

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr Kimberley Redmond-Carr
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 100 Barnett Way
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Camp Lejeune, North Carolina State DD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 28547-2552

County _____

Telephone (910) 449-8000 Fax _____
Web site/URL https://www.dodea.edu/HeroesES/index.cfm E-mail Kimberley.Redmond-Carr@DODEA.EDU

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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Todd Curkendall E-mail todd.curkendall@dodea.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name DoDEA Americas Mid-Atlantic Tel. (910) 907-0225

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Lt. Col. Jon Connolly
(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.

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

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. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. 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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	42	49	91
K	53	43	96
1	33	35	68
2	33	28	61
3	34	26	60
4	22	18	40
5	26	26	52
6	0	0	0
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	243	225	468

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1.5 % Asian
 - 8.1 % Black or African American
 - 16.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.4 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 67.4 % White
 - 6 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 21%

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

We are a military-affiliated school.

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, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	47
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	54
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	101
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	483
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.21
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

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

Spanish, Portuguese

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 29 %

Total number students who qualify: 135

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %

74 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.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>11</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>20</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>18</u> Developmental Delay | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>22</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	25
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	10

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 20:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	93%	94%	94%	94%	94%
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 2019.

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

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.

Educate, Engage, and Empower military connected students to succeed in a dynamic world.

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

Heroes Elementary School (HES) opened the doors of its beautiful state-of-the-art facility in 2011. The school is one of seven schools located aboard Camp Lejeune Marine Corps base. Since September, 1941, Camp Lejeune (luh-jern) has been the home of “Expeditionary Forces in Readiness”, and throughout the years, it has become the home base for the II Marine Expeditionary Force, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Logistics Group and other combat units and support commands. Today, as in the past, Camp Lejeune's mission remains the same — to maintain combat-ready units. To help prepare warfighters for combat and humanitarian missions, Camp Lejeune takes advantage of 156,000 acres of land including 11 miles of beach capable of supporting amphibious operations. The base and surrounding community are home to an active duty, dependent, retiree and civilian employee population of approximately 170,000 people. HES is part of the Americas Mid-Atlantic District as well as the DoDEA Americas region and follows the directives, curricula, and guidelines of the umbrella organization, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).

The faculty at HES believes it is truly a privilege to teach students whose parents serve our country. With military service comes a unique set of opportunities as well as challenges for our children. Parents are frequently dealing with deployments and family separations for extended periods of time. This can take a toll on our young students who might not see a parent for several months or, in some cases, for over a year. The guidance program offers a deployment lunch bunch, which provides an opportunity for children to deal with separation anxiety and other challenges they may face. Even with these military-related challenges, the parents and community demonstrate strong support and are very involved with the total school program. Additionally, the faculty is responsive and compassionate and works together to create a caring, supportive environment. During a recent internal review visit, the students who were randomly chosen to talk with the review team reported that “everyone at Heroes does everything they can to help us learn and improve.”

HES currently serves approximately 468 military-connected children in PreK through 5th grade who live on the military base in close proximity to the school. Heroes is truly a neighborhood school as many children ride their bikes to and from school and many families walk to and from school together with infants in strollers. Parents are able to participate in our student-led morning flag ceremony before they return home.

At HES, there is a wonderful blend of innovative 21st Century teaching and learning along with longstanding traditions. The student-led news broadcast, the Eagle Eye News, kicks off each day and reminds us of upcoming events most of which are annual traditions, including Read Across America Week, PTO Book Fairs, PE events such as Jump Rope for Heart and Eagle Run field day, music concerts, service-learning projects such as our Pet Food drive and much more. The purposefully designed daily Eagle Eye News features reinforce our core values. For example, on Marvelous Monday the school Principal provides mini-lessons related to the growth mindset and the PBIS character traits of the month. On Teacher Feature Tuesday, students show off teaching and learning, artifacts, and student work from one of our classrooms. On Fantastic Eagle Friday, a student shares his or her “Ah Ha” Moment so other students hear about how resiliency leads to overcoming challenges and success in all aspects of life.

HES is a collaborative environment in which all staff members not only believe in but act upon our collective responsibility for every one of our students. Collectively we ensure that ALL of our students are provided researched-based best practices and engaging learning experiences that meet their needs.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Over the past five years, HES has implemented the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) in math, ELA (English Language Arts), and science. Changes in standards required paradigm shifts and new instructional practices. In support of the new standards, new curricular resources, a detailed scope and sequence, and aligned assessments were also adopted. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which inform Focused Collaboration (FC) in our district, are a priority too. During FC, targeted interventions are developed based on collaborative analysis of common assessment data. Teams also develop unit-based SMART goals and collectively work to achieve those goals. From September to March of this school year, our students achieved at least 23 math and literacy FC SMART goals. Our FC teams work collaboratively along with our tier 2 math and reading professionals and our tier 3 special education, English second language (ESOL), and gifted professionals. Based on CCR standards, they clearly identify what we want our students to know and be able to do and take actions collectively to ensure all students are progressing.

Kindergarten through fifth grade classes have extended English language arts and math blocks of 120 and 90 minutes respectively. In addition, Kindergarten through fifth grade students have an intervention-enrichment period, called WIN time - “What I Need”. During WIN time, students receive additional support depending on their needs. Every staff member works directly with students during WIN time - this includes educational aides, large group specialists, and special educational staff members. Additionally, as we work collaboratively and collectively to support growth of the whole child, every staff member promotes outstanding student behavior through deliberate instruction and consistent implementation of our school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support System (PBIS). From the classroom to the lunch room to the playground and the hallways, we reinforce positive behavior which fosters behavioral growth for all students.

1b. Reading/English language arts

In 2018, Heroes Elementary School (HES), as part of a DoDEA initiative, began implementing the College and Career Reading Standards for Literacy (CCRSL). Implementing CCRSL standards requires teachers to make three key instructional shifts to their 120 minute ELA block. One key shift is providing students with “regular practice reading informational text that increases in complexity”. The Benchmark Advance materials are divided into ten fifteen day units which are thematic and help to assist teachers as they implement the second critical shift of “building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction”. The third shift places an emphasis on requiring students to provide “evidence from text” as students perform close reads to analyze, defend claims and share information with each other.

The DoDEA CCRSL implementation has prioritized a balanced literacy approach where students are offered the opportunity to experience reading and writing instruction in the context of engaging with complex text. Instructional aspects of the balanced literacy approach include: Interactive Read-Alouds, Reader’s Workshop to include Modeled Reading, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Literacy Workstations, Accountable Independent Reading, Writer’s Workshop, and Word Study/Phonics.

The staff at HES work together during Focused Collaboration (FC) to make data-based decisions that are embedded in these best practices. Teachers share successful strategies as they plan literacy instruction together. Site Literacy Leaders and District Instructional Support Specialists provide professional support and development for teachers, detailing what literacy skills students should acquire in the areas of Language, Speaking and Listening, Reading Foundational Skills, Reading Informational Text, Reading Literary Text and Writing. During FC, teachers spend time examining how the standards progress from grade level to grade level as well as how essential learnings progress over time. At the end of each unit, students take a common formative assessment either directly online or on paper and then the teacher inputs the data into an online assessment program. This assessment program allows teachers to quickly delve into the data to

determine which students are making progress and which groups need additional support. Students that are identified as needing further support are provided differentiated instruction, targeted intervention, and/or remedial intervention through Read180, Level Literacy Intervention (LLI), SPIRE, SPED, ESOL, or classroom interventions. Gifted or higher-level learners are also provided with differentiated instruction and alternate learning opportunities throughout the units of study.

Technology is threaded throughout the CCRSL. The aim is to prepare students for college, career and adulthood and as such students develop their ability to research, apply, construct and communicate using digital media tools. Teachers at HES have received professional learning on technology integration and receive ongoing support from our Educational Technologist to incorporate technology into their literacy instruction.

1c. Mathematics

Teachers at Heroes Elementary School (HES) have made tremendous growth in the implementation of the College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics (CCRSM) since their adoption in the school year 2015-2016. Teachers engaged in three years of intense math professional learning to increase their capacity in the teaching of mathematics and to internalize the conceptual understanding of the grade-level standards. Our math standards are addressed following DoDEAs mathematical instructional component model which outlines the expected instructional practices during the required 90-minute daily math block: The first 20 percent of math instruction is used to establish the purpose of the lesson. The next 60 percent constitutes the work session, where students are engaged in workstations and direct modeling from the classroom teacher. The last 20 percent is the closing, which builds toward an exit activity or assessment, the intent of which is to determine student readiness to move on. Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to include observations, exit tickets, interviews, quick checks, performance assessments, and unit assessments.

Lessons are collaboratively designed by grade-level teams around the Standards for Mathematical Practices (SMPs) to deepen students' conceptual understanding of mathematics. The SMPs include: making sense of problems and persevering in solving them, abstract and quantitative reasoning, constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, modeling with mathematics, use of appropriate tools strategically, attending to precision, and looking for and making use of structure.

Based on data, tier 1 and tier 2 interventions - which include differentiated instruction and targeted instruction - are provided to support students who are in need of additional support. During our weekly Focused Collaboration (FC) meetings, teachers use common assessment data to determine classroom groupings for differentiation and to develop intervention groups for our school-wide WIN (What I Need) intervention time, when students are provided targeted support according to their needs. For students who have mastered concepts, students participate in flexible enrichment groups during WIN time. This enrichment is designed to extend grade level math standards and further support mastery of the SMPs. Grade-level teachers, educational aides, and our tier 2 math support specialist all work collectively to support math learning during WIN.

Teachers integrate technology into math lessons, working collaboratively with the school's Educational Technologist. For example, teachers use Flipgrid to have students explain their thinking and develop mathematical discourse. Students use Wixie to make math movies or books to share. Students use Bee Bots and Ozobots to apply problem-solving strategies within these simple programming languages; writing programming code supports mastery of multiple SMPs.

Teachers use daily differentiated math stations or centers to meet the needs of individual students. Small groups of students work individually and/or as small group teams to apply their learning. Students may also use computers as a math station and complete individualized practice problems that their teachers have assigned through our Think Central computer math program. This program also collects data which helps teachers differentiate instruction and allows students to track their own progress as well.

1d. Science

Science instruction at Heroes Elementary School (HES) is based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), allowing students to learn grade level science concepts, make connections between the different science domains, and use engineering practices to develop inquiry skills and connect science to the real world. Our curriculum is designed to support deep learning in science, and our students have access to materials such as live creatures, scientific instruments, and other supplies necessary to create an engaging environment of science inquiry.

Science standards are also integrated throughout Benchmark Advance, our primary literacy material. Stories about science are taught in small groups, included in read-alouds, and are frequently the subject of students' writing. Additionally, science and literacy content are intentionally aligned so that students first learn about science concepts during literacy instruction and then later cover the same content in science, giving students valuable background knowledge to refer to when completing investigations in science. Additionally, writing is integrated into science learning through the use of science journals and science-based research projects.

The entire staff has received training on using technology to increase the Depth of Knowledge (DoK) included in science activities and investigations. For example, primary grades students use the Wixie application to practice inductive reasoning by sorting animals by observed attributes. They have also used online tools to report on their learning and record their voices sharing their ideas. In the upper grades, students think and act like scientists by collecting and analyzing data using google tools such as sheets, slides, and docs.

Science differentiation at HES most often occurs through adapting both processes and products to student needs, while continuing to maintain high expectations for all students. Examples might include tiered assignments, differentiated rubrics, and intentional grouping.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Heroes Elementary School (HES) provides a robust Social Studies (SS) curriculum using the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) for History/Social Studies. These standards are aligned to the CCRS Literacy (CCRS-L) and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework. SS topics are addressed weekly during a dedicated time and are deliberately integrated with literacy. Our HES purpose statement, which is publicly recited daily by all, embodies foundational SS concepts.

“At Heroes, our heads solve problems and are always learning; our hearts are respectful and considerate; and our hands work together for the good of all.”

Alignment to the C3 Framework includes crafting questions that promote inquiry (our heads solve problems and are always learning); providing opportunities for thoughtful informed action (our hearts are respectful and considerate); and cultivating collaboration and civic responsibility; (our hands work together for the good of all).

Students have opportunities to support the school and community as they learn what is meant to live the Heroes purpose and be a good citizen. For example, one of our 5th grade students was awarded the 2020 North Carolina State Student Excellence in Service Award. A wider reaching example is the work of our Beautification Club; student members provide outdoor flora as well as inspirational messaging on bulletin boards and displays inside the school.

To differentiate SS, teachers provide opportunities through Content Connections, the purposeful integration with the DoDEA literacy curriculum, and through the use of technology. During the literacy block, engaging read alouds and an array of leveled fictional and nonfictional texts are used to teach both literacy and SS standards. Literacy and SS cross-curricular project-based lesson plans are designed such that students write about SS topics and create technology-enhanced SS projects.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

At Heroes Elementary School (HES), our early learning programs include Preschool for all 4-year old children (by September 1st) and Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities (for children ages three to five years of age, who have been found eligible for special education services). The DoDEA standards are embedded in a center-based approach, using the Creative Curriculum. In our centers: computers, dramatic play, toys and games, sand and water, library, outdoors, music and movement, discovery/science, art and blocks; the children are learning through purposeful play-based experiences. Within this language-based curriculum, we address the “whole child” through exploration, socialization and investigation. Our students’ pre-academic and social skills are strengthened by using developmentally appropriate and intentional activities, while reinforcing self-esteem and independence. Home visits, parent conferences, weekly newsletters, and lesson plans (including applied standards) emailed home weekly, create a strong home-school connection. This home-school bond helps each child develop a pride in learning, while feeling safe and secure.

The Creative Curriculum’s Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Development and Learning, are the implemented standards that represent the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards for Preschool. These developmental and research-based objectives assist in measuring our children's achievements using the following domains and content areas: physical, social- emotional, cognitive, language, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. It also aligns our students’ learning to the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards for grades K-12. Our kindergarten teachers report they can tell which students attended our preschool. Our preschool students transition to kindergarten knowing a routine and displaying strong readiness skills. They are ready to continue their learning. Our school data shows reading and math scores have steadily increased each year, which in part, can be attributed to our preschool program which creates a strong, solid foundation of college and career readiness for Heroes' youngest learners.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Heroes Elementary School (HES) we want students to develop academic intelligence and social responsibility. We believe that participation in other curricular areas such as visual art, music, physical education, and information skills will deepen students’ understanding of themselves as well as their understanding of the world they live in thus helping to develop social responsibility. To accomplish this, Kindergarten through 5th grade students attend visual art class, music class and a class in the Information Center one time per week. Physical Education (PE) class is twice per week for all students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grades.

Visual art class encourages students’ individual creativity while simultaneously creating an opportunity to understand other perspectives. Students learn that the visual arts are a part of human communication and can be used to respond to the world around them. Students participate in a variety of individual and collaborative art projects. For example, every HES student created one feather as part of a Heroes eagles wings display which was based on the “What Lifts You” work of muralist Kelsey Montague. The art program at HES uses a combination of traditional and flipped instruction. The visual art scope and sequence focuses first on skill building/practice, then moves toward collaborative work, and finally self-paced projects and student choice. This is purposeful so that students gain experience with technique first, then use their skills to create work that is meaningful and unique to each student and communicates with the community. Students learn a variety of art making techniques including drawing, tempera and watercolor painting, oil and chalk pastel, clay, paper mache, plaster sculpture, photography, digital, and recycled art. Students study a wide-range of artists and artworks from ancient art to contemporary and living artists of diverse backgrounds and cultures. Our program utilizes social media as a vehicle to share artwork with stakeholders. We have received comments on our art Instagram from muralist Kelsey Montague and children’s illustrator Barney Saltzberg, as well as from other schools around the world. Heroes’ art teacher was even awarded a grant to travel to Japan to study art history and culture since many of our military families live and work on military bases in Japan at some point too.

Music classes are designed to provide students opportunities to respond to music, read music, create musical

compositions, and perform. Kindergarten through 5th grade students use a technology tool called Quaver in music class. Quaver is an online platform for creating a personalized avatar and music room, playing musical games, and composing with musical composition apps. The band club meets before school every morning and performs for our school and community. The music teacher plans and prepares students for a winter concert and a spring concert. Students sing and move to music performing for their peers and families. It is standing room only for every show.

Our Information Center (IC) provides students access to diverse print, digital materials including databases, and library services. During IC class, students are given opportunities to deepen their love of reading and to develop their inquisitive nature. In IC class, students also learn how to be a knowledgeable consumer of information which is a critical skill in 21st Century society. Our Information Specialist also collaborates with teachers to integrate information skills in support of the curriculum.

Socially responsible students are also active members of their communities. The PE curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop skills that will foster safe and satisfying lifetime participation in physical activities. Our students are able to show off their PE skills during our annual Sports Stacking events and Jump Rope for Heart event; both include community service components such as a food drive and donations to the American Heart Association respectively. The Eagle Run is an end of the school year PE event that is combined with a community picnic. Our parents are invited to all PE events and regularly participate.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Individual and diverse needs of students at Heroes Elementary School (HES) are met in a variety of ways. All staff at HES play a role in implementing the district-wide Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework and making sure that students are provided targeted support for all levels of learners. Tier 1 instruction is delivered daily by the classroom teacher, ensuring that all students have access to differentiated grade-level curriculum. HES has established a tier 2 intervention program called WIN (What I Need), during which students receive small-group, targeted tier 2 instruction 4 days a week. WIN groups are flexible, based on data, and intended to provide students with specific and targeted support.

Teachers at Heroes participate in weekly Focused Collaboration (FC) where grade level teams and interventionists use data to develop SMART goals to create plans for differentiated groups. Based on collected data, students may also receive tier 2 or tier 3 interventions from the Math and Reading Support Specialists. Students in grades K-3 may participate in Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) or SPIRE and students in grades 4-5 are supported through the Read 180 program. The Math Support Specialist works with all grade levels by collaborating with classroom teachers, providing pull-out or inclusion support to students based on data and students' needs.

Additional tier 3 support includes the Student Support Team (SST) in which a team of educators, interventionists, our counselor, stakeholders and administration work collectively analyzing student data to develop a plan to further promote student growth and success. Often an individual SMART goal is developed, whether academically or behaviorally, to further pinpoint student needs. If individual SMART goals are not met, or the SST feels the student needs further support, a tier 4 referral to the 504 Team or special education may be made.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Heroes Elementary School (HES) provides a continuum of advanced academic services, matched to the needs of our learners, through the Advanced Academic Programs and Services (AAPS) and through regular collaboration between classroom teachers and the Advanced Academic Programs and Services Resource Teacher (AAPS-RT).

At HES, we use a Levels of Service (LoS) approach, which is based on a foundation of differentiation in the

general education classroom, but also calls for increasing the intensity of services to match each student's demonstrated need. Under this model, the AAPS-RT provides both direct and indirect services, with a goal of supporting teachers in differentiating for their advanced students and of extending, enriching, and supplementing the DoDEA CCRS for all students who need a challenge beyond their regular curriculum.

At HES, Level I services, such as creative and critical thinking lessons and STEAM activities, are available to all students. Level II opportunities are developed by the AAPS-RT, the classroom teacher, or in collaboration, and are flexibly available to any student who demonstrates need via pre-testing or classroom performance. Level II services include Passion Projects, flexible math and reading enrichment groups, and CCRS-based extension activities. Level III and IV services are more frequent and intense and are primarily managed and delivered by the AAPS-RT. These services include Advanced Academic Units, Interdisciplinary Projects, Curriculum Compacting, and both grade and content acceleration for our most advanced students.

HES is committed to ensuring equitable access to advanced academics for all of our students. To that end, we administer the Cognitive Aptitude (CoGAT) screener to all 2nd graders, with a goal of identifying advanced students who may have been otherwise overlooked. The CogAT is, however, only one tool we use; our overall focus is on gaining a holistic picture of each child's needs and best matching those needs to services.

3c. Special education

The faculty at Heroes Elementary School (HES) believes ALL students will be successful. Working together, all staff members share the collective responsibility for ensuring students reach their highest potential. To meet the various needs of students, HES follows the DoDEA Mid-Atlantic District Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) which includes tier 1 differentiated instruction, tier 2 WIN intervention time and/or math and reading support classes, tier 3 Student Support Team (SST), and tier 4 English second language services, advanced academic services, 504 plans, and special education services. MTSS helps ensure that any academic gaps are closed as efficiently as possible. Interventions become more intensive and individualized as students move up in the tiers.

When a teacher has a concern with student performance, they follow this tiered approach; the last tier may involve a referral for special education. As a tier 4 intervention, special education services are a qualified service. The eligibility process starts with the case-study committee (CSC) designating assessments that are aligned to a suspected disability. Those assessments are completed and reviewed to determine if a student qualifies for special education services, in accordance with DoDEA eligibility requirements. These eligibility requirements ensure that students are not overidentified for reasons such as ethnic or social-economic status. This process supports the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). No two IEPs are identical. IEPs may include accommodations and/or modifications to the grade-level curriculum. IEPs are intended to address deficits and close gaps. As individualized instruction is carried out, data is collected. This data is used by the CSC to track progress, guide instruction, and make changes to the IEP.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

As a tier 4 intervention, English Second Language (ESOL) services are also a qualified service. ESOL students are identified based on information found in registration forms completed by parents and/or by teacher referral. Once identified, students are given the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) test which generates one of the following possible scores: one starting, two emerging, three developing, four expanding, five bridging, or six exited. Once the ESOL student has a level, an English Language Learner (ELL) plan is written by the ESOL team. All ELL plans are individually tailored to meet the needs of the ESOL student. The student may participate in ESOL classes or have accommodations and modifications based on their level. An ESOL student who scores a level one will receive more class time, accommodations, and modifications. An ESOL student with a level four or more may receive ESOL support through consultation and collaboration between the classroom teacher and ESOL teacher. A student who is exited from the ESOL program will be monitored for a period of two years. All students are monitored to track progress and determine further academic needs.

Our special education and ESOL services are staffed by three Learning Impaired Mild to Moderate (LIMM) teachers, one Learning Impaired Moderate to Severe (LIMS) teacher, one Learning Impaired Severe to Profound (LISP) teacher, one Emotionally Impaired (EI) teacher, one English Second Language (ESOL) teacher, two Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs), and shared Occupational Therapist (OT), Physical Therapist (PT), Vision Impaired (VI) specialist, Hearing Impaired (HI) specialist, and assessors. Our students also benefit from the support of 20 paraprofessionals dedicated to supporting tier 4 programs.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Heroes Elementary School (HES) is a nurturing environment that engages the whole child to develop a “growth mindset”. To foster a growth mindset, we end our school days with a 30 minute school-wide WIN time. WIN stands for “What I Need”. During this time, every student in the school is provided targeted support in small group settings. Our entire staff is involved. Students feel supported and our staff is dedicated to a collective responsibility for every child in our school. To foster a growth mindset, students examine their own assessment data and set goals. At the conclusion of both semesters, every class celebrates growth. Some classes make Flipgrid videos to share what they have mastered and what they are still working on. Some classes invite parents to a progress party. The upper grade students all participated in a 3G Gala; students made presentations to share their Glows, Grows, and Goals with parents and staff members.

Before and after school clubs further engage our students socially as well as academically. Our before-school band club provides daily lessons for students to learn an instrument. The band club performs for audiences at school as well as outside of school. During our after-school “Winners’ Club”, four educators provide additional tier 2 targeted support for selected students. Running clubs and a yearbook club are also available to engage students.

Through our school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support System (PBIS), students are explicitly taught and encouraged to continuously improve their behavior. Celebrations take place each quarter to recognize students who are successful in making positive behavior choices. In keeping with our growth mindset, students who have not yet mastered the behavior expectations attend a reflection session with the guidance counselor to learn social and emotional skills that will help them reach criteria to join the next celebration. In conjunction with our PBIS, our school has adopted a character trait of the month. One of our after school clubs, the beautification club, decorates a bulletin board each month to highlight this trait. We talk about these character traits on Eagle Eye News, our morning news show. Students who have demonstrated a trait may be featured on our Fabulous Friday news feature; one student each week talks about their “Ah Ha Moment” and how they persevered until they improved.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Heroes Elementary School (HES) engages our families and community through meaningful communication, family-oriented activities, and programs purposefully designed to support military families and increase parent involvement.

HES communicates through the official HES website and individual classroom websites, our popular school Facebook page, our daily Eagle Eye News YouTube broadcast, and weekly classroom newsletters. The school administration also communicates through regular emails and monthly Facebook “Live” virtual meetings. The Community Superintendent communicates via Town Hall meetings and the Camp Lejeune Community School Advisory Board. DoDEAs texting and calling system, AT-HOC, is also used to share critical information and emergency alerts.

HES invites stakeholders to a variety of family-oriented activities including academic and behavior celebrations, music concerts, PE events and PTO events. The 2nd Dental Battalion has “adopted” HES. Volunteers from this military command work with students at school on a regular basis. These Sailors and Marines also volunteer to help with Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) sponsored events, including a yearly “static display” where families explore tanks, helicopters and other military technology. Our PTO sponsors other activities including book fairs, family BINGO night, a family dance, and more.

Our community is comprised of Marines, Sailors, Coast Guard and their families. Therefore deployments, training exercises, and transitions are the “norm” for HES students. The school counselor works with the Military Life Family Counselor (MFLC) to ensure students’ and families’ needs are met during long

separations and difficult times. The school counselor also teaches weekly guidance classes to students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade to support their social and emotional development.

HES also initiated a One School One Book program which engages our families and promotes reading. At school, all Kindergarten through 5th grade students participate in a weekly interactive read aloud of the same book. Then, families are encouraged to discuss the book at home. Parents even receive weekly book updates and resources via emails, Eagle Eye News, and Facebook.

Finally, in order to increase parent involvement, HES adopted the “Six Slices of Parent Involvement” model. Research has shown that increased parent involvement benefits everyone - students’ internal motivation improves, student-parent relationships improve, students’ behavior problems decrease, social responsibility improves, parents develop new skills and knowledge, and parent-school relationships improve. Based on this model, HES works deliberately on six distinct ways parents can be involved. The six ways are: communicating, parenting, decision-making, collaborating, volunteering, and learning at home.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Heroes Elementary School (HES) values and supports all of our 46 professional staff and 25 support staff members. Our high performing students owe much of their success to our dedicated educators’ commitment and love for learning. Everyone at HES has a “growth mindset”; we are always continuously improving. Our teachers have 707 years of combined experience and 29 teachers hold advanced degrees including 24 masters, 2 specialists, and 3 doctorates. Even with this high level of experience and education, our teachers are equally committed to continued professional learning.

Professional learning is a key component of Goal 2 of DoDEAs Blueprint for Continuous Improvement, Student Excellence. Professional learning includes four days a year of College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) professional learning provided by DoDEA Headquarters. A second strategic initiative that is central to DoDEAs and HESs professional learning is Professional Learning Communities which are implemented as Focused Collaboration (FC) in our District. FC is a structured form of collaboration that focuses educators on making decisions that are grounded in evidence, accumulating and circulating knowledge and ideas, and working collectively to improve teaching and learning. At HES, teams engage in 80-minute weekly FC sessions that are facilitated by three teacher leaders. Additionally, teachers have 30 minutes of collaborative lesson planning three mornings a week along with a 45-minute daily team planning period. Our theory of action is that improved teaching results in improved learning. Hence, our multifaceted ongoing professional development leads to increased student achievement.

Teachers also receive on-the-job support through at least one annual formal observation and at least five annual observations using the DoDEA Learning Walkthrough Tool. Teachers receive feedback that acknowledges the outstanding teaching and learning observed in their classrooms while also challenging them to continuously improve.

Parents and volunteers value and support our teachers. For example, the PTO provides luncheons, special funding, and recognition during Teacher Appreciation Week. PTO volunteers and volunteers from 2nd Dental, our “Buddy Battalion”, make copies, update displays, collect classroom trash, pull weeds, work with students, and more.

Finally, the school principal and assistant principal maintain an open-door policy, welcoming and assisting, as we all hold ourselves collectively responsible for our students’ successes. It is through this balance of nudging and nurturing that the administration creates an environment where teachers feel valued and supported.

4. School Leadership:

HES has one principal, one assistant principal, 46 professional staff and 25 support staff who are all collectively responsible for meeting students’ needs. This means every member of our Heroes team does his or her best job every day to help our children learn and grow. All employees, working together with this

common goal, make HES successful. HES leadership supports this effort and holds everyone accountable for this work through supervision, distributed leadership, data-analysis, and capacity building. Our principal sets clear and high expectations for teachers, staff and students, but relies on many others to move the work forward.

The principal, with the support of the assistant principal, oversees every aspect of the school and is ultimately responsible for supervising all staff members and ensuring the safety and education of all students. Supervision includes formal observations and informal walkthroughs. As the instructional leaders in the building, the principal and assistant principal far exceed the number of instructional walkthroughs required by the district. With each walkthrough comes feedback and questions to help teachers ponder and make adjustments to improve their instruction. In addition to regular walkthroughs, the principal and assistant principal conduct at least one formal observation for each professional staff member. Supervision also involves a performance appraisal process consisting of setting performance elements at the start of the year, a progress review at the middle of the year, and performance ratings at the end of the year. Through this appraisal process, the administration meets with each employee face-to-face at least three times a year.

Another important aspect of HES leadership is distributed leadership through the work of our School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT). Our SILT, which meets weekly, is chaired by a teacher and includes the principal, assistant principal, bargaining unit leader, literacy leader, and math leader. Through regular analysis of data, the SILT ensures that programs, procedures, and resources focus on meeting students needs. For example, the SILT recently planned and facilitated a mid-year analysis of interim assessment data, walkthrough data, and focused collaboration data. Through this reflective work, the staff collaboratively determined literacy and math standards that needed improvement and then everyone purposefully targeted those standards. From our midyear data analysis, we also collaboratively determined our next steps for improvement which included increasing the DoK level of the activities in our literacy and math centers. Then, SILT members designed and carried out professional learning sessions to support these priorities.

Another important tenet of how we collectively and collaboratively meet students' needs is through deliberately building the capacity of each member of the Heroes staff. As the staff grows the students grow; we are all continuously improving together. HES staff members lead student groups, curricular programs, DoDEA initiatives, projects, and more. Most challenges are collaboratively addressed through teacher-leadership. Empowering individuals has been the best leadership strategy for this school. Other stakeholders include the military command, the school liaison officers (support our school on behalf of the military command), and our parents. They are involved in school leadership as members of the Camp Lejeune School Advisory Board and HES's PTO.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Heroes Elementary School's (HES) overall strategy for success is meeting students' needs through collaboration and collective responsibility.

Teachers and administrators at HES participate in one 80-minute uninterrupted Focused Collaboration (FC) meeting each week. Grade-level teams, interventionists, specialists, and administrators begin three out of four of the other school days with an additional 30-minutes of collaborative work. The four critical questions that drive our collaborative work are: What do we want students to know and be able to do?, How will we know if they know it?, How will we respond if they don't know it?, How will we respond if they do know it?

FC at HES is a systematic process in which team members work together interdependently to modify and enrich instruction using a district-wide protocol to guide the session and record minutes. Initially, SMART goals are developed based on data. Then team members use formative and summative data to plan rigorous, tiered lessons that focus on the College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS). On an ongoing basis, teachers collaboratively review student data, look at student work, and modify their instruction to increase student achievement. Each FC session concludes with identifying the next steps to improve student achievement.

In the past, teachers at HES focused on the students in their individual classrooms. More recently, teachers have shifted their thinking to consider all students in their grade level or even beyond their grade level. During FCs and other collaborative planning times, teachers also use data to create tiered groups for our school-wide intervention time, WIN. Win stands for "What I Need". It is not uncommon for students to be a part of a cross-classroom flexible group during WIN time, based on their individual data. Every member of our staff collectively supports students during WIN time.

A Cognia Accreditation Team visited HES in late-February, 2020 as part of the Mid-Atlantic District accreditation external review. After observing our classes, talking with our students, and interviewing parents and staff, they shared glowing remarks about our school. The reviewers felt that HES was like a family that takes care of and helps each other. They said we have a shared commitment for excellence which meant that the staff and teachers all believe that by working together they can really make a positive difference for students. The external review team also said that HES has school pride! Everyone has high expectations and it shows. Students are proud of their school. The staff, teachers, and administrators are proud, too. Additionally, excellent instructional practices were observed in all subject areas and grade levels. Teachers were observed working hard collaboratively and collectively to meet students' needs. All students were engaged and they were learning and growing.

The report from this team of professional external reviewers validates that we are focused on doing whatever it takes - together - to help our students, families, and school. HES is a great school. Through collaboration and collective responsibility, we achieve DoDEAs vision: Excellence in education for every student, every day.