

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Maria Teresa Garcia
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 6401 Arnot Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Houston State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77007-2007

County Harris County

Telephone (713) 867-5150 Fax (713) 867-5151

Web site/URL https://www.houstonisd.org/Memorialelem E-mail mgarci86@houstonisd.org

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. Grenita Lathan E-mail GLathan@houstonisd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Houston Independent School District Tel. (713) 556-6000

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 Ms. Sue Deigaard
(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)

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
 - 185 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 42 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 48 High schools
 - 5 K-12 schools

280 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- 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

- 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	21	27	48
K	19	22	41
1	30	19	49
2	17	24	41
3	23	22	45
4	26	22	48
5	19	20	39
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	155	156	311

*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
 - 6 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 72 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 13 % White
 - 4 % 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: 17%

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

Casa Juan Diego is a homeless shelter zoned to Memorial Elementary. This homeless shelter works with immigrant woman and children, specially serving pregnant or physically battered women and their children and those whose husbands have been deported. The goal of Casa Juan Diego is to get families back on their feet after recuperating from their trauma. Once displaced families living at Casa Juan Diego find a stable place to live, they move out of the shelter and usually out of our attendance area; therefore increasing our mobility rate.

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	36
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	57
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	334
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.17
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin Chinese, Marathi, Portuguese, Russian, Urdu.

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 34 %
106 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 69 %
 Total number students who qualify: 214

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %

30 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>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>6</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>5</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: 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.	16
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
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 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	97%	97%	96%	96%	97%
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.

Memorial Elementary seeks to nurture the total development of our students, so they can become critical thinkers, responsible decision makers, and college-ready learners.

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

Memorial Elementary (Memorial) is situated on part of what was Camp Logan, a military training facility for soldiers during World War I. More than 25,000 soldiers trained from August 1917 to March 1919 in preparation for overseas duty. According to school records, Memorial was established in 1926 to replace the old Roberts Elementary School which was in the original Camp Logan Red Cross building. With a current enrollment of 324 students, the school serves a predominately Hispanic student population, with 69 percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch and 71 percent of the school population considered at-risk. The student body is composed of 59 percent zoned neighborhood students and 41 percent transfer students. In 2019, Memorial received the Gold Ribbon Award from the non-profit organization Children at Risk and was an “A” rated school by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), earning five out of six possible distinctions in the areas of Academic Achievement in Mathematics, Academic Achievement in English Language Arts (ELA)/Reading, Top 25 Percent: Comparative Academic Growth, Top 25 Percent: Comparative Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness.

Since 1926, Memorial Elementary has had nine principals. This consistency has allowed administrators, faculty, and staff members to develop trust and meaningful relationships over time. Our school mission is to nurture the total development of every student so they can become critical thinkers, responsible decision makers, and college-ready learners. This is accomplished by helping our scholars become inquiring, caring, respectful, and compassionate global citizens through rigorous differentiated instruction and assessments.

Memorial has been part of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) for over 90 years. HISD offers a robust school choice program where students can attend their neighborhood school or opt to enroll in any of the 121 magnet programs at 122 schools. Memorial is considered a neighborhood school and has a long history of families who attended the school over generations. The neighborhood is currently experiencing a transformation from single family bungalow style homes to newly remodeled homes which are worth three to four times more than the previous dwellings. Student enrollment has declined over the years and the principal and Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) have worked together to improve student achievement and to implement new educational programs to make Memorial the school of choice for our neighborhood families.

At Memorial, student achievement and improvement are the result of effective Tier I instruction and a cyclical data-driven process coupled with differentiated instruction to meet the needs of our students. The school’s master schedule has been developed to include a different 45-minute intervention block for each grade level throughout the instructional day. This allows teachers and support staff time to provide necessary targeted instruction to students without interfering with content instruction. For example, our fifth-grade intervention time is from 8:15 to 9:00 a.m., allowing the dyslexia intervention teacher time to work with fifth grade students while the language arts teacher and instructional paraprofessionals are also working with other fifth grade students based on their particular needs. Intervention and support systems are provided to students at all academic levels, from the at-risk students to the highest-performing students, to help maximize student growth and achievement. The school facilitates English and Spanish language acquisition by implementing a pre-K through fifth grade Two-Way Dual Language Program. This program is an additive bilingual program for Spanish speaking students and a foreign language immersion program for English speaking students. In Two-Way classrooms, a combination of native Spanish speakers and native English speakers are taught together to develop full bilingualism and biliteracy for both groups of students. Memorial’s goal is to empower its students to become respectful, life-long bilingual and biliterate inquirers who celebrate diversity as responsible citizens of our world. Our Dual Language students spend 50 percent of the day learning Spanish and 50 percent of the day learning English.

During the 2016-17 school year, Memorial added a more comprehensive music program. Students in pre-K through third grades learn the fundamentals of music while students in fourth and fifth grades have an opportunity to learn how to play an orchestra instrument. Students have an option to learn how to play the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Most of the string orchestra instruments were bought with funds from a VH1 Save the Music Grant awarded in 2016. In the spring of 2019, after conducting a needs assessment and stakeholder survey, the SDMC unanimously voted to implement the International Baccalaureate (IB)

programme and seek IB candidacy status, with the goal of becoming an authorized IB World School by the year 2022. The IB programme was chosen because it aligns with Memorial's mission. Both of our feeder schools, Hogg Middle School and Heights High School, are IB magnet schools and by offering the IB Primary Years Programme at Memorial, our scholars can be better prepared for the middle and high school IB programmes.

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

Due to student mobility, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has adopted curriculum standards that are to be used in all Texas public schools. The current standards, which were developed with extensive input from educators and outline what students are to learn in each grade level, are called the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The approach used at Memorial starts with teachers developing a meaningful learning objective based on the TEKS which allows students to access what they will be learning in developmentally appropriate language, how they will learn that skill, and how they will demonstrate mastery of such skill. In all subjects, teachers develop lessons where students have opportunities to travel through the various levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Starting at the knowledge and comprehension levels, teachers build lessons so that students can later use those skills in the higher levels of thinking such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In all subject areas, teachers develop lessons so students have opportunities to conceptualize skills from the concrete stage where they use manipulatives and hands-on exploration or activities, to the pictorial stage where they may draw representations of concepts or story ideas, to the symbolic stage where written number sentences are used to demonstrate how a problem was solved or compositions are written to communicate experiences, to finally the abstract level where letter variables may be used to represent mathematical equations or poems are written to express feelings and emotions using figurative language. Assessments are ongoing and can be diagnostic, formative, or summative. Teachers create and use exit tickets to quickly measure student understanding of the daily learning objective. At the end of a unit, teachers create assessments that are tightly aligned to the rigor of the TEKS. Students are not just expected to select answer choices, they are constantly challenged to defend and explain their thinking processes.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Memorial English Language Arts (ELA) and Spanish Language Arts (SLA) teachers use a Balanced Literacy Approach to provide pre-K through fifth grade students differentiated instruction of the ELA and SLA TEKS. The Balanced Literacy Approach incorporates whole language, phonics, and phonemic awareness. Students see reading and writing modeled, shared, and coached; apply literacy learning independently; and are actively engaged in word study. Teachers are trained at the beginning of each school year on guided reading and running records. The instructional specialist also provides training on reading workshops and writing workshops. Grade level and vertical Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are scheduled to allow teachers to see the alignment within the grade level and view how the standards progress across all grades. During vertical PLCs, teachers learn from their peers and set their own goals for reading and writing instruction. Teachers follow a gradual release model within their reading and writing blocks by using an “I Do, We Do, You Do” model. ELA/SLA teachers implement guided reading instruction to provide lessons based upon each student’s instructional reading level. The reading block consists of a read aloud, shared reading, mini-lessons, word study, and guided reading. The writing block consists of shared and interactive writing, mini-lessons, and word study. Teachers conduct running records each month to assess student progress.

During the assessment, teachers take anecdotal notes and analyze the meaning, visual, and syntax cues the students use while reading. ELA/SLA teachers use this data to create flexible groups of five to six students for guided reading and conferencing. During the mini-lesson, teachers use mentor texts to introduce new skills. Students engage in the lessons through turn and talks, a strategy with student partners using sentence stems for responses and question stems for prompting discussion. The teacher provides a visual anchor chart and hands-on learning activities to promote spatial, linguistic, and kinesthetic learning. During small group guided reading instruction, students engage with word study activities, vocabulary reinforcement, decoding strategies, comprehension, and fluency. While the pre-K through second grade teachers conduct guided reading, the remaining students are engaged in differentiated literacy stations. While third through fifth grade teachers conduct guided reading, the remaining students work on increasing their reading stamina and

applying what they have learned during the mini lesson through a variety of student products including responses to their own reading. As an additional support to differentiate reading instruction, Memorial implements technology in pre-K through fifth grades to meet each student's fluency and comprehension needs. Each ELA/SLA teacher has a classroom library organized by genre and containing a variety of books at multiple independent reading levels. Dual Language Program classroom libraries include leveled books in both English and Spanish. Students have assigned checkout times when they select books at their independent reading levels to read during the reading block. To further encourage student literacy, students in kindergarten through fifth grades participate in the district's annual reading competitions.

1c. Mathematics

The state adopted mathematics TEKS are the core of our math curriculum. Memorial teachers develop lessons by creating a balanced approach between math fluency, computation skills, real-life application of mathematical concepts, and problem solving. To develop math fluency and computation skills, teachers in pre-K through fifth grades implement number talks. During number talks, students are challenged to solve problems mentally and share their strategies and justifications with their peers. For example, kindergarten students may be shown a picture of a ten-frame with six dots and be asked how many dots they see? One student may see three dots on top and three dots on the bottom to make six while another student may see three groups of two dots that make six dots. When students discuss with their peers, they can clarify their thinking, investigate and apply mathematical relationships, and build a collection of efficient mental math strategies. Second grade students may be shown an equation such as $5+7+3+5$ and be asked to solve it mentally. One student may say five plus five equals ten, seven plus three equals ten, and ten plus ten equal twenty. Students share their thinking and later discover it is more efficient to add two numbers that make a quick ten instead of adding the numbers from left to right. During these number talks, students learn how to clearly describe their thinking and expand their academic vocabulary. Teachers encourage and challenge students to use precise mathematical language such as composing, decomposing, products, addends, and quotients. To build reasoning and problem-solving skills, teachers use real life connections to math. Before diving into problem solving, teachers help students visualize mathematical relationships by using manipulatives such as counters, blocks, base ten blocks and fraction bars.

Once students have a solid understanding of the key concepts, teachers guide them through the pictorial, numeric, and then abstract understanding of the skill. In order to help students, organize their thoughts, students are taught how to use a problem-solving graphic organizer to help them record their thinking. This simple graphic organizer is made up of four squares. In the top left quadrant, students record what is important about the math problem. They often write what they know and don't know about the problem and what they are trying to find. Next, students use the top right quadrant to develop a plan. Depending on the developmental level of the students, some may draw a picture while others may use a strip diagram to show their solving plan. The bottom left quadrant is used to solve the problem. Students may use number lines, partial products, and/or traditional algorithms to show how they solved the problem. The last square is reserved for students to answer the problem in a complete sentence and ask themselves if the answer is reasonable. Teachers strategically use activities to help students see connections between real life applications and math concepts. By using content integration, academic conversations, multiple strategies for teaching math concepts, and various thinking skills, Memorial students become effective and efficient problem solvers.

1d. Science

Memorial uses the 5E constructivist learning cycle to address the TEKS-based science curriculum for students in pre-K through fifth grades. This approach helps students build their own understanding of science objectives from classroom experiences and new ideas. Prior to instruction, teachers ensure they have the background knowledge necessary for each objective. The Memorial Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) supplies all physical materials needed for each grade level's planned science experiences. When starting a new science objective, teachers administer a pre-assessment to determine the students' prior knowledge which enables them to maximize instructional time. Students engage in the new material through opening activities that grab their attention and lead to inquiry. Lessons then allow students to start building their understanding as they explore the new material with hands-on learning experiences. Students' knowledge

continues to grow as they explain their learning to others and ask questions to further clarify. Teachers help this process by checking for understanding through question prompts. Students may respond orally or with exit tickets. Building content vocabulary is especially important for our English Language Learners (ELLs) and this is accomplished through word study including both definitions and illustrations. Students record vocabulary words, definitions, and drawings in science journals, and they are also posted on a class word wall. Literacy is integrated through expository reading passages and open-ended questions requiring written responses. Teachers use a progress monitoring tool throughout the units as a formative assessment. Students are given additional opportunities to engage with the content through differentiated reading passages and math assignments that integrate the science objectives. Students also engage with current events related to the objective by reading newspaper and magazine articles and viewing newscasts. Teachers monitor student progress and pull small groups to address objectives students struggle to master. Each unit concludes with a summative assessment which incorporates writing through open-ended responses.

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

Memorial is committed to incorporating the social studies TEKS through integration and transdisciplinary units. Dual Language classrooms integrate social studies with English Language Arts (ELA) instruction. Within the literacy block, students are engaged with social studies objectives through literature, research, and writing activities. Content vocabulary is developed by challenging students to use new terms and vocabulary during academic discourse with their peers. In addition, all classrooms are implementing transdisciplinary units of inquiry. These units are developed by the teachers to allow students to inquire into a central idea through the lenses of multiple subjects. Students begin to see the connections between subjects through universal concepts. Memorial has chosen to utilize transdisciplinary units as they provide the opportunity for students to engage in significant, relevant and challenging real-world learning. These units allow teachers to teach and assess multiple standards at once. The transdisciplinary units also promote civic learning for all students, prekindergarten through fifth grades. Teachers plan for specific learning opportunities to encourage reflective, thoughtful, and caring behaviors. The units have also been developed to enhance the global context of social studies objectives. Students in kindergarten learn about and share their native cultures and engage in holiday celebrations from around the world. Fifth grade students learn about different forms of government around the world during their study of the United States revolution and as a culminating project develop their own country including government and symbolic flag.

Memorial promotes cultural awareness throughout the year through school wide programs for Hispanic Heritage and Black History Month. The school's annual International Festival has become a hallmark event, with a school parade and each class sponsoring a booth for a different country featuring foods, music, clothing, and hands-on learning activities. Honoring students' heritage has become a part of our school's culture of inclusion and appreciation of all cultures.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The pre-K program offered at Memorial Elementary is designed to develop a foundation, so students have the academic, social, and emotional tools to be successful in school. This foundation is formed through a rigorous curriculum, social and emotional learning, oral language development, and dramatic play to meet students' individual needs.

The pre-K curriculum focuses on the core subjects. Students engage in hands-on science experiments that allow students to make discoveries on their own. Memorial pre-K students participate in a variety of learning experiences beyond their classroom including physical education, social and emotional lessons, music, art, library, and Urban Harvest lessons. In Urban Harvest lessons, students learn how to garden, and students are able to sample various vegetables, fruit, and herbs. Social and emotional lessons help students develop skills to manage their emotions, form positive relationships, feel empathy for others, and make responsible decisions. Students have the opportunity to go on field trips to connect what they are learning in class to the real world.

Pre-K teachers participate in vertical planning with other grade levels to ensure that pre-K students are developing skills needed for educational achievement. One focus of vertical planning is to ensure the writing process develops from pre-K to fifth grade. Teachers bring student samples and discuss with upper-grade level teachers how to build on current skills.

Pre-K students at Memorial participate in either the Dual Language program or the English/English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Students learn both Spanish and English in the Dual Language program. The ESL program provides an ESL-certified teacher who provides additional support to non-English speakers as they learn English. Both programs are designed with a heavy focus on oral language development to prepare the youngest scholars. Data shows that students who attend pre-K are better prepared for academic success in the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Fine arts instruction is important to develop the full potential of each Memorial student. Students in pre-K through fifth grades receive two 50-minute music lessons each week from a certified music teacher. Lessons are based on kindergarten through fifth grade Music TEKS, with a focus on music literacy, creative expression, historical and cultural relevance, and critical evaluation and response. Third grade students are provided with a recorder which they learn to play independently and in a whole group. Fourth and fifth grade students may choose to take a regular music class or participate in an orchestra class. Students in orchestra learn how to play the violin, viola, cello, or bass in an ensemble. Memorial enhances fine arts instruction through a partnership with the local organization Arts Connect. Arts Connect commits to bringing high quality fine arts experiences to campuses. This year, students in grades pre-K through fifth grades have enjoyed performances by the Houston Grand Opera, the Dinky Drum Company: History of Jazz, Main Street Theater, and Express Children's Theater.

Physical and health education are a vital part of the daily programming. Students in pre-K through fifth grades participate in a 50-minute lesson with the physical education (PE) certified teacher every week. The PE teacher develops and implements lessons based upon the Physical Education and Health Education TEKS as well as scope and sequence documents provided by the school district. The PE instructor incorporates instruction on nutrition and hygiene for all students in pre-K through fifth grades each week. During PE lessons students learn the importance of physical activity, keeping themselves clean, and what types of food are important for their development. Students in third through fifth grades also participate in the Texas FitnessGram assessment, a tool used to monitor student improvements in endurance, strength, flexibility, and body composition. Following each assessment, the PE teacher works with the students to create reasonable and measurable goals so they may achieve their maximum potential. As health education includes emotional and social well being, PE lessons emphasize respectful behavior and being a good teammate in all lessons.

Memorial currently offers foreign language instruction through its Two-Way Dual Language Program. These classrooms are composed of approximately 50 percent native Spanish speakers and 50 percent native English speakers. Dual Language students spend 50 percent of the day learning Spanish and 50 percent of the day learning English. Students in the Dual Language Program, pre-K through fifth grades, are taught and assessed in both English and Spanish Language Arts TEKS. Memorial's goal is for all Dual Language Program students to be proficient in both English and Spanish by the time they exit the program in fifth grade.

Memorial believes that language development is essential to a child's development and as such, the school library has become the heart of the school. Each class, pre-K through fifth grade, visits the library one time a week for a 30-minute lesson with the librarian and they can check out books. In addition to the scheduled library time, classroom teachers may utilize the library for other purposes, including research.

The Ladies for Literacy Guild of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation has partnered with Memorial to extend literacy opportunities beyond the library. Thirteen committed Read Houston Read volunteers visit Memorial weekly to spend 30 minutes reading with nineteen individual first and second grade students. In addition, Memorial has five dedicated Reading Roundup volunteers who visit first

through third grade classrooms to conduct biweekly read-aloud with high-quality literature and engaging questions. They also facilitated a Read Across America special event that included volunteers conducting a read-aloud in all classes, a Reading Rally with a kickoff for a school wide reading competition, and a visit to the Curiosity Cruiser where each student was able to select a book to take home. Literacy development includes digital literacy and Memorial students have access to technology instruction through their homeroom classrooms. Students learn how to use word processing applications starting with second grade, presentation applications starting with third grade, and video applications in fifth grade.

Memorial believes in development of the whole child; therefore, teaching students the skills needed to do the right thing when no one is looking is key in developing students who will be responsible, trustworthy, respectful, caring, fair and courageous. The school counselor meets with every class once a week to help students have to necessary tools when dealing with everyday situations that require students to have strong character. The lessons are developed to be age appropriate and to show students real life examples of situations they may face and offer them tools to problem solve in manner that shows self-respect and integrity.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Memorial currently serves 324 students with a variety of learning styles. A full-time dyslexia interventionist works with students in first through fifth grades for 45 minutes during each grade level's RTI block. During this allotted time, the interventionist provides differentiated reading instruction for students to help them learn how to decode, comprehend, and use strategies to help them spell based upon their own individual needs. Within the first week of school, the interventionist and reading specialist conduct fluency assessments to all learners to determine the need for additional support for each student. Data is then gathered from the fluency assessment, benchmark running record data, beginning of the year district universal screener, previous year report card grades, and classroom observations to develop intervention groups and begin setting goals and progress monitoring throughout the year. Memorial has an Interventions Assistance Team (IAT) which consists of the IAT Liaison, principal, reading specialist, parent and the homeroom teacher(s) of the student. During IAT meetings, data is used to create goals for the student as well as determine an intervention plan utilizing a variety of decoding, comprehension, math, or behavior strategies based upon the individual's academic need. The dyslexia interventionist administers progress monitoring mastery checks to determine a starting point for the student and how the student will adjust to interventions. Teachers tracks student data using the district's benchmark running records and universal screener as well as classroom observations. Students at Memorial also track their own reading levels in data folders and set personal goals with their teachers. This allows students to be a part of the intervention plan which then motivates them to achieve their academic goals.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Memorial currently has 46 Gifted and Talented (G/T)-identified students in kindergarten through fifth grades, approximately 14 percent of its total enrollment. Memorial offers a Gifted and Talented Neighborhood Program, in which G/T-identified students are served whether they are enrolled at Memorial as a zoned student or as a transfer student. The Gifted and Talented Neighborhood Program provides a differentiated curriculum that modifies the depth, complexity, and pacing of the general school program. Each G/T-identified student has a Gifted Education Plan (GEP) that is developed by the student's classroom teacher and reviewed and revised annually. The GEP is a written statement that includes the student's present levels of academic achievement, a description of how the student's education shall be differentiated based on G/T identification results and past academic performance, and the curricular modifications of supports for school personnel that shall be provided for the student. All classroom teachers in kindergarten through fifth grades have completed state requirements for G/T training. Students receive differentiated instruction by their classroom teacher based on their individual needs. Teachers serve a range of student ability levels through guided reading groups and the daily RTI block. Student groupings are fluid over the course of the school year and across subject areas. G/T students participate in an extended individual research project and presentation each year. G/T students present these advanced level products for a panel

of judges and the school community at the annual Memorial G/T Expo. The three highest-rated G/T Expo products are invited to participate in the school district's District wide G/T Expo in the spring. G/T students in third, fourth, and fifth grades participate in a 6-week pullout STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) program. A trained instructor works with small groups to facilitate STEM curriculum units based on the engineering design process. Each year, G/T students are able to build upon the previous year's STEM learning as they develop their critical thinking, literacy, and problem-solving skills.

3c. Special education

Beginning in pre-K, all students' needs are measured and addressed individually. If a student continues to fall behind or show an indication of a learning, cognitive, emotional, speech, or other health difference, the IAT assembles to determine a plan to meet the needs of the individual student. This team consists of the teacher, administrator, evaluation specialists, and parent(s). If the team determines it is appropriate to pursue special education evaluation, assigned district personnel complete standardized evaluations to obtain further details about the student's need. Once a student has been identified as having a need for special education services, the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee assembles to determine the best setting and service model to meet the student's need. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed to target the student's specific needs. The primary goal of the special education department at Memorial is for all students to have access to and success with the full grade level curriculum. Student service models are determined in the ARD meeting and include a full array of services. Memorial serves students in a general education support facilitation model, resource classroom, and two specialized self-contained classrooms. Placement decisions are made by the ARD committee to maximize the student's access to a free, appropriate, public education. One self-contained classroom is designed to meet the complex medical, physical, and developmental needs of students with multiple disabilities. The second self-contained classroom is a structured learning class for students with autism who access the curriculum via prerequisite skill instruction. Students served in the self-contained classrooms are fully included in campus culture and activities and participate in general education classrooms to the maximum extent appropriate for their individual needs. Progress for all special education students is monitored continually using scientifically proven methods for measuring growth and shared with the parents.

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

Memorial offers both a Dual Language program and an English/ESL program. Memorial has an instructional specialist who serves as the Dual Language Coordinator as well as support for the English Learners (ELs). Dual Language classroom teachers are Bilingual certified and attend district required dual language training. In addition, four Memorial teachers have completed Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) training. ESL classroom teachers are ESL certified. Newcomer students are supported through daily small group instruction with a dedicated paraprofessional as well as a retired teacher who volunteers four hours a week. The Dual Language program operates a 50/50 model in which students receive half of their daily instruction in Spanish and half of their daily instruction in English. Reading and Language Arts is taught in both languages, pre-K through fifth grades. The instructional language for the content areas of math, science, and social studies alternates between English and Spanish every two years. The English/ESL classroom has a designated daily ESL instructional block, pre-K through fifth grades. Both the Dual Language and ESL programs utilize Sheltered Instruction strategies. Examples include visuals, manipulatives, total physical response (TPR), sentence stems, and bilingual buddies/turn and talk partners. The effectiveness of these instructional strategies is evident in students' Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) scores. The Dual Language classrooms introduce, teach, and assess content vocabulary through preview, view, and review (PVR) in the language that is not utilized for content instruction. Teachers use cross linguistics connections between the two languages to help students see how the two languages have common characteristics. Dual Language classrooms integrate content subject areas and end each unit with a culminating project. The classroom environment encourages bilingualism by labeling objects within the classroom in both English and Spanish. In order to track student progress and provide appropriate interventions and instruction, students complete a reading running record in both languages. Memorial faculty and staff work together to ensure that each Dual Language student is reading on or above grade level in his/her native language while growing the second language until he/she is truly bilingual and biliterate.

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

Memorial creates a welcoming, inclusive environment to all scholars and families, regardless of economic or financial status. Memorial Elementary is the zoned elementary school for Casa Juan Diego, a homeless shelter that often houses immigrants and families seeking asylum. The school has several programs to support these students and their families, so they are able to develop socially, academically, and emotionally. Students can receive counseling services to promote a positive transition into Memorial and school in general. They also have access to many community resources and community partners. Just this year, the community has come together to assist with the transition of a single mother with three children. The Memorial community was able to provide the family with enough furniture, food, and clothing so that they could make the transition from the shelter to stable apartment living. These students also participate in Backpack Buddies, a program with nonperishable food sent home with the students on Fridays. Memorial hosts uniform drives to ensure the students have a nice uniform to wear to school. Along with clothing, every winter there is a toy drive to support these families during the holiday season, including any siblings that are not enrolled at Memorial. The Memorial PTO always ensures these students have free access to events that otherwise might have been impossible for the child or family to attend due to financial constraints. In addition to providing for students' basic needs, the school provides one-on-one tutoring to assist the students who do not speak English and/or have not had previous access to education.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Memorial provides a learning environment where students feel safe, supported, and valued. This is done through an engaging curriculum, art, music, physical education, a cheerleader team, access to an outdoor classroom, Urban Harvest lessons, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, thirty minutes of recess every day, and plenty of outlets where students are contributing to the school and community. Teachers conduct interest surveys to determine what motivates and interests each student and then align lessons and activities to engage learning.

Every classroom, pre-K through fifth grade, devotes twenty minutes each day to conduct a Meet Up, a relationship-building activity that allows students to learn and practice key emotional and social-cognitive skills. These daily practices provide students with ongoing, supported opportunities to interact with peers and participate in dialogue and decision-making about issues related to the classroom community.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons with the school counselor are part of Memorial's ancillary schedule. Each class, pre-K through fifth grade, attends a 50-minute SEL lesson each week. The counselor coordinates the implementation and growth of culturally responsive and emotionally safe learning environments. The counselor utilizes resources to help students develop skills to manage their emotions, form positive relationships, feel empathy for others, and make responsible decisions. SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful. SEL lessons are differentiated based on grade level and student needs.

Events are held throughout the year to showcase the real-life application of the SEL content. At the International Festival, students get to showcase learning from the classroom. Students engage in career readiness activities during Career Day. This year, students selected the activities and professions they were most interested in and were able to attend sessions based on these preferences.

Student of the Month Luncheons are held each month to celebrate students who demonstrate positive behavior. Each classroom teacher selects two students to attend the luncheon with the school counselor. Students of the Month also receive a certificate of recognition and a letter for their parents. The letter acknowledges parents for their work at home instilling rules, manners, and values that prepare their children for excellence at school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Memorial is unique in the way the community has come together to support the students and staff. Memorial has the support of Lift Memorial, a nonprofit organization that believes in empowering students through community support. The Lift Memorial board is a passionate group who partner with the staff, teachers, administration, and PTO to maximize the full talents and resources of the community to benefit the children. Lift Memorial has donated over \$80,000 in the past few years to upgrade technology in the classrooms and support extracurricular activities such as Urban Harvest.

Urban Harvest is a nonprofit organization that enriches the Memorial community by providing youth education. Urban Harvest has created a partnership to develop the outdoor classroom and provide onsite classes with an Urban Harvest garden educator and project management. Garden education programs are delivered during the school day to enrich curriculum. Standard subjects include social studies, math, science and language arts. In addition, students explore nutrition, food systems, native habitats and ecosystems. An Urban Harvest instructor comes to Memorial every Wednesday and provides a lesson to each class every other week. This year Memorial's garden is growing various fruits, vegetables, and plants such as carrots, grapes, mint, cabbage, sweet potatoes, pepper, and cilantro. Gardening introduces students to scientific concepts, encourages healthy eating, and creates environmental stewardship.

The Comfort Dog Ministry is a nationwide program that utilizes the unique skills of highly trained Golden Retrievers to offer mercy and compassion. Unlike service animals, the Comfort Dogs can be petted and hugged. Memorial is fortunate to have Gabriel the comfort dog and the Pastor from our local church on campus every Monday to greet the students and staff. Gabriel also attends school events, joins in on SEL lessons, and is always there to support the students. This partnership helps children learn empathy and nurturing skills while reducing anxiety.

The PTO at Memorial is helpful in bridging the gap between home and school. Parent events are held during the school day and after school to encourage parents partnering with the school to enhance student learning. Events such as the Trunk or Treat, International Festival, and curriculum nights are popular with parents. The PTO also sponsors frequent Parent Lunches so parents can enjoy time with their children during the school day.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Memorial educators have agency in regard to their professional development. Each year, the school leadership conducts a book study on a title that is purposefully selected to enhance school culture, build capacity, develop a stronger learning community and help support student achievement. At the beginning of the school year, each educator sets personal goals and professional development plans through the creation of the Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP). Educators reflect on previous years and choose specific learning goals aligned directly with their student data and/or teaching practice. Teachers use these goals and collaborate with administrators, team members, and instructional support staff to create a personal plan to improve their craft and learning outcomes. Memorial teachers meet weekly in Professional Learning Communities. A (PLC) may consist of grade level teachers participating in horizontal planning/professional development time or as content area teams participating in vertical planning time. Various trainings are offered at the campus, district, and regional levels. Teachers are encouraged to attend any professional development that they find relevant to their personal, individualized needs.

Memorial encourages growth and success for students and teachers alike through respect for and agency of the individual. Teachers are empowered as instructional leaders in their classrooms and on the campus as a whole. Teacher expertise is acknowledged, expected, and honored. Much of the campus level professional development is provided by classroom teachers as each individual teacher has strengths to offer the community. For example, the instructional specialist and fourth grade writing teacher have taken the lead on professional development for writing. They attend specialized training and then bring that information back to the campus so that all students may benefit. Memorial believes that each staff member is a leader and that it is crucial for every member of the school community to contribute his/her expertise and seek out assistance from others.

4. School Leadership:

First and foremost, Memorial is a small, close-knit family that is committed, driven to strive for excellence, and has a growth mindset. Everyday teachers, staff, and students focus on giving their best efforts to grow and improve from the day before.

Memorial's leadership philosophy is best described as collaborative and transformational. The main goals are to collaborate with teachers and staff to help them develop and improve their craft so they can become capable, knowledgeable, and effective instructional leaders. The principal's main focus is on developing teachers and staff, so student learning and achievement are continuously improving. Building teacher capacity at Memorial is an ongoing process where teacher training each year is developed to build on previously learned and mastered skills. For example, teachers first learn how to conduct running reading records. Once teachers master this skill, they are taught how to analyze running records to determine if the students' errors are due to meaning, structure/syntax, or visual concerns. By understanding students' reading miscues, teachers can tailor their lessons to help students overcome those reading errors thus improving student reading fluency and/or comprehension.

While the school's core leadership team is composed of the principal, counselor, and teacher specialists, all

teachers are considered leaders in this school and their strengths are utilized to drive the school's success. When challenges arise, teachers are encouraged to collaborate and think outside the box to share their divergent and innovative solutions. The principal intentionally seeks out ambitious teachers to empower and help lead new initiatives. For example, a special education teacher has been leading and presenting parent workshops during the day to provide parents with appropriate and relevant visual schedules aimed at helping students develop at-home routines. Another teacher who is passionate about health and wellness helped create a weekly schedule to include all teachers in Urban Harvest lessons. Our teacher specialists are dedicated instructional leaders who not only prepare and deliver staff development but also model lessons for teachers, guide them through the development of units of study, and provide feedback for continuous improvement. The counselor addresses the social and emotional needs of students through a strong guidance and counseling program. She collaborates with all stakeholders to ensure our students feel safe, loved, and cared for while they are on campus. Ultimately, the entire Memorial family works together to create and provide a school environment which fosters student achievement and develops teacher capacity.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The most instrumental and fundamental strategy to our school's success is the implementation of a non-negotiable daily RTI time. By adding a different 45-minute instructional block per grade level to our master schedule, our classroom teachers, dyslexia interventionist, and other support staff can provide daily and timely academic support to our students. Unlike tutoring after school, when students may be tired from the academic challenge of the previous for seven hours, this unique intervention time is strategically scheduled during the instructional day and in a manner that does not interfere with the teaching and learning of other core subjects. Another benefit of providing intervention during the day is that students are already at school and do not have to depend on an adult for transportation to before-school, after-school, or Saturday tutoring sessions. Differentiating student groups and instruction allows our teachers to provide intentional and targeted small group instruction where they are able to constantly check student understanding and ensure students are indeed comprehending and applying new skills. Effective intervention helps close learning gaps before they become a larger obstacle to academic success, and it provides challenging instruction to students who may otherwise become bored without access to more rigorous materials. While the teacher works with a small group, the rest of the students are engaged in various learning stations. These stations are content-based and may include activities such as reading to others, reading to self, working on writing, listening to reading, word work, math computation, problem solving, number fluency, or a computer-based instructional program. Students move toward becoming independent learners and assume responsibility for their own learning.

As reading teachers work with students during intervention time, they are able to quickly assess their students' reading behaviors and instructional reading levels. Teachers then tailor their reading instruction to address observed weaknesses so that students focus on the specific skills they need to become fluent readers. Similarly, math teachers are able to quickly identify if the students' mathematical weakness are due to lack of number sense, computation skills, or problem solving and will provide students with the individualized and targeted support needed. During intervention time, our dyslexia interventionist provides a research-based multisensory intervention program with instruction in phonological awareness, sound-symbol association, syllabication, orthography, morphology, syntax, reading comprehension, and reading fluency. Intervention time is not only meant to improve academic achievement, it is also a meaningful way to provide authentic socialization experiences in the general education classroom for our self-contained special education students.