

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Fran Balthis

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

Official School Name J.W. Adams Combined School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10824 Orby Cantrell Highway PO Box 767

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

City Pound State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 24279-0767

County Wise County

Telephone (276) 796-5419

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Web site/URL https://www.wisek12.org/o/jwacs

E-mail fbalthis@wisek12.org
mike.goforth@wisek12.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* Dr. Mike Goforth E-mail mike.goforth@wisek12.org

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

District Name Wise County Public Schools Tel. (276) 328-8017

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. Larry Greear

(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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
3 Middle/Junior high schools
3 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 11 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	40
K	55
1	52
2	38
3	48
4	43
5	48
6	43
7	61
8	61
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	489

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 0 % 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: 13%

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	17
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	43
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	60
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	474
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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: 49 %

Total number students who qualify: 239

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 20 %
Total number of students served 96

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>21</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>4</u> Developmental Delay	<u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>57</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>10</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>3</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 0

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 1

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	31
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
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 16:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	95%	97%	95%	94%	94%
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.

The mission of J. W. Adams Combined School is to establish a strong foundation for lifelong learning, to nurture, guide, and challenge all students to perform to their maximum potential in an ever-changing technological society.

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

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/873430/JBA_Section_504_Nondiscrimination_Policy_and_Complaint_Procedures.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

J. W. Adams School (J. W. Adams) moved into its current building in 1977 as a Kindergarten through sixth grade school to replace Pound Primary. The Pre-K curriculum was incorporated in the early 1990s. Significant renovations and additions were completed in 2001 as seventh and eighth grade students were added to the student population. The school name officially changed from J. W. Adams School to J. W. Adams Combined School. The school currently serves students Pre-k through eighth grade.

This public school is located in Pound, VA, which is in a distant rural setting in the heart of the beautiful Appalachian Mountains in far Southwest Virginia. Pound has approximately 975 residents. The population in the community is made up of 99.67 % White and 0.412% African-American. This is an increase of 10.7% population in the last year but unfortunately the median income fell from \$34,224 to \$22,237, which is a decrease of 35%. The coal industry has always been the lifeblood of the community but the steady loss in the demand of coal production in the area has led to an increase in the poverty level for most of our students. As a result, J. W. Adams qualifies as a Community Eligible Provision(CEP) school. As a CEP school, all students eat school breakfast and lunch at no cost.

While the national average of students identified with a disability is 15%, J. W. Adams consists of a unique student body that is comprised of 20.6%. Despite our low socioeconomic status and disproportionately high number of students receiving special education services, we take pride in the fact that all of our students are held to a high level of academic standards and high expectations. It is not surprising that the students' response to this rigorous expectation has been an increased level of student success and achievement. The students are supported by dedicated educators who always put the needs of their students first. Because we are such a small community, our teachers and students interact with each other outside of the school setting and are able to build and maintain meaningful relationships. We pride ourselves on knowing each of our students and believe because we focus on these relationships, our students will achieve at the highest levels.

We love that our students are not products of their environment. Against the odds, they choose to rise to a higher level of expectation and defy the stereotype of our Appalachian region. As a whole faculty, we make sure our students know how valuable their education is to them and that their self-worth is not tied to outside factors they have little or no control over. By setting the bar high for our students, we hope they will also set high expectations for themselves.

We encourage ownership in student learning and celebrate their successes. Our students participate in an annual awards banquet that showcases their hard work and achievement. Students, parents, and community members enjoy a meal and the presentation of plaques for academic excellence. Traditionally, students who make principal's honor roll every nine-weeks receive an additional medal recognizing this accomplishment. We also have a citizenship award that is bestowed to an eighth grade student who exemplifies qualities of good character, positive attitude, and civic responsibility.

We have devoted teachers who work hard and provide students with everything needed to achieve academic success as well as become lifelong learners who are productive and responsible. Our curriculum is state aligned with a focus on planned experiences that translates to students practicing and applying the problem solving techniques in real life. The classrooms are technology driven and our teachers carefully select instructional strategies that are diversified to meet the needs of all students. When passing through the halls, it is not uncommon to see our teachers applying various learning modalities in their classrooms. The instruction is focused on the learner, and the students are active participants as they are the core of what drives our instruction in order to help us make better academic decisions. These dedicated educators create classrooms that are safe and conducive to student learning. There is truly no place like J. W. Adams!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At J.W. Adams, the teachers ensure that the reading/language arts block covers the core literacy components. In grades PK-3, the focus is on the process of reading, such as explicit phonics instruction, decoding using spelling features, and increasing reading fluency while also adding high frequency words to their growing vocabulary. This exciting time for our young readers offers them the opportunity to grow as readers with the use of whole group and small group instruction. The small instructional groups allow the teachers time to explicitly model the reading and writing process and track their individual progress using decodables and leveled readers from their classroom libraries. At the same time, other students are practicing skills with reading partners, working on spelling and vocabulary with engaging activities, and using electronic applications to reinforce and practice reading skills.

As students move into grades 4-8 and have developed their reading skills, the focus shifts to more comprehension and vocabulary building activities. Our educators continue to teach all of the literacy and writing components, but they also look for opportunities for students to apply their reading and writing skills in unique ways. For instance, in fourth grade, throughout the year the students take on the role of a detective. The students read through all of the evidence and take detailed notes along the way in order to crack the case and solve a mystery! They work in collaborative groups to put their reading and writing skills to good use while trying to solve the case and figure out who did it. In eighth grade, the students read works from various genres and enjoy learning about story elements and figurative language. They then get the chance to apply what they learn in small groups as they solve riddles and puzzles and retrieve codes in an interactive escape room using their computers. This immersive experience makes them eagerly want to continue reading and “escape.” In both examples, the students are physically engaged in the learning process.

The reading/language arts teachers use a variety of formative assessments to gauge student understanding. With the use of technology and dry-erase boards, teachers can quickly check for understanding. Summative assessments, such as comprehension, vocabulary, and spelling tests, are used by teachers weekly to assess progress. Quarterly benchmarks and growth assessments are used not only as a teaching tool but also as a way to track students’ progress. The Virginia Standards of Learning assessments administered in the spring also provide detailed information about the students’ level of knowledge. The engaging and interactive lessons and activities used by our teachers, as well as the continual efforts to track student progress and differentiate materials has led to the reading success of our students and has helped them grow as readers and writers.

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

Mathematics instruction at J.W. Adams is grounded in the area of practical, problem-solving applications. The students learn computation and estimation skills, as well as number sense, geometry, measurement, algebraic thinking, including patterns and functions, and probability and statistics. The teachers take on the role of a facilitator to help students become independent problem-solvers. Students are presented the material in ways that not only challenge their thinking but also helps them see how the math they are learning is used in practical, real-life applications. It is important for students to see how the connection between what they are learning in class translates to the real world.

It is common practice for the math teachers to begin each class with a spiral review. This quick review is not only used as a formative assessment for teachers but also keeps the cumulative skills fresh in the students’ minds, rather than learning a concept in isolation. Many of the math concepts build upon each other and are used together in problem-solving situations. Students might be asked to solve a complex multistep problem in a small group that would require multiple operations.

Whole group instruction allows the teacher to model the math concepts and the students take notes and

practice with the teacher before working independently. This also gives the teacher time to introduce or reinforce math vocabulary. It is important for the students to have a good understanding of math terms when introducing a concept. They also incorporate math videos to help introduce the new material and engage the students. The math teachers try to present the material using different modalities. When applicable they incorporate visual learning to help the students understand the concept. For example, using manipulatives and pictures affords them the opportunity to see the visual representation in order to establish a better understanding.

Some teachers use electronic forms and computer applications as a way for students to submit their responses on assessments. This gives the students and the teachers immediate feedback on their work. In the math classes, the teachers are able to incorporate math games quite often into their lessons. Team games take traditional board game concepts and incorporate math skills. For example, the students enjoy practicing math skills with tic tac toe, puzzles, and scooting to a peer's chair to check their calculations. Using dry-erase boards during games helps the teachers quickly check for understanding. Some of the teachers use interactive songs and dances to reinforce certain math skills. However, one of the best instructional strategies used is creating word problems that are practical to everyday life. The problems are not only solved by the students but also student generated. The students use drawings and sketches to divide the problem into more manageable steps, and then practice the problem solving skills using multiple strategies.

In addition to teacher made summative assessments, the students also take quarterly benchmarks and growth assessments to monitor their progress. In the spring the students take the mathematics Standards of Learning assessment that provides them with detailed information about the math concepts they have learned. The success of our students in the area of math can be attributed to the real-world applications as well as the critical thinking skills that are reinforced by our math teachers at J.W. Adams.

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

In recent years, the science standards have been placing a greater emphasis on engineering practices and technologies. Our science classes create lessons and activities that help students apply scientific principles, such as investigation, observation, and experimentation. At each grade level, students utilize the scientific method. Students learn about new concepts through reading, writing, and note-taking. The teacher demonstrates new concepts with the use of interactive technology as well as hands-on application. They also experience science in real life by participating in field trips. The younger students embark on nature expeditions in the school's backyard. They explore and take careful field notes and observations. The seventh and eighth grade students who are taking life science and physical science are in a science classroom that offers a science laboratory environment that has up to date science equipment for experiments. One particular activity the students enjoy is the frog dissection that is completed in small groups. Another activity that incorporates the use of engineering principles with science and math is when the eighth grade students develop a model playground. This activity demonstrates the students' in-depth understanding of how simple machines work. STEM activities also carry over to areas outside the classroom, such as the library where students use a maker's space to tinker, construct, and experiment with materials.

Teachers use formative assessments, such as discussion and demonstration to check for quick understanding. They create summative evaluations to monitor student progress in addition to the quarterly benchmark assessments. Educators in third grade collect samples of students' work as a balanced assessment to ensure exposure to standards at all grade levels. Students in grades five and eight are assessed with the Virginia Standards of Learning science test to gauge proficiency.

The STEM activities created and facilitated by the teachers create learning experiences that help prepare the students for life outside the classroom. The hands-on, problem-based learning experiences that J.W. Adams' students experience help them use critical thinking skills and practice problem solving skills. Thinking outside the box encourages and fosters their creativity through learning and exploration.

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

The history/social studies curriculum at J. W. Adams provides an opportunity for students to obtain a bigger picture of the importance of history, geography, civics, and economics from the development of American ideas to present day. Having a better understanding of these concepts will empower students to use their work, ideas, and voices to become active, responsible citizens in society. The educators at J. W. Adams foster the importance of not only significant dates in American history, but the ideology behind the movements and major issues that have impacted the past and present. The teachers integrate reading and writing as much as possible into all of the history classes by directing students to respond through discussion and writing. Students examine historical documents and analyze these pieces through written expression.

Our school is very fortunate to be located near a local museum that specializes in bringing our curriculum standards to life by presenting history concepts in multiple modalities. Through exploration the students are able to connect the content through completion of creative art projects such as drums, stained glass projects, and other historical artifacts. The replicas of the ancient artifacts help the students picture past life in Rome and Mali and gain a better understanding of their cultures. Our school is home to a performing arts theater and our students are given exposure to many cultural events and live performances. The theater is open to the community and some of the live performances held at the theater last year were *Frosty*, *My Imaginary Pirate*, *Mummenschanz*, and *Peter Pan*. Without this theater our students would have very limited access to these educational experiences.

As with all classes, teachers use formative assessments, such as discussion and demonstration to check for quick understanding. They create summative evaluations to monitor student progress in addition to the quarterly benchmark assessments. Educators in third, fifth, and sixth grade collect samples of students' work as a balanced assessment to ensure exposure to standards at all grade levels. Students in fourth and seventh grades are assessed with the Virginia Standards of Learning Virginia Studies and Civics test, respectively, to gauge proficiency. In the 8th grade, students are assessed by responding to a written prompt and composing a five-paragraph essay. On these essays, students are graded by the historical content they include as supporting evidence.

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

Seventh and eighth grade students at J.W. Adams are given the opportunity to enroll in courses that will not only let them earn high school credits but will also better prepare them for future endeavors. For instance, students who perform well in sixth grade math are given the opportunity to take pre-algebra in seventh grade and Algebra I in eighth grade. Students can also take a technology course, Spanish, or consumer science. The technology course teaches the students computer application skills that are helpful for any vocational/college track with an emphasis on coding.

Guidance counselors begin as early as fourth grade preparing students for career readiness by conducting career exploration activities. The students participate in a career inventory that displays different career clusters that pertain to their interests. For grade 6 through 8 students, a computer program is used to administer a personality and learning styles assessment. The students get to practice skills such as public speaking, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. We have teachers facilitate a lot of class discussions on future career choices and have the students research their career choices and present the information to the group. Guidance counselors work to connect students with people in their field of choice. Recently, our counselors were able to set up an interactive meet with an astronaut over the computer. Students were very excited to ask the astronaut questions and were able to interact with someone in a profession they most likely would never encounter in their everyday lives. Older students connected with a scientist who developed a rocket. After reading a book, students watched a movie about the man's life and were given the chance to correspond with him. In the eighth grade students get the chance to visit the district's career-technical school. This allows them to explore different areas that could potentially spark an interest. This could provide them with opportunities to enter the workforce upon their high school graduation. At this level, the importance is placed on exploring career choices early rather than waiting until students are approaching high school to start developing future plans.

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

The pre-kindergarten (pre-k) program at J.W. Adams enrolls three- and four-year-old students to prepare them for kindergarten. The pre-k program teaches students phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and number sense to ensure success when they transition to the kindergarten curriculum. In pre-k our teachers also make it a priority to create meaningful and engaging exchanges with our students that promote higher level thinking. The teachers receive training on how to increase the interactions and activities and are monitored and given feedback multiple times a year. The focus is on concept development, language modeling, and quality of feedback. This has been helpful in promoting academic learning and social engagement with the students. The teachers are more aware of the students' needs and provide different instructional formats, increasing their vocabulary and reasoning skills. Pre-k not only gives students a head start academically, but it also provides them with background knowledge that they may be lacking. The program equips students with the skillset to safely move independently around the school, communicate their needs, and increase their autonomy. Students are assessed throughout the year to monitor their progress and growth. The pre-k teachers use the assessment data to plan instruction and meet the diverse needs of their students.

The pre-k program at J.W. Adams opens doors for students beyond the classroom experience. Other students who are not enrolled in the program may not get the exposure to the enrichment experiences that our pre-k students receive. Some of these include the performing arts theater, the opportunity to participate in our own arts programs, and local field trips. These excursions include activities, such as visiting a grocery store, hardware store, pumpkin patch, veterinarian's office, post office, and library, as well as many other opportunities. Teachers also bring in community leaders and resources to further enhance their life experiences and promote academic growth. It is amazing to see how much our youngest students blossom throughout their pre-k experience at J. W. Adams.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

J.W. Adams has an art class for all students in grades prek-7. The art teacher has a wonderful way of nurturing the students and letting them express themselves in their own individual way. Students are given the opportunity to create original pieces of artwork using different mediums and materials. Creativity is not stifled in art class but encouraged and celebrated. The students' pieces are displayed and have even been used as decorations for several events throughout the year at the school. Both students and parents enjoy seeing their work showcased throughout the building.

J. W. Adams takes advantage of having a modern performing arts center on campus. We are able to attend many cultural events and give students exposure to the arts. We also offer a drama program that has two performances a year for the students. For the winter show, all students were given the opportunity to participate in "Rockin' Through the Decades." The students enjoy participating as performers in the school wide variety show. Through this avenue, students immerse themselves in the experiential learning of all aspects of a production.

At J. W. Adams we believe the arts are vital for our students. It encourages self-expression, provides an outlet for creativity, and reduces stress and anxiety. Through the arts, students can develop crucial social-emotional and interpersonal skills.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

At J. W. Adams physical education classes keep the students engaged in organized sports. Students learn nontraditional sports beyond kickball, basketball, and softball. For the middle school students, the county rotates gym equipment to provide an assortment of options. The mobile gym equipment provides access to equipment for track and field, lacrosse, disc golf, gymnastics, and croquet. J. W. Adams' large campus offers an on-site track as well as baseball and softball fields. Having the track enables students to participate in health and exercise programs such as morning mile.

A district nurse visits the school to teach the students about issues that impact their health and safety. Because of all the physical, emotional, and social changes taking place, the nurse teaches strategies that will result in healthy choices. The county also has someone visit the schools to speak with the students about good nutrition. She models by preparing healthy foods for them to try. A youth development program in the local area visits the schools in grades 4-8. These agents teach healthy habits by promoting physical activity, food safety, and how environmental factors impact our daily living. Students really enjoy attending summer camps where they gain meaningful life experiences.

The county also oversees a middle school sports program. This encourages all student to become involved with organized athletics. Students must be cleared with a VHSL physical, and coaches are trained in first aid, CPR, and AED. Approximately 25% of our middle school students participate in the program.

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

At J. W. Adams, Spanish is offered to students in grades seven and eight. In grade 7, students can elect to take a resource course that is an introduction to Spanish. The instructor immerses the students in the culture by preparing food, dress, and everyday conversation. They also develop in-depth knowledge about Spanish literature and language proficiency. In grade 8 students can elect to take Spanish I, which is a high school credit bearing class.

Students are invited to join a Spanish club which allows them to participate in enhanced cultural events. One of the most engaging activities the students enjoy is visiting other countries virtually with an Oculus. This provides the opportunity for the students to experience culturally diverse holidays and celebrations while taking in the geography as if they were there.

Here at J. W. Adams, we believe that learning a second language is extremely important for our students. We encourage participation as it increases their awareness of other cultures in addition to giving them an academic advantage. This cultural exposure creates more rounded individuals with an awareness of a world beyond our county.

2d. Technology/library/media

Technology has been an essential component of the school curriculum. Every classroom has enough devices for every student and is equipped with an interactive white board or smart television. This enables the teachers to use a wide variety of resources from the Internet as well as educational applications. This increased technology has been a huge asset during times of virtual instruction. Virtual classrooms were originally created during the pandemic so students could have online access to the curriculum. However, virtual classrooms are now used on days when school is cancelled due to inclement weather. During virtual instruction, the teachers have a set schedule that provides live meetings with their students which are recorded and uploaded to provide asynchronous learning. Internet hot spots are provided to students without Internet access.

In our technology and library classes, our teachers have implemented a robotics class during career exploration and investigation courses. Students work in groups to develop teamwork and leadership skills. They improve comprehension skills by constructing various picture-instructed fabrications, and computer science skills programming robots to carry out specific tasks. The students also use another program that focuses on basics of computer programming and computer science concepts.

Even though we live in a rural area with limited Internet access for many of our students, we have found creative ways to use the most-up-to date technology. Our district provides technology and instructional coaches who meet with teachers and students daily. Our goal is to empower our students in this technology driven world.

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

Here at J. W. Adams, we have partnered with a well-known company and are a CodeVa school. With the implementation of the computer science standards, we wanted to ensure our students had maximum exposure to this childhood-to-career computer science initiative. This collaboration was a result of our identification as a Title I school and our students' socioeconomic status. We along with another school in our district, have been active participants in order to make sure our students are code ready.

CodeVa has a focus on engineering practices and skills that will be beneficial to students later in life, as the demand continues to grow for coding and computer science experts. We have a lead teacher for our impact team who tracks the goals we set and makes sure we are navigating through the stages of implementing computer science standards at our school. The team leader provides professional development and training for our staff as she ignites an excitement for the field.

Being a CodeVa school has provided an opportunity for our staff and students that otherwise would not have been available. It has helped our faculty and staff realize the core components are things we already do daily as we now shift our vocabulary to align with the standards. We strive to ensure that the computer science standards cross all curriculum areas beyond math and science as we teach our students problem solving skills from design to development and then application.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Making sure students' progress is monitored and tracked is a critical piece of J.W. Adams' success. Instruction is tailored to meet the needs of the students. This is why our teachers use small groups in addition to whole group instruction. The small group instruction provides the teachers the opportunity to closely target the skill the student struggles with and differentiate the instruction as needed. For instance, in the primary grade levels, teachers meet with the students during small groups to track their individual progress and reading levels. They are able to adjust the reading material and instruction as needed. Remediation is the key! Students who are still under performing are remediated daily. Teachers use formative and summative assessments to target skills the students need help with, and they do not wait to remediate. Remediation is ongoing for all students.

The explicit phonics instruction has been a huge help to our students who are reading below grade level. The literacy coach at J.W. Adams works with the teachers to help them plan their lessons and demonstrates how to teach the phonics skills using explicit instruction. The students have responded well to the instructional strategies that have helped them learn how to decode words more efficiently. In addition to the explicit phonics instruction, the students also use a computer program that tracks their reading growth. The students read passages based on their reading levels, it provides them with instruction based on their needs, and also tracks their growth. Title I teachers work with students in small groups who are reading below grade level and focus on phonics instruction.

With every subject area, not just reading, teachers at J.W. Adams are consistently monitoring their students, tracking their progress, and remediating during and after school throughout the year. We love that our teachers remediate often to ensure students do not fall behind. Our after school remediation program is offered the entire year, and teachers invite students to stay as needed. We have high expectations of every student and do whatever is needed to make certain they achieve at the highest level.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

At J.W. Adams students performing above grade level are challenged in different outlets. We offer a gifted and talented program for students who are high performing and demonstrate a talent or area that exceeds the benchmark as compared to their same age peers. Students participating in the gifted and talented group join in after-school enrichment activities and field trips, such as visiting places that offer STEAM activities. One particular trip that allows students to be active participants in a simulated space mission and explore outer space is at the Challenger Learning Center in Hazard, Kentucky. They also travel to various museums and historical sites.

Beginning in sixth grade, students who are performing above grade level can be given the opportunity to be a part of a national honor society. This civic organization challenges students to not only perform at academically high standards but also teaches them what it means to demonstrate good civic qualities in society. They are active in the community by volunteering at local events. They are instrumental to J. W. Adams as an outreach program. High performing students are also awarded annually at the school's award ceremony. Their performance and achievements are recognized publicly. Beyond this honor or achievement recognition, students who are performing above grade level are challenged in the classroom as well.

Teachers adjust the instruction to meet the students' needs. This might mean that students are reading passages based on their reading levels, they might be given a different writing prompt that causes the students to expand their thought process, or they might be given more challenging math problems. Teachers at J.W. Adams understand that a student performing above grade level does not need a larger quantity of work, but they need more challenging tasks.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The focus with this group begins when students are identified as having a disability and referred to the child study team. This gives teachers the opportunity to try interventions, such as small group and individual instruction as well as specific classroom accommodations to see if a significant difference occurs in the students' academic performance. If interventions are unsuccessful after a period of time, the student may be referred for an eligibility evaluation. When a student is found to have a disability, an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed, which includes accommodations or modifications that help students successfully navigate the curriculum.

We work to close any achievement gaps for this student group by tracking these students weekly. Administrators meet with our special education teachers and staff often and monitor each student's progress. Each child has unique needs that we share with each other during these meetings and act as a team to make sure the student has the supports necessary to be successful. In our collaborative classrooms, special education teachers and mainstream classroom teachers work seamlessly together to service all students that are in the classroom. Our inclusive practices have ensured we have all taken ownership and embrace the ideology that all students are "our" students.

J. W. Adams believes all students, but especially our students with disabilities, will rise to the level of expectation set for them by our staff. Many of our students identified with a disability perform as well as or better than the regular education student group because we put into place the supports needed to help ensure academic success.

3d. English Language Learners:

Currently at J. W. Adams we do not have any students identified as English Language Learners (ELL). We do have practices in place for students who may register and present as a potential ELL student. As a district, we have a teacher who also acts as the liaison for the families when enrolling. He assists the guardians in completing the registration process and a home language survey. An approved screening assessment is administered to determine the student's English fluency and literacy levels. If a student qualifies for EL services, the EL teacher will send notification to the parent that the student has been identified for the program. The letter will be provided in the guardian's native language or a language they understand.

The EL teachers assist the general education teachers in making modifications to all academic content areas assignments by providing graphic support, visual aids, and interpretation. Multiple meetings with the parents and the Family Engagement Coordinator help bridge the communication between home and school. The EL teachers also offer vocabulary building ideas. It is important to recognize EL students' background knowledge may be different from our American culture and specifically our Appalachian culture. Support could include videos, group collaboration, and discussion based on their proficiency level.

As noted earlier, J. W. Adams does not currently have any students enrolled who are identified as an English Language Learner. However, proper supports are essential to minimizing the impacts of a language barrier on a student's success. Our program not only focuses on academic success but the students' emotional and social well-being as well.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Students are welcomed each morning as they walk through the doors at J.W. Adams. Each morning, our teachers and administrators greet the students by name and with a friendly smile. Fridays are a favorite because we play music outside as students arrive. Our energetic teachers are dancing as they welcome students who are walking up the sidewalk. J.W. Adams has always tried to help each student start the day on a positive note.

Because we want the students to feel safe, loved, and valued, we have placed an emphasis on attendance. As a school, we have tried to use positive incentives to encourage our students rather than focusing on punitive measures. When students are absent, they are told they were missed. When the atmosphere is positive and energetic, the students will want to come to school. As a school, we randomly take around a prize wagon, but the prizes are not the students' favorite part. They are so excited to see and hear the wagon roll down the hallway with a trail of balloons, lights, and music. The teachers have created their own attendance incentives as well. Some have used punch cards for a class reward or spelled out the word attendance to have a doughnut party.

Administration takes pride in the positive referrals we have in place for our students. Teachers are encouraged to send a positive note to the office when they witness a student doing something above and beyond. This could be picking up trash, being a good friend, making a good grade, or any act that needs to be celebrated. Administration celebrates the child's act and calls home to share the good news. The administration lets parents know how much we appreciate their child's part in making J. W. Adams such a wonderful place.

In engaging students, we focus on creating a thriving environment for our students. The classrooms are student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The arrangement of the classrooms demonstrates the collaborative atmosphere. Lessons are structured so that students are constantly moving and working together. It is exciting to walk through the classrooms and see the students up, moving and excited about learning. Outside of the classroom, our students are also engaged and happy. Even in the lunch room you will see students up and dancing on stage after they finish their lunch. When students are engaged, they not only feel excited about coming to school, but they feel valued and a part of our school family.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our students succeed because of the amazing families in our community. Even though J.W. Adams is situated in a small, rural area, we definitely do not fall short of family and community support. That is another reason this school is unique and special. At J.W. Adams we have events throughout the year that open our doors to family and friends. These events are centered on academics, but they also create fun activities for our students and families. One example is our family literacy night. This is a large event. More than half of our student population attended this event and over 450 parents/grandparents attended. The theme this year was "Hocus Pocus. Learning is our Focus". It was hosted outside in the evening time. Our students played black light sight word bingo on a school bus, adopted a stuffed animal and wrote about it, participated in a live production, had pictures made with friends and family, and participated in many other games and activities. However, none of this would have been possible without the support of our local businesses and community members. They each set up tables with candy, prizes, and games while generously donating all the food that was prepared for the students.

Other events that involved the community are our grandparents' night, "For the Love of Books" literacy night, "Stuff Your Stockings," "Toddler Story Time," and an open house for parents. J.W. Adams even participated in the homecoming parade this fall. Faculty members designed and decorated a parade float that was interactive and included some of our students walking behind the float, giving out candy. These events would not be possible without the help of our family engagement coordinator. The family engagement coordinator looks for ways to connect our students, families, and community in meaningful ways. The

family engagement coordinator has a parent resource room that offers resources that parents can check out and use to help work with their children at home. The more support students have, the more likely they are to be successful. Our family engagement coordinator oversees the social media for the school. Almost daily, numerous pictures are posted so our parents and our community can see the great things happening at J. W. Adams.

To maximize learning, the staff tries to make sure the students' basic needs are met. We partner with local churches and businesses to provide a weekend backpack of food to needy students. The community is involved in the Christmas Angel program which adopts approximately 125 children for Christmas. A local civic club provides vision and hearing screenings and contributes financially to families who need assistance. The generosity of our close-knit community has truly lent new meaning to the phrase, "it takes a village."

Because we know it takes a village for our school to be successful, we are dependent upon our families and our community for their support and engagement. We embrace this notion and invite anyone to come and visit our school. Visitors feel wanted, welcomed, and valued from the moment they enter our doors.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

It is important to create an environment where teachers feel valued and appreciated. The climate at J.W. Adams is more of a family atmosphere where teachers feel they are prized members of the school. Our teachers are recognized for their efforts. We believe people feel valued when they are seen as contributing members. The administrators make an effort to give autonomy to our teachers and provide opportunities for them to have leadership positions where they can share what works for them or ways to improve. At J.W. Adams, we do not have a static atmosphere. We are constantly looking for ways to grow and improve. Teachers are encouraged to lead professional development for the school. For instance, two of our teachers provided professional development for our teachers on implementing computer science standards in every subject area in the classroom. The literacy coach trains teachers on explicit phonics instruction, models the process, and teaches alongside them to help them be successful. The literacy coach also helps the teachers implement small groups in their reading blocks. Two book studies are conducted every year. Teachers are given chapters to present and discuss. It is amazing to watch not only the ownership they take when teaching their assigned chapters, but also how excited they get when presenting their part. As administrators it is exciting to witness their enthusiasm for learning regardless of their audience.

Another effective form of professional development for teachers is observing and learning from each other. The teachers adopted a growth mindset and are always continually looking for ways to improve their craft. If a teacher wants to observe another teacher trying something new, they are encouraged to do so. Teachers from other schools and school divisions come to observe our teachers and meet with them on a regular basis. We host division superintendents, principals, and teachers. Our staff at J.W. Adams are always willing to be observed and share the practices that have proven to be successful.

In order to show our appreciation to our teachers, J.W. Adams created a "Sunshine Committee" to help spread joy around the school. We celebrate teachers each month with goodies that bring smiles to their faces. The committee sponsors events such as family staff parties filled with games, food, and exciting team building activities. Because there is such an atmosphere of family, the turnover rate at J.W. Adams is very small. Overall, teachers at J.W. Adams feel valued, appreciated, and love their jobs.

4. School Leadership:

Historically, J.W. Adams has a reputation of working toward the greater good of the school, this includes what is best for all stakeholders. This attitude and focus are partly because of the leadership style of the administration. As administrators, our leadership style would be described as a servant style of leadership. With this mindset, it is important for the administrators to make decisions that are best for the entire school as we work with our faculty and staff to achieve our goals. At J.W. Adams, administrators do not dictate the decisions made, but work together as a team to decide what is best. Many times, this means putting teachers and staff in leadership positions. When someone is recognized for their talents or has a great idea, they are

given the opportunity to not only share their ideas but also lead the school with their expertise. J.W. Adams is not run by a select few. It is a joint effort by a community of educators and staff.

An important part of the servant leadership style is giving teachers a voice, encouraging them to address their concerns and keeping an open dialogue. The administrators at J.W. Adams make it a priority to hold grade level meetings at least once a month to not only discuss issues as a group but also take the time to listen to teachers and give them a chance to discuss issues or areas that might need enhancement. There are always areas that could be improved. There would be no growth if there was not an attitude for change. Since the field of education and children themselves are constantly changing, it is imperative as educators that we adapt our instruction and our focus to meet the needs of our students. Having a servant's style of leadership supports this idea.

Another aspect of a servant leadership style is leading by example with integrity and authenticity. The administrators at J.W. Adams understand how important it is to not only lead by example but also lead alongside their faculty and staff with a genuine motive. It is understood that the school is a joint effort. It is not uncommon to see administrators helping out in all areas of the school whether it is bagging ice cream orders, tutoring students, or answering the phone. This is true for all faculty and staff at J. W. Adams, no one works alone. When the goal is to do whatever is necessary for the best interest of the students, the focus will begin to shift. At this school, people work with students during their free time, help students before and after school, communicate and attend events outside of school to foster relationships. The focus will always be on the student and putting students first, and that is truly what makes our school stand out from many others.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Ensuring respect for all students is a priority at J.W. Adams. Inside and outside the classroom, the school looks for opportunities to teach students about equity and cultural awareness. This is done not only with modeling of appropriate, respectful behavior, but also through intentional lessons, activities, and discussions. The teachers incorporate this into their lessons and conversations with students. The guidance counselors at J.W. Adams visit grades 4-8 and teach inclusive lessons that demonstrate how to interact with others regardless of our individual differences.

At J.W. Adams multiple strategies help to create the success of the school. However, out of all of them, the one reoccurring area that the teachers emphasize as being the most instrumental to the school's success is the relationship building. No matter what type of curriculum is adopted, the types of classes offered, or the classroom resources provided, if the student does not feel valued, they will not work to reach their full potential. At J.W. Adams, the teachers go above and beyond to know their students. Because they know their strengths and their needs, in turn, they know how they learn best. Over the years, J.W. Adams has been known for its family atmosphere. The focus has always been on relationship building by understanding where our students come from and their life experiences.

The majority of students at J.W. Adams are considered economically disadvantaged. This could potentially handicap our students because so many have limited access to resources and opportunities. Many of our students come to school lacking the background knowledge that other same age peers have. Additionally, a large portion of our students come from nontraditional homes. We have students who are being raised by grandparents, great grandparents, or extended family. A small percentage of our students are in the foster care system as well. We stand in the gap for these students. Here at J.W. Adams we have always worked hard to level the playing field for all of our students. The teachers, staff, and administration pay close attention to the students' needs and make sure that our students are equipped with the resources they need to be successful. The resources include items such as supplies, clothing, food, or something as simple as just extra time and support. Regardless of the diverse needs, we set the bar high, and our students continue to excel and surpass all expectations.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Although there are multiple factors that make schools exceptional models, the one most important factor for J. W. Adams would be our focus on relationship building. By concentrating on this one aspect, we create some other key components that are necessary for a school to be high performing such as team morale, comradery, and a shared sense of responsibility among all. These relationships have established our school to be safe, warm, welcoming, and respectful to all. Relationship building has led to our core values and established the model by which we maximize instruction.

J. W. Adams Combined School is considered to be more of a family than a system of learning. Because we have developed our communication skills, we have been able to collaborate effectively, and, as a result, teamwork is now evident in our school among administration, teachers, students, parents, and community members. We have built relationships on trust, creating a climate focused on what really matters: the success of each student in our school. Everyone who comes into contact with a student is involved in the student's learning process and focused on ensuring their success. We take pride in the fact that we know all of our students by name and address them at some point throughout the day. Every student at J.W. Adams is seen, heard, respected, and loved. For many of our students, it may be the only time they are acknowledged or made to feel wanted and needed that day. We apply this same principle to our teachers. We do walkthroughs daily throughout the classrooms building trust and rapport with each trip. Communication is of high quality as we work diligently to maintain these relationships and collaborate for student achievement.

We believe the most important factor for our success is the fact that we have built solid relationships between teachers and students. When teachers and students share these strong relationships we see a dramatic increase in students' level of motivation and engagement. This in turn promotes learning as students are academically engaged, have positive behavior and attitude, and develop stronger social skills with the people around them. We work hard to give our students a greater sense of belonging as well as a connection to the school and their teachers. We love that our students are ours and we are theirs. We work to make them feel valued as we push them to perform at the highest level, defying limitations and surpassing all expectations.