

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

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

School Mailing Address PSC 476 Box 128
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City FPO, AP Sasebo, Japan State DD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 96322-0128

County _____

Telephone (011) 819-5650 Fax _____

Web site/URL

<http://www.dodea.edu/pacific/japan/CFASSASEBO/SaseboES>

E-mail Hattie.Phipps@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* Dr. Judith Allen E-mail judith.allen@dodea.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name DoDEA Pacific East Tel. (011) 225-3940

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 Mrs. Nichole Holmes
(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):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 20 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	10	8	18
K	15	12	27
1	20	24	44
2	16	19	35
3	8	12	20
4	13	15	28
5	18	12	30
6	16	13	29
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	116	115	231

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 17.8 % Asian
 - 13.4 % Black or African American
 - 25.5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2.6 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 20.8 % White
 - 19.9 % 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: 26%

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

Sasebo Elementary is a Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA) school primarily serving military-connected children and their families.

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	26
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	35
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	136
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.26
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	26

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

Japanese, Tagalog, Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 14 %
32 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31 %

Total number students who qualify: 71

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %

19 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 23:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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

Sasebo Elementary is a community school serving military children and families in Sasebo, Japan. It is a small school, serving nearly 250 students ranging from preschool through 6th grade. At Sasebo Elementary, we must strive to meet the unique needs of military-connected students and families. The school's purpose statement, "Empowering students to be confident learners and global citizens," was created to prepare our military-connected students to engage in an ever-changing global environment. The school, founded in 1948, has grown, changed, and adapted over the years, transitioning from a K-12 legacy school to a 21st century elementary school.

Sasebo Elementary began transitioning to a 21st century innovative teaching and learning facility in spring of 2017. The transition was completed for the 2019-2020 school-year and has culminated with an institution that pushes the boundaries of traditional teaching and learning to enrich the lives of all students. Given the opportunity to reimagine the design of a school from the ground-up, the new facility was engineered around the 21st century instructional shifts. Instead of standard classrooms and stand-and-lecture instruction, the design of the school-building was reimaged to focus on 21st century teaching techniques. Instead of the standard classroom layout, the school is designed in clusters that allow the free-flow of teaching, learning, information, and students. Teachers no longer are confined to an assigned classroom, but instead engage students in a larger area known as a neighborhood, which connects several learning studios, one-to-one rooms, and workrooms. Classes no longer sit in rows and watch a lecture – seating options are centered on tables that allow students to interact with one another and has a teacher serving as a facilitator of learning. Grade-level teachers share a neighborhood and practice collaborative planning. This ensures that the teachers instruct as a cohesive team and allows students to use whatever resources or tools they need anywhere in the neighborhood. By structuring the school like this, we can prepare our students for the future by fostering independence and initiative.

In anticipation of this sweeping change, Sasebo Elementary ensured that faculty and staff were given appropriate and in-depth professional learning opportunities on the new strategies they would need to implement, including project based learning, technology integration, and 21st century skills of communication, creativity and collaboration. By adopting these teaching strategies, instructors could collaborate and implement high quality project based learning units that focused on student-directed inquiry, problem solving, and critical thinking.

The school moved into a new open concept 21st century facility for the 2019-2020 school year and moved toward a new model of teaching and learning. To offer new learning opportunities to meet the needs of students, the staff developed a schedule that allowed for grade level and grade band collaboration on a daily basis. In addition to providing extra common planning opportunities, the staff changed the structure of the daily schedule. Rather than follow a traditional schedule where subjects are taught in isolation, Sasebo Elementary transitioned to providing instruction in the content block and the project based block. This structure allows for both direct instruction in all content areas and cross-curricular integration, giving students opportunities to make connections across contents. Through this approach, students are able to engage in project based learning opportunities. One such cross-curricular example included a project based learning unit focused on around "Rosie Revere, Engineer," which integrated the engineering design process, allowed students to create an invention out of household items, and culminated in a public presentation by students.

One great benefit of this structure is that learning extends beyond the grade-level classroom and includes many additional learning opportunities. Students at Sasebo Elementary attend lessons in art, music, physical education, Host Nation, Japanese language, advanced academics, counseling, library, and educational technology without losing out on core content standards. The specialists that teach these subjects collaborate with classroom teachers to co-plan and design lessons that encompass many content areas, which allows students to see how different subjects are connected and gives instructors the opportunity to reinforce concepts across subjects. To further support students, the Literacy Support, Special Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Advanced Academics, and Education Technology teachers, along with school and Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC), push into classrooms to provide individualized

and group support for student learning.

Not only are students provided with a variety of learning opportunities to empower them to be confident learners and global citizens, but Sasebo Elementary also benefits from its partnership with the local military command. By utilizing support services from Naval personnel, students are given opportunities to learn from various military-support units and have been instructed in many unique areas, including military working-dogs, safe animal interaction, fire safety, and even oral hygiene.

Sasebo Elementary provides a variety of opportunities to allow for student success and this serves as just a snapshot of what the school offers.

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

Sasebo Elementary commits to the ideal that all students can learn and this informs the approach we take within our school. In order to ensure that all students are given the best opportunities to learn, we include all stakeholders in the learning culture. Parental support is crucial throughout our school's environment. Parents help to reinforce our expectations and the belief that everyone, adults and students, can learn from each other and our varied experiences. Our work with students can be described by our purpose statement of "Empowering students to be confident learners and global citizens." Educators in Sasebo Elementary strive to find ways to engage, challenge, and enrich our students to become problem solvers and critical thinkers. Because of this, teachers differentiate content, products, and processes in order to reach children where they are. Sasebo Elementary realizes that students are not the same, nor do they learn in the same ways. The faculty and staff work together to ensure a culture of high expectations and rigorous learning by implementing DoDEA's College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS). In addition, we utilize our district scope and sequence charts in order to keep our focus on the essential student learning and to continue to be cohesive throughout our school and organization. We follow best practices in order to help our students be successful. Expectations are high, and students and parents strive to reach them.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Sasebo Elementary uses and applies DoDEA's College and Career Readiness Standards for English Language Arts (CCRSL). Through the standards, educators focus on four domains of English Language Arts (ELA): reading, writing, speaking/listening, and language. Students who are able to master these standards will demonstrate independence, value evidence, build strong content knowledge, understand and accept others' perspectives and cultures, use higher level comprehension strategies, use technological devices and media strategically, as well as respond to various tasks, purposes, disciplines. Educators focus on reading literary and informational text that exemplifies a gradual increase in text complexity from grade to grade providing rigor with attainability. To meet the needs of the standards across multiple content areas, educators use an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning. Educators implement a balanced literacy approach which incorporates meaningful, student-centered workstations that include word study and independent reading; guided reading to differentiate reading instruction; shared reading; as well as read alouds. Sasebo Elementary selected this approach as a structure because it lends itself to differentiated instruction, produces independence with a gradual release of responsibility, and provides educators the consistent access to formatively assess students through their collaborative and independent work.

Educators use literacy to encourage active participation and experimentation with ideas among students by constructing active learning opportunities, where students can be fully engaged with the material and generate ideas with open-ended projects and assignments. This allows students to be thinkers and to benefit from learning from failure, as well as aids our students to understand that they have a voice and can make a difference in a democratic society. Educators find connections to their students' everyday lives and incorporate them into the curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Educators implement summative assessments within various opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, such as through projects and project based learning, as well as having students demonstrate learning through traditional assessments. Educators collaborate with grade level peers and specialists to share data, programs, tools, and strategies that work for the students in the various classrooms, as well as work together to brainstorm, team teach, and design curricula and assessments aligned with the CCRSL. The collaboration helps to determine ways to provide reteaching, enrichment opportunities for students, as well as ways to use data to determine how to group students to meet the needs of each individual in addition to identifying students needing additional support.

1c. Mathematics

In mathematics, Sasebo Elementary follows DoDEA's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics (CCRSM). The standards call for students to learn multiple strategies and approaches to using and solving mathematics, allowing for a stronger sense of number fluency among students. Formative and summative assessment data is used throughout the year to guide instruction. Teachers are encouraged to give a unit pretest in math to assess skills already mastered. Students who demonstrate mastery of the skills are referred to the Advanced Academics Program & Services (AAPS) teacher. This is an all-inclusive opportunity. For example, in the multiplication of fractions chapter pretest, a 5th Grade student who did exceptionally well on the pretest was referred to AAPS for this unit since he showed a strong capability in this particular area. There, he received enrichment activities to build upon and expand his knowledge.

Classroom teachers use a variety of math strategies such as number talks, hands on manipulatives, math in motion activities as well as small group activities for both enrichment and intervention. Students participate in stations/centers in many classrooms tailored to their academic level through differentiation of the skills and content. In many classrooms, the teachers co-teach or team teach the students to see that math standards are exercised and that students are successful.

Students showing a lack of foundational skills receive remediation to help fill gaps in student knowledge. The teachers at Sasebo Elementary use flexible grouping based on levels of mastery. When a formative assessment such as a quiz, mid-chapter check, or homework assignment is used to assess understanding, the teacher would utilize flexible grouping to reteach the standard. For example, the teacher will assess the student's understanding and reteach the specific skill using a different strategy. Students from a variety of achievement levels may be placed in a group for reteaching based on the level of mastery of that particular skill. Summative assessment data is used to analyze student performance and to determine which areas need to be targeted to improve student outcomes. The DoDEA Comprehensive Assessment System (D-CAS) interim in math is taken by students three times a year. The rapid retrieval of student results allows teachers to analyze the data by standard and to collaborate upon ways in which the needs of the student can be met.

1d. Science

Sasebo Elementary School implements the Next Generation Science Standards and utilizes the FOSS Next Generation science curriculum as a resource to meet these rigorous standards. Students work towards mastery of the science standards through hands on investigations and guided instruction. Students are engaged in science investigations that go beyond the textbook. Our school encourages teachers to provide opportunities for students to have hands-on experiences to make learning meaningful to each student. The curriculum also provides a web-based platform that allows students to learn online, further practicing the technological skills we believe will shape their future.

Sasebo Elementary School teachers teach science in hand with other core subject areas. Teachers plan collaboratively to allow students to work together across grade levels and work to vertically align standards and students tasks. Project based learning that spans different subject areas provides students with hands on experiences that are both exciting for students and allow them to meet the rigorous expectations for their grade level. Our students work collaboratively with different grade levels to research driving questions about subjects such as movement, motion, magnets, and math. Creativity and collaboration are highly valued skills at Sasebo Elementary School. Children as young as kindergarten learn science through exploration and fun as they head outdoors and observe nature and weather. In the classroom, students learn about animal life cycles, ecosystems, and engage in investigations of organisms such as live worms, fish, and snails. Students capture their thinking and learning through science journals and engage in sense-making discussions to allow them to explore and learn scientific concepts through inquiry and exploration. In sense-making discussions, students discuss the phenomena they observed and learn about the science behind these observations.

At our school we value hands-on meaningful experiences, technology integration, and problem solving to develop critical thinking skills. Through an emphasis on these skills, we build a long-lasting love for investigation for all students.

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

At Sasebo Elementary, social studies is taught through an emphasis on literacy, research, and community engagement. As teachers at Sasebo Elementary prepare for the adoption of new College and Career Ready Standards for social studies, they are teaching students about community, civic engagement, government, history, and the analysis of primary resources. Students begin their involvement in the community by learning about rules, the roles of responsible citizens, and how members of a society support and help each other. Students practice these lessons in the Sasebo Elementary community, as well as the local Japanese community. Students visited a local elementary school and participated in several traditional Japanese games and physical education activities. They also visited the local National Science Institute and participated in a STEM fair with their students. The local Japanese students visited the school at Christmas time and participated in traditional American crafts, played American games, watched an American Christmas movie and had popcorn. As students learn more about being members of a society, they learn about the customs, traditions, and celebrations of other countries. Providing students with these learning opportunities prepares our military-connected students for their next move and next duty station. Lessons in social studies are integrated primarily with English language arts, allowing students to learn through reading, writing, and engaging with digital media. Teachers use formative assessments to determine how to best scaffold the learning for students and to identify opportunities for extension or enrichment. Students learn about what being a responsible and productive citizen meant many years ago and in our current day in time. Why participating in civic duties such as volunteering and voting are important to our communities. Students discuss how communities and cultures differ depending upon location and who lives there. Our school specifically learns and partners with local Japanese schools to exchange academic experiences and cultural opportunities. Students have the opportunity to learn about what resources, trades and industries are in their local area, and which of those we depend on for imports and how we export things to other locations.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The Sure Start program is a quality educational program that reflects best practices with the help of family, school, and community involvement. Our program is built on the idea that a child's potential for learning is influenced by early cultural, physical, social, emotional, linguistic, creative, and cognitive experiences. Sure Start stands firmly on the beliefs that learning at this age is done through the combination of practicing academic skills, mastering social-emotional skills, and refining physical skills. Children learn through play and interactions with adults who have an understanding of how to build on a child's natural desire to learn about the world around them. Families are greatly involved and are educated throughout the year on child development and extension learning techniques that support classroom instruction in all settings, including the home. Through the support of our volunteers, families, and our community our Sure Start students gain confidence in their skills and develop a love of learning.

Students learn reading readiness skills such as alphabet letters and phonological awareness through songs and creating art. Numeracy concepts are taught through a variety of activities and reinforced through play with the use of playdoh, dabbers, and manipulatives which also supports development of fine motor skills. Song and dance are integrated throughout the day to encourage movement and acquisition of rote memory skills such as counting and learning the alphabet. The objectives of the program are separated into ten areas: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, math, science and technology, social studies, the arts, and English language acquisition. These objectives correlate with the adopted Teaching Strategies Gold Curriculum and align with the College and Career Ready Standards. This alignment provides Sure Start students with a seamless transition between preschool and kindergarten and provides a solid foundation for the later grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Japanese Language, counseling, educational technology, advanced academics, and library/media. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade attend lessons in these courses on a weekly or monthly basis. Providing these varying opportunities to students allows Sasebo Elementary to meet the unique needs of military-

connected students while preparing them to become global citizens.

Specialists determine the essential knowledge and skills for their content area by engaging in weekly district collaboration. Specialists engage in professional learning communities with their peers across the 11 elementary schools in the district to allow for a discussion of essential learning, common lessons, and common assessments. They work with job-alike peers to consider how to support classroom teachers with their daily instruction.

The specialists take these district-wide discussions back to their collaboration with the classroom teachers at Sasebo Elementary. Specialists work with classroom teachers to develop lessons that allow for cross content integration, while meeting the needs of each class and grade level. This powerful collaboration practice has led to timely, integrated lessons for different grade levels and students. For example, after seeing an increase in negative self-talk among students in primary grades, the counselor and advanced academic teacher taught students about grit, perseverance and having a growth mindset. Students in 4th and 5th grade developed skits on having a growth mindset and performed them for the school to help cultivate these traits in younger students. These skits led to positive changes in student behaviors and attitudes in the primary levels. Another example of specialists working with classroom teachers to support student learning can be evidenced through the student success club. After classroom teachers saw a burgeoning need for financial literacy in 4th through 6th grade, the PE teacher and Educational Technologist created an after school club to teach students success skills and financial literacy.

Sasebo Elementary is not only working on teaching students life skills, but help students take advantage of the unique opportunity of living and learning in Japan. Students attend a Japanese language class once a week, and a Host Nation class once a week, resulting in two weekly classes centered around Japanese language and culture for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. As part of their class, students attend cultural events, such as the annual Sasebo Cultural Celebration. During this yearly event, students attend cultural workshops where they learn about Japanese culture, such as martial arts, Aikido, how to wear kimono, how to play traditional Japanese instruments such as the Koto and Taiko drums, traditional Japanese flower arrangement, Japanese calligraphy, and origami art crafts. These cultural lessons are extended into their weekly lessons in school and also include opportunities learning about local crafts such as the Sasebo spinning tops, learning Japanese dance, storytelling, and communication. Cultural exchanges also allow students to attend and visit local Japanese schools and to host Japanese students within Sasebo Elementary.

To prepare students to be digital and media savvy citizens, Sasebo Elementary provides students with direct technology and information literacy instruction from the educational technology teacher and the information specialist. Students learn about accessing and using digital resources and databases to support their learning and to engage in research. Students at Sasebo Elementary love to check out books, as evidenced by Sasebo Elementary having the largest number of book checkouts of any school across DoDEA Pacific. Students transfer this love of learning into their technology use; students can be regularly seen accessing technology to research questions, watch informational videos, and even develop presentations to share with their peers and the community.

Students at Sasebo Elementary also work on physical fitness. Students attend PE class on a weekly basis, but many students choose to attend additional school sponsored athletic clubs, such as running club and stretch club. The focus of physical education is on active physical engagement while working on social and physical skills. Students track their improvements in PE and take the FitnessGram at the end of the year to assess health-related fitness components.

Finally, students also receive an education in the arts. In art and music classes, standards-based lessons are created in order to support students in various ways. Lessons and expectations are differentiated according to the age, development, or grade level of the students. The specialist teachers incorporate activities that are engaging and encompass the belief that everyone can be an artist. The standards for both art and music correlate with the artistic processes: creating, performing/ producing/ presenting, responding, and connecting. Students are challenged through high expectations, and lessons are scaffolded to help them reach these standards. The art and music teachers encourage students as young as five to embrace their

creativity and strive to help students through 6th grade sustain that creativity. Students at Sasebo Elementary attend art class on a weekly basis. Lessons are prepared weekly and follow the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards for Arts (CCRSA). The CCRSA address artistic literacy, artistic practice, and related assessments. Student work is displayed through the school and there are opportunities to display work around the base and the local community. Students at Sasebo Elementary also attend music once a week and engage in school concerts several times during the year. Students engage in winter and spring concerts at Sasebo Elementary, but also are involved in concerts at local Japanese events and cultural celebrations. Students also learn to play Japanese instruments in partnership with their Host Nation class.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Sasebo Elementary School incorporates a Student Support Team (SST) which is a school-based problem-solving team composed of educators and outside resources who provide support to teachers to improve the quality of the general education program and reduce the underachievement of students. The purpose of the team is to work effectively with the referring educator or parent to analyze student struggles and design interventions powerful enough to effect the desired change.

The team utilizes the research-based, 3-tier system of Response to Intervention (RTI) service model. When a referral is received, it is reviewed, classroom assessments and work samples are evaluated, the problem is clarified, interventions are selected, and an implementation plan is created to include assessments for progress monitoring. The classroom teacher implements the plan for a specified amount of time with support from one to two of the team members, if needed (tier 1). Then the team reconvenes for a follow-up meeting to review the outcomes and determine the next steps. If the data collected during the progress monitoring shows that the intervention was unsuccessful, a referral to available support services may be recommended (tier 2) or another intervention can be selected (continuation with tier 1). Many times at this point, observations are scheduled and completed by several SST members, depending on the identified barrier to the student's success. The problem-solving process continues until the intervention(s) is successful or until a determination is made that a more in-depth evaluation for special services is required (tier 3). Sasebo Elementary School is fortunate to have a Reading Specialist, Gifted Education Specialist, and English as a Second Language Specialist on staff to provide tier 2 services to struggling or advanced students on a daily basis if needed.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level have the opportunity to qualify for Advanced Academics Programs & Services (AAPS). AAPS provides different levels of service for students based on their in class performance. At Sasebo Elementary, all students have the opportunity to receive support from the AAPS teacher if they demonstrate mastery of grade level skills or standards. The AAPS teacher provides four levels of service to students at Sasebo Elementary, classified as levels I-IV. All students receive level I services, which encourage critical and creative thinking, helping to push students beyond their grade level standards. Students receiving level II services are students who have shown success with grade level skills or standards. Students at the level II tier receive support in areas of success. Students classified as receiving level III support are provided additional grade level extension or enrichment, but also receive lessons in skills such as resilience, time-management, and self-esteem. The final level of support, a level IV, is acceleration. In the 7 years the AAPS teacher has been at Sasebo Elementary, she has successfully grade accelerated 7 students. Each student showed a significant need for above grade level work across the board. These students thrived in the next grade level and were appropriately challenged with the new standards.

3c. Special education

We offer a preschool program for children with disabilities (PSCD) ages 3-5. PSCD focuses on strengthening cognitive, adaptive, social-emotional, communication, and motor skills. Students are placed in the program through collaborative screening and assessment with professionals from the Navy's Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS) program.

PSCD utilizes the adopted Teaching Strategies Gold Curriculum and Second Steps social-emotional curriculum. Our goal is to nurture students and provide opportunities for learning and practicing social skills through play. Students engage in meaningful learning through in-depth unit studies on areas such as recycling and building. Families engage in activities like making play dough, building with blocks, and creating "robots" from recycled materials. The program encourages parents to focus on the building of fine motor skills through play, communication through stories and inquiry, and reading readiness through song and movement.

For students with disabilities in grades K-6 we offer the learning impairment mild to moderate (LIMM) program. Our school values inclusion and provides supports for all students to access the general education curriculum. Specialized instruction is delivered in the least restrictive environment. Our special education teacher collects data frequently using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) online, DIBELS, and Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) to monitor growth in reading and to guide instruction. Students track their data and set personal goals to beat each month. Math fluency is monitored with Math Running Records which not only checks to see if a student correctly answers a math fact question, but aims to understand student strategies.

The Speech and Language Pathologist provides services to students with identified communication disorders. The program is individualized and targets both sound and language development in children from 3 years to the sixth grade. Consultation services are provided to parents and teachers to address student goals as they pertain to home and classroom.

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

Sasebo Elementary provides support for English Language Learners (ELLs) through its English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Students identified as potential ELLs are assessed in areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening and leveled in each area from a 1-4. Individualized support plans are developed for students and shared with their classroom teachers, so that each ESOL student's expectations and skills are clear and they can perform to the best of their ability. The ESOL teacher and the classroom teachers work collaboratively and plan types of assistance, accommodations, and modifications that the students need during push in support. In class, the ESOL teacher provides the services accordingly and collects data. The teacher can also monitor the students' social and academic language development throughout the push in time to determine if they need more or less support outside of their classroom. Based on the data and observation, those students are pulled out to practice their targeted skills along with level one and two ESOL students.

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

Sasebo Elementary serves military-connected students, which has led to the school implementing different counseling services and supports to meet the social emotional needs of these students. The school has a military and family life counselor (MFLC) who works independently and in groups with students to help them deal with having deployed parents and the challenges of moving. The MFLC provides students with important strategies and skills for coping with and overcoming these challenges. The school counselor is part of the school's specials schedule, allowing her to provide grade level lessons to students across the school. In addition to these lessons, students receive one-on-one counseling or attend counseling groups to help them work through any challenges they have.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Located on a United States Naval Base in southern Japan, Sasebo Elementary is wholly embedded in the military community and the local Japanese community. Our school embraces the small town community feel and provides a safe and embracing environment for all students. This is illustrated in our school's purpose statement, "Empowering students to be confident learners and global citizens". All teachers at Sasebo Elementary work as a team to make student success our focus. This current school year we transitioned into our new 21st century school building. Immediately the students became empowered and gained a prideful sense of ownership of their classroom and the new facility. Students are at the center of everything we do. We aim to teach the "whole child". Staff frequently collaborate about student successes, challenges, and continued learning opportunities. Staff members genuinely care about the success of our students. This is evident in the dedication from our staff in all aspects of our school. We have staff in place to ensure our students have support academically, emotionally, and socially. Our school counselor has many activities in place to educate our students and enhance healthy social interactions.

Due to our small size, we are able to provide additional support from all of our specialists and support staff throughout the school. Our core curriculum is supported by the wide variety of other opportunities we offer to our students. There are many clubs and after school activities that allow students to try new things and blossom in their personal interests. Some of the clubs include: Glee Club, Life Skills Club, Gardening Club, Technology Club, Board Game Club, Robotics, Sports Club, Tutoring Club, and several others. This allows students to engage in activities with other students who might share their interest. This school year there were several opportunities for students to be recognized for their interests and strengths such as the Pi Day Challenge where students showcased how many digits of Pi they could memorize. In addition, upper grade level students created "Interest Boards" showcasing the things they are currently interested in. The students had the opportunity to showcase their Interest Boards in the Commons area of our school. Many students were also recognized for their participation in our Host nation activities such as Soroban and Taiko Drumming. These types of recognition for accomplishments advocate pride in our students and is celebrated throughout our entire school. Staff members and members of the administration recognize the importance of celebrating the unique contributions from all stakeholders in our school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our students represent military-connected families in Sasebo. The staff at Sasebo Elementary also represent all corners of our community. Each staff member plays a significant role in representing our school and military-connected families that we serve. There are many resources in place that create relationships to engage with our supportive community.

Our local Japanese community is actively involved in the education of our students. This provides student exposure to cross cultural experiences and allows students to embrace our beautiful host country and neighbors. Students and families participate in joint cultural activities such as cherry blossom viewing in local parks, musical performances at the local concert halls, Japanese expo events at the Japanese Cultural Center, and numerous school exchange programs at all grade levels. Our military partnerships consist of yearly tours of all kinds of ships and aircrafts that are stationed or visiting in the area.

A weekly newsletter is sent to parents informing them of all school and community related activities. The Parent Teacher Organization is actively engaged in the school by sponsoring activities that promote student achievement and to celebrate special occasions. Students have the opportunity to participate in a complex wide Spelling Bee, the Red Cross Pillow Project, USO events, Earth Day activities, recognition programs offered by the local banks or credit unions, and the Navy Exchange A-OK program for academic achievement.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

There are several levels of support offered to new teachers to aid in their transition to Sasebo Elementary. The following Specialists reach out ahead of time to offer their support and expertise so that new teachers are aware of the resources and services offered within the school: Educational Technologist for technology onboarding, literacy support specialist, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Advanced Academic Programs and Services (AAPS) specialist, and special education teachers. There is also a district based mentoring program for new teachers that meets regularly to assist with the transition to the school. The Sasebo Elementary teacher mentor meets with new teachers once per month or as needed throughout the school year.

An Instructional System Specialist (ISS) is located on the Sasebo military base to provide professional learning and coaching to staff members at the three DoDEA schools. She is also available at our school and provides professional learning opportunities to the staff, in partnership with teachers at Sasebo Elementary. Professional development topics are selected through staff needs assessments, coaching conversations with teachers, classroom observations, and teacher feedback during professional learning sessions. Teachers provide input for the professional learning opportunities through interactions with their school's continuous school improvement team, needs assessments, and discussions with their ISS regarding student achievement and student data. These sessions are aligned with school and district goals and selected based on the various data points.

The ISS and staff at Sasebo Elementary have provided the professional learning on 21st century teaching and learning, differentiation, guided reading, small group instruction, and professional learning communities. The ISS has also provided collaborative support with quarterly teacher College Career Ready Standards planning days, planning 21st century teaching and learning, technology integration, and differentiating instruction. The ISS also provides formal and informal coaching for staff.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership at Sasebo ES can be described as a shared or visionary process. The goal of the principal is to involve the entire staff, instructional as well as support staff, in operational practices of the school. This means that all in the community are responsible, actively engaged, and have a voice in areas outside their regular curriculum or support area. The leadership team works hard to ensure that information flows throughout the entire school community and maintains an open-door policy.

The ultimate goal of sharing leadership is to ensure that all students' individual, social, emotional, and academic needs are fully met. A key structure is the grade-level team, which includes all specialists (Academic Achievement Program Specialist, counselor, literacy support specialist, speech and language specialist, educational technologist, information specialist, host nation, art, music, and PE teachers). These teams monitor academic achievement and make data analysis a key priority. This data-driven focus has resulted in Sasebo Elementary performing at the top level in the district in summative assessments.

The principal has inherent faith in the ability of staff to assume leadership roles because she takes extraordinary steps to hire highly qualified educators. An enormous amount of time is spent researching and reviewing applications, communicating with former supervisors, and interviewing candidates to ensure applicants' skills are commensurate with the present staff and in tune with the school environment's priority for student achievement. A well designed mentoring program is established to orient new staff to the school and community. The school's social committee provides opportunities to build a sense of school community.

As a final piece of shared leadership, parents and community members are invited to support student learning through the Parent Teacher Organization, School Advisory Council, and local community organizations. They are consistently volunteering in the classroom and supporting activities. As we transformed from our old home to our 21st century school building, we wanted to empower our students to feel a genuine ownership in the creation of a new learning community. Students took pictures, wrote stories, and even observed the recycling of the metal from the old structure. Students have been at the heart of creating a new school culture and have played a key role in helping to define the identity of Sasebo Elementary School.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Although there are many strategies that could support the success of Sasebo Elementary School, the main reason would be our focus on our students. Sasebo Elementary puts the success and growth of all students, first. When decisions are made, those are made with the students in mind. If there is a lack in any area, we know it could affect the students, so someone who is capable will choose to step in and improve the outcome. This is seen time and time again in the work at Sasebo Elementary. All content specialists can be seen pushing in to the classroom environment, providing supports in everything from literacy to math. As a staff, we understand that we are all in this together, and that although we are different, our goal is the same: to prepare students to be the best version they can be academically, emotionally, physically, and socially. We understand they are at the heart of everything we do.

It is the student body that pushes teachers and staff to be our best: to plan, engage, inquire, encourage, and grow. We realize that without our students, it would be impossible for us to thrive to our fullest. We collaborate in order to effectively teach them. We communicate in order to engage them. We push ourselves and our colleagues in order to reach our students. We know that if one student fails, we have all failed as a school. It is the collective efficacy of our school that allows for our success and there is no separation between classrooms, grade levels, or teachers. It takes a team to develop college and career ready individuals, and as teachers, we cannot do it alone.

To strengthen our team, the use of professional development continues to enhance and fortify our knowledge to ensure that we engage in best practices. The complex Instructional System Specialist has provided targeted training, to the entire staff, small groups, or individually based on each educator's needs. In addition, the Educational Technologist provides in-class technology skills training to students, as well as, individually to staff. The literacy support and English for Speakers of Other Languages specialists provide instructional strategies to all teachers in the school. Sasebo Elementary also uses any available specialist teacher in order to support students in their least restrictive environment. Teachers provide data or activities in areas of weakness to the specialists, who in turn give students additional assistance. The goal is to ensure there are no students lacking support and that failure is not an option. Quarterly, the Principal reviews progress reports and then report cards of all students. Those showing low grades are carefully monitored by staff.

Taking these various steps to ensure students are at the center of what we do has allowed Sasebo Elementary to be a successful school.