

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Dena Rooks

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

Official School Name Des Arc Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2100 Hickory Street

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

City Des Arc State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72040-3128

County Prairie

Telephone (870) 256-4128 Fax (870) 256-4499

Web site/URL http://www.desarc.wmsc.k12.ar.us/ E-mail rooksd@desarcschools.org

Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/Des-
Arc-Elementary-

Twitter Handle 526439457433838/ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

_____ Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Nick Hill E-mail hilln@desarcschools.org

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

District Name Des Arc School District Tel. (870) 256-4164

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

_____ Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Charlie Brown

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

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

_____ Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	15	8	15
K	12	23	35
1	20	13	33
2	24	18	42
3	23	16	39
4	23	19	42
5	11	14	25
6	33	19	52
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	161	130	291

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 11 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 88 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 13%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	18
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	40
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	307
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.130
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 76 %
Total number students who qualify: 221

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
38 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 2 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 12 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 6 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 1 Orthopedic Impairment
- 8 Other Health Impaired
- 28 Specific Learning Disability
- 24 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	16
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 14:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

We strive to maintain collaborative relationships that facilitate success of all students through providing educational opportunities that promote academic, social, physical, and emotional development.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

Des Arc Public School is located in Des Arc, Arkansas. It is in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain Region in Prairie County. The landscape is rich, flat, delta farmland; therefore, the chief industry is farming. Our town is located on White River and near the Arkansas River. It is 45 miles east of Arkansas' state capital, Little Rock, with a population of approximately 1,650.

Arkansas Forestry Commission's Shade Trees on Playgrounds support these efforts. Because of our commitment to the arts, we support the participation in various local, state, and national art contests such as Lion's Club Peace Poster Contest. Moreover, our students learn to read music as they are introduced to a variety of musical instruments. A local musical instrument dealer provides instruments for elementary music classes. Additionally, each year we host the National Geographic Geography Bee for students in grades 5-6. Field trips for each grade level are designed to extend learning. 5th grade teachers, parents, and students raise money for students and teachers to attend Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. This year we added the National Archery in Schools Program. Students learn focus, poise, and safety through archery. At DAES we use these diverse opportunities to improve student motivation, increase whole child development, and enhance the educational process in a way that will promote career and college readiness.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

DAES implements a curriculum that is aligned with Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). Arkansas State Standards are used to guide Science and Social Studies curricula.

ELA curriculum goals for K-3 are to instill comprehension strategies and provide a foundation for lifelong learning through ELA. Kindergarten teachers begin equipping students with reading readiness skills, such as, concepts of print, phonemic and phonological awareness, and fluency. 1-2 grade teachers build upon foundational skills with a systematic application of sight words and phrases is used for reading. A phonetic approach is also incorporated for encoding and decoding words. Vocabulary instruction, fluency inferring, drawing conclusions, and summarizing are taught at these levels. Third grade shifts to an informational approach. Comprehension becomes a major factor in the reading process. 3rd grade curriculum uses foundational skills to facilitate a deeper understanding of word analysis, phonics, and fluency. This curriculum leads students to analyze characters, events, or ideas and their interactions over the course of a text and writing expression.

ELA curriculum, grades 4-6, is created around specific outcomes that engage students in a variety of literary experiences and interactions. Experiences are designed to facilitate interdisciplinary work. Students go through the process of becoming informed, competent users of language. In fourth grade, students begin analyzing word choices and its effect on tone. Grade five analyzes the parts of text structure and their role in the text. By sixth grade students begin to evaluate how the point of view or purpose shapes the style of a text.

The foundation of DAES mathematics curriculum and instructional methods is the Common Core State Standards. Our math program addresses all levels and learners while teaching real-world problem solving skill at appropriate stages. Our teachers use reached-based programs to guide instruction. Cognitively Guided Instruction in grades K-3 provide engaging, real-world problem solving while covering standards. Foundations of Fractions in grades 4-6 provide similar problem solving strategies at the higher level. Instructional methods at all grade levels are geared to help students learn to master math tasks both in school and throughout life. Teachers provide daily math instruction, reinforce core concepts, and provide immediate differentiation for students. Teaching methods balance conceptual understanding, visual learning as well as problem solving.

Instructional time in kindergarten revolves around numbers and counting focusing on two critical areas, represent, relate, and operate whole numbers, and describe attributes of shapes. 1-2 grades instruction concentrates on developing a conceptual understanding of addition and subtraction, whole number relationships, place value, and linear measurement. 3-5 grades focus on concepts, skills, and problem solving related to multiplication and division of whole numbers and fractions. Grade 6 studies ratios, proportional relationships, and early algebraic expressions and equations.

Each K-6 grade has an intervention aide full time to help ensure foundational skills are developed. Skill specific interventions are delivered based on assessment data, observations, or performance. Aides are utilized for small group instruction or support for teachers in their efforts to meet student needs of interventions or enrichments.

DAES K-6 Science Curriculum is modeled after the Next Generation Science Standards and Arkansas Science Frameworks. The curriculum is separated into three disciplines: physical, earth and space, and life. Our rigorous curriculum involves scientific skills needed to be successful in the 21st Century. The logically taught skills build throughout each grade. Intellectual, student-centered science approaches engage students in age-appropriate, real-world, inquiry-based learning activities. On-going investigations allow students to manipulate materials, make observations, express viewpoints, solve problems, and make decisions based on

collected evidence. DAES Science Curriculum integrates core ideas and practices, allowing students to make explicit connections to literacy and math.

The Social Studies Curriculum at DAES follows the Arkansas Social Studies Frameworks. Activities are designed for all students to analyze events, examine data, explore issues, assess sources of information, and develop the problem-solving skills essential to be productive citizens in the 21st Century. K-4 curricula provide an introduction to civics/government, economics, geography, and history. Practical classroom experiences engage students in building basic skills and foundational knowledge needed to make personal connections. Students build an understanding of self and personal experience, expanding to community, state, nation, and eventually a world view. 5-6 grades analyze patterns of change over time and humans' role in history. Students examine resources and communicate responses. Grade 5 history focuses on U.S. History from beginnings through the Revolutionary Period. Grade 6 history emphasizes World History, civics/government, economics, and geography from beginning through the middle of the first millennium.

Arkansas Early Childhood Education's approved curriculum, Adventures in Learning, is the curriculum used at our Arkansas Better Chance Program (ABC). This preschool program is for students ages three and four. The curriculum allows students the opportunity to explore language, literacy, math, science, art, dramatic play, construction, and physical education. The curriculum focuses on developing social skills, fine motor skills, printing first names, counting to 10, basic shapes and colors, and language development. Students learn language and social skills for the learning atmosphere. Sharing, cooperative learning, verbal communication skills, and following directions are enhanced by this curriculum. Benchmarks directly connect to the thirty-eight Kindergarten Readiness Indicators.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

A goal at Des Arc Elementary School (DAES) is to enrich student learning and participation beyond the basics. To achieve this goal, an extraordinary curriculum in art, music, physical education, technology, library/media, gifted and talented, and counseling is provided for all students kindergarten through sixth grade.

The visual art program provides a strong approach to teaching creativity and confidence through the student's individual art experience. Students are given the opportunity to think for themselves, express their own ideas, and produce original works of art. They experiment with a wide variety of materials throughout the year. Students also learn age appropriate art techniques, terms, and history.

The music department at DAES provides many opportunities for a worthwhile education in music. Classes meet forty five minutes once a week and a variety of instruments and music study strategies are introduced. Basic singing skills to listening, analyzing, reading, and creating music through various instruments are taught in music class. With such a structured, hands-on, elementary program, students are provided with multiple opportunities to excel.

The purpose of the physical education program is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, opportunities and encouragement needed to adopt healthy lifestyles. The instructor is a licensed physical education teacher who individualizes and modifies fitness plans as needed. Beginning with Kindergarten and then even numbered grades, DAES sends a student health report to parents with a body mass index percentile by age for each student. The physical education teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to integrate other subject areas into the physical education curriculum. DAES provides many chances to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles during the school day and in extracurricular programs outside of the school day. In addition, partnerships with local, state, and national programs keep students engaged, competitive, and challenged in diverse ways to explore health and fitness in their lives outside of the school day.

DAES is equipped with a computer lab in which all students kindergarten through sixth grade use weekly. The students work on various computer skills. Some of the programs used in the lab include ABC Mouse, Waggle, Typing Club, and Moby Max. Grades three through sixth have their own chromebook in each classroom. Kindergarten through second grade classrooms are equipped with iPads. Both Kindergarten

classes have a computer lab set up in their own room. Additional computers, chromebooks, and iPads are located in the library.

The library/media center at DAES provides an abundance of opportunities for students kindergarten through sixth grade. The full time librarian conducts weekly classes with each classroom in which they listen to stories, engage in lessons, check out books, and research topics. The librarian works with small groups and/or individual students. She hosts various book clubs, provides incentive reading programs, and reads individually with students. The librarian works closely with classroom teachers to provide additional support in all subject areas. She is also available throughout the day to help students with any media help that is needed. All students may check out one of the 15,000 book titles in the library for school or home use.

All K-6 grade students are provided monthly large group gifted and talented classes. A certified gifted and talented teacher uses this time to enrich students in motivating, real-world problem solving activities. Qualifying students in grades 4-6 also participate in additional gifted and talented daily programs to extend and challenge their learning.

The school counselor provides information and activities to all K-6 students that stress the importance of conflict resolution, drug awareness, character education, and anti-bullying strategies. The counselor also works with small groups and individual students as needed. He serves as a positive, male role-model to multiple students in need.

DAES uses these additional curriculum areas to positively affect student growth. These curriculum areas are proven to increase the physical, emotional, social, and educational development of children. We work diligently to ensure extra-curricular activities develop motor skills, decision-making, visual learning, creativity, problem-solving, self-discipline, goal setting, and self-confidence.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

The foundation of Des Arc Elementary School's curriculum is the Common Core State Standards. The math program addresses all levels and learners while teaching real-world problem solving skills at appropriate stages. Teachers use the research-based programs Cognitively Guided Instruction for grades K-3 and Foundations of Fractions in grades 4-6. Teachers provide daily math instruction, reinforce core concepts, and provide immediate differentiation for students experiencing difficulties or those ready for more advanced mathematical concepts. The math instruction focuses on real-world learning, discussion, and practice. Teaching methods balance conceptual understanding, visual learning, as well as problem solving. Students having difficulty mastering math skills are provided the skills-based interventions needed.

The reading program is an integrated and comprehensive program of all reading skills. Promoting literacy skills in all content areas is a major factor in the school's success. Vocabulary building, research, writing, and reading of informational texts have been incorporated in to all aspects of the school curriculums. The literacy skills taught in English language arts classes must be transferred to all other classes and practiced daily.

K-2 teachers use a combination of whole group reading and guided reading to ensure foundational skills are mastered at the early level. Teachers implement reader's and writer's workshops for a 90 minute block each day. Foundational skills are practiced through class assignments, literacy centers, and iPad learning apps. Accelerated Reading also begins in kindergarten. This differentiated, supplemental program is used to promote motivation and comprehension skills in reading. Grade level aides allow the teachers more flexibility to work with students in small groups while maintaining purposeful learning with everyone else.

3-6 teachers implement Literacy Lab and Effective Literacy as methods of teaching English language arts. Skills aligned with Common Core State Standards are taught through book studies. Lessons are designed to help all students realize the goal of independent and meaningful reading and writing.

Intervention providers give purposeful instruction to students in need. Interventions are based on assessment data, observations, and performance. They are delivered small group or one-on-one based on

student need. Interventions do not overlap a core subjects and are in addition to the classroom curriculum. Students receive help through various researched-based programs and interventions. Technology-based interventions are delivered through Waggle, a personalized program designed to accelerate learning through individualized math and reading pathways. The Barton Reading/Spelling Program and LIPS have been implemented for struggling phonological processors. Our Response to Intervention Team also collaborates to find the best research-based interventions for students. DAES also offers a free after-school program that allows struggling students to get more personal assistance from a certified teacher. A structured and consistent process for meeting the intervention needs of students has had a profound effect on student achievement.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

At DAES we believe that no single assessment can inform our educators all they need to know to make informed instructional decisions. In order to maintain our high levels of achievement, we use multiple assessments to guide our instructions and interventions. Teachers and school leaders analyze data from a multitude of formative and summative assessments.

State-mandated standardized assessments are given in the spring of each school year. Principals, literacy coach, math coach, and superintendent meet to review once results are available. This meeting allows for a broad overview of how the students are achieving in all tested areas. The district provides teachers with professional development for data disaggregation. At this time, each grade level teacher closely examines individual scores. The achievement levels of subpopulations are then scrutinized to determine areas that need to be addressed as well as areas that may indicate students are successfully achieving. A plan for each student who did not meet expectations is devised. Weaknesses are identified and addressed in instructional practices, curriculum, and/or student achievement. Furthermore, results are reported and explained to parents through conferences and annual Report to the Public. These results are also published in our local newspaper.

Teachers universally screen all students with the purpose of pinpointing weaknesses in foundational skills at the student or curriculum level at the beginning, middle, and end of each year. All K-6 students are screened using DIBELS Reading Assessment, Developmental Spelling Assessment, and Accelerated Reading STAR Assessment. Cumulating the data gained from these assessments give educators input on strengths and weaknesses in language arts. The same process is used for mathematics. The Learning Institute (TLI), GO Math, and skills-based assessments are given and analyzed. This information is used to develop intervention plans or services, as well as classroom instructions. Communications with parents are maintained throughout the intervening process.

TLI, ACT Aspire Assessments, and classroom assessments serve as valuable sources of information for teachers, helping them identify what they taught well and what they need to work on. These assessments are very valuable in ascertaining if students are learning and mastering the necessary current skills and if instructional methods are effective. These assessments are given periodically. They can be technology-based or pencil and paper. They are based on classroom curriculum pacing guides and are content specific. Data indicates student deficits and interventions or instructional modifications are immediately made to address the deficiency.

Leadership teams remain proactive in monitoring and analyzing assessment data. Data dialogues are held frequently between stakeholders. Administrators use analysis and dialogues to plan professional development, address curriculum needs, improve instructional practices, and promote continuous high achievement. Monthly Professional Learning Communities with leadership team and teachers are held to focus on data and student achievement.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

A positive and nurturing school climate is the bedrock of student and educator success. At Des Arc Elementary School (DAES), students have numerous advocates that strive to create an environment in which they can encounter, explore, and investigate ideas. Parents, teachers, administrators, and staff continuously and energetically collaborate to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Educators around the globe continually struggle with the problem of motivating students to care about their education. We answer this struggle with a group of people who approach learning with energy and enthusiasm. Teachers model a deep admiration and respect for learning and encourage students to become lifelong learners themselves. They immerse students in this culture of learning by using technology such as laptops and iPads as tools for exploration and investigation of passions and interests. Students are also encouraged to participate in learning opportunities that have relevancy to the greater world, such as student choice in meaningful research opportunities, participation in the St. Jude's Math-a-Thon, Space Camp, and Geography Bee. They also strive to reach individual Accelerated Reader goals to earn rewards and meet criteria for curricular awards at the annual End of Year Awards Assembly.

Students cannot be successful academically and shoulder the mantle of a life long learner if they are not given social and emotional guidance and support. All classrooms have specific rules for behavior, consequences, and goals set in place. Reward systems are in place for each grade level. At DAES, we model the cornerstones of character development and give our students opportunities outside of the classroom to employ positive social behaviors, serve their community, and pursue interests outside the intellectual sphere. Our Gifted and Talented program spearheads a biannual clean up of the campus and visits the local nursing home to uplift patients. Family and fun is emphasized at events such as the Daddy Daughter Dance, Grandparent Breakfast, Family Fun Night, and teacher led pep rally before standardized tests.

The trust, admiration, respect, and collaboration that exists between faculty and staff allow for an environment in which educators feel energized and motivated. We share in each other's successes and failures and challenge one another to forge new ways of supporting our students' academic, social, and emotional growth. Just as we work to feed our students what they need to succeed, the district also feeds its educators by maintaining rigorous expectations for teaching, offering positive support and resources when they are needed, and treating all stakeholders in school achievement with dignity and respect. Our principal maintains an open-door policy, that allows for two-way communications. Additionally, administrators work to empower teachers through leadership committees, anonymous surveys, and teacher decision making.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Des Arc Elementary offers many programs, policies, and events that engage parents and the community to become involved in the academic realm of our students' lives. Our mission statement reads: "The mission of the Des Arc Elementary School is for staff, parents, and students to work together as students learn the skills necessary to become competent citizens." With the many programs Des Arc Elementary has in place, we feel we are accomplishing this mission.

The school year begins with Open House Night where stakeholders meet each other and become acclimated to the new school year, schedule, and classrooms. Students, parents, teachers, and administrators also sign compacts to affirm teamwork, respect, and hard work among each group throughout the school year.

Our school communicates with families and community using a variety of methods. Remind 101 and Class Dojo are technology based tools used for two-way communications between teachers and parents. The programs are used for communications concerning academics, behaviors, and/or feedback to parents. Our school's Facebook page is updated weekly and used to share school celebrations with stakeholders.

Administrators also use our school's one call system to make phone calls to parents, send emergency texts, and email reminders that commence within seconds of creation. Partnership with the local newspaper for publication of school news is another effective communication tool.

A particular activity that strengthens our ties to the community is our Family Fun Night. With the help of PALS (Partners in Active Learning Situations) the community comes together for games, silent auctions, and other activities that raise money for the betterment of our students and school. This event raised over \$26,000 dollars last year in a town with a population of only 1,717 residents. The amount raised increases each year. Items that have been purchased using these proceeds include magnetic doors and intercom systems to ensure safety for our students and staff, classroom Red-Cat microphone systems, iPads for student use, and school playground equipment.

Throughout the school year, several groups positively interact with our community. Gifted and talented students visit the Des Arc Nursing and Rehab Center and build relationships with residents. Preschool students visit businesses throughout Des Arc. Kindergarten studies community helpers. Local agencies visit the school throughout the year for programs, activities, and partnerships with the school.

At Des Arc Elementary we understand that family and community engagement is a vital part of a truly successful school. We pride ourselves in our success in this area

3. Professional Development:

Professional development (PD) activities are used to improve the instructional process at Des Arc Elementary School. In order for the teachers to achieve and maintain the required skill-set, they must continually expand their knowledge and techniques to implement the best educational practices and stay abreast of the latest research, programs, and methodologies available. The district's professional development is aligned with academic standards. Activities address such issues as classroom management, instruction, curriculum, test preparation, parent relations, bullying, identifying student needs, intervention methods, and incorporating technology into the 21st century classroom.

The majority of PD activities are provided by the Wilbur Mills Cooperative. Close contact with Co-op directors helps to insure the school's PD needs are met. The Des Arc School District is in a small, rural community. It would not be cost efficient or even viable to attempt to provide all the needs of the school on site. Therefore, utilizing the Co-op is a much better option for our district. The school is located just thirty miles from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. Many PD opportunities are made available to teachers and administrators through this resource. Harding has math, literacy, and science specialists that collaborate with specialists at the Coop. The Learning Institute in Hot Springs, Arkansas, provides additional professional development for Des Arc Elementary teachers. PD at The Learning Institute includes curriculum development, assessment, and data disaggregation.

Professional development activities have a great impact on student achievement. Student learning and achievement have increased as teachers take part in effective professional development that is focused on the skills and strategies needed in order to address students' learning challenges and prepare students for their next level of education.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are another way that our school caters to the professional development needs of our staff. These meetings allow teachers on each grade-level or specialty area come together and discuss hot topic issues within the school, state, and even the national stage. Collaborative learning within the faculty allows for smoother transitions and greater levels of achievement for students.

The purpose of all professional development for the Des Arc Elementary School faculty is to improve learning for the educators, as well as the students. All activities are aligned with state standards or state mandates. The recently implemented Common Core State Standards have brought about many changes and challenges for teachers. There has been a shift in subject content, instructional methods, technology requirements, and assessments. In order to implement the standards with confidence, teachers and administrators must be immersed in effective, productive, and informative professional development

coursework. Ongoing and relevant professional learning at Des Arc Elementary School supports the district's efforts to develop students who are college and career ready.

4. School Leadership:

DAES leadership is based on the philosophy that excellent instruction leads to excellence in student achievement. Our school focuses on instruction and student achievement. The school board, superintendent, principal, and instructional coaches make decisions that support the work of teachers in the delivery of instruction. Student achievement is the motivating factor that drives all decisions.

DAES principal and coaches foster a climate that supports and empowers teachers to do the work necessary at the heart of our organization. Equipping teachers with tools and skills needed to establish quality, learning relationships with students is a priority. Principal ensures that instructional times are protected and maximized to eliminate unnecessary distractions. For instance, teachers use bell ringers to review foundational skills. These activities allow students to engage in previously taught skills while teachers routine procedures required to start each class. Furthermore, principal and coaches restructured daily schedules to increase class time spent on language arts and mathematics skills. Teachers were trained in a variety of effective instructional strategies and techniques that maximize this additional time devoted to these core components of the curriculum.

DAES principal's leadership includes building a collaborative culture that not only fosters, but encourages open dialogue and professional inquiries dedicated to improving student achievement. One example is our utilization of Response to Intervention Team. This group made up of the school principal, speech therapist, school counselor, dyslexia therapist, interventionist, classroom teacher, and parent of student in need. The committee analyzes individual data of students in need and collaboratively develops intervention plans that target weak areas. Leaders also actively participate in DAES parent organization, Partners Active in Learning Situations (PALS). This organization involves the community in various activities that support the education of our students. PALS surveys teachers' needs for improving student achievement. Upon review of those responses, they partner with the community organizations to obtain resources necessary in meeting those needs. This collaboration has yielded iPads, school security systems, and items that promote health and active living.

Leaders facilitate a culture focused on student achievement. This is accomplished by erecting a base built on accountability and data driven results. Monthly leadership meetings are devoted to analyzing school required diagnostic and formative assessment data. Monitoring of data is frequent and professional conversations take place regularly about this data to enhance student learning and achievement. Weekly principal and superintendent meetings focus of ensuring the success of the school. Principals also attend monthly school board meetings and periodically offer updates on student achievement.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Data analysis is the single most influential factor in the success of Des Arc Elementary School. Student performance on state-mandated accountability assessments was initially the one piece of data being used to determine student needs and to guide instruction. However, proper analysis required more than end of the year standardized test scores. In order to obtain a complete picture of what a student knows, what they should know, and what is necessary to meet their academic needs, it became evident that additional data had to be collected and analyzed thoroughly.

Multiple data sources are collected and analyzed. At the base of data collection, we evaluate basic, yet invaluable information such as, student attendance, behavior and discipline records, student work samples, and classroom participation. At the core of data collection are high quality, research-driven, targeted assessments. These assessments include Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), The Learning Institute's (TLI) Formative Assessments in math, literacy and science, ACT Aspire Periodic Assessments, Teacher-made evaluations, as well as many other screenings and assessments. These assessments are ongoing throughout the school year and play a vital role in guiding instruction. They also are used to identify weak areas that may need remediation and/or intense assistance and support.

The district has implemented the use of Response to Intervention (RTI) to address students' diverse needs. RTI uses graduated levels of support with constant monitoring of progress. DIBELS and the various dyslexia screenings and assessments are used to identify students who need reading intervention. Analysis of TLI assessments and the ACT Aspire periodic assessments help teachers pinpoint weak spots and alleviate deficit areas in math, literacy, and science. Educators in the district know that providing immediate and appropriate corrective instruction is essential to school improvement efforts.

Helping educators understand how to properly analyze and use data is very important. Schools often have no trouble collecting data, but don't know how to use assessment results to identify and address learning difficulties and academic needs. Faculty and administration have attended professional development activities designed to teach how to effectively interpret the data. The school principal and the literacy and math coaches have presented information on using assessment results to guide instruction. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings are held consistently each month to allow teachers to develop their analysis skills, share instructional strategies with their peers, and seek effective instructional solutions from their peers. Because Des Arc Elementary is a small school, it is easy to schedule time during the day, before school, or after school to collaborate with other teachers. Classroom teachers have come to realize the value of data analysis for making informed decisions that have a positive impact on student achievement.