

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

Official School Name University Place Primary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2708 Grandview Drive W.
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City University Place State WA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 98466-2699

County Pierce

Telephone (253) 566-5620 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://upp.upsd83.org/ E-mail wkeith@upsd83.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* Mr. Jeff Chamberlin E-mail jchamberlin@upsd83.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name University Place Tel. (253) 566-5600

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 Mrs. Mary Lu Dickinson
(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

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	0	0	0
K	49	47	96
1	50	57	107
2	47	57	104
3	60	68	128
4	48	46	94
5	0	0	0
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	254	275	529

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 6.8 % Asian
 - 10.8 % Black or African American
 - 16.4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 48.2 % White
 - 16.3 % 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: 15%

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.

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	42
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	38
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	80
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	533
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Chinese-Mandarin, English, Gujarati, Hawaiian, Korean, Marshallese, Polish, Romansch, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Ukrainian, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9 %
47 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44 %
 Total number students who qualify: 233

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %

60 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>8</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>19</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>25</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6

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.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 14:1

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	95%	94%	95%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Our mission, in partnership with our community, is to ensure that all UPSD students are competent, contributing citizens.

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

University Place is a small city of about 35,000 people within a much larger urban area (Tacoma/ Pierce County). The city was only incorporated in 1995 but the school district has existed as the focal point of the community for many years. University Place Primary School (UPP) is located on the northern boundary of the city adjacent to Tacoma. The school was rebuilt in 2008 and is in excellent physical condition. The quality of the school reflects the community's long standing commitment to education and to public schools. Local funding (levies) are strongly supported by our community.

We serve a very diverse community of students. This diversity spans race, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic status. Many students live in one of several large apartment complexes while others live in middle to upper-middle class residential homes in the community. Due to the reputation of the school and school district, UPP also serves families in nearby Tacoma who "opt in" to the district.

The key strategies used in our district, and specifically at UPP, focus on the development of strong, core academic programs in math and literacy. These programs form the foundation of our success and are characterized by high-quality, fully guided instruction and a demonstrated guaranteed and viable curriculum for students. Students needing more than our core program can offer have access to effective, targeted interventions that serve to bolster their ability to find success in core programs. Staff interactions at UPP are professional and collaborative. Most importantly, they are focused on measurable student academic success.

UPP is also committed to implementing best practices for school safety and classroom management. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) systems have been in place at UPP since 2008. We also have a highly impactful "At Promise" mentoring program serving students of color at our school.

Leadership at UPP is outstanding. The current principal is in his seventh year. His commitment to serving all students- but particularly students who have been historically underserved by traditional public schooling- is unmistakable and ever-present in communication and action. In addition, the principal is highly knowledgeable about quality instruction and our adopted curriculum. He is very visible and participates in this work with staff. This academically focused, "hands-on" leadership is essential.

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

At UPP, teams are dedicated to the work of providing explicit core instruction, exposing every student to the same rigorous content, scaffolding instruction to provide accessibility to every student, identifying students who need additional support or remediation, and providing additional interventions specifically aligned with core content. The structure and systems within the school mirror this commitment, including: scheduled blocks for core ELA and math, social studies and science integrated into the ELA blocks to provide broad background knowledge with rich texts, intervention schedules and personnel aligned to provide flexible grouping and double or triple doses of intervention aligned with core content, child study teams to diagnose learning difficulties and provide general education interventions, and positive behavior systems designed to establish a safe and predictable learning environment. An unwavering commitment to these overlapping academic and school-environment beliefs allows our students to perform academically well above their state peers.

School leaders, grade level leaders and teacher teams work within a Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure in all subject areas, establishing high expectations for academics, curricular rigor and behavior intervention. These PLCs are the vehicle to provide consistent core instruction and intentional, aligned interventions with research-based instructional techniques. These PLCs work within district-wide curriculum maps to identify intervention and remediation need and plan consistent intervention instruction designed to increase students' access to core instruction. As a result, we see students in the bottom performing quartile increase in proficiency and in their ability to access to core content each year they are enrolled. The lowest performing student groups begin in kindergarten or first grade with an academic profile similar to struggling students nation-wide. By third grade, these consistent efforts result in our bottom performing quartile outperforming their similarly lower-starting peers and approaching the state average in proficiency.

1b. Reading/English language arts

At UPP, we use two ELA curriculums (both aligned to CCSS). In kindergarten/1st grade, we use Read Well. In grades 2-4, we use Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). The decision to use two curricula was strategically made, because we wanted our youngest students to become strong decoders and fluent readers before transitioning to a program that requires students to access rigorous text designed to build academic background knowledge on essential content (particularly science and social studies).

Read Well is a systematic and explicit phonics program. Students are assessed at the beginning of the school year and placed into the unit of instruction which best meets their instructional needs. Read Well supports students in phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Teachers use direct instructional methods to teach students letters, sounds, the skill of blending, high frequency words, etc. Students receive at minimum 30 minutes of direct reading instruction by certificated teachers in small groups daily (along with additional whole group ELA instruction). Students are assessed at the end of every unit and instructional decisions are made to either move them to the next level or provide remediation. This ensures mastery for nearly every student. Teachers maintain a pace that allows most students to access every unit, which helps ensure that students are ending the year reading at or beyond grade level.

We also use Read Well in our reading intervention programs. Students who qualify for additional reading support, receive a second dose of instruction (an additional 30 minutes per day) from a highly qualified interventionist. Each interventionist works closely with the classroom teacher to ensure the double dose is truly a second dose of the most essential content. Doing this helps intervention students to master the content at a faster pace than their peers and enables them to reach grade level standards by the end of each school year. Teachers and interventionists collaborate very closely together to ensure the needs of every student are met.

CKLA is designed to provide students with essential background knowledge that can be leveraged within the school year and in years to come. The curriculum contains units of instruction in content-based areas and includes topics like: Ecology, the American Revolution, Ancient Civilizations, etc. The scope and sequence is designed so that students are developing vocabulary and building understanding of key content over time.

Older students who qualify for intervention services receive intervention in one of two tiers. Students who are not yet fluent receive intervention with Read Well, so that they can become better decoders and fluent readers. Students who qualify for services but are “at or approaching fluency” receive support with close reading and vocabulary (in alignment with CKLA whenever possible).

All of UPP’s students are assessed three times per year with DIBELS (a standardized fluency measure) and GRADE (a standardized comprehension measure). These assessments combine to provide teachers and administrators critical information about each student and how their achievement compares to their nationally normed peers. This data is used to make decisions about intervention services, classroom-based support, etc.

1c. Mathematics

The math curriculum used at UPP was written by the district to align with specific research and address standards in a specific sequence and to varying degrees. Beginning in 2008, district-wide teams of teachers and administrators wrote curricular resources for grades K-4 to reflect the knowledge of hundreds of research studies and participated in grade level training which persists even today. The resulting curriculum dedicates significantly more time than typical schools on selected math standards and models which are used throughout the K-8 curriculum. New teachers receive what we describe as “in-time” trainings.

This ongoing professional development is designed to provide consistent instruction and expectations as the school year progresses. Numerous UPP teachers are among the training leaders for their grade levels and/or on the curriculum teams which continuously refine the curriculum.

At UPP, teacher teams equate teaching content from the curriculum map as the centerpiece of equity. Students who never receive instruction because teachers slow down pacing or eliminate content are at a competitive disadvantage later. UPP teams, instead, stay on pace and provide remediation lessons designed to provide access to the mapped content. PLCs are the vehicle to identify remediation needs and determine common instructional interventions. This ongoing mapping of intervention instruction allows teachers to stay on pace, guarantees access to core instruction and keep students who might typically fall behind on pace with their peers.

The district math curriculum made many of the Common Core shifts before the new standards even existed. So, as the Common Core and math practice standards rolled out, teachers at UPP were able to spend this time identifying the most important standards for long term success and dedicate more time and spiral review on these topics. As a result, students in grades K-2 spend approximately 40% of their year on standards related to basic numeracy, research-based instruction on understanding and comparing values (not in the Common Core standards), place value and on two addition and subtraction strategies. In third and fourth grades, teachers spend nearly twice the typical time on lessons devoted to fractions and area multiplication. These same lessons are found in subsequent grades, providing consistency across three grade levels.

There is a unique dedication to these consistent strategies, models and vocabulary K-7. In addition, there is regular training to refresh what are atypical lessons and practices, but align directly with research focused on students with learning difficulties. Significant time is spent teaching mobile students the background knowledge built into the K-3 system to ensure that new students receive the same foundation and opportunities within the system. Many of the math models within teachers’ lessons are derived directly from research, including those from the Rational Number Project. These lessons do not contradict, but supersede, the expectations established by the CCSS. There are many times where it is clear that UPP

students have spent less time on state-tested concepts but more time on those standards and topics confirmed by research to have lasting, long- term positive impact on academic success.

1d. Science

The science curriculum used at UPP was written by UPSD teacher leaders who have extensive knowledge about NGSS standards and the recent shifts aligned with these standards. The decision to use our own curriculum was made for two reasons. First, we wanted to align NGSS science instruction with the science content delivered in Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). The background knowledge needed for overall success in school needs to be carefully selected and developed for students over time. Additionally, students will be more successful with science if they understand both the science content and the science methods. In grades 2-4, CKLA covers science topics such as Cycles of Nature, Human Body, Light and Sound, Astronomy, Ecology, Geology, etc. Students learn in-depth information about these topics as they listen to structured read-alouds, read complex text, participate in class discussion, answer text dependent questions, engage in scientific investigations, etc. Teachers use direct instructional methods and the “I Do, We Do, You Do” model to ensure students have the support needed to engage successfully.

Each unit is approximately 3-5 weeks in length. Students are immersed in academic vocabulary and deepen their knowledge base over time. Topics are aligned across the grade levels. For example, students learn about the Human Body- Building Blocks and Nutrition in grade 2 and Systems and Senses in grade 3. The intensity of instruction within each unit, and alignment within and across grade levels helps students build strong academic background knowledge, which can be leveraged as students move through the grade levels.

Second, we wanted to protect instructional time in our ELA blocks. Reading and writing instruction is absolutely essential for primary students. Building the science lessons in this manner made it possible for us to integrate NGSS-aligned science instruction with English Language Arts.

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

Much like science, students learn about key social studies content through UPP’s implementation of Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) literacy program. CKLA is unit-based in design and contains units on ancient civilizations, events in history such as the War of 1812, topics related to regions and cultures, key historical figures, etc. The topics within the CKLA curriculum were selected by curriculum developers, because they are important topics for students to know. The topics build on each other, both within and across grade levels. Because of this curricular design, and because UPP teachers use effective instructional approaches, UPP’s students are able to build academic background knowledge on these social studies topics.

Teachers guide students in the learning of this content through whole group read-alouds, reading of text, group discussion, and writing. Because the content is complex, UPP’s teachers use formative assessment to determine whether students are learning the content adequately. They use curriculum-based assessments for each unit (and check-ins throughout the unit). They look closely at, and listen carefully to, student responses each day. Teachers make in-time decisions about this data and provide in-time intervention for students who are struggling.

UPP’s principal has set the expectation that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is essential for the success of UPP’s students. Each student should have equal access to the content determined to be most important for student learning. Access refers both to the amount of content delivered and to each student’s ability to learn that content. UPP’s principal works with his teachers to ensure they meet together regularly. Teams decide on the most essential objectives from the CKLA curriculum and map out the time spent on each content topic. They work together to design common grade level tasks. They also decide on common formative assessments and use these assessments to monitor student progress.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

UPP provides both music education and physical education to students during the week. Music programs are a long-standing and important component to K-12 education in University Place. By 5th grade, all students will take music every day. Physical education goals are also highly valued across the district. Health and fitness goals make up one of four district areas of focus or "ends".

UPP has a full-time librarian and a growing set of technology tools to aid learning. However, technology use has been intentionally downplayed in an effort to maximize instructional time focusing on building critical academic background knowledge and literacy skills.

Our full-time school counselor helps to engage students in the Second Step Curriculum to support their social/emotional learning.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

For students who enroll in UPP and are performing below grade-level, the most important component for success is access to core instruction. Students who are struggling spend the majority of their day in core instruction. If they can't adequately access this content, they will be unable to close the gap between their performance and their on-grade-level peers. Therefore, in-class remediation or intervention, and targeted intervention by specialists must be designed to quickly increase access to day-to-day core content. This is accomplished by grade level PLCs planning specific intervention lessons and by district-wide interventions systems geared toward specific content.

PLCs provide weekly plans for intervention and remediation for each team. Teams identify the most vital content and map out lessons designed to increase access to the core content in daily instruction. These maps are team-based maps specific to ELA and math. Each key concept is broken down into the most important chunks, with special notes dedicated to common errors or misunderstandings. Teams use this map to teach whole group and small group lessons with the necessary scaffolds to ensure access to core instruction. Pre-teaching the most important prerequisite skills or knowledge just prior to the lesson in core instruction supports those with insufficient background knowledge or limited working memory keep pace with their peers. The quality of planned team interventions makes it possible for students who might be unsuccessful elsewhere to experience high levels of achievement at UPP.

District-wide interventions in ELA and math are also geared toward alignment and access with core content. Struggling students often lack background knowledge to make learning efficient. District interventions provide direct instruction on prerequisite knowledge so that students can learn more efficiently when in core instruction. In this way, intervention augments, not replaces, core instruction.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students at UPP who are performing above grade level are challenged by the rigorous curriculum, complex texts and teacher-led extensions. In addition, some extremely high performing students receive instruction at an accelerated pace or with deeper content. The ELA and math curricula at UPP provide more than enough content and high enough rigor to allow teachers to differentiate for even the most proficient learners. Many teachers who are new to UPP find the ELA and math curriculum challenging compared to what they've experienced elsewhere. This rich curricular environment provides them the tools to meet the highly diverse needs of the most proficient students.

3c. Special education

UPP has a fairly typical distribution of students receiving special education. The school has one special programs classroom for students with a higher level of profundity in terms of their disability. For these students, the goal is appropriate placement and inclusion whenever possible in a general education setting.

Students accessing the Learning Resource Center (LRC) typically have less profound disabilities and benefit from the school-wide goal of accessing general core instruction as much as possible.

Unless previously identified as requiring specially designed instruction, students receive numerous general education interventions prior to being assessed for special education. It is our belief that many students at UPP don't qualify for special education because their general education interventions are so successful.

For students qualifying for special education or related services, UPP provides a unique cooperation between general education and special education to allow as much access to the least restrictive environment as possible. This collaboration extends beyond legal requirements, reflecting a philosophy that students will thrive when the best teachers provide as much core content as possible for every student. The level of content may vary widely, but the need for high quality instruction in special education is an imperative.

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

ELL students receive wrap-around services. First, ELL students receive strong core instruction by their core content teachers. These teachers use instructional methods geared at supporting our most at-risk populations (modeling, guided practice, scaffolding, frequent check-ins, structured feedback, etc.) UPP's core content teachers use formative and summative assessment to ensure students are learning at an adequate rate. If students are struggling (including ELL students), teachers provide classroom-based intervention during daily intervention blocks.

Second, ELL students who qualify for federally and state funded intervention are provided with supplemental intervention services for approximately 30 minutes each day. This intervention is aligned to core content. Interventionists use double dosing, front-loading of essential content and skills, and strategic review with ELL students who qualify for this content-based intervention. Our intervention program is designed with the goal that students out-pace the learning of their peers, so that gaps in learning can be filled.

Finally, ELL students who are struggling to access core instruction due to language (as determined by the State ELPA21 assessment) receive language services from a certificated ELL specialist. The ELL specialist uses the Language for Learning curriculum, which is designed to provide students with support particularly in the Listening and Speaking domains. Students receive 20 minutes of ELL services three to five times per week, depending on the student's language level. The ELL specialist uses a direct instruction approach to model correct language usage, engage students in listening and speaking tasks, and to provide specific and explicit feedback throughout each lesson. Because group sizes are kept small, students have ample opportunity to engage in both guided practice and independent turns. Students are placed into units based on their language levels and are assessed after each unit. ELL specialists make instructional decisions about movement from one level to the next, based on this data.

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

UPP does not have any migrant students at this time. We monitor this closely. If we have migrant students, these students are provided with strong core instruction in ELA, mathematics, social studies, and science. All primary students are assessed three times per year with DIBELS. This assessment is used to determine whether students meet the fluency benchmarks. A student who is not reading fluently is at risk of not being able to access grade level content. We also use the GRADE (for reading) and GMADE (for math) assessments to check on each students' progress relative to their nationally normed peers. We pay extra attention to students who fall below the 35th percentile on either of these assessments. Our goal is to ensure students have adequate access to core instruction. Students who struggle on any of the aforementioned assessments are looked at more closely and the principal at UPP works with classroom teachers to determine whether intervention is needed and to place students into intervention programs as necessary.

UPP has multiple tiers of intervention. Students who qualify for special education are provided with SPED services. Federally and state funded intervention is provided to the next tier of students. Students who do not qualify for Title/LAP services, but fall on the cusp are provided with intervention by UPP's K-3

specialists. Additionally, classroom teachers provide in-class intervention for students as needed. In-class intervention is determined largely through the use of formative assessment data. UPP has been successful with its different populations of students, because all of these systems of intervention work together to fill the gaps in student learning. Teachers constantly collaborate. They make in-time decisions about what students need most. Teachers are invested in the learning of all. They do what it takes to meet the needs of each student.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Creating a positive, productive, and engaging school environment is a critical building initiative. This environment is cultivated by all staff members in coordinated efforts throughout the school day and across the building. The common language and expectations that shape this work are part of a comprehensive PBIS model. Implementation is the responsibility of every adult and occurs in multiple settings. These include daily, all school morning assemblies, classrooms, and common areas. Every classroom teacher and support professional teach, reteach, and reinforce these expectations. Layered reward systems are also in place to acknowledge productive and responsible student behaviors. These reward systems are designed in a way that all students can regularly receive positive reinforcement.

Additionally, specific systems are in place to promote the social emotional development of every child. District adopted curriculum is taught to all students during morning assemblies and in individual classroom lessons by a certificated social skills teacher. These skills and concepts are used commonly throughout the building and reinforced in every setting. At kindergarten, an additional, systematic social emotional curriculum is taught to every child during a designated instructional block. This program is intended to specifically teach and reinforce the skills our youngest students need to successfully navigate the classroom and to develop appropriate and meaningful peer relationships.

These systems provide a framework to make clear for all students the choices and behaviors that are necessary for each to appropriately and successfully engage the school environment. Beyond this foundation, however, is a pervasive school culture that communicates to all students an unwavering sense of value, dignity, and capacity to learn. UPP teachers and staff members, through both their words and actions, convey a deep sense of believe in the capacity of all students to learn at high levels. As a result, every UPP student knows that they are expected to learn at high levels and that every adult in the building will support them in achieving their goals.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At UPP, we believe families are vital partners in supporting the learning of our students. We engage in broad, school-wide efforts to involve our families in the school community and to improve student learning. We promote two-way engagement between teachers and parents/guardians in multiple ways. We hold multiple family engagement events throughout the school year. At these events, we engage families in activities designed to build their capacity for supporting students. These events are centered on mathematics and ELA content. Parents learn about grade level learning targets, specific learning strategies, homework practices, ways to engage with teachers in two-way communication, etc.

We also identify barriers to meaningful family engagement by parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, etc. We work to remediate these barriers by hosting multiple events at various times, and backing up Title/LAP/ELL family engagement events with other building events. Events include reading/math nights, informational meetings, check-ins at conference time, and engaging parents themselves in the content students are learning. Childcare is provided when possible. Our goal is to reach as many parents as possible and we employ multiple methods of communication. We also use translation and interpretation services when needed.

While we believe strongly that it is our role and responsibility to provide meaningful and targeted interventions to all students who struggle, we do invite numerous family and community members to provide additional opportunities to support, encourage, and read with students who struggle. We also provide opportunities for family and community members to mentor at-risk student populations. These opportunities are created and supervised by certificated staff members who run our At Promise mentoring program for young men of color.

While all of these efforts are important for building a broad sense of community and fostering investment in

the growth and development of our students, the most important and impactful interactions are between the family and their teacher. At UPP, it is a fundamental part of our culture to communicate regularly with family members to better understand the needs of our students, to communicate and celebrate students' growth and progress, and, when necessary, to develop targeted plans to address specific student needs. While we always take responsibility for providing additional supports to those students who require them, we do honor the power of close teacher/team to family partnerships in ensuring the greatest possible impact from interventions.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At UPP, we believe that the best way to foster a positive and productive professional culture is to provide the conditions necessary for teachers to succeed. This success defined as promoting the learning and growth of all students and our struggling students in particular. Therefore, every effort is made to ensure teachers considerable efforts have a clear and observable impact on student learning. To accomplish this, district and administrative staff provide all teachers a clear understanding of their work, articulate manageable goals and expectations, provide necessary training, materials, and support. We also believe that meaningful collaboration is central to all of these efforts. Therefore, we have worked to establish regular, protected, and extended times for teammates to work together in PLCs to support one another and achieve common goals.

Trainings for teachers are provided in the closest possible proximity to when the content of that training is presented to students. These trainings are taught by grade level experts, often UPP teachers, who are familiar with the students and the realities of the classroom and they include actionable information and practices that can meaningfully inform classroom instruction. Regular building level staff meetings provide opportunities to celebrate individual and collective successes, to articulate critical objectives and expectations, and to prioritize and shape the most essential work.

All of these efforts are in place to support the work of the PLC, the core of our professional improvement efforts. Professional learning is most impactful when engaged in by a small group of practitioners who can share their knowledge, questions, and experiences in real time. We have worked at UPP to establish highly effective PLC leaders and teaming expectations that enable a narrow focus on critical objectives, student learning, the identification of students who require additional support, and protocols for implementing and monitoring common, highly effective interventions.

Providing teams regular, structured opportunities to engage in this process effectively results in common, high quality implementation of curricula and the growth of collective expertise and efficacy. Most importantly, it results in high levels of student achievement. The growth and achievement of students, particularly struggling students, is the most powerful professional motivator. It reinforces common commitments and expectations, and provides critical validation of team's heroic efforts to serve their students.

4. School Leadership:

UPP is led by a committed and knowledgeable principal in his seventh year of service to staff and students at UPP. The principal serves as the direct supervisor to all classified and certificated instructional staff in the building. He also facilitates a group of teacher leaders who, in turn, lead critical PLC work with their grade-level colleagues. While this leadership is shared across multiple teachers in the building, there is an expectation that instructional approaches and curricular emphasis are highly guided/directed. In general, it is expected that the work be more similar than different across classrooms. Both teachers and the principal in this environment demonstrate the ability to appreciate (or at least tolerate) this level of coordination in service to students. The principal, as chief communicator of the schools vision and purpose, keeps student achievement at the forefront of his messaging and, more importantly, at the center of all collaborative work and learning that teachers engage in. Teacher time is not wasted and distractions are avoided at all costs.

Not only is academic achievement the ongoing focus of everyone's time and energy at UPP, but there is particular focus on achievement for traditionally underserved students and students whose progress

demonstrates the need for additional support. In nearly every staff communication, the importance of this approach is explained and reinforced by the leader. Additionally, decisions are made through this same lens of equity via academic intervention and increased supports.

It should also be noted that the leadership at UPP is closely aligned with a long-standing and well-supported district mission with the same focus. The leader at UPP, while exceptional, leads programs that are aligned to larger, district-wide initiatives creating coherence and predictability in the system at the primary level. District leadership, in this sense, supports the leadership work in the building.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The heart of UPP's success and ongoing improvement efforts is the work of our PLC teams. At UPP, we are committed to ensuring every single student meets essential grade level objectives. This work is only possible when teams have the capacity to identify the most essential learning objectives, to create assessment systems to monitor student understanding, to identify those students who don't learn, and to employ common interventions to monitor and support those who struggle. This work is the focus of every grade-level PLC at UPP. Multiple times per week, these teams meet to preview upcoming content, to determine potential pitfalls and misconceptions, and to agree on the most successful method of instructional delivery. They create common lesson plans, templates, and organizers to scaffold learning for struggling students. They break complex learning into small chunks and create small, common formative assessments to measure students' progress toward critical learning in real time. They regularly examine these assessments and discuss, develop, and implement intervention plans to ensure struggling students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to move forward. They are invested deeply in the each other's professional learning and singularly focused on meeting the needs of even their most impacted students.

The understanding of and commitment to authentic PLC work centered around the achievement of all students is the reason historically underserved and at-risk populations of students experience extraordinary levels of growth and achievement at UPP. Individuals and teams do not linger on the limitations of students or make excuses for their lack of performance. Instead, they focus on the specific teacher actions necessary to advance students' learning. In doing so, they continually advance their collective knowledge of appropriate assessment, scaffolding, and intervention. As their knowledge and expertise grows, so does student learning, further reinforcing and validating their exceptional work.