

2024-2025 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Otwell Miller Academy (2019)

Otwell Miller Academy



**School
Improvement
Institute
(SII)**

Aug 26, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
OVERVIEW	3
Organizational Structure	3
School Improvement Process	4
Data-Driven Decision-Making	4
Implementation Window	5
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS	6
PART 1: Vision	6
PART 2: Academic Goals	7
PART 3: Root Causes (Comprehensive Needs Assessment)	12
PART 4: Interventions	14
PREPARATION	16
PART 5: Professional Development Summary	16
PART 6: Interventions Task List	17
APPENDICES	18
Appendix A: School Improvement Plan Summary - Crosswalk	18
Appendix B: Root Cause Self Study Excerpt	31
Appendix C: Continuous Improvement Timeline	32

OVERVIEW

This school improvement plan was developed using a vision-based and data-driven process called *Vision-to-Action*. In addition to containing the interventions our school and community identified as key to raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps in our school, this plan contains interventions that meet the expectations of:

- Indiana Rules and Regulations
- Title I - Schoolwide

School Improvement Institute (SI2) review completed on August 26, 2024 at 01:56 PM

Organizational Structure

Many individuals were involved in the creation of this school improvement plan.

Steering Team

The **Steering Team** is comprised of educators, a parent, and a business representative. The Steering Team's role is to help the School Improvement Council 1) analyze data, 2) discuss key questions related to school improvement planning in an open and honest manner, and 3) reach consensus in decisions related to school improvement.

Name	Position	Steering Team Point Position
Kim Elliott	Teacher	
Jordan Hill	Economic Development	
Misti Ison	Parent	
Pam Julian	School Counselor	Student Body
Heather McCandless	Teacher	
Randi Nelson	Parent	
Rich Padgett	Principal	
Star Riker	Teacher	Council Discussion
Valerie Schoppenhorst	Teacher	Council Consensus
Nicole Sutton	Teacher	Intervention Development
Nicki Troutman	Parent	Achievement Data
Leigh Ann Tusing	Teacher	Root Cause Data
Andrea Wiseman	Teacher	

School Improvement Council

The **School Improvement Council** is made up of educators, parents, and representatives of community stakeholder groups. Educators include teachers, counselors, administrators, and others. All parents were invited to be part of the council. The role of the School Improvement Council is to 1) analyze data, 2) discuss key questions related to school improvement planning in an open and honest manner, and 3) reach consensus for decisions related to school improvement.

Name	Teacher	Parent	Other Stakeholder Group(s)	Name	Teacher	Parent	Other Stakeholder Group(s)
Elizabeth Disney		☑		Heather McCandless	☑		
Kim Elliott	☑			Randi Nelson		☑	
Tracy Evans			Instructional School Support Staff Person, Non-Instructional School Support Staff Person	Sherryl Osgatharp	☑		Community foundation representative
Brittany Harbin		☑		Rich Padgett			Administrator, Title 1 School Director/Coordinator
Jordan Hill		☑		Andrea Readle	☑	☑	
Danielle Houtsch		☑	Business representative, Youth service organization representative, Other	Stardom Riker	☑	☑	
Misty Ison	☑	☑		Valerie Schoppenhorst	☑		
Pam Julian			Counselor	Deb Troutman			Instructional School Support Staff Person
Haven Lashbrook	☑		Feeder school representative	Nicki Troutman		☑	Administrator
Amy Lee	☑			Leigh Tusing	☑		
Jean Marcum			Non-Instructional School Support Staff Person, Other	Tina Uppencamp			Other
Jada Maxwell			Administrator	Terri Whitehead			Other
				Terri Whitehead			Business representative, Community foundation representative
				Andrea Wiseman	☑		

Student Body

The **Student Body** includes every student enrolled in the school. The role of the Student Body is to 1) review data, 2) discuss key questions related to school improvement planning in an open and honest manner, and 3) provide input for the School Improvement Council.

School Improvement Process

Those involved in developing this School Improvement Plan participated in a series of discussions related to the Vision-to-Action process:

- Discussion 1: Rationale for Raising Student Achievement
- Discussion 2: Common Vision for High Student Success
- Discussion 3: Data Analysis & Achievement Goals
- Discussion 4: Data Analysis & Root Causes
 - o Academic expectations
 - o Curriculum content
 - o Instructional practices
 - o Classroom assessment
 - o Extra help
 - o Student guidance
 - o Learning environment
- Discussion 5: Interventions

Data-Driven Decision-Making

The Vision-to-Action improvement process relies heavily on data as a foundation for decision-making.

1. Achievement Data - To what degree are students prepared for success at the next educational level, and ultimately for success in postsecondary education and a global economy?

2. Root Cause Data – What conditions in the school and community interfere with student achievement?
3. Intervention Data – Is the intervention having the desired impact on adults and students?

Implementation Window

Our school and community will be implementing this plan during the 2024-2025 school year. Questions about the School Improvement Plan should be directed to the building principal.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

PART 1: Vision

The Vision Statement was developed by teachers, parents and community members serving on the School Improvement Council with input provided by the student body. The foundation of the statement identifies the core convictions upon which this school improvement plan is built and answers the question, "What do our students deserve in order to be successful learners, responsible citizens, and productive members of a global economy?" The second part of the vision statement describes ideal adults who are striving to provide students with the things they deserve in order to achieve at a rigorous level. The third part of the vision statement describes ideal students in a school and community where adults live by their convictions. The last part of the vision statement includes ideal data that represent the community's dreams. This lofty data serves as the focal point for the remainder of the school improvement plan and requires the school and community to work toward every student succeeding at a high level.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

We believe all students deserve:

available educational opportunities as needed on an individual basis.
a safe and interactive environment in which to learn.

All adults in our community are living by these core convictions daily and as a result, show the following attitudes and actions:

education is individually based and tailored to develop the individual student.
an environment in which they can take risks and explore without prejudice.

In this environment where all adults are living by their core convictions, all students:

are receiving educational opportunities as needed on an individual basis.
a safe and interactive learning environment.

As a result of these efforts, our school's student achievement data is as follows:

- % of students who pass ILEARN: 100%
- % of students who pass NWEA: 100%
- % of students who pass I-READ: 100%

PART 2: Academic Goals

The academic goals were established after a thorough analysis of multiple achievement data assessments including the state math assessment, state English / language arts assessment, student mastery of each Indiana College and Career Readiness Standards, and report card grades. A full list of academic assessments is found in the Root Cause Self Study Excerpts section of this plan. Note: Other types of data are discussed in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment / Root Causes section of this plan.

The School Improvement Council (including teachers, parents, and community members) and Student Body were involved in the analysis of the achievement data. The following questions were addressed during the data analysis.

- How does this data compare to our vision (ideal) data?
- What specific data fields disturb us?
- What specific data fields please us?
- Where do we observe achievement gaps?

Using a consensus based decision-making model, the School Improvement Council (including parents) first identified a small number of **Focus Areas** (FA). These are broad academic areas on which the school and community agreed to focus their energy in the coming year.

Next, the School Improvement Council members "drilled down" the data within the FAs and created specific **SMART Goals** focused on specific courses, academic standards, and/or student groups that, if improved, would impact the broad FA. Both the FAs and the SMART Goals are listed below.

Once the SMART goals were developed, the student body was asked to identify the SMART goals the school should address.

Finally, the School Improvement Council established a data target for each SMART Goal that the students, teachers, parents and community would strive to reach by the end of following school year. The data targets fall between the current student data and the vision (ideal) data.

Description of the Gaps Identified between the Vision and the Achievement Data Report:

Teachers felt there is a huge gap between the vision statement and achievement report in the areas of reading and math.

IMPORTANT: Each Focus Area (FA) is followed by its SMART Goal(s). The title for the FA indicates the FA focus, subject and student grades. The numbers in the tables reflect baseline data for past years and the target data for future years. The "vision data" represents our ideal data. It is the mission of our school to work toward this ideal.

OUR GOALS

FA 1: Math; KG, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Description:

Students seem to be lacking in some progress due to different issues. We believe once some issues are fixed and we can now use our NWEA data to help target key areas.

Specific Achievement Data:

Students in the bottom 25% struggle with comprehension and performance on state and local evaluations. Can't cite data due to classroom size under 30.

Key Takeaways:

Students as a whole are not meeting proficiency in local/state assessments

SMART GOALS THAT IMPACT FA 1:

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 4; All Students)

Grade:	4					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	46%	36%	40%	45%	50%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6 This SMART Goal has students who underperformed on the most recent state test as the student group					

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 5; All Students)

Grade:	5						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	May			Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:				40%	42%	45%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6						

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 3; All Students)

Grade:	3						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	May	May	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:			22%	18%	25%	30%	

External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6
------------------------	--

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade KG; All Students)

Grade:	KG						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan			Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	80%			82%	83%	84%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2						

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 1; All Students)

Grade:	1						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan			Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	49%			50%	53%	55%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2						

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 2; All Students)

Grade:	2						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2021	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan			Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	63%			65%	67%	69%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2						

FA 2: Student Proficiency (Pass Rate) English / Language Arts; KG, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Description:

Students seem to be lacking in some progress due to different issues. We believe once some issues are fixed and we can now use our NWEA data to help target key areas.

Specific Achievement Data:

Inconsistency in data interpretation. Can't cite data due to class size under 30.

Key Takeaways:

Students, as a whole, are not meeting proficiency in local/state assessments.

External Expectations:

This FA aligns with English / Language Arts

SMART GOALS THAT IMPACT FA 2:

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 4; All Students)

Grade:	4					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:		2022	2023	2023	2024	2025
Month:				Jan	Jan	Jan
%:				24%	26%	30%
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6					

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 5; All Students)

Grade:	5					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:		2022	2023	2023	2024	2025
Month:		Jan		Jan	Jan	Jan
%:				25%	28%	30%
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6					

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 3; All Students)

Grade:	3						
Demographics:	All Students						
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students						
Completion date:	June 30, 2025						
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target	Target
Year:		2022	2023	2023	2023	2024	2025
Month:		Jan		Jan	Jan		Jan
%:		13%		18%	20%		23%
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades 3-6						

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing (reading) Under 30 students (Grade KG; All Students)

Grade:	KG					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing (reading) Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:		2022	2023	2023	2024	2025
Month:		Jan		Jan	Jan	Jan
%:				50%	52%	55%
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2					

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 1; All Students)

Grade:	1					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan		Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	25%		28%	32%	35%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2					

Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 2; All Students)

Grade:	2					
Demographics:	All Students					
Benchmark:	Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students					
Completion date:	June 30, 2025					
Data:		Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Year:	2022	2023	2023	2024	2025	
Month:	Jan		Jan	Jan	Jan	
%:	13%		18%	20%	23%	
External Expectations:	This SMART Goal relates to Reading, Grades K-2					

PART 3: Root Causes (Comprehensive Needs Assessment)

Root Causes are situations that are interfering with learning and achievement. Root causes within the school and community were identified by the School Improvement Council after studying two types of root-cause data and reviewing input from the student body.

The root-cause data included:

1. Surveys
 - a. Survey of all students with results disaggregated by gender, free-reduced lunch status, race/ethnicity, and parental postsecondary attendance status. Survey of parents, faculty, and community members.
 - b. Survey items asked participants to identify whether or not best educational practices were in place with regard to a) expectations, b) curricular rigor, c) instruction, d) classroom assessments, e) extra help, f) student guidance, and g) the learning environment.
2. Short answer question responses completed by school personnel regarding the degree to which the school was implementing best educational practices with regard to a) expectations, b) curricular rigor, c) instruction, d) classroom assessments, e) extra help, f) student guidance, and g) the learning environment.

Discussion:

The student body was asked to respond to an open ended question below. Their responses were provided to the School Improvement Council.

- "What is interfering with learning at our school?"

After reviewing the students' input and the root-cause data, the School Improvement Council was asked to respond to two questions:

- What data indicate an area that is interfering with students' ability to reach our SMART goals?
- What data indicate an area that is interfering with a specific student group's ability to reach our SMART goals?

OUR ROOT CAUSES

SMART Goals →

↓ Root Causes

Does at least one Root Cause address this SMART Goal?	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
students' comprehension level is lacking. Evidence: Cloze Reading tests and math quarterly check up scores	✔												
there is a lack in vocabulary comprehension in math and language arts. Evidence: Closed Reading tests and math quarterly check up scores	✔												

Full Text of SMART Goals

1. General root causes that affect all smart goals
2. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 4; All Students)
3. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 4; All Students)
4. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 5; All Students)
5. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 5; All Students)
6. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 3; All Students)
7. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 3; All Students)
8. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade KG; All Students)
9. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 1; All Students)
10. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 2; All Students)
11. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing (reading) Under 30 students (Grade KG; All Students)
12. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 1; All Students)
13. Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students (Grade 2; All Students)

PART 4: Interventions

The Student Body was asked to brainstorm potential interventions for each root cause. Their thoughts were shared with the School Improvement Council.

In addition to interventions suggested by the Student Body, the School Improvement Council researched and reviewed interventions for each root cause using several sources including the SI2 searchable database of interventions. The Council then selected the interventions that would be implemented in the coming year based on the intervention's potential for addressing the root cause.

OUR INTERVENTIONS

Academic Assessments and Assistance

OMA through the implementation of a well rounded academic program will identify students who may be at risk of academic failure with the use of classroom assessments, NWEA, ILearn, IREAD, STAR as well as any other State mandated assessments. Additional assistance will be offered to students at risk in the classroom, as well as, after school tutoring and cross walk activities. In addition classroom aides will be made available for individual help.

Families will be made aware of assessment results and methods of remediation.

Attendance

OMA has an attendance policy for public viewing at otwellmilleracademy.school. All attendance issues follow Indiana code.

Behavior Plan

The behavior plan can be viewed at otwellmilleracademy.school.

This will support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, which may include identifying schools with high rates of discipline, aggregated by each subgroup of students.

HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals

OMA recruits and retains HQ teachers and paraprofessionals. Parents will be notified if any teacher is not HQ. Only HQ teachers are assigned to low achieving students. This will identify and address any disparities that result in low income and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperience and Out-of Field teachers

Kindergarten Round-Up

OMA will host a kindergarten round-up every spring. Appropriate screening will be done during this time as well as meet the teacher and a tour of the school. All parents/guardians are strongly advised to attend. This is an evidence based activity that will occur with all families.

Oma will work with area pre-schools in support of a smooth transition for all students

Math Intervention

OMA utilizes several sources to advance students in their progress towards mastering state standards. OMA sources include a rigorous math curriculum, STEM, and specific educational math websites that target individual student needs.

Reading Plan

The plan covers OMA's core reading program used to guide tier 1 instruction. Reading Block minutes are utilized daily as well as intervention outside the 90 minute reading block. OMA has an assessment plan and goals by grade level. Professional development for the core program, assessments, and reading interventions is provided.

Parent/guardian communication is consistent and there is a remediation structure for students not demonstrating proficiency on IREAD 3.

PREPARATION

To prepare for successful implementation of the interventions outlined above, the School Improvement Steering Team developed several plans including a Professional Development Plan and an Intervention To-Do List.

PART 5: Professional Development Summary

Alignment with the School Improvement Plan: The Professional Development Summary is directly aligned with interventions found in the School Improvement Plan.

Effective Learning Process: The Professional Development Summary was written by teacher-leaders and includes activities that will help teachers develop the knowledge and skills needed to successfully implement the interventions listed in the School Improvement Plan. The plan includes a variety of formats for professional development. Activities have been embedded in the school day as appropriate.

Professional Growth Environment: Each intervention is supported by the Steering Team. Steering Team members are responsible for 1) writing (with support from colleagues) an intervention plan including on-going professional development activities, resource and funding procurement, and evaluation activities, 2) providing on-going mentoring to their colleagues in the implementation of the intervention, 3) analyzing the effectiveness of the intervention, and 4) making a recommendation to the School Improvement Council with respect to whether or not the intervention should be sustained.

OUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Professional Development Title	Learning Style	During Contract Hrs	Implementation Date	Introduction	Preparation	Early Use	Routine Use
Intervention: Reading Plan							
NWEA training	Auditory	✓	Mon, Sep 23, 2024			✓	✓
Intervention: Math Intervention							
STEM training	Kinesthetic	✓	Mon, Sep 9, 2024			✓	✓

PART 6: Interventions Task List

As needed, a detailed task list was developed that includes activities related to 1) intervention evaluation, 2) professional development, 3) resource securement and 4) funding securement. The Steering Team will go over the intervention task list with the entire faculty. Throughout the year, the Steering Team will check off each task as it is completed. At the end of the first semester, the Steering Team will present the percentage of completed activities to the School Improvement Council. If the tasks were not fully implemented, the Steering Team will facilitate a discussion about changes that will occur during the second semester to ensure that all tasks are completed.

OUR INTERVENTIONS TASK LIST

Date	Intervention	Prep Area	Task	Person Responsible
Mon, Sep 9, 2024	Math Intervention	Professional Development	STEM training	Rich Padgett
Mon, Sep 23, 2024	Reading Plan	Professional Development	NWEA training	Rich Padgett
Mon, Mar 3, 2025	Math Intervention	Evaluation	Collect Follow Up Data	Classroom Teachers
Tue, Mar 25, 2025	Kindergarten Round-Up	Other Tasks	Put announcement on Facebook and School Website	Nicki Troutman
Mon, Apr 7, 2025	Kindergarten Round-Up	Funding	Funding Sub	Nicki Troutman
Tue, Apr 8, 2025	Kindergarten Round-Up	Resources	Hiring Sub	Nicki Troutman
Fri, May 2, 2025	Kindergarten Round-Up	Evaluation	Collect Follow Up Data	Kindergarten Teacher

APPENDICES

Appendix A: School Improvement Plan Summary - Crosswalk

This report shows the relationship between the SMART Goals, Root Causes, and Interventions. For each SMART Goal, the report shows 1) Root Causes that, when successfully addressed, will positively impact the SMART Goal; and 2) the Interventions that will enable the school to successfully address the Root Causes.

GENERAL Root Causes that affect all SMART Goals

↓ Interventions	Root Causes →		
	1. students' comprehension level...	2. there is a lack in vocabulary...	External Expectations
Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes	yes	yes
Attendance			✓
Behavior Plan			✓
Reading Plan	✓	✓	✓
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals			✓
Kindergarten Round-Up			✓
Math Intervention	✓	✓	✓
Academic Assessments and Assistance			✓

Full Text of Root Causes

- 1. students' comprehension level is lacking.
- 2. there is a lack in vocabulary comprehension in math and language arts.

Grade 4; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 4; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 5; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 5; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing.Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 3; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 3; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade KG; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✓
Behavior Plan	✓
Reading Plan	✓
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✓
Kindergarten Round-Up	✓
Math Intervention	✓
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✓

Grade 1; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 2; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✓
Behavior Plan	✓
Reading Plan	✓
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✓
Kindergarten Round-Up	✓
Math Intervention	✓
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✓

Grade KG; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing (reading) Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✓
Behavior Plan	✓
Reading Plan	✓
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✓
Kindergarten Round-Up	✓
Math Intervention	✓
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✓

Grade 1; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Grade 2; All Students; Students will meet NWEA benchmark passing. Under 30 students

Root Causes



External Expectations

Interventions

Does at least one Intervention address this Root Cause?	yes
Attendance	✔
Behavior Plan	✔
Reading Plan	✔
HQ Teachers and Paraprofessionals	✔
Kindergarten Round-Up	✔
Math Intervention	✔
Academic Assessments and Assistance	✔

Appendix B: Root Cause Self Study Excerpt

This excerpt provides root cause information required by PL221 and, if applicable, Title I.

Short Answer Questions 2023-2024

Indiana Rules and Regulations

A	Where is the public copy of your school's curriculum located? (PL221) Please use data from 2023-2024	in office and on website
B	What rules or statutes would you like to waive in order to promote student learning? (PL221) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the specific statute and and/or rule you wish to waive. Identify the educational strategies this waiver would allow you to implement that could not be implemented under current statute and rule. Explain the benefit to student achievement. Describe the evaluation process that would be used to measure the success of these strategies. Please use data from 2023-2024	none
C	Are your school's attendance rates supportive of learning? What activities will you implement next year to increase or maintain your attendance rate? (PL221) Please use data from 2023-2024	yes
D	List the titles of the assessment instruments that are used in addition to ILEARN, IREAD-3, and SAT. Give a brief description of each. (PL221) Please use data from 2023-2024	ILEARN IREAD NWEA SumDog Competitions include diagnostic testing that shows improvement over time. AR Testing/Assessment

Title I SW & TAS

E	List the needs assessments used in your school to help you identify areas that are interfering with learning Please use data from 2023-2024	NWEA, ILEARN, classroom observations, assessments and testing, RIT goals, hearing and vision checks, CLOSE Reading Assessments. E-spark
---	--	---

Title I - Schoolwide

F	TITLE I SW ONLY: List the programs that will be consolidated under the school-wide plan. If not consolidating programs, please explain why not. Please use data from 2023-2024	We will not be combining programs. they will continue to build the climate of seamless flow in the building. NWEA, ILEARN, IREAD, Classroom observations, Classroom assessments and testing, RTI goals, Hearing and Vision checks, CLOSE reading assessments
---	---	---

Appendix C: Continuous Improvement Timeline

The SI2 School Improvement Planning Process operates on a three year cycle and includes leadership team development followed by the development of key components of the school improvement plan as outlined above.

Our school was in Update 2 for the 2023-2024 school year.

	ORIGINAL PLAN	REVIEW & REVISE		
	Start Up	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3
Aug		Begin Implementation of Interventions	Begin Implementation of Interventions	Begin Implementation of Interventions
Sep				
Oct	Commit to SI2 Process	Recruit School Improvement Council & Establish Student Body Discussion Format ; Update Steering Team (if needed)	Recruit new Council Members & Update Steering Team (as needed)	Recruit new Council Members & Update Steering Team (as needed)
Nov	Recruit Steering Team	Update Achievement & Root Cause Data <i>(surveys are optional)</i>	Update Achievement & Root Cause Data <i>(surveys are optional)</i>	Revise Vision & Update Achievement & Root Cause Data <i>(including Student, Faculty, Parent, and Community Surveys)</i>
Dec	Create Organizational Structure / Learn About SI2	Mid-Year Intervention Implementation Evaluation	Mid-Year Intervention Implementation Evaluation	Mid-Year Intervention Implementation Evaluation
Jan	Collect Achievement Data & Root Cause Data <i>(including Student, Faculty, Parent, and Community Surveys)</i>	Achievement Goals Update	Achievement Goals Update	Achievement Goals Update
Feb	Write Vision Statement	Root Causes Update	Root Causes Update	Root Causes Update
Mar	Identify Achievement Goals <i>Focus Areas and SMART Goals</i>	Intervention Update	Intervention Update	Intervention Update
Apr	Identify Root Causes	Prepare to Implement Interventions	Prepare to Implement Interventions	Prepare to Implement Interventions
May	Select Interventions			
May Jun	Prepare to Implement Interventions <i>detailed planning</i>			



Title I School-Wide Plan

Additional Strategies for Otwell Miller Academy

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

School Phone Number:	(812) 354-0800
Director:	Rich Padgett
Director Email:	rpadgett@oma.school
School Principal:	Rich Padgett
School Principal Contact Email:	rpadgett@oma.school

VISION OF EXCELLENCE

We believe that all students deserve a safe and interactive environment to learn. All students deserve access to educational opportunities needed on an individualized basis. We strive for all adults in our community to cultivate an environment that allows our students to explore and take risks without prejudice. As a result of these core convictions, students will thrive, and our children will feel safe and confident in their journey of learning.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Location: Otwell Miller Academy is located in Pike County in southern Indiana. The school is located in the small farming community of Otwell (Pop. 434), as part of Jefferson Township. The town has several small businesses, a fire station, a post office, and a library.

Brief History: Otwell Miller first opened their doors to students for the 2017-2018 school year after the Pike County School Board voted to close Otwell Elementary School (OES) on June 8th, 2015. The school corporation was four million dollars in deficit and, with a failed referendum in 2015 (which would have generated 2.3 million annually), further cuts were inevitable. The people of Otwell wanted to see the school board find alternate ways of cutting costs so that schools were not shuttered. They contend that without a school, businesses leave and without businesses, tax dollars are lost, thus perpetuating a downward economic spiral. Additionally, they believe strongly that this rural school is the hub of the community by providing employment. OMA also serves as a social, recreational, and cultural foundation. At a school board meeting, Michael Houtsch (then president of Friends of Otwell Elementary LTD.), emphasized the number of businesses that left Otwell and the neighboring town of Velpen when they lost their respective high schools. This furthermore reinforced the belief that to maintain a strong and vibrant community, a strong central gathering point, such as a school, is needed.

When the closure of Otwell Elementary was announced, the people of the town came together and developed Friends of Otwell Elementary LTD, a non-for-profit entity that supported the effort to reclaim the school as a charter. After a study of innovative educational models, discussions with educational leaders, and visits to many schools, the founding group decided to embrace a project-based model of educating youth using Indiana State Standards and the Core Knowledge Sequence.

MISSION STATEMENT

“To develop alternative educational opportunities, improve existing educational structures and build a brighter pathway to success for our children.”

VISION

“At Otwell Miller Academy, we believe that the life-long educational journey begins with a love of learning. However, our academy’s mission extends beyond book learning to encouraging our students to embrace service above self, becoming active citizens and leading others to excellence. By providing an environment where our students are not afraid to fail, our students are prepared for success in higher learning, serving their community and leading their peers.”

CORE BELIEFS

It is OMA’s belief that by using resources available in the community and creating opportunity for learning to come to life, OMA will best prepare students educationally, socially, and emotionally at levels that the students will truly internalize and ultimately be able to teach others what they have learned. It is the OMA’s core belief that students will continue to gain skills and knowledge in post-secondary education and will, in due course, give back to their community.

STAFF INFORMATION

Staff Overview: Otwell Miller Academy’s 2024-2025 staff consists of eight teachers, one contract teacher, seven instructional aides, one school nurse, one director, one administrative assistant, three bus drivers, and three cafeteria and custodial staff.

Teachers and Para-Professional Qualifications: Per section 1111(g)(2)(J) of ESEA, as amended by ESSA, all teachers who are teaching in a program that is supported with Title I funding must meet appropriate state certification and licensure requirements. Para-professionals/classroom assistants must also meet the highly qualified guidelines (through PRAXIS, teacher's license, two or more years of college, or Ed-Flex approved waiver). Documentation is on file in the school's main office.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Otwell Miller Academy strives to recruit the absolute best instructional staff by using the following methods:

- OMA recruits from professional organizations including Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and Teach Plus. OMA also recruits from educational organizations including Indiana University, Southern Indiana University, Hanover College, and the University of Evansville.
- Administration and instructional staff are encouraged to use their wide teaching network to recruit effective teachers for open positions.
- OMA prioritizes the hiring of individuals that best fit the school model and recognize similar goals lead to a cohesive work environment.
- OMA consults practitioners and experts who have a clear sense of the school to attract talent that aligns with the school philosophy and are representative of the community.
- Staff participate in building level meetings once or twice monthly. Administration and staff discuss any questions regarding curriculum, student achievement, and/or safety concerns. Professional development presenters and materials are also brought in to help staff in areas of concern.
- Otwell Miller Academy invests in teacher's development and encourages them to continue learning.
- Teachers are eligible to request to attend conferences or other professional development outside of school.
- With a staff of twenty-four, new staff is warmly welcomed and given a tour of the school. Everyone is willing to help with any questions that may arise.
- Staff members go over all paper work and safety procedures with the principal and are given the opportunity to ask any questions or voice any concerns.
- Otwell Miller Academy offers competitive salary and benefits and review for merit and market comparability annually.
- Staff are offered generous paid time off, granted each year.
- Otwell Miller Academy contributes 100% of the 3% employer match into the teacher/paraprofessional retirement programs.
- Professional development is offered to teachers and the principal in areas such as trauma training, CPR, civil rights, STEM Camp, Indiana University Science and Writing workshop, behavior support, and achievement data. In addition, all instructional staff may request professional development in any area and approval will be granted based on need and resources available.

Teacher Mentoring: Otwell Miller Academy is developing a more collaborative environment. Instructional teams are the backbone of the school. Teachers are provided various resources in order to increase the effectiveness of their instruction in the following ways:

- Teachers engage in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) weekly. This allows the principal to have a direct line of influence with teachers. These teachers and their actions have a direct influence in the classroom. This relationship between leadership and instructional staff allows educators to be more efficient and allows for a foundation that increases student achievement.
- Mentor teachers have one on one meetings with the principal prior to meeting with mentee teachers so the principal can serve as a high-level coach if the mentor teachers need guidance and to ensure that goals are aligned with all teachings staff.
- School administration reviews assessment data and performs classroom observations for teachers. If a teacher is found to be ineffective, they meet with the principal one-on-one and are placed on an Individual Growth Plan designed by Otwell Miller Academy. Staff are evaluated according to their growth plan and given the opportunity to promote student growth and achievement in their classroom. If a teacher is still not able to perform effectively, the position will be filled with an existing or recruited effective teacher.

Teachers Included in Decision Making: As a school of less than 25 staff and only eight instructional teachers, OMA encourages all staff to be actively involved in decision making. Administration consults with teachers in regard to decisions concerning students, behavior, policies, procedures, safety concerns, curriculum, and schoolwide planning. Administration meets bi-weekly with instructional staff to discuss progress monitoring and assessment results. Otwell Miller Academy has had 100% teacher retention since opening. This allows each teacher to maintain autonomy in their classroom and adapt to how their students are learning. Teachers keep living documents of pacing guides and curriculum maps as they work through sections with their students. This allows for fluidity in how long teachers stay on each topic and allows for teachers to plan ahead in the following year when teaching difficult subject matter.

Teacher/Principal Evaluation: Evaluation criteria are aligned to the school's core values and to the actions and habits demonstrated by effective leaders. By providing clear measures, staff members know what is expected of them, and the specificity of the performance measures ensure accurate self-assessment of leadership development. The principal will be evaluated by the board prior to the end of each year's contract, based on criteria set forth by job responsibilities and all elements of the school's Accountability Plan. The evaluation form for the principal outlines specific measures around the following school leadership competencies: (a) instructional expertise and leadership; (b) people management and development; (c) school culture and character development; (d) communication; (e) strategic thinking and planning; (f) building teams and working organizationally; (g) self- management and organization; (h) professionalism and character; and (i) budget, enrollment, and compliance. Results will be in writing and included in the employee's personnel file. Decisions to renew the

principal's contract will be based on the evaluation, which will incorporate the following: Mid-Year Self-Evaluation & Board End-of-Year Evaluation of Principal; and External School Audit.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION METHODS

Otwell Miller Academy reviews curriculum on an annual basis and seeks input in a variety of ways from different stakeholders. In reviewing textbooks and other curricular resources, OMA considers the following factors: (a) alignment to the Indiana Academic Standards; (b) enhanced cohesion to the State Standards; (c) basis in scientific research; (d) degree of use in high performing rural schools; and (e) proven effectiveness with special populations of students. Proposed new and existing curriculum is discussed during grade level meetings to determine what would be most beneficial for the grade level team and promote the highest level of student achievement. All curriculum suggestions for each grade level and subject area are brought to administration. Administration reviews existing curriculum and any proposed new curriculum for effectiveness annually.

Educational Programs and Curriculum: All curriculum is located in each classroom and the main office and available for public inspection. The following programs and curriculum are used to strengthen the core academic programs and increase implementation of instructional strategies across, curriculum, classrooms, and grade levels:

- **Textbooks, Software, and Online Programs:** Pearson ReadyGen: Social Studies, Science, and Reading, IReady, Handwriting without Tears, ABC Mouse, Teach your Monster to Read, Freckle, Scott Foresman Reading, Spelling City, Reading Street, iReading Math, Prodigy, Virtual Science Labs, Physics Basketball, Sum Dog, Khan Academy, Math Antics, EPIC!, Sushi Math, and Readers and Writers Notebook.
- **Assessment and Evaluation methods:** NWEA, DIBELS, ISTEP, IREAD, ILEARN, CLOSE tests, teacher generated classroom tests and quizzes, paper/pencil benchmarks, Pearson's Reading Benchmark, State Standardized teacher generated checklist, weekly subject matter tests, textbook provided tests and quizzes, and cumulative projects. In addition to "test" assessments, students are assessed daily on soft skills and personal growth.

Otwell Miller Academy views an education program to be the sum of an effective curricular content, aligned in a planned sequence, delivered with high-interest instructional methods, and assessed with summative and formative measures. All selected curriculum and supplemental materials are well-aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards, sequentially aligned to Core Knowledge, and designed to be used in a project-based environment.

Project-Based Learning (PBL): While OMA is not an "immersive" project-based education model, students learn best when actively engaged in real world, high-interest projects. PBL makes school more engaging for students, and it prepares them for the real-life working situations they will encounter as adults.

According to information from the Buck Institute for Education (http://bie.org/about/why_pbl)

- PBL makes school more engaging for students. Today's students, more than ever, often find school to be boring and meaningless. In PBL, students are active, not passive; a project engages their hearts and minds and provides real-world relevance for learning.
- PBL improves learning. After completing a project, students understand content more deeply, remember what they learn and retain it longer than is often the case with traditional instruction. Because of this, students who gain content knowledge with PBL are better able to apply what they know and can do to new situations.
- PBL builds success skills for college, career, and life. In the 21st century workplace and in college, success requires more than basic knowledge and skills. In a project, students learn how to take initiative and responsibility, build their confidence, solve problems, work in teams, communicate ideas, and manage themselves more effectively.
- PBL helps address standards. Present-day standards emphasize real-world application of knowledge and skills, and the development of success skills such as critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, communication in a variety of media, and speaking and presentation skills. PBL is an effective way to meet these goals.
- PBL provides opportunities for students to use technology. Students are familiar with and enjoy using a variety of tech tools that are a perfect fit with PBL. With technology, teachers and students can not only find resources and information and create products, but also collaborate more effectively, and connect with experts, partners, and audiences around the world.
- PBL makes teaching more enjoyable and rewarding. Projects allow teachers to work more closely with active, engaged students doing high-quality, meaningful work, and in many cases to rediscover the joy of learning alongside their students.
- PBL connects students and schools with communities and the real world. Projects provide students with empowering opportunities to make a difference, by solving real problems and addressing real issues. Students learn how to interact with adults and organizations, are exposed to workplaces and adult jobs, and can develop career interests. Parents and community members can be involved in projects.
- PBL is an important component in working with Core Knowledge.

Teachers at OMA will challenge and motivate students to learn by providing them with real life problems to solve. Students will learn to better communicate, collaborate, and think critically and creatively. PBL is an inclusive approach to education, which involves a participatory community of learners in the process of solving academic and real-world problems. It is based on a number of research-based assumptions:

- Human beings are driven to solve problems.
- We are challenged and motivated when confronted with problems that need solutions.
- The current generation of students is technologically sophisticated
- The work world in which students will participate is increasingly characterized by critical thinking, analysis of evidence and data, and a team approach to getting work done.

Students are presented with a problem that they must research and attempt to solve. They work in groups or teams, with the teacher acting as a coach giving students guidance as to how to ultimately solve the problem. Students must do research, weigh evidence and think critically and analytically about the problems they are examining. This experiential approach to learning will take different forms (problem-based learning, project-based learning and design-based learning) as we differentiate instruction based upon the age and grade level of the students.

Readers and Writers Workshop: Students at OMA experience Readers and Writers Workshop during the 45-minute skill classes in the afternoons. Workshops are highly structured, predictable, purposeful, and well planned. The Writers Workshop approach is the result of more than 30 years of work by the leaders of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and thousands of affiliated schools across the country. Kelley conducted a large-scale study that compared the writing process approach to the lecture, teacher-only approach. The study revealed that the quality of writing from students who participated in Writers Workshop was twenty-two times greater in a pretest/posttest assessment. Other studies have found the Readers Workshop approach to be similarly effective. Debbie Miller, Detroit teacher for thirty years, author and lecturer, describes strategies that proficient readers use to make meaning out of a text and these strategies are ones taught during the Readers Workshop class time.

Service Learning: Service learning that involves community projects will be an integral part of OMA. Service Learning uses many or all disciplines in completing a project. Students at all grade levels will be involved in giving back to the community.

Proven Study of Success in Service-Learning Initiatives:

At Spring Valley School in Columbia, South Carolina, more than 1,200 Spanish- language students engaged in service-learning projects. In one project, they distributed 20 tons of food, clothing, medicine, and household products to needy new arrivals in the area with the fastest-growing Hispanic population. At Topa Topa Elementary School at Ojai, California, 5th and 6th grade students created pamphlets on the pros and cons of pesticides to explain how crop pickers can protect themselves against the substances. Students passed out the brochure, written in Spanish and English, to workers and consumers throughout the Ojai Valley. Through the project, students fulfilled state- required standards for language arts, science, and social studies (Ragland, 2002).

Glenn (2001) found that more than 80 percent of the schools that integrate service learning into the classroom report an improvement in grade point averages of participating students. For example, when teachers integrated service learning into the curriculum in a Springfield, Massachusetts, high school, the dropout rate dropped from 12 percent to 1 percent, the number of students going to college increased by 22 percent, and those achieving a grade point average of 3.0 or higher increased from 12 percent to 40 percent. According to Glenn, such

programs foster a lifelong commitment to civic participation, sharpen “people skills,” and prepare students for the work force.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Based on best practices from rural schools eliminating the achievement gap nationwide, teachers are taught the practices below during summer professional development so they can execute from day one. Additional support and individualized feedback from the school's principal will be shared weekly.

- **Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction:** Curriculum is designed upon Indiana's Academic Standards and aligns to the Indiana State Standards (ISS). Teachers are trained in analyzing standards and unpacking them to uncover their primary objective and build their daily lesson plans and longer units of study in a manner best suited for achieving the desired student outcome.
- **Use Data Every Day:** Sequential instruction leads students to a standard and a goal, not just to the next topic. Teachers use data daily to guarantee students make progress towards end-of-year goals and long-term targets. Although a significant amount of data is generated by school-wide assessments, each teacher uses data to inform instruction for each objective. The frequent use of standards-driven assessment data notifies teachers if mastery is occurring at the appropriate pace or if more intensive instruction is required.
- **Systematic Checks for Understanding:** Assessing students' learning on an ongoing basis is pivotal to tracking progress aligned to grade-level and individual goals. Effective checks for understanding are intentional and purposeful. Methods to ensure effective checks include: direct questioning and paraphrasing, written response, think-pair-share, small group or partner discussion, use of signs or cues, or choral response.
- **Strong emphasis on differentiated instruction:** The small class size model in key subjects ensures instructional staff are proactively reaching all learners in a manner that individualizes instruction based on recent data, teacher observations, and overall class performance. Using data during literacy rotations allows teachers to differentiate instruction in small groups, working with groups of six for 30 minutes at a time.
- **Taxonomy of Teaching:** OMA uses a variety of academic, behavioral and advanced instructional techniques that reinforce student expectations and build high levels of student engagement. OMA also provides training on selected techniques throughout the year.
- **Small group and one-on-one tutoring:** Targeted interventions throughout the day allow for opportunities to deliver focused instruction in precise areas of concern and to reteach concepts not mastered. Assessment data is used to inform our tutoring practices.

- **Individualized Computer-based Learning:** Students spend 30 minutes on the computer daily as a key component of our literacy rotations. Reading software specifically designed to supplement core reading instruction, such as Istation for K-5, will be computer adaptive, allowing for individualized and targeted instruction derived from scientifically-based reading research. Assessment data on phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension gathered from the software provides teachers with another indicator of a student's progress, as well as targeted interventions, specific tools, and interactive literature designed to elevate students to on-grade level reading and beyond.

Technology and Delivery of Instruction: Technology is embedded into all areas of the curriculum (reading, writing, math, science, social studies). Technology is a fact of life in the classroom and the school—as it is in the real world. Teachers maintain achievement and growth records that are technology-based. The school also makes use of computer software that differentiates instruction. Students use technology to publish reports, presentations, and writing samples. Students are taught word processing and spreadsheets. Many assessments are technology-based (e.g., Acuity, Dibels). Technology can also be used in PBL activities and with other student collaboration projects. In a word, technology will be leveraged to support and enhance student learning—in the classroom and through assessment.

OMA develops a technology plan each year. It contains four primary components: annual technology trends survey; three measurable goals; three-year projected budget; and plans for technology use. The use of technology is also part of Professional Development opportunities for staff.

Even as a small, rural school, Otwell Miller Academy provides all students with a school issued Chromebook. One nationally representative research project, Project RED, found that when schools properly implement an initiative that provides every student with a computer, disciplinary action goes down, high-stakes test scores go up, fewer students drop out and more students graduate. Project RED concluded, "In general, respondents say that schools with a 1:1 student-computer ratio outperform non-1:1 schools on both academics and financial benefits." Therefore, technology is integrated across the curriculum. All students use technology as part of their learning experience and are able to access a wider range of programs to supplement curriculum.

Otwell Miller Academy utilizes a variety of technology hardware, such as:

- 1:1 Chromebooks in all grades
- Staff laptops
- Mimio Board
- Promethean Board
- Document Cameras
- Projectors
- Tablets
- Calculators

Otwell Miller Academy uses technology to integrate the following software or programs into the curriculum:

- Integrated textbook online components
- Freckle
- Prodigy
- Sumdog
- Google Docs
- Spelling City
- Khan Academy
- IReady Math
- IReading
- Virtual Science Labs
- EPIC!
- Math Antics
- Physics Basketball

Differentiated Instruction: At OMA, teachers are taught to use various teaching methods to differentiate the curriculum for all learners. Differentiating the curriculum for students is natural in teaching a project-based curriculum. Students are given choices and will gravitate towards “how they learn”. Differentiation is a way of teaching; it’s not a program or package of worksheets. It asks teachers to know their students well so they can provide each one with experiences and tasks that will improve learning. As educator, author and speaker Carol Ann Tomlinson has said, differentiation means giving students multiple options for taking in information (1999). Differentiating instruction means that teachers observe and understand the differences and similarities among students and use this information to plan instruction. Below is a list of some key principles the teachers use to form the foundation of differentiating instruction in their classroom.

- **Ongoing, formative assessment:** Teachers continually assess to identify students’ strengths and areas of need so they can meet students where they are and help them move forward.
- **Recognition of diverse learners:** The students we teach have diverse levels of expertise and experience with reading, writing, thinking, problem solving, and speaking. Ongoing assessments enable teachers to develop differentiated lessons that meet every student's needs.
- **Group Work:** Students collaborate in pairs and small groups whose membership changes as needed. Learning in groups enables students to engage in meaningful discussions and to observe and learn from one another.
- **Problem Solving:** The focus in classrooms that differentiate instruction is on issues and concepts rather than “the book” or the chapter. This encourages all students to explore big ideas and expand their understanding of key concepts.

- **Choice:** Teachers offer students choice in their reading and writing experiences and in the tasks and projects they complete. By negotiating with students, teachers can create motivating assignments that meet students' diverse needs and varied interests.

Differentiating instruction asks teachers to continually strive to know and to respond to each students' needs to maximize learning.

Exceptional Learners: Otwell Miller Academy is committed to providing high-quality instruction and appropriate supplemental services to all students. This includes students with Individualized Education Programs, students with Section 504 plans, English Language Learners, and Gifted Learners. OMA assesses and identifies any students with these needs and serves them appropriately.

1. Special Education

- a. Individualized Education Programs (IEP) Components

- i. A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance and how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum;
 - ii. A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives;
 - iii. A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child;
 - iv. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and in other activities;
 - v. A statement of any individual modifications in the administrations of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment;
 - vi. The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications identified and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications; and
 - vii. A statement of how progress toward annual goals will be measured and how the parents will be regularly informed, at least as often as parents of the non-disabled students, of their child's progress toward the annual goals and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.

- b. Identification

- i. In accordance with 34 CFR §300.301-300.311, the referral of students for a full and individual initial evaluation for possible special education services is a component of OMA's overall general education Response to Intervention (RTI) system. Prior to referral, students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom are considered for all support services available to all students, such as tutorial, remedial, compensatory, and other services. If the student continues to experience difficulty in the general classroom after the provision of interventions, school personnel documents the provision of interventions and refers the student for a full and individual initial evaluation.
 - ii. OMA ensures that a full and individual evaluation is conducted for each student being considered for special education and related services. The

evaluation is completed before the initial provision of special education and related services is provided and addresses whether the student is a “student with a disability” in accordance with federal and state requirements and the educational needs of the student.

- iii. Based on the requirements of 34 CFR §300.232, OMA has an IEP in effect for each identified student with a disability. OMA ensures that the IEP is in effect before special education and related services are provided to an eligible child and that the IEP is implemented as soon as possible following the IEP committee meeting.
 - iv. For a student who is new to OMA, a Transfer IEP committee will meet prior to or upon the student’s enrollment. In this case, the parents must verify that the student was receiving special education services in the previous school district or the previous school district must verify in writing or by telephone that the student was receiving special education services. A second IEP committee meeting must be held within 30 school days from the date of the first IEP committee meeting to finalize or develop an IEP based on current information.
- c. Instructional Programs and Strategies for Special Education Students
- i. Inclusion, differentiated instruction, and interactive technology strategies have been implemented as appropriate for students identified with disabilities. Differentiated instruction applies an approach to teaching and learning that gives students multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas. This can be done for the special needs learner with or without technology. Differentiated instruction lends itself to the inclusion of all students into the general education classroom, allowing teachers to meet students where they are in order to help them achieve the highest possible standards.
 - ii. OMA assures that students with disabilities are educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to meet the student’s IEP and overall educational needs (34 CFR §300.114- 330.116). In providing programs, services, and activities for students with disabilities, OMA shall first consider the least restrictive environment of the general education program. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the general education environment will occur only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily. OMA will provide a FAPE for students with disabilities in order to meet the need for special education and related services (34 CFR §300.115). This includes a variety of placements and will make provision for supplementary services to be provided in conjunction with general education classroom placement.
 - iii. Students with disabilities also have a variety of educational programs and services available to students without disabilities, accessible facilities, and the same instructional regular school day as is provided to all other students. In addition, OMA ensures that each child with a disability participates with non-disabled students in non-academic and

extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, and the services and activities set forth in 34 CFR §300.320.

d. Progress Monitoring and Evaluation

i. In both the development and review (and revision as appropriate) of a child's IEP, the IEP team will consider the strengths of the student and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child, the results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child, and, if appropriate, the results of the student's performance on any state or district-wide assessment that has been administered. In addition, the IEP team will also consider special factors such as:

1. whether a child's behavior impedes his or her learning or the learning of others,
2. whether a student is limited English proficient and the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child's IEP, and
3. what the communication needs of the student are and whether the child needs assistive technology devices/services.

ii. Review of the IEP will occur annually or more frequently if the student is not being successful.

e. Staffing: All special education personnel shall be certified, endorsed, or licensed in the area or areas of assignment in accordance with 34 CFR §300.156 or appropriate state agency credentials. OMA employs one certified special education teacher. Additional special education personnel (e.g., teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers) will either be employed or contracted with depending on students' needs at the school. Using a multi-certified and multi-strength staff provides students at OMA with tailor-made support services to meet each individual need. An experienced director of special education services is contracted through our ESP to ensure compliance with IDEA, Article 7 and all applicable laws and requirements.

2. English Language Learners (ELL)

a. Identification

i. The school administers a home language survey to identify the first/native language(s) of all students enrolled in the school. This home language survey is administered to ALL students enrolled in the school, and the survey will be used during the enrollment process to identify the native language of each new student at the time of enrollment into the school. Documentation of a student's native language will be recorded in the permanent record. OMA will implement an identification procedure to survey all students in the school with the following three questions:

1. What is the native language of the student?
2. What language(s) is (are) spoken most often by the student?
3. What language(s) is (are) spoken by the student in the home?

b. Instructional Programs and Strategies for ELL Students

i. OMA will provide equal educational opportunity to language minority students with the appropriate level of English language development to allow for meaningful participation of language minority students in the school's educational programs. Such instruction will take place during the

regular school day. A minimum of one (1) hour daily will be appropriate for LEP students at English proficiency levels 1-4.

- ii. After a determination of needs based on the student population, one or more of the following approaches to instruction may be used:
 1. Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE): TBE is an instructional program in which subjects are taught through two languages—English and the native language of the English language learners—and English is taught as a second language. English language skills, grade promotion, and graduation requirements will be emphasized, and the student’s native language will be used as a tool to learn content. The primary purpose of these programs is to facilitate the LEP student’s transition to an all-English instructional environment while receiving academic subject instruction in the native language to the extent necessary. As proficiency in English increases, instruction through the student’s native language decreases. Transitional bilingual education programs vary in the amount of native language instruction provided and in the duration of the program. TBE programs may be early-exit or late-exit, depending on the amount of time a child may spend in the program.
 2. English as a Second Language (ESL): ESL is an educational approach in which English language learners are instructed in the use of the English language. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content), and is usually taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual education program. Every bilingual education program has an ESL component. Pull-Out ESL: A program in which LEP students are “pulled out” of the regular, mainstream classrooms for special instruction in English as a second language.
 3. Content-Based ESL: This approach to teaching ESL makes use of instructional materials, learning tasks, and classroom techniques from academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, cognitive, and study skills. English will be used as the medium of instruction.
 4. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): English language development (ELD) means instruction designed specifically for English language learners to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. This type of instruction is also known as ESL, “teaching English to speakers of other languages” (TESOL), ESOL. ELD, ESL, TESOL, or ESOL standards are a version of English language arts standards that have been crafted to address the specific developmental stages of students learning English.

5. Sheltered English: An instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to English language learners to help them acquire proficiency in English while at the same time achieving in content areas. Sheltered English instruction differs from ESL in that English is not taught as a language with a focus on learning the language. Rather, content knowledge and skills are the goals. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use simplified language, physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects.
 6. Structured Immersion: In this program, language minority students receive all of their subject matter instruction in their second language. The teacher uses a simplified form of the second language. Students may use their native language in class; however, the teacher uses only the second language. The goal is to help minority language students acquire proficiency in English while at the same time achieving in content areas.
- c. Progress Monitoring and Evaluation
- i. OMA will assess all students whose first language is other than English to determine whether a student is Fluent English Proficient (FEP, see level 5) or Limited-English Proficient (LEP, see levels 1-4). Each spring, all LEP students must participate in the WIDA proficiency assessment. Newly enrolling students must be assessed for identification as LEP using the WIDA within thirty calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks during the school year.
 - ii. Assessment shall, to the extent possible, include listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities, as well as academic achievement. Language proficiency levels are described below:
 1. Beginner (Level 1): Students performing at this level of English language proficiency begin to demonstrate receptive or productive English skills. They are able to respond to some simple communication tasks.
 2. Early Intermediate (Level 2): Students performing at this level of English language proficiency respond with increasing ease to more varied communication tasks.
 3. Intermediate (Level 3): Students performing at this level of English language proficiency tailor the English language skills they have been taught to meet their immediate communication and learning needs. They are able to understand and be understood in many basic social situations (while exhibiting many errors of convention) and need support in academic language.
 4. Advanced (Level 4): Students performing at this level of English language proficiency combine the elements of the English language in complex, cognitively demanding situations and are able to use English as a means for learning in other academic areas, although some minor errors of convention are still evident.

5. Fluent English Proficient (Level 5): Students performing at this level of English language proficiency communicate effectively with various audiences on a wide range of familiar and new topics to meet social and academic demands. Students speak, understand, read, write, and comprehend in English without difficulty and display academic achievement comparable to native English-speaking peers. In order to attain the English proficiency level of their native English-speaking peers, further linguistic enhancement and refinement are necessary.
- iii. Retention of language minority students will not be based solely upon English language proficiency. Appropriate classroom modifications should be made for each language-minority student to ensure meaningful participation in the educational program.
 - iv. OMA will continue to provide English language development services to LEP students until they attain an Overall/Composite score of Level 5 on the summative WIDA proficiency assessment. Services for Level 4 students may be modified based on the students' needs.
 - v. Upon the first Overall/Composite score of Level 5, students are exited from daily English language development services and reclassified as FEP for reporting purposes and they begin informal monitoring. At this point students no longer generate funding. The following Spring, upon the attainment of the second Overall/Composite score of Level 5 on WIDA, students enter the formal two-year monitoring period required by Title III to ensure continued academic success. After the second score of Level 5, students will no longer participate in WIDA.
 - vi. The method of maintaining this information for each language-minority student is the Individual Learning Plan (ILP). ILPs are developed for each student and updated annually based on their Overall/Composite of English proficiency on WIDA. ILPs are developed by the ESL teacher in collaboration with the classroom teacher. Accommodations used on ILEARN must be those already in place for regular classroom instruction that are outlined on each ILP.
- d. Staffing: All English Language Learners (ELL) personnel will be certified, endorsed, or licensed in the area of assignment. Additional ELL personnel will either be employed or contracted with depending on the students' needs at the school. OMA will participate in training programs designed to help the development and implementation of these guidelines offered; these will be facilitated by the Office of English Language Learning & Migrant Education, including in-service and technical assistance. Other resources for staff development may include courses available through the Regional Educational Service Centers, various university-level courses, annual conferences held by the Office of English Language Learning & Migrant Education, Indiana Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (INTESOL) and the national Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) conferences.

3. Intellectually Gifted Students

a. Identification

- i. OMA provides students with a rigorous educational program. For those students who are academically advanced, additional opportunities will be provided to enhance their education, e.g., additional electives. OMA understands that students can be gifted in one area or another and these gifts are not necessarily tied to their cognitive scores.
 - ii. Project based education lends itself well to meeting the needs of intellectually gifted students. PBL is based on student empowerment. Gifted students can pace themselves, spending less time on easier tasks, but more time on complex and intellectually stimulating ones. Gifted students often excel in projects using authentic assessment.
 - iii. Demonstrations of learning can take many shapes and forms, and students are always be encouraged to show their very best work. As mentioned earlier, the key to many educational challenges is differentiated instruction. OMA prioritizes this in an effort to help all students reach their potential.
- b. Staffing: All personnel are certified, endorsed, or licensed in the area or areas of assignment in accordance with 34 CFR §300.156 or appropriate state agency credentials. Additionally, OMA seeks professional development opportunities for better preparing staff to meet the needs of these students.
- c. Progress Monitoring and Evaluation: Any student with an ILP, this would include students in the gifted program, shall have his or her program reviewed annually or more frequently should the student not be making adequate progress towards his or her goals stated within the ILP.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Understood.org defines MTSS as a framework used to provide targeted support to struggling students. It focuses on the “whole child.” MTSS supports academic growth and achievement, but it also supports many other areas. This includes behavior, social and emotional needs, and absenteeism. The multi-tiered supports are a huge part of MTSS. MTSS supports all students, including general education and high-risk. These tiers of support increase in intensity from one level to the next. The MTSS model can help general education students receive interventions sooner. It can also help identify sooner which students need special education.

MTSS has several key elements:

- Universal screening for all students early in each school year
- Increasing levels of targeted support for those who are struggling
- Integrated plans that address students’ academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs
- The use of evidence-based strategies
- A school-wide approach to student support. Teachers, counselors, psychologists and other specialists work as a team when they assess students and plan interventions.
- Professional development so staff can deliver interventions and monitor progress effectively

- Family involvement so parents can understand the interventions and provide support at home
- Frequent monitoring of students' progress so educators can use this data to help decide if more interventions are needed

One primary component of MTSS is the academic focused multi-tiered support, Response to Intervention (RTI). According to The RTI Action Network, RTI as a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.

1. Tiered Supports

- a. Tier 1: High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions
 - i. Within Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction provided by qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction.
 - ii. All students are screened on a periodic basis to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. Students identified as being "at risk" through universal screenings and/or results on state- or districtwide tests receive supplemental instruction during the school day in the regular classroom. The length of time for this step can vary, but it generally should not exceed 8 weeks.
 - iii. During that time, student progress is closely monitored using a validated screening system such as curriculum-based measurement. At the end of this period, students showing significant progress are generally returned to the regular classroom program. Students not showing adequate progress are moved to Tier 2.
- b. Tier 2: Targeted Interventions
 - i. Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom in Tier 1 are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress.
 - ii. Intensity varies across group size, frequency and duration of intervention, and level of training of the professionals providing instruction or intervention. These services and interventions are provided in small-group settings in addition to instruction in the general curriculum. In the early grades (kindergarten through 3rd grade), interventions are usually in the areas of reading and math.
 - iii. A longer period of time may be required for this tier, but it should generally not exceed a grading period. Students who continue to show too little

progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3.

- c. Tier 3: Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation
 - i. At this level, students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the students' skill deficits.
 - ii. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004).
 - iii. The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included and used to make the eligibility decision.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cultural Competency: Otwell Miller Academy is in a rural setting with 61% of their students qualifying for free and reduced meals. The school improvement plan includes strategies to address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly low achieving children and those at risk of not meeting state standards are emphasized. Otwell Miller Academy focuses on project-based and service-based academics as a way of incorporating something that all children, regardless of demographics, have in common. Teachers are encouraged to read books and attend professional development on teaching in a rural community and what it means for the students and families to live in one. The teachers, many who also come from the same background as the students, are often engaged with the community outside of the school. This allows staff to have a better understanding of the experiences the students in their classroom have been through and the best way to assist them with different or new learning materials.

While neighboring communities are not very racially or ethnically diverse, and Otwell Miller Academy's school demographics reflect that as well, OMA will make it a point to expose all students to other cultures. Administration will also encourage teachers to assign projects that allow the students to immerse themselves in the accomplishments of these minority groups that they may not get to interact with on a daily basis. This also gives OMA's minority student population the reinforcement that their identity is valued in the academic setting.

School Safety: School safety is a vital part of creating a constructive learning environment. In order for students, volunteers, and staff to look forward to coming in to work and school each day, they must have an understanding of their environment and feel safe in that environment. All staff are provided access to the Emergency Action Plan and participate in the review of the plan annually. According to the staff survey, 100% of teachers agreed that they know the emergency management procedures and that they practice implementing procedures for specific incidents with their students.

Beginning of the year professional development includes training on safety and emergency planning. The school complies with all emergency drills so that teachers and students alike know exactly how to proceed if an emergency arises. Any non-staff members that interact with students must undergo a background check prior to involvement with students.

Disciplined Learning Environment: The goal of Otwell Miller Academy is to establish supportive relationships with students in order to encourage them to learn new skills and promote positive behaviors and attitudes. Otwell Miller Academy (OMA) holds high expectations for student behavior and places a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and is safe for all. OMA knows that every minute out of class is a minute of instruction missed. Because of this, principal approval is required for any class removals exceeding one session. Behavior and discipline are tracked using student management software and through paper records. The principal monitors discipline data in order to ensure that the overuse of discipline, especially that which removes students from the classroom, is not occurring.

Teachers have the autonomy to manage behavior within their classroom in a manner that works best for their students. OMA strives to maintain a safe and respectful environment through adherence to proper behavioral expectations. Teachers use a variety of methods to convey behavior expectations with students including: clip charts, posted classroom rules, student created classroom behavior rules and goals, affirming statements when addressing corrections, teaching ownership in actions, “team” mentality towards behavior, and communicating rules on handouts provided to students and their parents. All students are taught actions and their respective consequences at the beginning of each school year. Teachers also communicate with parents any behavior trends in relation to their child and the effects on their child’s education.

Parent Participation: Parents assisted with the development of the school improvement plan through representation at the school improvement committee and participation at the Title I Annual Parent Meeting. The Title I Annual Parent Meeting is held prior to the beginning of the school year. The Title I Administrator explains the purpose and goals of the Title I program to parents. This meeting allows for parent input, questions, and concerns. Parents will be surveyed every year for input on the program and their satisfaction with school activities they are able to participate in with their student.

Otwell Miller Academy provides individual assessment results to parents every quarter. These assessment results are also discussed at parent-teacher conferences. Communication between parents and teachers is essential and required for the success of all students.

Parent involvement and community collaboration are critical to student growth and will provide the educational investment necessary to develop students beyond elementary school and into adulthood. In order to promote parent participation in students’ education, teachers operate private Facebook groups, generate weekly newsletters, share phone numbers and emails, and have parents sign-off on classroom work done at home. Most teachers agreed that one of the top student needs in order to succeed academically is parental involvement in the form of support of their studies.

Otwell Miller Academy also provides parents with opportunities to get involved with the school. Otwell Miller Academy hosts a variety of activities and encourages family attendance and parent volunteers such as, Back to School Night, Fire Prevention Week, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, 5th Grade Graduation, Grandparents' Day, American Education Week activities, Holiday World field trip, Blood Drive, Birthday Open House, Winter Program, Spring Program, Veterans Day Program, etc.

Community Engagement: True to the definition, from the very onset, OMA has epitomized a strong rural school. It was the parents and the Otwell community who raised awareness and strong opposition to closing their beloved school. Parents were actively involved, assisting the organizing group, getting accurate information to the community at large and gathering ideas for the OMA charter application. The community formed committees of people looking at academics, governance and financial issues that needed to be addressed. The existence of Otwell Miller Academy has been solely parent and community driven.

In a small rural area community involvement is an essential piece of daily instruction. Community involvement may include:

- Career Day - Community members will be asked to speak to student groups regarding their vocation and what educational components are necessary to obtain employment in their profession.
- Guest Speakers - locals, foundation representatives, civic club members, politicians, historians, etc. will be utilized in teaching the history of Pike and surrounding counties.
- Field trips to museums, cemeteries', local municipalities, parks, and historic sites, will give students' unique insight into the places and things that surround them.
- Community professionals will lead students in various studies such as water and soil testing, crop growth, identification of local plants, trees, animals and fish.
- Community members will teach local folklore and customs, share artifacts, etc.
- Community liaisons will financially support summer initiatives.

Established partners of Otwell Miller Academy include the organizations below:

Business	Location
Buchta Elmer Heavy Machine Mover	Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-6078
Buchta Elmer Trucking Inc.	Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-3131
Jefferson Township Community Center	2301 Spring St. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-2878
Jefferson Township Fire Dept.	9975 E. Jefferson St. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-2878
Jefferson Township Trustees	6291 E. Cty. Rd. 450 N. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-2406

Otwell Mercantile	2230 N. Spring St. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-9841
Otwell Ruritan Senior Housing	9821 E. Jefferson St. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-9117
Tri-County Paving	882 N. Cty. Rd. 800 E. Otwell, IN. 47564 812-354-1281
Wehr Welding and Machine Shop	2250 North Spring St. Otwell, IN 47564 812-354-2876

Early Childhood Transition: Transitioning into kindergarten is a monumental step for a child, and Otwell Miller Academy works to make this step as seamless as possible for students by doing the following:

- Conducting meetings involving parents, teachers, and Head Start teachers, to discuss the developmental and other needs of individual children.
- Hosting kindergarten information nights.
- Establish memorandum of understanding with local Head Start agency to ensure that Otwell Miller Academy is provided with transferring student’s academic, attendance, IEP, and other records determined to be beneficial to the continued support of the student.

Lil’ HOOsiers Preschool is also located in the Otwell Miller Academy building for preschool (3-4-years-old) and pre-k (4-5-years old) students.

WAIVER OF RULES AND STATUTES

Otwell Miller Academy has an approved waiver to qualify a paraprofessional as highly qualified through the following additional requirements:

- 1,000 hours of previous school employment
- One year of previous school employment
- 48 credit hours of college level classes with “passed” annual school-level evaluation

COORDINATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Otwell Miller Academy has a yearly budget of revenue and expenditures. OMA elects not to consolidate their federal funds but will continue to effectively coordinate and budget local, state, and federal program funding for all programs, services, and resources. Otwell Miller Academy participates in the following federal programs:

- Title I
- Title II
- Title IV
- SRSA
- ESSER
- SpED, Part B