

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

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

School Mailing Address 3700 Wood Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Wheeling State WV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 26003-4399

County Ohio

Telephone (304) 243-0372 Fax (304) 243-0373

Web site/URL https://ritchie.ohio.k12.wv.us E-mail jjorden@k12.wv.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Kimberly Miller E-mail ksmiller@k12.wv.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Ohio County Tel. (304) 243-0300

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. Michael (Andrew) Garber
(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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
3 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 13 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	30
K	52
1	48
2	40
3	42
4	45
5	36
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	293

*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
 - 2 % Asian
 - 26 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70 % White
 - 2 % 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: 26%

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

Our school provides two, self-contained special education programs for Ohio County. Therefore, any student within our county who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) with a primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or a primary eligibility of having a mild intellectual disability (ID) is bused to Ritchie. Re-evaluation of students with special needs contributes to new placements of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). There is a group home within our school's district. Most children who reside there only stay temporarily until they complete their treatment. Economic challenges have brought more families into the South Wheeling area where there is affordable housing and job opportunities. A new housing complex has recently been constructed next to our school which has provided homes to more families within the South Wheeling community.

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	44
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	33
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	77
(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)	0.26
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	26

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
2 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 84 %

Total number students who qualify: 245

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 26 %
Total number of students served 77

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>19</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>7</u> Developmental Delay	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>28</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>8</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 1 %
Total number of students served: 2

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 21

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	18
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.	2

12. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	92%	96%	95%	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.

Providing exceptional learning experiences in a safe and healthy environment that prepares every student to achieve success.

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

<https://boe.ohio.k12.wv.us/page/child-nutrition>

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1921/ocs/2364981/Updated_And_Justice_for_All_Poster.pdf

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1039644/Policy_2025.pdf

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

N/A

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Ritchie Elementary School is the heart of historic South Wheeling in Wheeling, West Virginia. The 293 Pre-K to fifth grade students, who we serve, love coming to school every day because to many it is like a second home. The people who live here have grown up locally. They are proud to be part of this community and continue the Ritchie tradition that has carried on for almost 100 years.

Built in 1925, Ritchie is a three-story brick structure serving the families of the South Wheeling, East Wheeling, Center Wheeling, and Mozart neighborhoods. These areas of Wheeling are less affluent than other areas within Ohio County. Despite these challenges, the school and community is dedicated to helping their children. Our families believe in the value of education and hard work. An example of this would be the pride our families felt in celebrating the students' achievement on the 2021-2022 West Virginia General Summative Assessment (WVGSA). Ritchie was distinguished as meets standard (blue) on the West Virginia School's Report Card. These test scores resulted in a "Blue Day" with fun festivities for the students. A blue carpet led the children from their buses, through the hallways, and into their classrooms. A special assembly was held by our principal where he congratulated the entire student body and staff for this amazing accomplishment. Parents expressed their joy through numerous comments on the school's social media page. This partnership between home and school provides each child with an opportunity for success.

Ritchie serves students county-wide identified as having intellectual disabilities as well as autism spectrum disorder. Ritchie's diversity helps to create a unique, positive environment that focuses on meeting the needs of all students. Every morning Ritchie Hornets declare, "Ritchie is our name and learning is our game." Our students strive to be successful, have winning attitudes, be accountable, be respectful, and be motivated to learn and grow daily.

Our highly qualified faculty, led by our award-winning principal, encourages students to develop to their fullest academic potential. In 2019, our principal was recognized for excellence in elementary school leadership and received the title of National Distinguished Principal, West Virginia's Elementary Principal of the Year. Many of our teachers hold advanced degrees and two are Nationally Board Certified. Ritchie provides services to students through Title I interventionists, tutoring with community volunteers, guest readers, occupational, physical, and speech therapists.

In addition, the emotional needs of our students are met by two school counselors, a licensed independent clinical social worker, Trauma-Informed Elementary Schools (TIES) liaisons, and our dedicated staff. Ritchie students have the opportunity to further their social and cultural growth by attending an afterschool program at Laughlin Memorial Chapel. Through this program, students receive a nutritious snack, homework help, and enriching social activities Monday through Thursday. Students are bused to Chapel from school and home after dinner. Chapel also provides extra-curricular activities such as cooking, gardening, tech skills, arts, music, dance, games, and crafts.

There are two distinctive techniques used at Ritchie that aid in our success. The first is the creation and implementation of a master schedule that coordinates and effectively manages the entire school. This takes collaboration among administration, counselors, classroom and resource teachers, therapists, Title I interventionists, and special educators. The master schedule is fully available to all current professional staff. It allows for common planning time among grade-level educators and support persons to analyze benchmark and anecdotal data in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Data-driven and student-centered instructional strategies are utilized by teachers to close achievement gaps in reading and math. Small groups are created and taught by Title I interventionists, homeroom teachers, and classroom aides. These groups provide students with a safe, comfortable space to learn and to grow at their own pace. Secondly, we developed and implemented a positive behavior management system, S.W.A.R.M. (Successful. Winning attitudes. Accountable. Respectful. Motivated.) This multi-component program features daily, weekly, and monthly individual rewards along with classroom incentives. In addition, classrooms are assigned buddies in a different grade level to work together and to support each other throughout the year.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines swarming as "the phenomenon in which a large number of individuals organize into a coordinated motion. Using only the information at their disposition in the environment, they are able to aggregate together, move en masse or migrate towards a common direction." Ritchie Hornets, like those in nature, are a family who uses tools and information to achieve our ongoing success. The hope is to celebrate another "Blue Day" by becoming a National Blue Ribbon School!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

In the arena of English Language Arts, students are first expected to learn to read and then move into reading to learn. Reading instructional time is invested in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, letter/sound recognition, and vocabulary while learning and building comprehension skills. As a result, our students met standards on the West Virginia Balanced Scorecard with 68% achieving mastery in English Language Arts. At Ritchie Elementary, we focus on the College and Career Readiness Standards for English Language Arts as set by the West Virginia Department of Education. We address these standards through the use of county adopted curriculum and supplemental resources. Our primary source of instructional materials come from Great Minds Wit and Wisdom, which is a comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum designed to build knowledge and skills learners need to be strong readers, excellent writers, and effective communicators. Their lessons utilize both captivating texts and art to empower students to confidently embrace grade-level content.

One important piece of the Great Minds program, utilized in grades kindergarten through second, is Geodes. These information-rich books provide the opportunity to experience the process of reading to learn while learning to read. Geodes are founded on the belief that the groundwork for lifelong literacy starts with giving emerging readers fascinating books about their world.

Our kindergarten through third grade teachers implement Wilson FUNdations, a carefully structured research-based reading, spelling, and handwriting program. FUNdations incorporates print concepts, letter formation, phonological and phonemic awareness, sound mastery, phonics, word study, high frequency word practice, handwriting, and spelling in effective and efficient practices. These skills are supplemented and enhanced with engaging narratives and music from the Secret Stories by Katie Garner.

Assessment data is collected through multiple sources and analyzed by grade-level teachers, Title staff and administrators during monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. Grades kindergarten through fifth administer Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) by IO Education, as well as utilizing additional tools and anecdotal notes to guide instruction. The Early Learning Reporting System (ELRS) is implemented in kindergarten. Grades one through five use formative and summative assessments incorporated throughout the Great Minds and Wilson programs. Grades three through five also collect data from Comprehensive Interim Assessments (CIA), which are replications of the WVGSA, and Interim Module Assessments (IMA), which target specific skills covered in the CIA and WVGSA. Once analyzed, this data addresses both strengths and deficiencies.

This year, Ritchie Elementary kindergarten students are fortunate to have been invited to participate in the initial implementation phase of an exclusive pilot project through the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). The computer-based program, Fast ForWord by Carnegie Learning, focuses on the science behind reading and is designed to improve cognitive skills and enhance early literacy learning. This 30-minute daily program fully engages the students through educational games while assessing their academic progress. Future lessons are tailored to the students' individual needs. It is yet another tool that will help teachers make informed instructional decisions in the area of Reading and English Language Arts.

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

At Ritchie, we focus on the College and Career Readiness Standards for Mathematics as set by the WVDE. We teach number sense, geometry, data, measurement and early algebra. We believe no specific curriculum can address the standards and needs of each student. To address both, we use a combination of the research-based Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) GoMath! program and supplemental materials. These are found online and are teacher-created. On the 2022 WVGSA, 76% of our students achieved mastery.

Teachers meet weekly to plan as a team with Title I and Special Education. In these meetings, standards are reviewed and materials are found to address each specific element. In the classroom, co-teaching is a foundation. We know that students will have misconceptions that need to be addressed. Co-teaching allows one teacher to lead the group while the other meets students on individual levels. As co-teaching is occurring, both instructors are taking anecdotal notations to be discussed after the lesson. The following day's lesson is adapted to meet the needs of the group as a whole. Those students who are struggling are eligible to be pulled into a small group with targeted instruction.

While the teachers use anecdotal data daily, Ritchie also utilizes benchmarks and other assessments throughout the year to monitor student progress. In kindergarten, the ELRS provided by the WVDE provides data that shows student progress on all kindergarten math standards. Students are assessed one-on-one three times per year. First and second grade students complete benchmark assessments created by teachers in Ohio County Schools. The link is provided to teachers and students to complete the assessment on student devices. In grades three through five, students take IMAs and the CIA. The IMA assessments are used to assess student progress on different mathematical concepts after instruction. IMAs can be given to the class as an assessment or an instructional tool to allow students to experience the testing interface. The CIA is a replication of the WVGSA that provides a broader picture of student achievement. We use this at the start of the second semester as a determiner of who is on track to master the state assessment.

The data collected from all the aforementioned means is analyzed in PLC meetings. Grade level teachers, Title I, Special Education teachers and the principal meet every other month to review assessments given and anecdotal data collected. Recommendations for those students who need remediation are made at these meetings. At the start of the school year, Support for Personalized Learning (SPL) groups are created. Throughout the year, students move fluidly in the groupings based on academic progress and needs. In the spring, after completion of the CIA, teachers in grades three through five meet by grade level with Title I, Special Education, the principal and counselor to analyze the data. Those students who are classified as "At" or "Near Mastery" are observed closely. These are the children who can pass or fail depending on the day. We use our resources to develop our "spring training" groups. These groups meet to practice test questions, learn test taking strategies, and build confidence.

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

Ritchie Elementary utilizes various programs and educational resources for inquiry-based and cross-curricular science instruction. Mystery Science is an educational website used in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Numerous lessons begin with an engaging video as a "hook" to introduce new concepts. Extension activities are provided following each interactive video. Enrichment activities are also available to further reinforce the concepts taught. Grades kindergarten through second grade engage in group experiments and small group tasks observed by the classroom teacher. Third through fifth grade engage in hands-on activities. To assess students' understanding of the topic, students complete a performance task to provide data for the classroom teacher.

BrainPop and BrainPop Jr. also offer engaging videos to promote discussion of new material. Formative assessments are provided in either a five-question or a ten-question quiz. Students may also complete follow-up activities relating to the instructional content. This educational site is utilized by both grade-level teachers and special educators in our self-contained programs to provide a deeper understanding to reach each student on their personal learning level. The videos provided are presented in a manner that is clear and concise for students with intellectual disabilities and autism to comprehend the material.

Our local zoo has educational instructors and naturalists at Oglebay's Schrader Center who visit our third grade classrooms to further their current understanding of animal habitats, environments, and aspects about our Earth. They provide weekly lessons and occasionally bring along zoo ambassador mammals and reptiles to motivate students to discover more about animal adaptations. These naturalists conduct hands-on tasks to assess for understanding. Additionally, Oglebay follows up with an outside school learning experience for our third grade classes. Every spring, the students travel to the zoo and the educational center to learn more about the topics previously covered from the classroom program.

All of these educational resources and programs are aligned to the West Virginia College and Career Readiness Science Standards as well as the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for students in special education.

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

Our social studies curriculum targets civics, history, geography, and cultural aspects around the globe. Instruction, as well as formative and summative assessments, is student-centered and derived from county provided, curriculum-based materials and teacher-created activities. Teachers design their assessments and adjust instruction based off the curriculum they have implemented.

Three concepts of focus in our social studies' curriculums include Black History Month, Women's History Month, and West Virginia History. Influential African Americans and women are discussed to broaden our students' minds of the impact these citizens had on United States history. Formative assessments are given on West Virginia History to allow the opportunity for students to demonstrate their content knowledge regarding their current state of residence and how that has affected our local communities today.

BrainPop and BrainPopJr. are again implemented to engage student learning. Formative assessments are offered following interactive videos to assess comprehension of new material. Lessons from this educational site and/or teacher-created activities are frequently administered to the children to reinforce these concepts.

Educational magazines from HMH are used and are accompanied by virtual educational experiences. HMH also provides lessons and activities via their website for teachers to grab the students' attention and further their understanding.

Our second graders participate in an outside school learning experience at Meadowcroft Village where they become part of the past in the 1800s. They visit a preserved schoolhouse, learn to make candles, and discover the uses of wool to create clothing. They observe a blacksmith crafting items that were utilized during that time period. They also are exposed to the way of Native American life, the culture pertaining to their homesteads, and tools used to hunt and to survive. Formative assessments are provided upon return to the classroom to demonstrate students' knowledge gained from the experience.

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

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

Ritchie Elementary School strives to develop and demonstrate positive growth and high quality educational experiences for young children through its implementation of the Universal Pre-K program. This program is designed to target and strengthen the educational, health, and social needs of young children. These services are offered to all four-year old and qualifying three-year old children, as supported by federal and state mandates. Ritchie Elementary has two collaborative classrooms with Northern Panhandle Head Start. Programs align with the WV Pre-K Standards for Universal Pre-K to ensure developmental domains are supported with rich and meaningful experiences in all areas of learning.

The Pre-K programs at Ritchie Elementary are rooted in research-based strategies to support strong foundational skills for academic success. Reading readiness is encouraged through activities rich in speaking and listening, comprehension and recall, phonological awareness, word recognition, print concepts, literature and writing, and self-expression. Mathematical readiness skills are promoted through activities designed to encourage counting and cardinality, number operations, patterning, problem solving, measuring, sequencing, data representation and interpretation, as well as algebraic and geometric reasoning. Hands-on learning experiences are designed to inspire meaningful learning for each student while supporting the abilities and needs of each individual learner.

Fluid communication among teachers, administrators, therapists and students, as well as assessment-driven

data, help target areas of students' strengths and needs. Strong foundational skills in all areas of development support and prepare students for academic and social success. Having strong partnerships within the school system encourages continuity of teaching and learning. Ritchie Elementary utilizes a student-targeted approach to assist students in personal achievement. Our collaborative team uses this information to drive instructional opportunities and curriculum planning to support and enrich each student in learning. This prepares them for success in the next grade level.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

The Arts Education program at Ritchie Elementary complies with WV College and Career Readiness Standards. The general music curriculum is provided to all students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Each class meets for 40 minutes twice a week. Students are immersed in an atmosphere of music topics ranging from rhythm, tempo, dynamics, instrumentation, pitch, improvisation, and style. They are given opportunities to sing, play instruments, move, and listen to music. The exploration of world, patriotic, folk, and West Virginia songs develops civic literacy and promotes global awareness.

Ritchie Elementary offers a chorus and a band program to interested fifth grade students who want to broaden their musical experiences. In addition, students in fourth and fifth grade have the opportunity to join the strings program. Our school is a great place for students to enrich their music education.

Students in grades kindergarten through fifth meet once a week for 40-minute sessions for visual arts. Projects introduce students to a variety of mediums such as drawing, painting, photography, digital art, assemblage, sculpture, and printing. Students use paint, paper, pencils, markers, crayons, ink, yarn, sand, cardboard, wood, and plastic. All student work is based off of individual experiences which transfer to other areas. Each student participates individually and collaboratively to promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Cross-curricular material is utilized to help students relate music and art to other disciplines.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Ritchie Elementary students participate in a wide variety of activities during their allotted Physical Education (PE) schedules. All K-5 classes receive PE for 40 minutes, twice a week. Content covered includes a variety of team sports, lifetime recreation activities, and health and wellness lessons along with character education and social-emotional learning lessons. Ritchie Elementary is unique, with access to an indoor pool where swimming classes are available to grades first through fifth. Aquatic safety and basic swim instruction are provided.

Technology skills are integrated with the use of digital fitness and exergaming. Students are introduced to total body wellness testing in which they measure their individual fitness levels with the use of FitnessGram Assessments. This process gives students ownership of their individual health and fitness journey. The importance of community outreach and "giving back" are provided to Ritchie students through participation in a nationwide program known as Kid's Heart Challenge and Jump-Rope for Heart. All proceeds and donations go to The American Heart Association.

Ritchie's PE program incorporates all three learning domains in each lesson and activity. Cognitive learning occurs through the development of sport content knowledge and rules associated with each activity. Psychomotor learning is demonstrated through fine and gross motor skill participation. Lastly, the affective domain of learning is present in the attitudes, feelings, emotions, and sportsmanship learning opportunities that occur. Teamwork, cooperation, sportsmanship, and integrity are all components of Ritchie's Physical Education Program.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

The makerspace is a place for students to experiment, innovate, and acquire 21st Century skills in a hands-on environment. Students are introduced to the makerspace as early as kindergarten and spend more time there each year. In fifth grade, students spend a 40-minute weekly class in the makerspace. Students learn about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (S.T.E.A.M.) in a safe environment that helps students visualize real-world context by working on projects that solve everyday problems. An important component of the classroom is learning the engineering design process. Lessons the students encounter start with simple robotics in kindergarten through the use of the Bee Bots robots. As students get older, they use the Lego We-do's to work through a computer program to create robots and moving parts. Students learn about motors and batteries and make a scribble robot using found objects and markers. They are also presented with the opportunity to make t-shirts using the Cricut and t-shirt press in a lesson that begins with a discussion about design and learning how to use the program. Ritchie students are encouraged to explore technology in the makerspace, an environment that supports learning from mistakes, being creative, and working together.

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

Fifth grade students at Ritchie participate in the countywide Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. Students are taught by our school's resource officer once a week for a duration of six weeks.

Our Pre-K students receive 30 minutes a week of yoga from a local, licensed instructor to encourage them to keep a positive, clear mind and healthy body. Teaching healthy ways to cope with stress is critical at a young age, and we wish for our students to carry this state of mindfulness with them as they grow. Several classrooms also use GoNoodle.com and "Would You Rather" for brain break exercises to keep the students alert and in shape.

West Virginia University (WVU) Medicine provides a Nutrition Goes to School program put on by certified dietitians. Students in third and fourth grade participate in interactive lessons regarding nutrition, the food groups, and maintaining a well-balanced diet.

Our local fire department teaches fire safety to kindergarten through second grade students. They are able to tour a "fire safety house" to undergo a simulation of how to safely evacuate from a house fire.

Ritchie's self-contained special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities visits our neighboring middle school to collaborate with maintaining the school's garden by planting in the spring and harvesting in the fall. The garden has fruits, vegetables, flowers, and a compost area containing earthworm-enriched soil which gives students experience in growing their own food.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

To meet the needs of our students achieving below grade level, Ritchie strives to provide quality differentiated instruction in SPL groups and in-class. SPL groups are created in meetings with classroom teachers, Title I, and Special Education. Data that has been collected from various assessments is reviewed. Pull-out group size is limited to six students to ensure more learning time. Interventions in these groups come from a variety of sources and focus on remediation where needed. For example, third grade students in a math SPL group might work on the day's lesson as well as practice basic math facts online and individually with the teacher. The goal of SPL groups is to allow students to sustain progress and build confidence.

In-class support is also offered. While a co-teacher is in the classroom, a small group can be created to offer more individualized instruction per student need. This small group completes the same lesson but has

additional help and more focused instruction. All classrooms have an area designated for this purpose.

Students with extreme deficits are placed under the watch of the Student Assistance Team (SAT). The team meets per federal guidelines to monitor and assess the student. Students determined to need an Individualized Education Program receive appropriate accommodations based on individual needs. These accommodations apply in the classroom, in resources (media, gym, music and art), and on state standardized assessments.

Students at Ritchie Elementary have the opportunity to participate in our Title I extended day program before school as well as at Laughlin Chapel after school. Students work on specific reading and math interventions as determined by assessment data collected in class. Those who participate here receive targeted one-on-one instruction. Laughlin Chapel breaks the students into grade level groups. Each group has local college students available to help with homework, practice math facts, and read. Daily communication occurs through student agendas so that the volunteers at Laughlin Chapel know how to best help the students. In addition, Laughlin Chapel reaches out to the school to address concerns.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Ritchie Elementary takes pride in offering enrichment opportunities for our students. Classroom teachers collaborate with Title I and Special Education to analyze data collected from various assessments. From this information, students identified as being above grade level are recommended to participate in additional activities to enhance their learning.

One example of this occurs in kindergarten. Some students arrive at the start of the year knowing most or all of the letters and numbers. They quickly learn the sounds of the letters and the larger numbers. These students excel at classwork. To encourage their achievement, two SPL groups are created, one for reading and one for mathematics.

In the reading SPL group, students play games to learn blends, digraphs, and diphthongs. They work on building comprehension and decoding strategies as well as writing a sentence. Students are provided reading materials on a first or second grade level, depending on need. They are permitted to take these books home to practice reading outside of the classroom. When the student feels confident, he is allowed to trade in his book and choose another to take home.

In math SPL, students are exposed to science along with math. Students have engaged in making rain clouds from shaving cream while measuring water with food coloring. They use knowledge of shapes to create a house for a pig to live in that will not blow down when a hair dryer blows on it. They use logic to solve simple Sudoku puzzles. These experiences provide students with an outlet to use their skills.

Another enrichment opportunity is for grades four and five. Students are invited to participate in Ohio County's Math Field Day. To prepare, students engage in stations relating to physical estimation, mental math, and problem solving. Two teams travel to Wheeling Park High School to compete against other top level students in the county, including local private schools. This school year, Ritchie had a county winner taking fourth place. The same student achieved first place in the estimation portion of the competition.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Ritchie Elementary School's children with disabilities subgroup met standards on the 2022 West Virginia Balanced Scorecard with 79% of our students achieving mastery in Mathematics and 66% in English Language Arts.

Our school provides a countywide program for students with ASD. These students with ASD are taught through direct, individualized instruction that implements techniques such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and discrete trial. The county also has an Autism specialist who visits these students twice a year. He meets with their families to discuss their child's current progress and describes methods that can be utilized for students' success academically, socially, and behaviorally.

Ritchie also provides a self-contained program for students in third through fifth grade who are identified as having a mild intellectual disability. These children are given individualized lessons that lay the stepping stones to achievement at the child's own pace. Differentiated instruction is adjusted based on student need and is student-centered. These children participate with their grade-level peers for all related arts classes as well as lunch, recess, and special events.

Those who are served in either of these self-contained programs are led by highly qualified special educators who are assisted by classroom aides. The students in these programs complete the Dynamic Learning Map (DLM) Alternate State Assessment for West Virginia each spring, and these scores factor into the school's overall performance along with the students who complete the WVGSA.

Our school also serves students who are identified as having a specific learning disability (SLD). These students receive pull-out services by a certified special educator in small groups. Students receive services for mathematics and/or reading that are particularly addressed in their IEP. Every student with an IEP at Ritchie is provided with a safe, positive learning environment where collaboration between grade-level and special educators is the key to meeting their accommodations school-wide as well as to closing the achievement gap.

3d. English Language Learners:

Ohio County Schools (OCS) provides an English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsed teacher for supplemental instructional services to assure that students will increase their program in English as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA21). OCS makes content material more comprehensible to English Language Learners (ELL). Every classroom teacher with ELLs uses the Sheltered Instruction Lesson Planning Sheet. The instructor provides supplemental instruction and pull-out services when necessary. Rosetta Stone is provided to students for out of school use year-round and can be used in school as a learning station. The ESL teacher will also plan and implement programs, activities, and procedures that promote meaningful involvement. Parental involvement activities include, but are not limited to, individualized meetings with school administrators, counselors, core content teachers, and the teacher at the beginning of school. The parents are included in regular, meaningful communication including phone contacts, school newsletters, and ESL teacher-parent communication. OCS provides materials, supplies, and equipment required for all the provision of ESL services as well as necessary electronic bilingual dictionaries for daily instruction and appropriate assessments. All ELL students may participate in extended day and year programs. Materials and supplies, which meet their individual personalized learning, are provided. Ohio County's ESL teacher and the Title III Director collaborate with all school personnel responsible for classroom instruction to provide professional development. These focus on the comprehensive needs of stages, sheltered instruction for teaching core content, assessments, cultural diversity, classroom modifications, increasing language acquisition, and mastering academic content. All teachers have access to the ESL Tool Kit, "Connecting Classroom Best Practices for Limited English Proficient Students," from the West Virginia Connections site. Collaboration is developed by utilizing the "Collaboration Teacher Letter" provided to classroom teachers with options for a face-to-face meeting, e-mail communication, and phone contact information for the ELL at each school.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Ritchie Elementary's greatest strengths are our positive learning environment and caring culture. The students that attend our school look forward to coming each day because they know they will be supported academically, socially and emotionally.

One of the most engaging programs that our school uses to assist in students academic development, is called Spring Training. Our Title I staff created this highly anticipated game for grades three through five. This second semester challenge entails baseball-themed preparation for the WVGSA. By answering test practice questions correctly, students advance through the bases on individual playing fields. Once a student has scored six home runs, a point is awarded to their homeroom on a hallway display. The goal of the program is to acquire as many runs as possible for your grade-level and to encourage team spirit for academic success.

Social and emotional development is fostered through classroom lessons, cross grade-level teamwork opportunities, outside school learning experiences, participation in Laughlin Chapel, and our schoolwide positive behavior management system, S.W.A.R.M. Once a month, our two gifted counselors present whole-group lessons to each grade level that enhance and develop self-awareness and promote kindness. Weekly, grades kindergarten through second enjoy meeting with their assigned mentor classroom in grades three through five. The students look forward to participating in academic and social activities with their buddies. On multiple occasions throughout the year, our students attend programs hosted by the community. The children enjoy a variety of sporting events, arts, and cultural happenings. At the end of the year, WesBanco Bank, Inc. and Panhandle Cleaning and Restoration sponsor an outside school experience for the entire student body. Four days a week, as stated in our school overview, the students are invited to attend Laughlin Chapel where they receive additional academic, social, and emotional support. Lastly, S.W.A.R.M offers students many opportunities to enhance their emotional well-being. Kids experience internal and external rewards for academic growth and demonstrating kindness.

Ritchie is also lucky to have a few community partnered programs that assist our students in preparing for their futures. Our fifth graders enjoy engaging in "Teach Children to Save," which was designed by WesBanco Bank, Inc. to introduce our students to saving money and the banking process. Our fourth and fifth graders are introduced to a world of vocational learning at our local high school, Wheeling Park, as they spend the day experiencing the different classes that are offered there. High school students who are participating in each of the programs lead the demonstrations and discussions.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Ritchie Elementary kicks off the school year with our Back to School Block Party. This event consists of members of the community, our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and our local businesses. We provide free school supplies and a backpack to every student at Ritchie. The children also have the opportunity to enjoy snacks from vendors, receive a free hair cut from local stylists, and play interactive games with their families. The parents and guardians are able to visit their child's classroom and meet the teacher before the official start of the school year.

Our school's PTO also assists in arranging other special occasions throughout the school year. Every October the students have the opportunity to attend our annual Ritchie Halloween Trick-or-Treat Walk. Our PTO members fill the first floor hallways of our school with Halloween decorations where students are thrilled to trick-or-treat. They also design Halloween-themed games for the children to play with their peers and families in our gymnasium. Other events our PTO organizes include Breakfast with Santa, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, and our school socials.

Various donations are offered by community partners throughout the school year. The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) make a generous donation of winter coats each year to help supply our school's

clothes closet. The Rotary Club provides hygiene products such as deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body wash, and shampoo. These items are given to every child in our school. Community volunteers assist families each year by providing Thanksgiving and Christmas donations of gifts and food. New Vision Pioneers provide dictionaries to our third grade classes each year. They also contribute backpacks to our school's clothes closet and donate to kindergarten outside school experiences. Local attorneys provide funds to be spent on replenishing the essential needs of our clothes closet such as socks, undergarments, shirts, pants, and shoes. Parents and local community members donate clothes to assist in keeping our closet full for our students.

We have two local churches who provide donations. New Life United Methodist Church contributes numerous school supplies to our students, and Hope Church has volunteers who help organize and provide special events for our students and staff. Hope Church also packs weekend snack bags that are provided to all students each Friday.

Our Ritchie family is highly appreciative of our community members and their charitable donations. They play a critical role in meeting the students' physiological needs which enables our educators to focus more on the children's academic and social needs.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Through professional development, socialization opportunities, and teamwork, Ritchie creates an environment where all staff feel valued and supported. Many applicants, when asked why they want to be at Ritchie, have stated that they want to be part of a family.

Professional development opportunities abound at Ritchie. Our county provides a Teacher Induction Program (TIPS) for new teachers. Through this program, all participants are provided a vast array of activities designed to enhance their growth and career trajectory. In the first year, teachers are provided a mentor to help them navigate the ins and outs of education. In addition, each year our staff is eligible to participate in a course for graduate credit created and facilitated by the principal and curriculum coordinator. An area of need is identified from our school's strategic plan and a research-based book is chosen. This year, our course was designed around the book "Emotional Poverty in All Demographics" by Ruby K. Payne. The book discusses how students bring emotional noise from their outside lives into the classroom each day. As teachers, we need to be aware of this as well as our own noise from our personal lives. Payne shares research about the human brain and how stress affects emotions. She shares strategies teachers can use in the classroom to help students recognize their behavior and learn to calm themselves. Nineteen teachers completed the course this semester and earned three hours of graduate credit toward advancing their degree status.

Socialization opportunities are a key component of Ritchie's culture. Our social committee organizes several luncheons for staff to eat together, family style. These luncheons are provided by local churches and Partners in Education. The committee routinely organizes get-togethers after hours for outside school socialization opportunities. These social gatherings enable our school to have a dynamic Faculty Senate. Each faculty member has been assigned a specific committee. Members feel safe to share ideas and areas of concern during committee meetings. Committees meet at each meeting and then share important information.

Another important aspect of teamwork at Ritchie is the creation and implementation of the school master schedule. Each spring, the principal and curriculum coordinator meet with each classroom and Title I teacher to discuss the schedule. The goal is to maximize instructional time with co-teachers. Being afforded the opportunity to give input empowers teachers. Our teachers know they are supported because their opinions are valued. This is an important part of the Ritchie family dynamics.

4. School Leadership:

Walt Disney once stated, "Around here we don't look backwards for very long. We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things, because we're curious...and curiosity keeps leading us down

new paths." Ritchie's principal has created a culture of transformational leadership by including all major stakeholders to meet the schoolwide goals. This transformational leadership is essential to student achievement and the overall growth of staff. Our principal is a devoted leader, who considers himself as the "head coach" of our school's team. He delegates responsibilities to all teachers in ways that enable them to lead. He facilitates a graduate level book study each semester to Ritchie teachers where they implement strategies and best practices from the course into their classrooms.

PLC meetings are led by the principal who assists grade-level and special education teachers with data analysis throughout the school year. They discuss each student's progress regularly and set goals for his/her continued improvement. PLC members also share behavioral and academic concerns and seek support from our principal.

The Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) consists of the principal, three teachers, one service personnel representative, three parent representatives, a bus driver, and three members from the community. This team meets to discuss policies of the school as well as areas of concern to ensure ongoing school improvement.

The Ritchie Faculty Senate committees meet six times throughout the course of the school year. The committees are comprised of the following: Curriculum, Finance, Safety, Staff and Community Recognition, Social, Wellness, and Student Recognition. They meet to discuss past and present matters, report upcoming events, and the well-being of our students.

Ritchie has a highly active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that is instrumental in encouraging our positive school climate. Ritchie parents and community members volunteer as tutors and read aloud to our classrooms. They are also chaperones for our outside school learning experiences. As mentioned previously, this dedicated group organizes a variety of events for our students and their families.

Leadership at Ritchie involves a great amount of teamwork among all stakeholders.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Ritchie Elementary has a diverse population with a range of backgrounds and experience. This diversity helps our school to teach equity, cultural awareness, and respect. Our counselors teach monthly lessons centered on the nine Pillars of Character Education. Through these lessons, students are taught to speak kindly, see other sides to events, and be accountable. In addition, the counselors keep a list of resources available for families. These resources come into play when a family suffers a calamity and cannot pay a bill, has a fire, or needs other assistance. The counselors are able to connect families to resources so help is there.

Our school is part of the USDA Community Eligibility Provision grant. All our students receive free breakfast and lunch daily regardless of economic classification. During the COVID pandemic, staff worked hard to deliver meals to families who were unable to get to school. The staff also worked to deliver school materials and supplies to help instruction continue with minimal disruption. Oftentimes, teachers would visit homes to provide one-on-one instruction to children who did not learn well via an electronic device.

The staff respects the beliefs and practices of others. At Ritchie, we have students who do not celebrate religious holidays. For example, during the holiday season, we have a schoolwide singalong. Phone calls are made to families to see if anyone would prefer their child not attend. If needed, arrangements are made for that student to play games and spend quality time with staff members during the singalong. Students typically enjoy this time because they get undivided attention and have fun.

Community members have come to the school to teach lessons based on cultural awareness. The local YWCA employs a director whose focus is diversity. He came to school and held a program for students in which he discussed how our words affect others. He also shared how differences in color and race should not change how we view another person. We are all equal and deserve respect. Another group, Oglebay

Institute, performs a play each spring. The play is a fable in which there is a moral or lesson. The troupe leader talks with the student body about the moral and how it applies to their lives.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Teamwork among our Ritchie Family is fundamental to our success. Title I educators co-teach with other grade-level teachers in order to develop strategies to enhance our students' education. A master schedule is designed to allow for common-planning time with Title I, grade-level, and special education teachers. All teachers meet with the principal and curriculum coordinator to provide input. Teachers share the length of time a co-teacher would best fit their grade level. They discuss the preferred amount of time devoted to SPL groups. This data is collected and the fun begins. The principal and curriculum coordinator work all summer to create the schedule for the following year. This accessibility allows for open communication among all stakeholders when making decisions for our students and school.

The intention of the common-planning time is to optimize teaching time among co-teachers. This also provides planning opportunities to create schedules for students with SLD. Small groups are created based on the interventions necessary to address their areas of need in Reading and Math. The teacher adjusts her instruction based off the information and curriculum provided by the general education teacher. Title I teachers meet weekly during common-planning periods with grade-level teachers to discuss various teaching strategies and standards to be addressed in future lessons. Targeted students of concern may also be discussed at this time. The knowledge shared between all of these professionals leads to the success of our students and our school.

Our PLC meetings give the staff at Ritchie another opportunity to work as a team. During these meetings the principal and counselor meet with the grade-level and Title I teachers to discuss what is currently happening in their classroom, what topics will be covered in the future, and any behavior or attendance concerns. The knowledge of our counselor proves to be extremely useful during these discussions. The counselor can make referrals regarding attendance and contact parents. He may also know a back story that can be very helpful when addressing an issue with a particular student. Our counselor at Ritchie is a part of the SAT team. He can communicate to the teacher the kind of documentation needed to help the process of testing a student to determine if he/she in fact may have a SLD.

Overall, teamwork is the component that holds us together and makes us an effective school. Without this practice, there is no way we would be able to reach all of our students and be as successful as we are.