the Line" award. Students that demonstrate above-the-line behaviors are honored with special recognition. Students have the opportunity to return the support and can nominate their teachers too. This is a powerful strategy for strengthening relationships.

Indian Way Week begins in the spring with a motivational speaker. Then, as a group, members support each other by running a community 5K. (Students and staff are joined by numerous members of the community.) During the week, students also have the opportunity to showcase talent in the Middle School Idol contest with the support of the entire school. A Health Fair allows community members the opportunity to talk to students about their well-being. The culminating event of the week includes Tribe competitions during Field Day.

FRMS implements many programs to motivate students. From Spirit days that boost morale to pep assemblies honoring student-athletes and spirit weeks that celebrate student effort on state assessments, the staff strives to foster a positive environment that builds strong school culture. The success of these programs is obvious based on high staff and student participation and attendance rates at school and during extracurricular events. Many things are done to promote a positive environment for students, but ultimately building relationships is the key. The staff at FRMS is focused on building relationships. With strong healthy relationships come motivated students, and motivated students drive FRMS success!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The cornerstone of Fort Recovery is the school! FRMS strives to build and maintain meaningful relationships with its families, community, and local businesses. This school makes it a priority to make sure its families feel informed and connected to what is happening in school. Each month, staff members post to social media innovative classroom activities and student successes. This allows families and community members to engage their children in positive conversations about what is happening in their classrooms. Progress Book and Google Classroom are used to communicate assignments, grades, and classroom updates. All of the above-mentioned activities are used to acknowledge and promote families as a part of the FRMS educational team. High-achieving students are honored by inviting their families to celebrate with them at the academic awards banquet each year.

The community is welcomed into our schools for a multitude of student-led programs to showcase athletics, fine arts, as well as our academic achievements. Great pride is taken in hosting local veterans for a Veteran's Day program each year. Students help with this program in various ways. Breakfast is served by student council members, while the middle school choir and band perform patriotic songs. Students from the 8th grade, who have earned the honor of laying the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, give speeches about the importance of their Washington DC trip. FRMS also collaborates with the local American Legion Auxiliary to celebrate the poster and writing contest winners at this banquet.

FRMS has partnered with various community organizations and businesses to help meet student and family needs. The Psi Iota Xi philanthropic sorority, the Academic Boosters, and a myriad of local businesses' donations have always been appreciated. Ft. Recovery t-shirts for newly enrolled students and numerous other projects and programs, including homework help room, summer Beyond the Books program, Tribe Day activities, etc. have reaped the benefits of these donations. Likewise, students volunteer their time and talents to support various community activities and programs.

Local industry plays a big role in the success of the students. The R-Factor class partners with local law enforcement to have an officer come in weekly and promote "making responsible choices." This class also takes a field trip to a local nursing home to learn from and brighten the day of its residents. In another business collaboration, Honda engineers visit the STEM classroom to teach students about the engineering-design process through a program called Jet-Toy. This STEM class also takes all of the 6th-grade students on a field trip to visit various local manufacturing businesses. The purpose of this trip is to expose the students to the numerous STEM occupations available in the local area. All of these programs and activities serve to connect FRMS students and their families to the local community and all it has to offer.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Fort Recovery Middle School prioritizes creating a supportive environment for its staff to provide the best possible education for its students. One of the initiatives implemented to support the professional growth and development of staff is providing in-service hours to attend professional development of their choice, aligning training with personal and professional goals. Additionally, the school offers reimbursement for staff's college coursework, demonstrating the school's commitment to investing in their staff's knowledge and skills.

Another way in which FRMS teachers are supported is by making possible their attendance at the Ohio Middle Level Association (OMLA) conference, which provides them with the opportunity to learn from other educators about engaging and rigorous lessons that they can implement in their classrooms. This helps teachers stay up-to-date with the latest teaching strategies and techniques, and it also provides them with the opportunity to network with other educators from across the state.

FRMS also has a program called Cheers to Peers, which gives staff members the opportunity to congratulate and recognize their colleagues for their accomplishments. This helps to build a sense of community and support among staff, and it also helps everyone feel appreciated and valued for their hard work.

Additionally, Fort Recovery Middle School has an Indian Way Committee that puts together creative activities to instill the Above the Line mindset within all students and staff. This committee focuses on building relationships, showing respect, taking responsibility, and creating a positive culture within the school. Additional various staff committees have been implemented including the Staff Leadership Team, the District Leadership Team, and the Building Leadership Team. The goal of these committees is to make decisions that benefit all involved students, staff, and community members.

The school also utilizes the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES 2.0) to evaluate and improve teacher performance continuously. The evaluation process results in individualized Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) that align with the teacher's goals and students' needs. As part of the PGP process, teachers are encouraged to use High-Quality Student Data (HQSD) to inform their instruction and measure student growth over time.

By utilizing OTES 2.0 evaluations and encouraging the use of PGPs and HQSD, Fort Recovery Middle School is able to support teachers in their professional growth and development. This, in turn, helps to ensure that all students are receiving the highest quality education possible.

Overall, FRMS has committed robust time, effort, and resources to create a professional culture. Staff surveys and nominal needs assessments document the success of this commitment of time, effort, and resources. This staff fully participates in an environment where professionals feel encouraged, valued, and supported. They believe and demonstrate that investing in professional growth and development not only benefits them individually but also benefits the students and the entire school community. The benefits of a strong professional culture are nearly limitless, and the success of FRMS documents this.

4. School Leadership:

Fort Recovery Middle School thrives on a shared leadership style, utilizing the strengths of all staff to help drive conversations and inform decisions. The school principal supports this model to empower all staff to have a stake in the school's success. The school has found that when communication is open and honest, and all stakeholders are informed throughout the decision-making process, a shared vision is created that positively benefits the students and their production in the classrooms.

The school principal serves as a facilitator to the various groups of stakeholders that help brainstorm and make decisions for the school. He works closely with the guidance counselor and social-emotional learning coach on a daily basis to make informed decisions about the day-to-day activities that occur within the school. He also communicates with staff openly each day and makes himself visible in the hallways and classrooms. The Staff Leadership Team, consisting of the principal and three teachers from the building, meets on a weekly basis to communicate updates and information. A District Leadership Team also meets bi-monthly to discuss information among the three schools in the district. The Middle School Culture Team, consisting of various building staff members, is vital in building the school culture as well as supporting the social-emotional needs of all students. This team's responsibilities are to work with building administration, teachers, and support staff to reinforce the Above the Line culture and maintain a positive school environment.

Staff members are encouraged and empowered to collaborate with others and to grow professionally. School professional development days include staff-led breakout sessions to not only provide teachers with opportunities to share their ideas with colleagues but to embolden them by showcasing all of the great resources and strategies they are using in their classrooms already. Teachers in co-taught classrooms are given professional time once every two weeks through inclusion planning to work together to work and plan for their classes. Staff meetings are also used as a time to collaborate and share ideas, as well as make team decisions. When these opportunities are given, all staff members have an opportunity to grow their leadership skills.

The leadership of our school also prides itself in not only recruiting and developing a talented and hard-working teaching staff but retaining quality teachers and staff as well. Consistency undergirds success. When interviewing for open positions, a team of staff members led by the principal work cohesively to seek individuals that model the high standards and visions expected of Fort Recovery Middle School staff members. In following this core school leadership principle, leadership teams past and present have been instrumental in developing a high-quality staff that works together toward the outstanding achievement and culture exhibited in this school today.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

At Fort Recovery Middle School, the staff believes that all students deserve an opportunity to experience an environment that is safe, makes them feel like an important part of something, builds self-esteem, and allows individuality. The staff is proud to have developed a system of identifying and addressing the unique needs of each of the students.

At the beginning of the year, students are encouraged to complete a school culture survey. Questions on the

survey are aimed at identifying whether or not students' "needs" are being met. The responses to this survey provide information that drives school-wide initiatives, as well as small-group and individual interventions/supports.

One school-wide initiative addressing the potential concerns in the survey is the Tribe system. The middle school tribes were developed in an effort to improve relationships across grade levels, genders, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, and ability levels. Intentional groupings and staff involvement ensure an environment with multiple opportunities to learn from and appreciate one another. It is a group that requires acceptance and tolerance to be successful. The relationships built in these tribes, both student-to-student and student-to-staff, are essential to building FRMS' inclusive culture.

In addition, when individual students of diverse backgrounds are identified as needing additional support, Fort Recovery Middle School has a variety of programs including "Beyond the Books", "Homework Help Room", free Wi-Fi hotspots, and youth mentoring that can be accessed according to need. Students also have access to a school counselor, a social emotional coach, a family liaison, and a mental health therapist.

Classrooms across content areas include culturally diverse circumstances and perspectives. For example, the music program incorporates not only music by Western composers, but also folk music from East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and the South Pacific, as well as music from indigenous peoples of North America and elsewhere. They also cover spirituals, jazz, gospel, and rock, all of which directly and/or indirectly have their roots in African American music. The English Language Arts department includes diverse literature requirements. The teachers in this department have also dedicated time, energy, and money to improving their classroom libraries, and in so doing, strive to add books that appeal to a wide range of individuals, and encourage book selections that motivate students to explore cultures that are different from what they typically see in rural Fort Recovery. Finally, in response to the FRMS goals of presenting a culturally responsive curriculum through culturally responsive strategies, the social studies curriculum (literature, discussions, projects) and current event discussions are seen as opportunities to stress those goals of culturally responsive teaching and learning.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that has been the most instrumental to the success of Fort Recovery Middle School is the implementation of its culture playbook known as “The Indian Way”. While the playbook has many components, at the basis of it are a set of three core beliefs: Power of the Tribe, Passion to Grow, and Own It. Each of these beliefs is accompanied by expected behaviors and intended outcomes. One of the key features of The Indian Way is that this is a school-wide, top to bottom strategy in which students, teachers, staff, and administrators are all held to the same behavioral standards.

The first of the three beliefs is the “Power of the Tribe.” Within the power of the tribe, the expected behaviors are to “respect each other and really listen, talk with people even when it’s hard, and bring others along.” As a school, FRMS has worked extensively in the past few years to build strong relationships. Teachers connect with students and build relationships in a number of ways. Staff supports students by interacting with students in the hall, conferencing with students, and attending extracurricular events such as sports, plays, and concerts. Students build relationships with one another in tribes. Since tribes are made up of students from multiple grade levels, students have the opportunity to interact with students that may not have a chance otherwise.

The second belief within The Indian Way is “Passion to Grow.” The expected behaviors within this belief are to “embrace the journey, accept the challenges, and be coachable.” It is stressed that students and staff understand that there will be challenges along the way, whether that be through difficult classes, tough sports games, personal challenges, etc. All stakeholders must accept these challenges and embrace that, through their journey, they will strengthen and grow.

The third and final belief within The Indian Way is “Own It.” The expected behaviors within Own It are to “own your attitude, own your effort, and own your choices.” When students and staff are able to own their actions, attitude, and effort, they are able to adapt and grow. At FRMS, there are high expectations for both academics and behavior. It is expected that staff and students will hold themselves to high standards, and The Indian Way helps all accomplish this goal. Through The Indian Way, Fort Recovery Middle School continues to grow beyond just a building where learning takes place to a community where students, staff, and administrators grow into one cohesive tribe. This has proven to be an outstanding strategy for excellence.