

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Beverly Lusk

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

Official School Name George Bannerman Dealey International Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6501 Royal Lane

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

City Dallas                      State TX                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 75230-4142

County Dallas County

Telephone (972) 794-8400                      Fax (972) 794-8401

Web site/URL http://www.dallasisd.org/dealey                      E-mail BeLusk@dallasisd.org

Facebook Page  
Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ https://www.facebook.com/groups/gbdpta/                      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\*Dr. Michael Hinojosa                      E-mail HINOJOSAM@dallasisd.org

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

District Name Dallas Independent School District                      Tel. (972) 925-3700

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. Eric Cowan

(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

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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

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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):
- 155 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 41 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 43 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 239 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	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	41	44	85
8	34	62	96
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	75	106	181

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 9 % Asian
  - 11 % Black or African American
  - 40 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 37 % White
  - 2 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 3%

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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	189
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.032
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
6 Total number ELL

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

Spanish, Hindi, Chinese, Amharic, Vietnamese, Korean, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Bengali, Hungarian, Arabic, Thai, Turkish, Filipino, Mandarin, Cantonese, Swedish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %  
Total number students who qualify: 70
8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %  
4 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.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 1 Orthopedic Impairment
- 1 Other Health Impaired
- 1 Specific Learning Disability
- 1 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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	9
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals	4
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 13:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2009

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

Our mission is to provide an exemplary education that develops and empowers all students to become productive citizens in a global society.

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

Applicants are selected based on four factors: grade point average, standardized test scores, writing skills, and a face-to-face interview. Grade point average is computed based on the applicant's most recent official report card. Standardized test scores accepted include State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), Stanford 10, or ITBS. Each applicant composes an on-site expository essay in response to a prompt. After completing an essay, a team of two teachers (one 7th grade teacher, and one 8th grade teacher) interview the applicant to assess verbal communication skills, thought process, and motivation.

Students who attended 6th grade in our Montessori elementary are automatically admitted into 7th grade. After all outside applications are complete and scores have been calculated, applicants are ranked accordingly. Preference is given to applicants whose siblings already attend the school. To ensure Dealey receives a diverse population, students are equally selected from all areas of the district.

Final recommendation letters are sent to parents the last week of February.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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George Bannerman Dealey International Academy (Dealey) is a magnet middle school in the Dallas Independent School District, one of the largest districts in the country. With a student population of no more than 200, teachers and administrators are dedicated to providing an exemplary education that develops solid foundations for success in demanding high school programs and enables graduates to become productive citizens in a global society.

As a magnet school, Dealey students gather from 45 Dallas-area zip codes and across the city's many demographic categories. Students gain knowledge of world geography and global events, enrich their cultural perspectives, improve proficiency in core subjects, build foundations in modern technology and participate in fine arts programs and extracurricular activities as they earn a well-rounded education. An international focus pervades and enriches the core and elective courses. Students earn high-school credit learning the Spanish language and the culture and history of Spanish-speaking countries. Electives in World Leadership and in Global Issues emphasize geography, global concerns and world events. Students in fine- and performance-art courses experience music genres from around the world, research, plan and participate in theatrical productions reflecting foreign aesthetics, and study and create artwork influenced by different global regions and cultures.

Preparing globally and culturally aware students with solid academic foundations is only part of the school's mission. For Dealey students to succeed in a globalized world requires a solid foundation in science and technology. Not only is technology an integral component of instruction at Dealey, students take electives in computer programming where they can work at their own pace. The Robotics elective prepares students to embrace electronics, invention, engineering, and programming. In Exploring Communications Technology, students learn to excel in digital, print, and video communications systems while meeting real-world deadlines.

Teamwork and problem-based learning are the principal method of instruction. Students create the questions that will guide their path of discovery. Teachers carefully structure team projects and group activities so that assessments can be performed on each individual. Groups are constructed to have a balance of members from heterogeneous ethnicities, perspectives and abilities. With this approach, the learning experience teaches collaboration and accountability in addition to the subject matter.

Finely honed techniques for student assessment leverage technological tools to gather and quickly evaluate data. Teachers rely on analytical assessment tools and make a daily practice of reviewing and modifying instructional approaches based on the feedback these tools provide in addition to monitoring for individual or group interventions. Faculty, staff and administrators collaborate with one another on thematic programs, actively seek opportunities for cross-curricular coordination, and strategize practices to improve the student experience.

Dealey's past Blue Ribbon award (2009) along with top rankings, an ever-growing list of State and local recognitions of students and teachers, and the hard-earned reputation for consistent achievement fuel the commitment to deliver on the school's mission every day. Successes also motivate and inspire parents, students, faculty and staff to contribute an extraordinary amount of time and effort to the school. This process has resulted in an engaging community, the Dealey family. Parents volunteer thousands of hours each year. Teachers take time to get to know students and be a part of their lives inside and outside the classroom, attending (even coaching) sports events, organizing afterschool clubs and activities, and communicating frequently with them and their parents. Administrators support and empower teachers and provide leadership and career growth opportunities whenever possible. Students take pride in and give back to the community, mentoring and tutoring Pre-K through 6th graders in Dealey's lower school.

The most illuminative results of Dealey's success, however, are the school's 99th percentile statewide ranking in postsecondary preparedness, and students' 98% acceptance rate at magnet and private high schools. Students leave Dealey prepared to face the rigors that await them, and motivated to conquer the challenges of high school, college and life beyond.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

In addition to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-mandated learning standards, Dealey International Academy adheres to the standards defined by the Asia Society's International Studies School Network. These standards are designed to inspire globally competent students who are able to investigate their world beyond their immediate environment, to recognize different perspectives, to communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, and to take action to address social issues.

In every Dealey classroom, the learning objectives (LOs) for the day's lessons are prominently posted along with the associated TEKS. Students are required to show mastery of the TEKS at the end of every lesson or two with an end of class demonstration of learning (DOL).

English and Language Arts (E/LA) TEKS cover writing, reading, listening, and speaking. E/LA teachers incorporate each of these skills into every lesson through project and group-based activities designed to integrate these objectives and to immerse students into each area consistently. Literary Circles boost student engagement and encourage lively discussion as students collaborate with their peers. Listening and speaking skills are reinforced through formal presentations, in-class participation, Socratic seminars, philosophical chairs, and round table discussions. Grammar is advanced through dialectical journals, skills exercises, and teacher presentations. Students write essays, articles, speeches, and traditional journals. A school-wide focus on writing requires students to develop their ideas in well-organized paragraphs that advance their purpose.

Most seventh and eighth grade students at Dealey are enrolled in advanced math courses: pre-AP math or Algebra 1. Math lessons are based on the district's curricular maps and pacing guides to ensure all grade level TEKS are taught and mastered before the end of each semester. Instruction is geared toward a three-step process: discovery, practice, and application. Higher order thinking skills activities are used to reinforce and make sense of the concepts during the practice phase. Students practice math concepts weekly in an online standards-aligned program that allows teachers to monitor student mastery by learning objective. Teachers use this data to individualize instruction and provide additional support for both low-performing and high-performing students. Low-performing students receive weekly intervention, where standards are retaught and additional practice is provided to ensure mastery. High performing students are provided accelerated learning opportunities and have additional opportunities to demonstrate their skills by competing in district and state-level competitions.

In seventh-grade Texas Studies and eighth-grade U.S. History, teachers use district curriculum maps as guides to create daily lesson plans which address the TEKS for each grade level. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods to promote mastery, including multimedia presentations, lectures, reading assignments, role play, group exercises, and individual or group projects. These curricular approaches are chosen to address multiple learning styles and perspectives, while also targeting the diverse needs of Dealey's student population. Differentiated instruction is incorporated in the curriculum to address the needs of both low and high-performing students. Students have the autonomy to present social studies content projects in a way they feel best suits their learning needs.

Eighty-seven percent of seventh grade students take Pre-AP Science. All eighth grade students take Physics, for which they receive high-school credit. Science TEKS are addressed through lab-centered instruction. At least 50% of instruction is hands-on. Teachers focus heavily on process skills in order to foster a long-term love of learning and of science in students. The Physics teacher builds direct lessons and reinforcement activities around labs using a variety of sources including a textbook targeted toward younger physics students. In seventh grade Pre-AP science, the district-approved textbook is used as a compass, but most curricular objectives are met through teacher-made guided notes, hands-on activities, and labs to provide connection opportunities for every learning style. Virtual lessons and labs are used to quickly engage prior knowledge or prepare students for new or more intricate concepts.

Through ongoing data analysis of science TEKS using both formal and informal assessments, low-performing students are identified for after school interventions. High performing students serve as mentors to others and receive additional assignments where their learning is challenged through high-rigor tasks and projects.

All facets of the curriculum directly support the state of Texas College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards, with the objective that students should be able to synthesize and organize information into effective work products. Through research projects, formal presentations and group work in all classes, students advance skills in speaking, listening, reasoning, research, and problem-solving. Project work allows students to develop and advance their organizational, planning, and self-monitoring skills that are so important for collegiate success.

In 2015, Dealey received a distinction designation in post-secondary readiness from the Texas Education Agency. Dealey received an overall score of 76, ranking the school 17th out of the 1,563 that met the standards.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Dealey's elective courses follow a traditional seven-period schedule and meet daily. They are open to seventh and eighth grade students, and are permeated with international content which is essential to the development of the whole child. Learning standards for electives are based on the TEKS. Learning objectives (LOs) for the day's lessons are prominently posted along with the associated TEKS. Students are required to show mastery of the TEKS at the end of every lesson or two with an end of class demonstration of learning (DOL).

Thirty-seven percent of students are enrolled in Theatre Arts. Through creative expression and performance, prop and costume design/construction, lighting and sound design, students prepare to contribute in a world that is increasingly team-oriented. Plays are selected that expose students to past and present global dynamics.

Forty-four percent of students are enrolled in one of the Music electives (African Drumming, Choir, Guitar, Orchestra, and Piano). Music classes study and perform music from around the world. While many middle schools limit the number of electives so that students spend more time on academics, Dealey believes learning to play a musical instrument reduces stress, and improves students' cognitive skills.

Forty-three percent of students are enrolled in the Visual Arts elective. Students learn art production, art history, analysis, and aesthetics. Art production encourages individual expression and develops skills and techniques that students may use throughout their lives. Art classes emphasize cultural plurality so that students make connections between an artwork's content and the culture and time in which it was created.

Eighteen percent of students are enrolled a Leadership elective (Student Leadership or Global Issues).

Student Leadership provides the knowledge and skills necessary for students to assume leadership positions on campus, in the community, and across the globe. This group participates in a program that allows students to role-play delegates to the United Nations. Students learn about other countries, cultures, and international relationships while developing a global perspective on real issues confronting the world community today.

Global Issues combines curriculum from a financial literacy program, and an activity-based program that bridges social studies, science and environmental studies to help students make connections between complex global issues and sustainable solutions. Through video and literary materials, students engage in thought-provoking discussions and lively debates as they realize their impact on and responsibility for a clean, financially sustainable, and safe global environment.

Forty-four percent of Dealey's seventh and eighth grade students take Spanish for high school credit. Students experience an in-depth study in speaking, hearing, reading, and writing the language. While students learn advanced vocabulary and grammar concepts, they also study the cultural history, music and geography of Spanish-speaking countries. Each six weeks culminates with recipe research and a food tasting event.

Seventy-one percent of students are enrolled in one or more Technology elective (Robotics, Programming, Technology Applications, or Communication Technology).

In Robotics, students learn about mechanics, programming, and engineering through hands-on activities while they build robots in a fun and challenging environment. The curriculum combines resources from a prominent robotics academy and a nationally-recognized robotics competition program. This course prepares students to enroll in pre-AP Computer Science or Robotics Programming & Design in high school.

Students in Programming learn to program graphics, animations and games. Students begin with online block-based programming tools, then advance to text-based programming in Javascript through several personalized online learning management systems. This course allows students to learn at a level that is appropriate for them - whether they are slow first-timer coders, or speedy go-getters that already have some coding experience. The Robotics and Programming courses allow students to broaden their creative problem-solving and team collaboration skills.

Communications Technology provides hands-on experiences with the latest technologies used to communicate mass messages. Students rotate through various class projects during the course of the year such as the yearbook, digital signage systems, and video production and editing. Students combine graphics, photographs, and text to create a cohesive theme for the yearbook, while experiencing the pressure of real-world deadlines. Students create Dealey commercials that are showcased at the lower elementary school's annual Are You Smarter Than a 3rd Grader program. Students write and record scripts, and add green-screen backgrounds and titles all while meeting aggressive deadlines.

All students take one semester of physical education each year. To address the physical education TEKS, students perform various forms of cardiovascular and strength exercises and overall conditioning through timed runs, groups games, and sports skills. Students learn the benefits of a nutritionally-sound and physically-active lifestyle. The Martial Arts program introduces students to different styles from around the world that form the basis of the certified, centralized system.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Dealey believes strongly that teamwork and problem-based learning are effective approaches to motivating students to become productive citizens in a global society. Allowing students to create questions that will guide their inquiry and investigation creates excitement throughout the discovery process. This approach invites students to discover and construct knowledge, rather than simply pass an exam, and permits teachers to monitor students both academically and socially.

Project teams are intentionally diverse in ethnicity and gender, and have both high performing leaders and students who may struggle. This ensures that all groups are fairly constructed but that both high-performing and struggling students can get the maximum benefit from each project. Students are paired with others who will work with them and assist them, but who will not do the work for them. Students create guidelines for member responsibilities and the consequences for not fulfilling those responsibilities.

By working on monthly projects, students simultaneously develop skills such as researching, collaboration, writing, reading, questioning, and problem-solving as well teamwork. Teachers encourage student ownership through criteria charts, evaluation forms, and goal setting. This allows the teacher to move into the role of facilitator rather than lecturer. Students are assessed not only on the content of the projects, but their own participation, preparedness, and achievement of milestones and goals.

Technology integration is another important technique and component used to support instruction at Dealey. Classrooms are equipped with interactive short-throw projectors, document cameras, classroom sets of iPads, graphing calculators, and integrated audio systems. An online student response program where assessments can be uploaded and analyzed instantly is used to ensure total student participation and allows teachers to check for understanding in real time.

Students are encouraged to further engage in learning by participating in the popular school-wide social learning network, a safe online environment that allows students and teachers to reach out to one another and connect by sharing ideas, problems, and helpful tips. Through this system, teachers assign and grade work, and students can get help from the entire class. Teachers see everything that is posted on the system. As part of the school-wide focus on writing, students are required to use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar for all posts. Parents can join the class to bring a level of transparency that is difficult to achieve without technology.

Interim assessments are used to determine how well students have mastered the instructional content within a given period of time. Standard and item analysis reports are reviewed for each assessment. When assessments identify a weakness in a specific learning objective, teachers can intervene quickly, efficiently, and effectively.

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

Students maintain high levels of academic achievement due to collaborative planning, data-driven interventions and enrichment, and through effective communication between administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

At the beginning of each school year, teachers review students' performance and overall school performance on standardized assessments from the previous years. This analysis focuses the annual campus improvement plan, including instructional strategies and professional development requirements. In addition, it provides teachers with data on incoming students to use as a starting point for instruction. Two to three weeks into the school year, teachers and the counselor identify which student schedules need adjustments. For example, a student taking regular eighth grade math may be better served in Algebra.

In addition to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), students take several benchmark tests, Fall and Spring Assessments of Course Performance (ACP), and End of Course (EOC) exams. Dallas ISD's data retrieval system contains item analysis for each assessment by classroom, ethnic subgroup, gender, socioeconomic status, and individual student. It also contains current and historical STAAR and ACP data detailing each student's proficiency, by learning objectives. These formative assessments and the wealth of data they provide, inform instruction on a consistent basis. It allows teachers to identify areas for improvement, adjust curriculum pacing, develop individualized student instruction, and identify necessary interventions.

Data results showing a significant gap for a specific subgroup require instructional practices to be further adjusted to assist students. Reading mastery and other support classes are offered to address specific learning needs. In addition, the student support team meets weekly and suggests differentiation strategies to be utilized daily in the classroom.

Parents receive timely feedback on their child's academic progress through progress reports, emails, phone calls, and regular conferences. Report cards are issued at the end of each six-week grading period. Teachers also provide students and their parents a formal progress report identifying missing assignments or deficient grades every three weeks. This provides ample time for them to respond and adjust before the end of each six-week grading period.

The principal shares the results of formal assessments with the school's Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) committee at their regular meetings and with the larger community during PTA meetings, Open House events, parent orientation sessions and at recruiting events. Assessment results and school rankings are also available through the school's website and through the TEA's online Campus Report Card database. The school leadership team facilitates discussions around the meaning of assessment results and how they relate to specific performance indexes measured by the state's accountability system. Parents and community members are informed of previous year's goals and how the most recent data results are used to set current school goals.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

When asked which one word best describes Dealey, students most commonly respond with “family.” Teachers, administrators, and students know each other well, and experience a strong sense of identification and belonging. This manifests in a safe, comfortable environment for students during these pivotal years of both personal and academic development. Students want to come to class and they exhibit great school pride, which helps explain Dealey’s 98.6% attendance record.

Beyond the academic advantages that arise from the individual attention provided to the relatively small student body, teachers and staff regularly attend student sports events, concerts and plays in an ongoing endeavor to connect and build strong relationships with students and their families. The result is a tightly knit community in which teachers feel valued, trusted and supported by administration, parents and students who have faith that teachers are deeply committed to the academic and social success of every student.

The Instructional Leadership Team and Site-Based Decision Committee keep the lines of communication open between administration, staff and parents. Administrators, office staff and the counselor work hand in hand to ensure that all student and teacher needs are met. Teachers are validated and supported through positive feedback around instruction and other job-related duties from administrators. They are recognized for their contributions and commitment to students and excellence. Dealey’s teacher turnover rate is very low.

Dealey wants students to enjoy a lifetime of success, not just during their two years at the International Academy. Students are encouraged to expand their knowledge outside the classroom by participating in extracurricular programs and activities like Chess Club, Science Fair, Spelling Bee, Club Scientific, Robotics Club, and Martial Arts. In addition to providing emotional support to students, the counselor develops programs that encourage philanthropic growth (Jump Rope for Heart, Angel Tree donations for less fortunate families) and raise awareness of social issues (Healthy Lifestyles, Red Ribbon Week and anti-bullying campaigns).

The family bond doesn’t stop at the staff-student level. Engagement from parents and the community is almost palpable. As a Title 1 school, most of Dealey students are in need of financial assistance. This year, the PTA created a scholarship fund to cover the costs of extra-curricular activities for less fortunate students. The supportive PTA also gives generously of their time and money to support classroom and professional development needs.

The bonds shared are also student-to-student. As part of the emphasis on global citizenship and service, students regularly mentor kids in the elementary school. Through peer-buddy and reading-buddy programs, students increase their own understanding by working daily with Pre-K through 6th grade students in reading, writing, and math while experiencing the personal growth and rewards from serving as a role-model and mentor.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Dealey International Academy is not a neighborhood school. The school’s diverse school population brings students from 45 zip codes throughout the Dallas area together from homes where over 19 different languages are spoken. Despite the distance, the engagement of family and community continues to profoundly impact student achievement.

Dealey works closely with families and the community to bolster student success and school improvement. Parental involvement elsewhere typically declines when students move from elementary to middle school. However, because so many of Dealey’s students attended or currently have siblings enrolled in the Montessori elementary school, the school experiences the benefits of a long tradition of parental

involvement. Dealey parents eagerly offer their time and assist teachers by sponsoring academic clubs and activities, volunteering in the classrooms, and contributing supplies and other items needed to support instruction.

The fact that Dealey families are spread all over Dallas makes the school's dedicated PTA an anomaly. Dealey PTA hosts multiple events that raise funds for classroom and school needs which directly contribute to school improvement. Dealey PTA coordinates bi-annual Box Tops for Education fundraisers, and sells Dealey Dragon spirit wear. Each year, the PTA organizes a fall carnival and a spring auction, reaching out to businesses all over Dallas for gracious donations of goods and services, even though Dealey is often not their local neighborhood school. These events raise record amounts of funds annually that go directly to school improvement initiatives ranging from new playground equipment to upgrading classroom materials. The PTA hosts Middle School Socials, Movie Nights, Health Fairs and Field Day every year, strengthening the bond between students, staff and families. Dealey PTA encourages every parent to participate in a "Day for Dealey" and thousands of volunteer hours are clocked every year.

Unlike most middle schools in Dallas ISD, Dealey International Academy does not have an athletics program. Instead, dedicated teachers and parents organize and provide students the opportunity to participate in group sports. The U.S. History teacher volunteers to coach an after-school basketball team. Dealey parents have organized the Dealey Soccer Club which supports boys, girls, and coed soccer teams in three different leagues throughout Dallas. The Dealey Soccer Club negotiated a significantly reduced fee for students to play soccer through the local YMCA, and helped fund a sprinkler system for the Dealey grounds.

The frequent and highly-visible involvement of parents and the community serve as constant reminders of the high expectations for student achievement. Teachers and students are confident that they have the support required to meet and even exceed those expectations.

### 3. Professional Development:

Dealey International Academy staff and administrators are committed to their own lifelong learning and continually seek opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills to improve instruction and impact student achievement. Teachers are encouraged to attend and facilitate professional development sessions tailored to their specific content area and participate in weekly collaboration sessions within their departments or vertical teams.

The school's approach to professional development is as individualized as the approach with student learning. One challenge is that there is only one core content teacher for each grade level, which limits on-campus collaboration opportunities. Therefore, teachers attend monthly professional development sessions with off-campus content peers to share best practices for instruction. These professional learning communities increase teacher capacity and improve student learning. Many also attend local and national conferences to further develop their skills. Teachers are expected to share new knowledge with others to spread benefits beyond their own classroom.

Due to the unique dynamic of the middle school, where Pre-Kindergarten through 6th grade students and teachers share the same building, Dealey is fortunate to watch students transition from their elementary grades at Dealey Montessori into the International Academy. Through collaboration sessions with Montessori teachers, teachers share curriculum strategies and engage in vertical discussions to identify gaps in learning and review vertical alignment of TEKS standards in order to improve incoming students' preparedness for the rigor the Pre-AP and high school-level courses demand.

Each year, Dealey conducts several "Global Friday" events, each with a focus on a different region of the globe. Monday through Thursday, students experience lessons on the politics, economy, geography, or culture of the region. The event culminates on Friday with special programs, guest speakers, cultural performances, hands-on group activities, and student presentations. Planning and preparation for these events require teachers to expand their own awareness of global issues. For this, teachers are assisted by the Dallas/Fort Worth World Affairs Council, which customizes seminars specifically to help teachers prepare

for Global Fridays. The D/FW World Affairs Council typically only works with high schools. Dealey is the Council's only local middle school affiliation.

#### 4. School Leadership:

Dealey is proof that groups of individuals become a powerful team when they embrace a clear vision and mission. This mission and vision guide Dealey far more than any single individual. Collaboration, support, delegation, teamwork, empowerment and commitment are the qualities that fuel success. The Dealey family values input from all stakeholders, and all stakeholders share in the success. Administrators and teachers work closely with parents and community members to ensure the school's mission and vision are met and that students receive an exemplary education. The administrative team consists of a principal and assistant principal who share a strong philosophy of distributive leadership. Together, they look for ways to empower others to lead and are dedicated to increasing leadership density among staff members. Administration empowers teachers to make instructional decisions that are in the best interest of the students, to embrace growth opportunities, and to identify their areas of expertise and interest.

As a result, many teachers choose to chair committees, initiate extra-curricular activities, mentor new teachers, lead professional learning communities, and provide professional development at the campus and district level. With 67% of the teaching staff qualifying for the prestigious Distinguished Teacher Review through Dallas ISD's new evaluation system, the school has many master teachers who are available to share their expertise with others.

The leadership team is equally committed to providing opportunities for frequent collaboration among staff members to strengthen curriculum alignment, discuss best practices for instruction, analyze data, design interventions, and plan for student programs and extracurricular activities that extend learning beyond the classroom.

The strong and active PTA provides support through multiple volunteering and fundraising efforts. Within the PTA, over 18 committees focus their efforts on specific areas of the school to provide teachers and students the support and resources they need to succeed.

The Site Based Decision Making Team also serves as a valuable support by working with staff members to identify issues, resolve problems, or change strategies to positively impact the school. Additionally, campus instructional teams and grade level chairs bridge communication between teachers and administrators. Administrators rely heavily on these feedback channels, while also actively seeking feedback from students, parents, and teachers to ensure their decisions are well-informed and in the best interest of the school.

Communication is critical to effective leadership and building morale. The principal sends out weekly communications to teachers and staff highlighting upcoming events and sharing important information. Parents receive a monthly newsletter with updates on all the great things happening at Dealey.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Dealey's success is a direct result of the attention given to each individual student. Dealey is a small school in a big city. The student population is limited to 200 students; 100 in seventh grade, and 100 in eighth grade. The average class consists of about nineteen students. There is only one content teacher for each grade level. Small class sizes provide teachers the time to engage with students and get to know each one as a unique individual and establish strong mutually-respectful relationships.

Based on this deep knowledge of students, teachers are able to customize their style of teaching to best suit a class' mix of learning styles, and to align content to the interests and needs of the individual students. Teachers set high expectations for every student based on each individual student's current level and abilities. Students are motivated by their teacher's confidence to meet those expectations. Students are engaged, and engaged students succeed.

District assessments consistently prove that Dealey students outperform their peers. End-of-year STAAR assessment results and End-of-Course scores highlight the school's outstanding results. For the past two years, Dealey International Academy has been recognized as a Title 1 Reward School for High Performance and High Progress. The Texas Education Agency's 2015 Accountability Summary Performance Indexes for Dealey International Academy are 96 for Student Achievement (target score is 60), 62 for Student Progress (target score is 28), 68 for Closing Performance Gaps (target score is 27), and 76 for Postsecondary Readiness (target score is 13).

The Texas Education Agency can designate a school in up to seven areas. Dealey received distinction designations for Academic Achievement in Reading, Academic Achievement in Math, Academic Achievement in Science, Academic Achievement in Social Studies, Top 25 Percent Student Progress, Top 25 Percent Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness.

Dealey International Academy graduates extraordinarily prepared students for accelerated and challenging curriculums at magnet and private high schools. In 2015, 98% of students who applied to magnet or private high schools were accepted.