

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name John Z. Leyendecker Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1311 Garden Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Laredo State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 78040-2418

County Webb

Telephone (956) 273-3800 Fax (956) 273-3895

Web site/URL http://leyendeckers.elisd.org/ E-mail moviedo@laredoisd.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.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Sylvia Rios E-mail sgrios@laredoisd.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Laredo Independent School District Tel. (956) 273-1000

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Hector Noyola  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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

1. 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

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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):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 28 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	41	36	77
K	41	30	71
1	41	38	79
2	36	39	75
3	40	27	67
4	27	24	51
5	35	42	77
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
<b>Total Students</b>	261	236	497

\*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
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 100 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 0 % White
  - 0 % 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: 14%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	39
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	34
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	73
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	508
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.14
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 60 %  
298 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 497

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %

83 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>21</u> Autism                 | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>16</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>23</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</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: 15

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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 19:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	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.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

J. Z. Leyendecker Elementary School provides equal learning opportunities to enhance students' intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development.

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

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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John Z. Leyendecker Elementary School (LES) is located on the West side of Laredo, Texas, known as the Gateway to the Americas, just a few miles from Puente de las Americas International Bridge 1 and Juarez-Lincoln International Bridge II. The school borders along a historical landmark area that encompasses the first middle school and the first high school in the Laredo Independent School District. LES is rich in history, named after Captain John Zirvas Leyendecker veteran of both the Confederate and Union Armies.

LES, established in 1953, is affectionately known as the “Little Red School House.” It continues to encourage students’ potential for the past 67 years. In 2008, LES opened its doors to our current state of the art facility with an enrollment of prekindergarten to 5th grade student population. LES serves a diverse social economic population that has 97.8% economically disadvantaged, 58.9% English Learners (EL), and 11.1% mobility rate.

In 2019 with an enrollment of 513 students, LES received an overall rating of 95 – “A” by the Texas Education Agency for “exemplary performance by serving students well, encouraging high academic achievement and appropriate academic growth for all students and preparing them for success in college, a career, or the military.” LES received recognition on three State Accountability ratings in the following domains, earning 92% in Student Achievement, 93% in School Progress, and 100% in Closing the Gap. LES earned six out of six Academic Distinction Designation from the Texas Education Agency in ELA/Reading, Mathematics, Science, Comparative Academic Growth, Comparative Closing the Gap and Postsecondary Readiness.

Focusing on the values of always ready, always responsible, always respectful, LES students, faculty, and staff are the mighty Eagles with a campaign initiative fostering kindness to all. Faculty and staff instill students with a sense of belonging. Students enthusiastically begin their day with the Mighty Eagle Pledge: “I pledge today to do my best, in reading, math, and all the rest. I promise to follow all the rules in my class and in our school. I am ready, responsible, and respectful. I will give my best in all I do. Today I will try my best to soar. I am a J. Z. Leyendecker Eagle to the core.”

LES campus Leadership Team along with faculty, staff, parents, and community collaborative maintain the mission to provide equal learning opportunities to enhance students’ intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development through the combined efforts of our professional learning community. LES promotes instructional practices in all classrooms sharing the vision and core belief that fosters close relationships among all stakeholders. LES teachers provide quality education using differentiated instruction, hands-on activities, and scaffold instruction opportunities to ensure student learning. LES faculty and staff ensure that all students become problem solvers, critical thinkers, and productive citizens. Teachers follow the LISD Curriculum Align Resource for Education Support (C.A.R.E.S.) document aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Teachers attend professional development trainings focused on research based instructional strategies to enhance the teaching practices in the classroom. Teachers and staff participate in a districtwide wellness program that assists in eating healthy foods, exercise, and developing positive attitudes to enhance the well-being of our staff members.

Students engage in lessons aligned to state content standards that tap into prior knowledge and make connections to new learning experiences. During planning time, the teachers use data to develop activities that incorporate technology and challenging activities that enhance academic student growth. Every three weeks, LES teachers, administrators, and parents monitor student progress by conducting student conferences to review students’ intervention plans, attendance, behavior contracts, and overall student participation in school activities. Students are committed to set goals and self-monitor accountability to achieve academic excellence. LES promotes depth and complexity projects by hosting the Gifted and Talented (GT) Showcase. The Fine Arts Gallery highlights the Art Club, Cheerleaders, Choir, and Drama Clubs. LES students participate in honor society, Chess Club, Accelerated Reader (AR) challenge, spelling bee, robotics, technology expo, Courtesy Service Club (CSC), yearbook, and University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic meets. Sport plays a key role in the development of the whole child that includes basketball, football, volleyball, track, and soccer. Students participate in the annual Christmas program, field

trips, attendance rallies, Student of the Month ceremony, Grandparents' Day, "16 de septiembre" celebration (Mexican Independence Day), veteran's program, and Week of the Young Child (WOYC).

LES believes that parental involvement and community partnerships are key to students' success. Parents volunteer over 3,100 hours to assist the overall school community. Monthly parent sessions promote parental engagement in their child's life. Sessions embrace heritage and cultural values in our students by enriching knowledge and providing a quality education that produces life-long learners.

LES works alongside stakeholders to ensure the needs of the whole child is met and they can be successful.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

LES is committed to high standards in instructional behavior in the workplace. Administration beliefs, concepts, and attitudes filter to teachers, students, and community. Teachers work in systematic ways that contribute to the success of the whole child.

All subject areas connect to a common approach across the different content areas. All teachers ensure that students engage in learning by framing the lesson and stating the learning objective as it reflects in the C.A.R.E.S. district resource guide. Students participate in lessons with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Teachers link students' prior knowledge and skills to address and adjust instruction. Teachers check for student understanding and adjust instruction based on the lesson progression as well as informal assessment data. Teachers provide feedback and students monitor their own progress to ensure they target areas of need. Teachers incorporate frequent purposeful talk throughout the lesson delivery to promote student interaction and engage all students in the learning process. Classroom routines and procedures are essential in achieving classroom, campus, and district goals. Teachers allow students to be active in their own learning and promote student engagement that allows them to encourage their peers in contributing to the lesson. Teachers create and foster an atmosphere that respects students' point of view and creativity. Teachers at LES reinforce positive behaviors and interactions that encourage students to be risk takers and successful learners.

LES incorporates gallery walks throughout the school. This practice engages teachers and the leadership team in frequent purposeful talks and targets professional practices that enhance learning opportunities for student success. Collaboration on data analysis and school environment between teachers and the leadership team extends beyond the classroom. Instructional practices promote and reinforce skills that provide quality discussions during the Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings on a weekly basis producing academic achievement.

### **1b.** Reading/English language arts

The English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) at LES develop critical and independent thinkers. Teachers utilize a systematic approach that allows for high yield instructional practices that combine ELAR pedagogy, content, and technology to engage learners with different learning styles. Teachers use performance level descriptors and Depth of Knowledge (DOK) to develop sophisticated ways of critical thinking. All students begin to develop multiple pathways thus refining comprehension and understanding. Daily routines encompass a class schedule that allows for 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction. Intervention time is within the schedule to implement personalized learning based on student data. The district C.A.R.E.S. curriculum incorporates TEKS, English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), and differentiated instruction for our EL's and Special Education subgroups.

Kindergarten thru 2nd grade consists of 120 minutes for reading and writing focusing on the 5 components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) through a balance literacy approach. During guided reading, teachers scaffold and provide support to ensure that students apply reading strategies independently. The literacy coach provides reading interventions to students in kindergarten thru 2nd grade by targeting fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary in a small group setting. Prescriptive instruction provides flexible and differentiated remediation to ensure students are successful, thus closing the gap. Reading schedule provides opportunities to meet students' needs.

Students engage in various listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities with a language acquisition program for Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) in order to increase one proficiency level. Primary grade levels assess three times a year with a state diagnostic assessment and

fluency checks every six weeks utilizing a reading level assessment. Every six weeks, 3rd thru 5th grade students assess with Curriculum Bases Assessments (CBA's) and district benchmarks to identify the root cause, either cognitive or content. Teachers analyze the data, create an action plan, and target interventions to improve student achievement.

During the ELAR block, teachers utilize a formula for quality instruction: framing the lesson, working the power zone, frequent small group purposeful talk about the learning, recognize and reinforce, and write critically. This practice gears instruction for students to engage in small group purposeful talk activities and produce an exit ticket to check for understanding of concept. Teachers use daily exemplary sample lessons, higher order thinking question stems, vocabulary lists, anchor charts, and differentiation activities to address the various needs of our students. Bell to bell instruction encourages higher order thinking, persistence and achievement, pursuing high level of academic, social, and emotional success. Teachers use content and pedagogical techniques to design and execute lessons aligned to state standards, related content, and diverse student needs. Analyzing student data, LES confirms our competitiveness to reach masters level in state and federal accountability. Distinction recognition in reading acknowledges our excellence in the overall success of our school.

At LES, reading is at the crux of the foundational success in cross-curriculum learning. Reading is the fundamental core area that leads to success in all content areas.

### **1c. Mathematics**

Teachers use C.A.R.E.S. timeline and integrate an online math program in students' daily routines to provide intervention. In their 90 minutes of math instruction, TEKS and CCRS standards ensure students become problem solvers for the 21st century in career path they choose beyond high school and enable them to become lifelong learners. LES uses the SMART goals: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time to impact a high level of student achievement. Teachers administer benchmarks to demonstrate TEKS mastery and target non-mastered skills.

Teachers use inquiry-based instruction, learner-centered, hands-on activities, technology, and a variety of instructional manipulatives. Math instructional blocks comprise of 60 minutes of rigorous guided mathematical processes and 30 minutes of enrichment/intervention time. Teachers introduce math concepts and skills using well-planned interactive activities. These activities target specific academic vocabulary and student expectations using analytical thinking. Journal writing incorporates the interactive activities with critical writing to internalize mathematical and writing skills. Teachers provide reflective feedback to validate students' responses to extend and build on their personal experiences.

Teachers use data to create a plan of action to target low-performing students through weekly progress monitoring, small group instruction, prescriptive tutorials, and peer tutoring. Students attend after school and Saturday tutorials to ensure they understand concepts and skills. Teachers reinforce EL's, Special Education, and GT's through best practices using ELPS, Individual Education Plan (IEP), and depth and complexity icons. High level questioning strategies build on making connections to real-world experiences. Students are able to apply reasoning strategies when solving mathematical multi-step problems. The use of software programs integrate and gear towards the students' academic functional level. Individualized lessons spiral providing a tutorial plan for each student until they achieve concept mastery. LES supports online math classroom instruction that focuses on content, context, and cognitive levels of rigor and relevance. The online math program provides pre-, mid-, and post assessments to assess student progress and understanding. Teachers monitor data and assist in planning appropriate lessons to target students' needs during PLC's. Teachers use the reports to monitor performances, plan for small group instruction, and frame targeted skills. Students utilize the math program in a computer lab and during math sessions. The online math program goal for kindergarten thru 2nd grade is to complete 60 lessons by the end of the school year. Third to 5th grade students complete 30 lessons before the administration of the state assessments. Student engagement contributes to the understanding of retaining acquired skills and building new skills. Teachers embed proper mathematical academic vocabulary during daily classroom instruction to reinforce the listening, speaking, reading, and writing components. LES prepares students for district checkpoints, benchmarks, and state mandated assessments using higher order thinking skills. Teachers at LES analyze

data for state accountability and strive to reach state performance at the meets or masters level in Domain III and Closing the Gap for math 4th and 5th grade students. LES goal is to achieve math performance scores at the distinction level and create independent critical thinkers to compete globally.

#### **1d. Science**

The LES science curriculum aligns to the TEKS and CCRS standards. Teachers provide sound learning opportunities in the areas of life, earth, and physical sciences for grades kindergarten thru 5th grade. A strong vocabulary understanding develops when students use terms, pictures, graphs, posters, charts, models, and videos to build a solid foundation for content learning. Teachers provide opportunities for students to discover, analyze, predict, and explain through critical writing. Students engage in real world experiences through outdoor hands-on activities. Teachers plan lessons in collaboration with the East Foundation and field trips to the Texas State Aquarium. Teachers afford opportunities for students to hypothesize, explore, analyze, and think critically through hands-on activities in the science lab. Using the scientific method, students develop anchor charts and models to show an analytical understanding of the content.

The implementation of technology in our science curriculum provides learning opportunities through the online science program. Students participate in completing virtual lab experiments, strengthening vocabulary, and interactive videos in which students answer questions before proceeding to the next section of the video. Students use iPads to conduct research on content related topics and create a representational model of their findings before presenting to the class.

District based assessments support the rigor and relevance of the state accountability. Data collected from these assessments assist to prescribe individualized differentiated instruction. Learning opportunities promote an instructional model using engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate concepts for quality instructional strategies. Students are eager to conduct experiments, explore their surroundings, work with their hands, and make every science opportunity fun. At any given time, you observe 5th grade students in the halls, in and out of classrooms recording findings, and videotaping the group activity. Higher order thinking skills yield self-confidence, be at state mastery level, and exceed state accountability standards.

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

LES Social Studies curriculum aligns to the TEKS and CCRS. Teachers follow the C.A.R.E.S. curriculum guide and provide 30 minutes of daily instruction for kindergarten thru 5th grade. The Social Studies TEKS include history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, and culture. Students acquire the foundational skills in the primary grades and learn the importance of history and culture. Students participate in the celebration of “diez y seis de septiembre,” Mexican Independence Day. Students learn cultural traditions, par-take of traditional Mexican foods, and dress up in traditional Mexican attire. Another history and cultural event is our annual Thanksgiving Celebration. Students learn the important events, struggles, and relationships of the pilgrims and Native Americans. A Thanksgiving luncheon with students dressed in both pilgrim and Native American attire concludes the learning experience.

Intermediate grade level students learn about Texas and United States History. Unique to our school is a student project entitled “Texas Cultural Expressions.” Students’ research and present on important events from Texas History such as Battle of the Alamo and The Texas Revolution. Students attend a stage production at the Washington Birthday Celebration Association Princess Pocahontas Council rehearsal. Students learn about civic duty by attending a district wide activity entitled “Classroom in the Courtroom.” Students travel and visit a local courtroom to see a mock trial in action. They serve as junior court officers, jurors, and as participants in the Court of Public Opinion to learn the importance of court procedures. At LES, students participate in civic duties and become abreast of local and state laws promoting civic minded citizens.

LES uses formative and summative district based assessments to improve student performance. Teachers use technology for instructional approaches, differentiated instruction, and problem-based/explicit learning.

Our core belief is for our students to become responsible and productive citizens of our changing global society.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

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

LES provides a full day Early Childhood Program for three and four year-old pre-kindergarten students. The program builds on the social-emotional, physical, language, and intellectual development of every student. The emphasis is a high exposure of literacy, math, science, social studies, fine arts, physical education, and technology application in highly qualified classrooms. The curriculum follows the Texas Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines that align to the kindergarten TEKS and is a key component for the development of the whole child. Language acquisition and phonological awareness activities incorporate opportunities for our diverse learners for school readiness and a smooth transition from home to school. LES believes in providing research-based professional development opportunities for teachers to build capacity and teaching strategies for our high population of EL students. We embrace vertical alignment meetings that bring together a community of professional learning and provide opportunities for a shared culture of academic growth. A strong solid foundation is instrumental in promoting academic growth and student success. LES makes data driven decisions by collecting assessment information from prekindergarten students through progress monitoring system that targets school readiness skills. Prekindergarten teachers implement practices based on the data through hands-on student centered activities that provide purposeful playful learning experiences. LES promotes monthly parental partnerships through informational meetings and WOYC events. Parenting sessions provide family support to make the transition from home to school. We take pride in community partnerships that create a positive climate and culture to meet future goals and aspirations at an early age. LES philosophy embraces and promotes a strong solid foundation through the development of each prekindergarten student making connections through school, parents, and community. Early childhood students participate in daily activities that promote high levels of achievement to transition to primary grades and foster an educational career to be successful.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

LES promotes choir, art, cheerleaders, and drama. Fine Arts comprises of students from 1st thru 5th grade. Music follows the TEKS curriculum in basic reading notes, movement, melody coordination, tempo, rhythm, pitch, and beats once a week for 45 minutes. Fifty students from 3rd thru 5th participate in choir. Students learn to develop their vocal cords to sing and play musical instruments. LES offers the fundamentals of art. Fifteen students view artistic videos of sketching and painting. Students stay after school to draw basic pencil sketches. Our 25 cheerleader Eagles perform and represent our campus through the year for special events. They cheer and dance in sports games and participate in local parades. Ten students from 3rd thru 5th grade join the drama club. They stay after school to practice theatrical drama. Students perform throughout the year in various events. LES highlights the 4 areas of fine arts to the community to enhance their social and emotional development that addresses independent learners' success.

LES offers 45 minutes of physical education (PE) to pre-kindergarten thru 5th grade students four days a week. Coaches follow TEKS and comply with the district timeline. Students participate in seasonal sports (basketball, flag football, track, volleyball, swimming, and soccer). Students in 3rd and 5th grade participate in a fitness assessment at the beginning and at the end of the school year to monitor and track their physical fitness progress. The health and nutrition components along with physical activities help to maintain a proper diet.

The nutrition program aligns to the state TEKS and CCRS. The LISD Child Nutrition Program (CNP) provides breakfast, lunch, and a nutritional snack to all students. Prekindergarten students participate in a family style lunch. Students eat in their classrooms portraying a family sit down lunch. Teachers discuss nutritional values of meals, emphasize table manners, vocabulary, and encourage students to savor new foods. A 4th and 5th grade student comprises the LISD Elementary Advisory Committee (EMAC). They meet twice a year to taste new menu items providing feedback to CNP.

LES offers a technology program with TEKS guidelines that gear to prekindergarten thru 5th grade. Students embed mobile learning devices; iPad, mimeo, document cameras, virtual reality, interactive whiteboards, and desktops. Students attend 45 minutes per week targeting computer application and internet safety procedures. With long distant learning, students go on virtual educational trips and connect with other classrooms around the country. The coding club provides technological critical thinking for 12 students from 3rd thru 5th grade.

The Library Media Specialist implements standards, guidelines, and TEKS set by the state of Texas. Pre-kindergarten thru 5th grade students enjoy 45 minutes per week to incorporate literacy skills and checking out books. The librarian promotes 100% family engagement by students participating in AR, Read across America, Family Fun Night, Reading with a Loved One, extended-after school hours, and Saturdays.

LES offers a Transitional Early Exit Program for all E's to be fluent and literate in the English language. All EL's assess in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing to determine English language acquisition. Students show progress by advancing one proficiency level per year: beginning, intermediate, advance, and advance high.

LES provides special education services for students with disabilities that require additional in-class support or by receiving services outside the regular classroom. Teachers implement IEPs for each qualifying special education student. Students' modifications and supplemental aides help improve performances in kindergarten thru 5th grade to sustain academic success.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a three-tiered model approach to identify students that need support in the academic areas. Tier 1 targets all students addressing the TEKS. Tier 2 targets 30 minutes of intervention and tier 3 targets 45 minutes of additional interventions. Every two weeks, teachers progress monitor and conduct parent conferences to target academic growth. Under a 504 plan, teachers develop individual accommodations for students with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

GT students consist of high performing students in 1st thru 5th grade. Teachers differentiate instruction by following the Texas Standard Project (TPSD) guidelines, the TEKS, and by using the depth and complexity icons. The GT program at LES gears students to achieve mastery levels in all subject areas.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

LES provides students performing below grade level an intervention plan that targets skills for three weeks. Teachers assess all students with subject area assessments and with progress monitoring skills. Every three weeks, teachers meet with parents, document subject and skills not meeting standards, and discuss grades that are below 70%. Parents communicate on how they assist their child at home. Teachers provide study guides for students from pre-kindergarten thru 5th grade. Parents refer to these study guides in order to assure their child is on grade level. The principal checks the failure report with the teachers' intervention plans, parent conference documentation, and verifies parents' responses. The principal assures all students that perform below grade level participate in interventions to improve academic performances before the end of the six weeks grading period. Teachers recommend tutorials for all students performing below grade level standards. Students from 1st thru 5th grade stay afterschool for an hour and a half to engage in skills that need reinforcement. Students in kindergarten thru 5th grade attend Saturday tutorial classes for 4 hours. Teachers review TEKS standards, reinforce concepts, and target specific strategies to reach students' instructional levels. Small group instruction addresses deficiencies that target non-mastery concepts. This process helps support to close the achievement gap among all subgroups.

Teachers identify students that continue performing below grade level. The RTI committee determines the assistance the student needs such as tutorials, interventions, or special education referrals. Teachers address TEKS concepts for an extra 30 minutes of intervention in a small group setting within the regular schedule. For additional support, teachers provide 45 minutes of intensive one to one instruction. Referrals to 504,

dyslexia, and special education programs benefit students performing below grade level standards. Individualized accommodations and modifications allow students to master instructional activities for academic success.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

LES provides 6 trailblazing classes for students performing above grade level from kindergarten to 5th grade. Classes consist of GT students and high academic achievers. These students transfer each year together to the next grade level. This ensures continuity and that high achievers stay focus and exceed academic standards. Teachers differentiate instruction by planning classroom activities above grade level expectations. Teachers use depth and complexity instruction to address the unique needs of these talented students.

Trailblazing classes perform at mastery level standards. Students explore, analyze, and think critically among their peers. Students achieve mastery level of 95% and above in all assessments. Clear expectations drive teachers to plan and execute lessons with a mindset of differentiation. Trailblazing students attend afterschool tutorials for an hour and a half to engage in required GT projects. GT students attend Saturday classes for 4 hours to finalize virtual lab projects. Students present projects twice a year to parents and community members by following the TSPD guidelines.

LES has 71 students in the GT program. In the fall semester, GT students select a project and present their introduction to parents and community members in a 3 minute oral presentation. Research continues throughout the year for students to develop their final presentation. A big celebration culminates at the end of the year to denote their hard work, creativity, and dedication. Students stand beside their project ready to discuss the development and final stage of the project. Selected students present their projects through a power point presentation speaking in front of their peers, parents, district directors, and community members.

Students performing above grade level benefit by being in the trailblazing classes to meet academic mastery level of 95% and above in campus, district, state and federal accountability. The trailblazing classes at LES perform at distinction levels.

### **3c. Special education**

LES provides students with equal learning opportunities for our special education students. Staff believe in meeting the needs of all students to ensure continuous success in achieving mastery in all content areas. Our special education program services students with disabilities that require individualized prescriptive instruction. Certified teachers instruct our special education population. Teachers' assistants support the educational environment. The student-teacher ratio is 2 to 1. Our campus services three autistic units from prekindergarten thru 5th grade students. Prekindergarten and kindergarten students make up the youngest population with five students in the unit. The primary unit, 1st and 2nd graders, consists of nine students. In the intermediate unit, 10 students comprise the state accountability grades. LES follows all state and federal guidelines to ensure special education students receive accommodations and modifications to improve academic performances in all subject areas. Teachers assess students' IEP's and revise the plan according to the needs of the students. The special education teachers reinforce the TEKS and C.A.R.E.S. curriculum guide to teach all content areas. P.E. is part of the regular classroom schedule. A special education coach provides adaptive P.E. to all autistic unit students.

A special education certified resource teacher provides in-class support for 13 students in the regular classroom. Classroom teachers deliver instruction that embed accommodations and modifications identified in students' IEP's. Special Education students from 1st thru 5th grade participate in afterschool tutorials for an hour in a half and attend Saturday tutorial classes for 4 hours. The resource teacher provides reinforcement for students to meet performance on grade level. The special education resource teacher plans and works together with the grade level teacher to achieve student academic success.

At LES, teachers meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of our special education students to pave the way to be productive citizens of our community.

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

LES provides a bilingual program for ELs in prekindergarten thru 5th grade and offers a Transitional Early Exit Program. These programs gear students to be fluent and literate in the English language. Students entering our educational system complete a survey to determine their dominate language. Students assess with a diagnostic test to determine level of English proficiency. The LPAC classifies student as EL or non-English learner. Students test at the end of the year to determine proficiency level: beginning, early intermediate, intermediate, proficient, and above proficient. The LPAC monitors and reviews E's language of support plans, grades, failure reports, assessment decisions, and student candidates to exit from the bilingual program. ELs assess with TELPAS to determine English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students meet performance by advancing one proficiency level per year: beginning, intermediate, advance, and advance high. If students score advance high in all domains and score a level 4 in the diagnostic test, LPAC determines student is ready to exit from the bilingual program. LPAC considers exiting students in 1st thru 5th grade.

The LPAC monitors exited students for four years, as they continue instruction at the same rigorous level as non-English learners. Teachers utilize the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and language objectives aligned to cross curricular student expectations.

The Transitional Early Exit Program provides our Hispanic population a measure to blend into our English learning community. With 58.9% of identified EL's in our campus, students work well with the 41.1% of non ELs. Most students transition from Spanish to English within 2 to 3 years. Our LES students listen, speak, read, and write in both languages, English and Spanish. Students assimilate to the English language without losing their native language.

LES commits to our EL population to succeed and become independent thinkers in our society.

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

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

At LES, we provide equal learning opportunities to enhance students' academic, social, and emotional development. Teachers, staff, administrators, and parents work collaboratively to create a safe, nurturing cultural environment that promotes learning and a sense of belonging. Students from prekindergarten thru 5th grade engage in classroom activities that make learning fun and extend into activities outside the classroom. Students participate in campus and district competitions that promote reading in and outside of the classroom to enrich academic, social, and emotional growth. Students are able to select high interest books and take a quiz to earn points. At the end of every six weeks period, administrators recognize students for meeting grade level and district reading goals. Teachers play an important role in driving the competitive edge in each classroom. The librarian provides incentives to all student subgroups that achieve their academic reading goals.

Aside from competitive activities, our students engage in team building skills through a behavioral program connecting between a positive environment for students and the success of the school. Administration provides weekly incentives to promote positive behavior in and outside of the classroom. Teacher praise students that demonstrate an act of kindness. All LES students develop communication and public speaking skills by participating in morning announcements. Students as young as three years old recite the LES pledge during morning announcements.

At LES, students feel a sense of belonging by being able to choose activities to participate in throughout the year. The development of the whole child triggers the social and emotional competitiveness of participating in school organizations. Our students are able to try out for cheerleading, basketball, volleyball, track, flag football, choir, drama, and chess. Teachers, students, and parents work together to encourage student success throughout the school year. Students participate in a campus and district Science Fair competition. Winners receive certificates, trophies, and medals. The National Honor Society characterizes our student members as ambassadors of the school community. The CSC members help escort all prekindergarten thru 2nd grade students to their classroom, making sure all students are safe and ready to begin their day. UIL activities, spelling bee, chess, technology coding, and robotics clubs support the school's mission of creating independent citizens of the workforce. These curricular and extra-curricular activities highlight our daily announcements, webpage, Face book, and Twitter.

Students' academic, social, and emotional growth contributes to the school climate and the overall school success.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Engaging families and community members at LES provides an increased focus in the lives of our students to create a pathway of opportunities for each child to achieve academic, social, and emotional success. Parents and community partners share a common vision of collaboration working towards a goal of excellence. LES uses a dual language approach, English and Spanish, to communicate with the school's stakeholders. Monthly information is sent to parents via newsletter, calendar of events, campus website and by light emitting diode (LED). Meet the Teacher Night, progress and report card nights, open house, family reading night, and library book fairs connect between home and school.

Parents celebrate their child's accomplishments during the Student of the Month ceremony, reading nights, kindergarten graduation, and end of the year awards. For the EL students in our campus, a parent representative participates in the decision making process as a member of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). The campus parent liaison bridges communication between home, school, and community. She conducts monthly meetings along with administrators and counselor to bring educational awareness, provide nutrition information, weight management, and other community concerns such as suicide, drugs, bullying, and gangs. Parents have the opportunity to participate and become abreast of topics surrounding their children and the community. During these informational sessions, parents

become aware of agencies that assist with support and skills they need for their children to be successful.

At LES, community members contribute in making decisions to provide equal learning opportunities for all students. Community members participate in site-based decision making such as: budget, school organization, staff development, and staffing committees at the LES Campus Education Improvement Council (CEIC). LES students participate in drug awareness presentations during Red Ribbon Week. Local Junior Achievement, in cooperation with our neighboring high school, provides lessons twice a year for LES students. The district and the city health department annually conduct a flu vaccine drive. Local agencies, in conjunction with the school district, provide jackets and toys for students. Other organizations such as Laredo Police Department, Webb County Sheriff's Department, and other civic clubs provide school supplies for our students. LES commits giving back to our community by having 100% faculty and staff participation in United Way of Laredo Campaign. By contributing these monetary donations, the faculty and staff assist non-profit organizations in our community that help change the lives of our students.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

LES teachers and administrators embrace innovative trends by attending staff development sessions to continue professional growth. The district's Curriculum and Instruction Department (C&I) targets professional development across the curriculum. The district focuses on reading and math with an emphasis on writing, science, and social studies. Every six weeks, teachers attend sessions to prepare for the upcoming six weeks TEKS. Teachers plan differentiated lessons and weekly tests for district benchmarks and state assessments. During professional development sessions, teachers share best practices that align to TEKS and student growth.

Teachers acquire a minimum of 15 hours of technology training on a website to improve and enrich student technology application skills. Teachers acquire 6 hours of GT updates through online training by watching video presentations, taking quizzes, and acquiring best practices to teach GT students. Teachers implement web-based programs to engage students with the latest technology applications.

During Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) meetings, administrators and teachers discuss lesson planning, data analysis, action plans, and upcoming six weeks TEKS. Using Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels, teachers create rigorous and complex reasoning lessons for students to achieve growth in district and state assessments. Administrators and teachers share best practices that promote academic growth for all sub-groups.

Administrators attend monthly leadership meetings that include data assessment analysis, curriculum and instruction information, attendance, discipline, family and community engagement, new initiatives, district, state, and federal accountability, budget allocations, and other topics that focus on campus and district goals. Turn around trainings for every professional development increases the accountability of all stakeholders. Training for administrators is vital for the overall student and teacher academic growth.

Besides nurturing teachers in academic performances, LES recognizes and celebrates the well-being of teachers and staff. As the school year commences, administrators provide traditional Mexican breakfasts during welcome back week. A Thanksgiving luncheon and our traditional Christmas "Tamalada" gathering highlight the fall semester celebration. Culminating the spring semester, administrators recognize teachers and staff during Teacher Appreciation Week with a luncheon and tokens of appreciation. LES presents teachers and staff with service awards, retirement certificates, and plaques at the end of the school year ceremony.

Recognizing and cultivating relationships through socialization, teachers and staff feel a sense of security and belonging. At LES, 70% of teachers embrace continuity by teaching at our campus, thus creating a unique professional culture.

LES understands professional growth and recognition of teachers and staff is vital to the success of our campus.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

LES molds the whole child to achieve success in academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being. The principal ensures all students receive high quality instruction in a safe nurturing environment. Administration and faculty implement the school's vision, mission, and goals to ensure quality education for all students.

The principal monitors curriculum and instruction through observations for high quality lesson delivery. Weekly PLCs ensures preparation and clear expectations for student academic success. Every three weeks, teachers hold conferences with parents to discuss academic performances, discipline, and intervention plans to meet student academic goals. A shared vision and a culture of high expectations for staff and students, serves as a driving force to impact student learning at a high mastery level. The assistant principal, instructional specialist, literacy coach and counselor make up the leadership team.

The assistant principal's main role is to carry out the school's goal. Walk-throughs ensure that instructional practices and safety procedures are in place. He communicates with parents on attendance, discipline, instructional programs and academic performances. He is the campus test coordinator for local/state assessments. His duties and responsibilities ensure the effectiveness of student success and that LES has a successful school year.

The instructional specialist assists in analyzing prekindergarten thru 5th grade local/state assessments. Collaborating with administration and teachers in interpreting student data, she advises on mastery level performances. She models lessons and provides resources to aid in the effectiveness of classroom instruction. By updating teachers on district initiatives and ensuring academic performances, high levels of mastery maintain student success.

The campus literacy coach provides academic support for kindergarten thru 2nd grade. She provides support to students in reading with 45 minutes of daily intervention with small group prescriptive instruction. She assesses students on reading levels, fluency, and comprehension. Her support in the foundational years is essential to the mission of the school and the success of all students.

The counselor addresses the social, emotional, and physical well-being of the students, thus maximizing performance and achievement. She counsels students and organizes community presentations on drug awareness, bullying, and other topics. The counselor assists with sensitive issues by referring students to Child Protective Services (CPS) and Serving Children and Adults in Need (SCAN). She distributes uniforms and school supplies for students in need.

The leadership team ensures systems are in place to perform at the master's level to sustain our academic accountability status.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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LES experiences academic success due to analyzing student data from administrators, faculty, and staff that contributes to the students' academic success. During PLC's, the leadership team reviews item analysis of district benchmarks with teachers and makes recommendations for adjustments in instruction based on TEKS performance, assessments, and student expectations.

At LES, the data room displays the 2018-2019 achievement STAAR scores. The principal prioritizes 2019 - 2020 distinctions by area, scores, and quadrants. Teachers reflect upon the chart that indicates the number of students needed for each subject area to meet distinction levels. LES implements the "KIS" model, "keep it simple," where goals are set by grade levels from prekindergarten thru 5th grade. All information by student, teacher, and grade level display the urgency to perform at high levels of understanding. Prekindergarten teachers review state guidelines at beginning, middle, and end of year. This ensures that students are kindergarten ready to succeed in the state mandated curriculum to continue into 1st and 2nd grade. The principal monitors and analyzes data from prekindergarten to 2nd grade with a reading diagnostic assessment at the beginning, middle, and end of year. This information assures that students will be reading at grade level when they enter 3rd grade.

Every six weeks, administration and teachers monitor prekindergarten thru 5th grade data through campus-based assessments, benchmarks, and checkpoints. Teachers compare their scores to state accountability outcomes by grade level. Based on analyzed data, teachers review item analysis reports and make modifications to target the needs of all subgroups. Interventions address the non-mastery TEKS through small group instruction, peer tutoring, and technology applications. This practice of monitoring students' outcomes encourages teachers and students to be competitive meeting local, state, and federal accountability standards.

To ensure success, the LES principal develops a handwritten running record of data that contains vital academic information of student population and the instructional strategies needed to succeed. An array of student data addresses language of instruction and students in need of special services. A logbook has a list of students by teacher to identify possible exit from the bilingual program, identification targets for GT nominees, RTI recommendations, possible special education referrals, and TELPAS proficiency levels.

The team analyzes student data to close the achievement gaps of all subgroups and ensure mastery on all academic performances. LES teachers and administrators analyze student data promoting a sense of commitment towards student achievement and academic success.