

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

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

School Mailing Address 13850 W Akron Canfield Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Berlin Center State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44401-9752

County Mahoning

Telephone (330) 547-4100 Fax (330) 547-9302

Web site/URL https://www.westernreserve.k12.oh.us E-mail dfarelli@wrls.k12.oh.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* Mr. Dallas Saunders E-mail dsaunders@wrls.k12.oh.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Western Reserve Local Tel. (330) 547-4100

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 Mrs. Jasmine Henning
(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):
- 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	41
1	48
2	50
3	56
4	53
5	41
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	289

*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
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 97 % White
 - 1 % 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: 7%

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	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	21
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	293
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Not Applicable

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %

Total number students who qualify: 56

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 16 %
Total number of students served 47

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>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>27</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: 8 %
Total number of students served: 24

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 11

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.	13
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 22:1

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%	95%	96%	95%	95%
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 of excellence through positive connections between the students, staff, and community stakeholders. Students will develop the skills to grow academically and socially through rigorous, interactive classroom experiences and extra-curricular activities.

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

https://www.westernreserve.k12.oh.us/forms_policy.htm

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

Western Reserve Elementary School (WRES) is a K-5 school located in Berlin Center, a small rural town in northeast Ohio. The district's students come from Ellsworth Township and Berlin Center. Originally farming communities, there has always been a strong belief in hard work, family values, and community spirit which continue to be the cornerstone of the school community. As time has passed, the district has become a blended community. The farming community has welcomed residents who commute to white-collar and blue-collar jobs in urban and suburban centers. Many new houses have been built across the district. Open enrollment students come from districts across Mahoning County because of the strong academic program and positive academic environment. The academic program involves providing students with a rigorous curriculum that develops a strong foundation in reading, math, and study skills. In addition, a diagnostic and prescriptive intervention program that provides early, targeted intervention is used to close learning gaps. To satisfy the needs of high-achieving and gifted students, enrichment is provided through differentiation in the general education classroom; there is a concentration of reaching a deeper understanding through the enrichment of material as opposed to providing more material. Meeting the individual needs of each student, whether through intervention or enrichment, is foremost so students may reach their full potential; it is the driving force behind the teachers, administrators, and support staff.

The cultural goal of the district is to create a culture of excellence through positive connections between students, staff, and community stakeholders.

The K-5 educators and the community continuously work together to develop a comprehensive curriculum while incorporating a positive social-emotional learning program. Community engagement activities and extracurricular activities, combined with the curriculum, help students develop a strong foundation based on hard work, perseverance, and a positive attitude.

In the classroom, the administration, counselor, teachers, and intervention team work together to provide an excellent education for all students. This is accomplished through the application of common planning times which allow for grade-level meetings, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) meetings, and curricular discussions. This year, WRES implemented the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) reading and language arts curriculum which is based on the Science of Reading. The program is an immersive program that scaffolds skills and builds knowledge through rich literature that includes science and social studies as well as a variety of genres that expands students' vocabulary. It includes enrichment activities to challenge gifted students and those performing at a higher level while the Assessment and Remediation Guide provides resources to close gaps in reading skills and comprehension. Along with CKLA, the K-5 teachers are participating in dyslexia certification training to learn how to meet the needs of students in every classroom. For math, WRES has used the Everyday Math program for six years. The program combines hands-on activities with real world experiences. Students do not learn skills in isolation, instead, they build their knowledge using application-based activities. Students learn to think mathematically which develops problem-solving skills that transfer to other content areas. Both CKLA and Everyday Math prepare students for future success.

These programs help guide teachers in students' learning, but it is also the knowledge gained through the study of data that makes WRES top notch. Teachers use various forms of data in both reading, language arts, and math to improve instruction. The diagnostic assessment, Track My Progress, sets benchmarks and tracks individual and group growth to aid in the planning and delivery of instruction. Content based assessments measure the level of concept learning and formative assessments and exit tickets measure student understanding. Combined, these assessments prove to be extremely beneficial in the growth of the children.

The Child Study/IAT- MTSS process provides tiered supports and accommodations for academically or behaviorally at-risk students. While the guidance counselor, an administrator, and teachers are always on the team, other professional staff is included based on the needs of the individual student. This ensures that all students receive services in their least restrictive environment. Student intervention plans are developed so that teachers can track progress. Interventions include, but are not limited to, in-class accommodations such as preferential seating, clarification of directions, and permitting oral responses; other interventions include

Title I services and support from the Intervention Specialist.

With the named strategies, curriculums, and supports, WRES students achieve, personally and academically. These achievements are celebrated throughout the year. Hallway Heroes recognize students for acts of citizenship, through classroom currency and treasure chests, Class DOJO points, Students of the Month, and end-of-the-year awards. The PAX Curriculum, a universal and research based behavior management program, is used as a basis for the Social Emotional Support program. PAX helps students achieve positive behavior while making academic strides.

The school guidance counselor has developed a character education program that is based on the student motto: We Are Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn. Monthly themes that teach character traits center on respect, responsibility, and readiness to prepare students for success academically and socially. Friendship groups focus on a specific challenge(s) or need of a group of students. To WRES, developing leadership skills is an important part of attaining greatness. The guidance counselor also implemented a student government during the 2022-2023 school year. The student government plans service projects, acts as ambassadors to visitors and liaisons to the administration and school services, and helps plan positive behavior Interventions and support activities.

Building partnerships with the school families and community is paramount to the success at WRES. Together we have built a community that works conjointly to educate the whole child. We partner with community groups like the local churches, Ruritan, Kiwanis, youth sports centers and organizations, the library, fun centers, and outdoor centers to name a few. The Parent Teacher Organization is involved in kindergarten registration, partners with the Back to School Bash, Community Fall Festival, Trunk or Treat, District Showcase, and Blue Devil Dash 5K.

Western Reserve Elementary School strives to achieve excellence for its students by providing programs that are research-based. Leadership opportunities, a student-centered guidance program, and educators are dedicated to its mission. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare students to be respectful and responsible citizens ready to contribute positively to their communities.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Western Reserve Elementary School (WRES) strives to meet the needs of all learners across the curriculum to include reading/English language arts (ELA). Students are engaged in an appropriate grade level reading curriculum while gaining knowledge in social studies and science. To achieve a successful and positive learning outcome for all participants, learning standards are appropriately scaffolded and addressed to best meet students' needs. The objectives for the standards are identified in all lessons beginning in kindergarten and proceeding through grade five. Standards are then addressed within the lesson using meaningful and rich text while following a strict daily regimen of vocabulary, comprehension, morphology study, and writing.

The school has chosen the approach of identifying objectives and scaffolding standards based on a firm curriculum that was formed on the foundation of tremendous research and study--the science of reading. It is of utmost importance to WRES to incorporate a reading/language arts curriculum centered on evidence based practices; to achieve this goal, the comprehensive program, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), has been adopted school wide. The program provides continuity between grades while meeting the Ohio adopted standards.

ELA instruction consists of a two-hour block of time in grades kindergarten through second and a ninety minute block of time in grades three through five. In kindergarten through grade two, the block is divided into two sections, knowledge and comprehension. Knowledge consists of oral listening, to include read alouds, while the comprehension portion consists of comprehension and understanding of text with the addition of writing. Grades three through five, however, concentrate more so on tiered vocabulary and reading a variety of literature that immerses readers in rich experiences. Writing is also incorporated by applying the targeted standard(s) across the unit. Reading, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and spelling are incorporated into lessons in all grades. These concepts are explicitly taught using whole group, small group, and/or partnered activities to form a strong reading foundation while building fluent readers and writers.

The Western Reserve Local School District has a goal to show three percent growth in student achievement based on high-quality student performance data by the end of the 2022-2023 school year. To meet this goal, formative and summative assessments are administered throughout the year to provide feedback and guide educator instruction. Formative assessments are given in the form of observations, white-board responses, extension projects, exit slips, and more. Track My Progress, a diagnostic assessment, is proctored three times a year (fall, winter, spring) to identify student strengths and needs in ELA. In addition to classroom assessments and Track My Progress, the state of Ohio partnered with Cambium Assessment, Inc., this year and offered the Restart Readiness Assessment to assist in identifying student progress and provide educators with actionable performance data in ELA, science, and math.

Summative assessments, such as exams, projects, and reports are used in conjunction with the formative assessments to aid in future classroom planning and instruction to meet the needs of the students at their appropriate levels. Students identified in need of additional assistance are then provided proper remediation either in the form of small groups and/or tutoring services. The reading tutor rotates through a daily schedule assisting students with their academic classes and/or on an individual basis within her classroom.

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

The math program at Western Reserve Elementary is developmentally appropriate as it provides concrete experiences to build a strong foundation and allow the students to become proficient mathematical thinkers. The teachers work collaboratively and have high expectations that hold students accountable for learning in the classroom. For the past six years, Everyday Mathematics has been our primary resource for our math

curriculum. The district adopted Everyday Mathematics as we know our math curriculum must go above and beyond what is expected in our Ohio Common Core Standards.

Everyday Mathematics is a rigorous program that incorporates hands-on activities and real world applications. Numbers, skills and mathematical concepts are not presented in isolation, but related to situations and contexts that are relevant to everyday life. Building on an array of life experiences, students are shown how to make connections between their background knowledge and new mathematical concepts. Mastery of mathematical concepts and skills are learned with repeated exposure and practice. This allows the students to make new relationships and build on mathematical content that they have already learned while gradually learning more difficult content.

Instruction includes time for the whole group, small group, or partner lessons and activities. During the math block students are actively engaged in the use of a variety of manipulatives that assist the teacher in introducing and reinforcing math skills. Math games that go along with the lessons are also introduced and played to develop and gain mastery of math concepts. Everyday Mathematics also assists with individualized lesson ideas to help those students who may need extra instruction one-on-one or in small groups.

The school places student achievement as a high priority. We use formative assessments throughout the year to track student progress and identify students who may need remediation services. Track My Progress is given in grades one through five to track student progress. It is given in the fall, winter and spring. Teachers meet in grade bands to review student scores and plan for individualized or small group instruction based on the test results. Restart Readiness is also given in grades three through five as a second formative assessment resource. Students, identified by assessments, as needing additional support in mathematics, receive small group instruction from support tutors as well as the classroom teachers. It is our goal at Western Reserve Elementary to equip the students with the skills they need to become mathematical thinkers in the real-world. Participation in a math program that embraces high expectations and differentiation of instruction makes the goal attainable for all students.

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

The Western Reserve Elementary kindergarten through fifth grade science curriculum is an interdisciplinary, standards based program where students apply reading, language arts, social studies, and math skills using the scientific inquiry model. Through discussions or readings, students pose questions, state hypotheses based on research, develop plans to test their hypotheses, collect and evaluate data, reflect on their findings, make changes, and draw conclusions. Students work collaboratively on investigations and projects and then present their results. Lab centers are set up in the classrooms so that students have space to investigate, experiment, plan, and create. The teachers guide students' thinking through inquiry-based questions that require them to make decisions, develop a plan or formulate a conclusion. One way the lessons are differentiated is through the use of folder notes. Students complete graphic organizers and visuals that are glued onto a concept-based folder or science journal. They then use the materials throughout the unit as references and to answer questions. Hands-on activities allow students to explore and experience science. Students create simple and complex circuits using Junior Snap Circuits. They learn about an owl's diet by dissecting owl pellets; they observe metamorphosis in a butterfly chamber right in their classroom; and lastly, they understand that electricity produces light and heat as they watch it travel through a giant pickle. Out of the classroom, students experience real world science through field trips to the Cleveland Aquarium, the Planetarium at Youngstown State University, The Business Incubator in Youngstown, Ohio, OHWOW Science Center, The Green Team activities, Mill Creek Metroparks, Camp Hiram House, COSI Lunchbox Kits, On Target Outfitters, and Fun Times Fun Park, studying speed and velocity through snow tubing. Other classroom activities include planting seeds, observing states of matter through the melting of snowmen, and actively using weather instruments. Students practice the design process in cooperative teams through practical activities like designing and building mazes for their classroom pet hamster to use and creating roller coasters to further explore Newton's laws. Teachers assess students through science journals, rubrics, lab reports, scientific writing, and observation.

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

The social studies curriculum is based on the Ohio Social Studies Standards taught through the reading program. Studies Weekly and Scholastic News supplement the curriculum. Students begin learning about their community and community resources in kindergarten. Community helpers visit the classroom to talk about their careers. Students ask questions and record information about each guest. The curriculum expands as the students learn about goods and services in first grade. The first grade students visit the Youngstown Incubator where they tour a kitchen facility where seasoning mixes are made. They take an interactive tour to discover how goods and services help our community. As students move through the grade levels, the curriculum takes a deeper look at community and expands into the state, country, and nations. Students experience topics through numerous immersive activities. Second grade students create artifact boxes filled with mementos from family members. They share their treasures and write about how the past has influenced their life today. Third grade students form a local government. They elect government officials and workers as they better understand how the roles of government work together and how the decisions impact the community. Fourth graders take on the role of Native Americans and colonists through project-based learning. They gain a better understanding of how slaves felt as they traveled the Underground Railroad, and they become inventors while they create products that will make life easier. Once the product is created, they then vie for investors through the Western Reserve Shark Tank. The third through fifth grade band conducts campaigns to run for Student Government offices, to include representatives. The guidance counselor and teachers work together to learn the responsibilities of each position and the desirable traits of a leader. Candidates give speeches and answer questions from the voters. The students learn leadership skills, act as ambassadors for visitors, serve as student liaisons to the school, and plan activities and community service projects under the guidance of the staff and administration. Character education and bullying prevention is woven throughout the social studies curriculum to ensure that the students are not only academically prepared but emotionally equipped in a positive manner.

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)

Through the visual arts program, students learn elements of art composition. The art teacher supports content studies through joint projects. Units of study introduce students to artists famous for the techniques or medium about which they are learning.

Students' work decorate the halls and is shared with veterans' homes, nursing homes, and soldiers abroad. Students feel famous when they see their artwork in the school art show and featured at the local Canfield Fair. Afterschool art classes are held one day per week for four weeks at various times of the year. A community favorite of the art program is the parent and child Snack and Paint.

In performing arts, Western Reserve uses Quaver Music, a comprehensive, fully-digital interactive music curriculum based on the national music standards. Students learn all elements of music, note reading, elements of sound, early exposure to instruments, movement, and music composition. The students meet new musicians as they begin each unit. The digital component keeps the students focused as the lesson is projected on the smart board. The Quaver Five: Be Safe, Be Polite, Be Cooperative, Be Responsible, and Be Kind to create a positive learning environment for all students.

The Recorder Karate program motivates fourth grade students to practice their music so they can achieve black belt status. Fifth grade students have the opportunity to choose either band or general music during

their last year of elementary school. Music concerts for both band and general music are held during the school year to showcase the students' musical talents.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Physical and Health Education at Western Reserve Elementary is taught with the objective to create both the skills and knowledge for healthy lifestyles. Ohio Standards for Physical Education are used to guide, assess, and collect the necessary data needed to implement quality instruction. Utilizing SHAPE America's Standards for Health Education, Open PE, Spark PE and Health curriculums, we are providing our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices. With the help of community partners, we are able to incorporate different activities such as TaeKwonDo and bowling which combine fitness and character education. After-school sports and activities allow students to apply the skills and character education learned in physical education classes. The school teams with the community to offer football, basketball, and baseball. Family activities offer families the opportunity to come together for activities that focus on physical health and nutrition. The cafeteria supports the health education program through Wellness Wednesdays where each student receives a sticker for sampling a healthy, new food option. Colorful posters and banners encourage healthy choices at lunch and literature is sent home regularly to educate families of healthy meal preparation. Our focus is to create a safe environment to develop social skills, self-esteem, and motor skills. This allows students to be well-rounded healthy individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy choices for a lifetime.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

The K-5 grade students learn the design process, research methods, and inquiry in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (S.T.E.A.M.). program. Through S.T.E.A.M. activities, students learn the importance of research to inform ideas. They understand that not every question has a right answer and that determination and perseverance result in progress. Coding is introduced in kindergarten, and first grade students learn simple coding using Code and Go. They create a code that guides an electronic mouse through a maze. The mazes become more complex to challenge the students to create more complex codes. As the students move through the grade levels, they use Kodable to write code using if-then statements. Finally, students design using Inventor or Fusion 360 to produce 3D images printed on a 3D printer. Through project-based learning, the students understand how science, technology, engineering, art, and math work together to create products or systems that inform progress. Fifth grade students work in collaborative groups to research, design, and test their egg drop packages. Students are given constraints and control variables. Students learn that the design process takes time and persistence. Final reports include research to support their design, cost, and data. Other activities include the design of flight and bridge building.

The library and media services are integrated into classroom learning. Students check books out of the library weekly. Students use the library to gather information and use tools for projects and presentations.

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

Partnerships with diverse programs provide students with unique experiences that allow students to apply skills and concepts while exploring interests and developing talents. On Target Outfitters is a local organization that promotes environmental education through outdoor activities and sports while promoting positive character traits. Eighty-four students participated in the after school Taekwondo program, which emphasizes respect, discipline, and motivation. The program concluded with a ceremony where students received their yellow belts. Through a partnership with the Mahoning County Green Team, K-5 students have learned the importance of protecting the environment through classroom activities and projects. Students collected bottle tops to donate to a recycling center in exchange for a Buddy Bench, and fifth graders on the Recycling Team collect and recycle paper, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. Along with these activities, The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning Valley has motivated students to read

through classroom activities and summer reading programs. A monthly visit by the Mobile Library provides access to books for students and area residents. WRES has been planning with two new organizations that will implement programs in the fall. Junior Achievement will bring lessons in financial literacy, work, and career readiness, and entrepreneurship. The Ohio State Extension Office will offer a Healthy Families program that will provide a hands-on program to educate families on the importance of healthy meal planning and healthy lifestyles. The fourth grade Buddy program partners each fourth grade student with a kindergarten buddy. The fourth graders mentor the kindergarten students through games and activities each week.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Western Reserve tailors instruction, interventions, and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of various student populations by using differentiated instruction techniques. For instance, teachers may use a variety of materials and resources, offer flexible grouping, and adjust the pace of instruction to match the learning needs of each student.

Universal screeners are tools we use to identify students who need extra help beyond the regular curriculum to meet grade-level expectations. Teachers use various methods like visuals, videos, role play, discussion, and debate to support reading. They also use culturally and linguistically responsive practices. Progress monitoring is done regularly to assess student response to intervention and plan the next steps. These students also work with our Reading Specialist to build their reading skills.

Our K-12 Campus allows high school students to participate in our elementary students' educations. Leadership Students volunteer their time to work alongside to build skills by playing games, encouraging them to learn and share their stories of growth, to motivate our students.

Supporting Struggling Students with Organizational/Behavioral Strategies aids in assisting students that are undergoing special circumstances. At times, students may face challenges that require additional resources to overcome. We support struggling students with organizational/behavioral strategies. Our Study Contract offers a pathway for students to reach their goals, while motivational strategies provide opportunities for students to choose activities and gain rewards for their progress and success.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Beginning in kindergarten, students performing above grade level, as identified by analyzing diagnostic and performance data, are challenged through differentiated activities to challenge them through higher level depth of knowledge activities, center work, and inquiry-based activities in reading and/or math. Teachers work with groups of advanced students to extend their learning through cross-curricular application of concepts. All second and fifth grade students participate in whole group gifted testing to determine if they are gifted in language arts, math, and/or qualify as superior cognitive, and/or creative. There is also gifted testing in the visual and performing arts through The Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio. A Written Education Plan (WEP) is written for all students who meet the criteria to be identified as gifted. The WEP identifies how the student will be challenged in their identified gifted areas. Some ways students are challenged include interest based activities, inquiry, and application based projects. Students who perform beyond grade level and meet the criteria may be accelerated to the next grade level in one or more subject areas. When students are subject area accelerated the current grade level teacher works with the Gifted Coordinator to discuss instructional strategies that may be used to extend learning and encourage deeper thinking. Together the classroom teachers and Gifted Coordinator design an educational program that is challenging and developmentally appropriate for the individual student.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The Special Education Department offers a continuum of services to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of students with disabilities. Two Intervention Specialists provide services to elementary students and

serve as consultants to their General Education Colleagues. Collaborative learning, peer teaching, inquiry-based learning, and independent academic tasks are effective strategies used in small groups. Student persistence is enhanced through manageable tasks, acknowledging hard work, and encouraging motivation. The use of various teaching strategies and technologies to improve student learning outcomes are utilized daily. This approach recognizes that students have different learning styles and preferences, and aims to cater to these differences by using a combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods. Examples of multi-modality interventions that are used include the use of multimedia resources, interactive learning activities, and differentiated instruction. For example, the use of Elkonin Boxes helps build phonological awareness in elementary students, specifically students who are struggling with reading. Studies have shown that a multi-modality intervention approach can significantly improve academic achievement and engagement among students. Our Intervention Specialists value the need to provide a variety of sensory experiences that can help students regulate their emotions and behavior. Some strategies that are used to meet sensory needs, include providing sensory breaks, incorporating movement, using fidget toys, creating a calm-down corner, and using sensory tools such as weighted blankets or compression vests. We feel it is important to work with each student to develop an individualized plan that meets their unique sensory needs. As students move through the grade levels they use their accommodations to access the general curriculum. The goal of the special education program is to develop independence so that students are able to reach their full potential in their least restrictive environment.

3d. English Language Learners:

The K-5 Reading and Language program that was adopted this year provides many resources to meet the language needs of all students. There are not currently any English Language Learners (ELL) enrolled in Western Reserve Elementary School. There is a plan in place for students who speak a language other than English. All families who enroll their children complete a Home Language Survey. When the survey reveals a language other than English is spoken, the guidance counselor will work with the parents, student, and teacher to determine if a screener is necessary. Once a student is identified as ELL the guidance counselor works with the parents and teachers in collaboration with a teacher certified as a Teacher of Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to develop a service plan based on the results of the Ohio English Learning Proficiency Screener (OELPS). Goals are written in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking while supports are provided so that students can access the general curriculum. An English Language teacher provides instruction in reading, writing, listening and speaking and evaluates data to measure progress toward the goals stated in the service plan. The Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) is given once each year. The service plan is revised based on the results of the OELPA. Once a student scores proficient in all areas of the OEPLA, the student exits the English Language program but is still monitored to ensure continued success. The Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio provides services to support schools in meeting the needs of ELL students. They also keep districts up-to-date on the latest resources and legislation for ELL students and their families.

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

There has been an increase in the number of students diagnosed with anxiety, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Executive Function Disorder, Sensory Processing Disorder, and Autism Spectrum Disorder since 2019. Many of these students do not have learning disabilities, however, the diagnoses interfere with learning. The goal of Western Reserve Elementary is to equip students with tools and strategies to control and accommodate these challenges in the regular school setting. In order to create an effective learning environment, a range of sensory tools and strategies are available to students in all classrooms. These include sensory-friendly environments that provide appropriate lighting, reduced visual stimulation, and tools for sensory feedback. Some classrooms have light filters on the overhead lights to reduce the intensity of light while others use lamps or natural light. The teachers have designed their classrooms to be sensory friendly by including work areas, softer color choices, the option to use privacy shields, noise-canceling headphones, sensory tools and fidgets, and alternative seating. Visual schedules help students prepare for transitions and plan their day. Organizational tools are used such as organizational planners, color-coded notebook systems, graphic organizers, and checklists. Designated sensory walks and walls provide spaces for students to take controlled movement breaks in the hallway. Students can hop through a marked path, push on the wall hand prints, or count the sea creatures on the wall. Each classroom

has sensory bins that contain any number of fidgets like squish balls, tactile rings, and buttons that students use to reduce anxiety and help focus. Students are also taught how to use various strategies like doodling to help with focus, anxiety, and/or sensory processing issues. The Occupational Therapist and Speech Language Pathologist provide resources and current best practices to the teachers and administration so we create the best learning environment possible for all students.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Western Reserve strives to create a culture of excellence through positive connections between students, staff, and community stakeholders. These positive connections start at the front door. Students are greeted by an administrator, teacher, counselor or School Resource Officer every morning before they enter the building. The connections made during this brief encounter build strong, trusting relationships. The daily activities and learning experiences are centered around the students. Signs around the building remind students of the motto: We Are Respectful, Responsible, Ready to Learn. Western Reserve Students have ownership in their learning and the school environment. Student work decorates the hallways. Students proudly walk under Hallway Hero capes with their pictures and a blurb about an act of kindness or citizenship they demonstrated. Classroom learning is challenging through active engagement. Students experience learning through inquiry-based discussions that encourage them to think deeply and immersive learning where they are actively involved in the content.

Fifth grade students are responsible for the morning announcements every morning. The Student Recycling Team collects paper, plastic drink bottles, and aluminum cans for recycling. The Student Government is comprised of grade representatives (third through fifth) and fifth grade officers. They play an active role in school activities and collaborate with the cafeteria. Through the guidance of a teacher, counselor, and/or administrator students plan and carry out a community service project called WR Inspire. The students choose a charity and then plan a fundraiser or product drive to raise money or collect products for the charity. Friendship groups, small group lunches, and community service projects give students the opportunity to interact with a teacher, guidance counselor, social worker, or administrator which builds positive relationships throughout the school. Regular classroom guidance lessons include topics in character education, developmentally appropriate social-emotional issues, and study skills.

The foundation for career readiness begins in elementary school by developing soft skills like communication, collaboration, responsibility, and work ethic. Soft skills are embedded in classroom activities and expectations. Leadership skills are developed beginning in kindergarten with classroom presentations, setting goals, and self-evaluating. Students grow these skills in the classroom and through extra-curricular and service learning activities. Careers are part of the curriculum. Students experience various careers through field trips and guest speakers. A vehicle fair introduces kindergarten-second grade students to careers and a career passport fair provides an opportunity for 3-5 grade students to collect information on careers.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The partnership with the school families and the local communities is the key to Western Reserve Elementary School's success. The Western Reserve P.T.O. supports the faculty and students in a variety of ways. They provide holiday parties with special activities. Their auction provides a classroom ice cream party and extra recess with the principal, and funds many school activities and initiatives including purchasing safety equipment to register guests and providing funding so all students can participate in all activities. They also plan and volunteer for Special Persons Week where every student invites a special person for lunch and activities. Veterans, Senior Citizens, and First responders are invited for a turkey lunch in November courtesy of the W.R.P.T.O., Students look forward to Field Day because PTO always has new and fun activities. The P.T.O. also sponsors the Trunk or Treat and Fall Festival, and the Blue Devil Dash 5K.

The Berlin Ellsworth Ruritans support the school and families throughout the year. During the holidays they provide food baskets and gifts for needy families. They provide funding to purchase new books for the library. The local VFW Post presents a Veteran's Day assembly and reads to the elementary students. The United Way sponsors the Success by Six program, a summer program for incoming kindergarteners. The two local churches provide support for local families in times of need. They participate in the Trunk or Treat and Fall Festival. The Back To School Bash is a night where students and families come to the school to

meet their teacher and drop off supplies, and then go outside to visit over 40 representatives from local community organizations.

The school is open to the entire community during District Showcase. Community members and families see classroom activities and demonstrations from extra-curricular activities. Students showcase their learning as the lead demonstrates or leads the classroom activities. Various parent nights help showcase academic programs, support through Title I and special education. Student artwork is showcased at the local agricultural fair each fall.

Communication is an important part of any partnership. The school uses a one call phone system for text or voice calls. Email is used for general communication. The District Facebook and Instagram pages share information and highlight pictures from school activities. The district website is a one-stop shop for school and district information. The monthly community newsletter, The Western Reserve Roundup provides information about the school and the community. Class DOJO is the messaging application used between teachers and parents and the school and parents.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Western Reserve Elementary creates a positive environment by fostering a culture of collaboration and respect. This can be achieved through regular communication, opportunities for feedback and input, and recognition for success and achievement. Ultimately, creating an environment where teachers feel valued and supported requires a commitment from school leaders and the entire school community. Teachers have worked to become experts in their classrooms. They grow professionally through individual and group professional development. The staff brings their learning back to their classrooms where they try new instructional techniques and strategies. As a team we regularly share new learning and resources with each other in meetings, through emails, and in informal conversations. The philosophy is to continue learning and growing to provide excellent learning experiences for all students.

The input of teachers is crucial in selecting curricula that will benefit student learning. In choosing a K-5 math curriculum, the principal and faculty reviewed two programs and observed them in neighboring schools. The teachers gained valuable information through conversations with those classroom teachers. The principal talked with the math coach and administrator. Once the school visits were complete the group came together to share the information, listing the pros and cons. The team decided on a program and implemented it with fidelity. The teachers have also shared their learning with teachers from other districts across the state. The faculty used the same approach in adopting a reading program. A few teachers studied the Science of Reading. They connected with teachers from other schools who were using this approach to teach reading. Within a few weeks, the faculty was learning about the Science of Reading. Teachers and the principal started exploring programs and joining professional learning communities to learn as much as possible to make the best decision for our students. Together we chose The Core Knowledge Language Arts program. The implementation has been intense, but working together we are already seeing many successes in student performance. The school also partners with the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio for professional development, team building, and educational resources that support and enhance learning. The Curriculum Consultants have become part of our school family.

The teachers work hard to provide excellent learning and social opportunities to develop the whole child. We realize that we have to do the same for the faculty and staff. Monthly birthday lunches offer a time to celebrate and stay connected. During teacher appreciation week the Parent-Teacher Organization has provides special treats like a popcorn bar, massages, car washes, and buffet lunches.

4. School Leadership:

Western Reserve Elementary's leadership philosophy is based on supporting students so that they can grow academically and socially. The Principal, Guidance Counselor, and Special Education Supervisor are in the main elementary office. The elementary secretary is an integral part of the team as she is the face of the school to students, parents, and visitors. Related services, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, vision and mobility specialist, and physical therapist support students, teachers, and

administrators in Child Study and Intervention Assistance Team meetings. The teachers regularly consult with the related service specialists for tools used to address student needs in their classrooms.

The Occupational Therapist provides general strategies for classroom teachers to address challenges in executive function and focus. The School Resource Officer (SRO) is shared in the district. He develops and monitors the safety plan, assists with attendance, and conducts well-checks on families outside of school. The principal is responsible for the daily operations of the school. Some other responsibilities include instructional leader, staff evaluator, planning and organizing professional development, leading curriculum planning and implementation, monitoring student services/MTSS, communicating with the community and building community partnerships. The Special Education Director is responsible for all aspects of special education. She leads the MTSS and RTI process and oversees the special education program, conducts all special education meetings, and completes and submits all required paperwork. The Special Education Director also works closely with the school psychologist who evaluates all students as part of the identification process.

The Superintendent is the district leader. He oversees the operation of the K-12 campus, collaborates with community stakeholders, and works closely with the administrative team to provide high-quality learning experiences and a positive environment for students and staff. The K-12 campus fosters collaboration between administrators to support student learning, community engagement, and positive school culture. The team identified the need to connect parents to community resources through a parent survey and organized a Back to School Bash with over 40 community groups. Collaboration among the administrative team is vital to ensure a comprehensive learning experience for every student in a safe and secure environment. This includes analyzing data, reviewing district schools and programs, planning staffing and support staff, and working together to create a quality curriculum.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Western Reserve Elementary School is dedicated to ensuring that inclusivity is at the forefront of our student's education. To achieve this, our school offers a variety of programs that cater to the specific needs of our students. The students celebrate the diversity of their families and other cultures. Through research and interviews with family members students learn the customs and traditions, celebrations, foods, and clothing, of their heritage. The students share their family history at the annual Heritage Fair.

Through social studies programs, students learn how different populations of students live based on their locations. They also explore different cultures. Scholastic News and Studies Weekly are used to teach current events. These resources are used to introduce students to topics in today's news using language they can understand. The Parent Teacher Organization is committed to fostering a sense of community within our school. Special Persons Week invites a special person in each student's life to share lunch and activities with them. The Special Someone Dance is an event where each student invites a special adult in their lives to an evening of dancing and fun activities. We have a growing number of students who do not live with their biological parents. These are two of the many activities that bring our students, families, and staff together to celebrate our students.

Through the MTSS process, we meet the needs of students with various learning needs. Working with the families we gain an understanding of the student's background and develop an intervention plan to meet the student's academic or behavioral needs. Students are taught early on to advocate for themselves academically. They understand that all students learn differently and all students need different supports at different times. The student body ranges from students who need specially designed instruction to those who need enrichment.

The Guidance lessons are personalized to each grade level and focus on topics such as diversity and inclusion, mental health awareness, and social-emotional learning. The Guidance Counselor partners with a clinical counseling center to offer a range of services to meet a full spectrum of student needs. The Guidance Counselor works with students on school-based challenges while the clinical counselor addresses mental health needs. Both counselors share resources with teachers and staff to support the students in the school.

The W.R.E.S. faculty, administration, and staff strive to provide a culture of acceptance and tolerance where students support each other through their academic and social experiences.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Creating a culture of excellence through positive interactions between students, staff and community stakeholders is the foundation of the success at Western Reserve Elementary School (W.R.E.S.) The administration and staff work together to implement curricular and character development programs that lay a strong foundation for future success. The motto: “We Are Respectful, Responsible, and Ready” is hung on each end of the hallway so it is visible to everyone walking the halls of the school. Students develop habits of excellence as they practice being respectful, responsible, and ready in all areas of the school. Students develop these skills through their tenure at W.R.E.S. They learn that respectful and responsible behavior leads to opportunities for leadership. It may be a classroom responsibility in the early grades or serving on the student government in the upper grades. Respect, responsibility, and readiness are demonstrated in the classroom through cooperative learning activities, team projects, and assessments. Students take responsibility for their learning as they self-evaluate their understanding and advocate for support. Students further their learning at home and come back to share that knowledge with the class. They practice these skills on the playground as well when playing team games or helping each other through the activity stations.

The student-led recycling program teaches students to be stewards of the Earth. Students are recognized throughout the year for demonstrating responsibility, respectfulness, and readiness. The Hallway Heroes program displays students’ pictures on capes for responsible and respectful behavior or actions, and WR Inspire showcases students who make a difference in the lives of others or their community, various tokens recognize citizenship, hard work, perseverance, and achievement. During the end of the year, awards assembly students are recognized for various types of achievements including the Presidential Academic Excellence Awards and Presidential Awards for Citizenship.

Developing the skills that lead to excellence takes a collaborative effort between the school, home, and community. Parents/caregivers learn the motto “Respect, Responsible, and Ready” beginning at kindergarten orientation. The school families and community groups partner with the school to instill these tenets into all areas of the student’s lives. The school hosts family and community events that include churches, 4H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and sports organizations. Through their activities students practice respect, responsibility, and readiness. The teachers, administration, and staff work together to model the skills we want to instill in our students. We are committed to lay a foundation that will prepare our students to achieve excellence.