U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Eric Raynard Dockery
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Edgar Allan Poe Classical Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10538 S Langley Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Chicago   State IL   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60628-3092

County   Cook

Telephone (773) 535-5525   Fax (773) 535-5213

Web site/URL http://www.poe.cps.edu   E-mail   edockery@cps.edu

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

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Forrest Claypool   E-mail FEClaypool@cps.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name City of Chicago School District 299   Tel.   (773) 553-1000
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. Frank Clark
(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. 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.)

2. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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 (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district   421 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   0 Middle/Junior high schools
                                            95 High schools
                                            0 K-12 schools

                                            516 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [X] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [ ] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	11	14	25
1	15	16	31
2	13	17	30
3	9	23	32
4	14	18	32
5	16	16	32
6	11	18	29
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	89	122	211

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school: 1 % Asian
                                          92 % Black or African American
                                          5 % Hispanic or Latino
                                          0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                          1 % White
                                          1 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 1%

    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 *to* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	208
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.010
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
                                                        0 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 43 %
        Total number students who qualify: 90

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %
                                                        4 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.

1 Autism	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	0 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	0 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	3 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0 Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	7
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   30:1

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

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	98%	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 2016.

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 X

    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.

Edgar Allan Poe Classical Elementary School empowers students to maximize their learning, become leaders of their lives, and servants to their communities and the world.

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

Applicants for the Regional Gifted Centers and Classical Schools like Poe are selected based on their admissions exam score. When students apply for the exam they also rank the schools in which they are interested. They are selected based on a combination of their score, ranking of the school and available seats at the school.

PART III – SUMMARY

Edgar Allan Poe Classical Elementary School is located in the Pullman Historic District neighborhood located on the Southside of Chicago. Poe was founded in 1905 and was originally a neighborhood school serving the children of North Pullman factory workers. As the railroad industry collapsed and the Pullman factory closed, Poe also closed but was reopened as a selective enrollment classical school serving gifted and high-achieving children from all parts of the city.

Although we serve families from all over the city of Chicago, Poe still maintains its roots as a community school. We have an active presence in our community and take great pride in it, as our history is linked to its history. Our neighborhood is significant for its origins in the Pullman Company, the first and one of the most famous model, planned industrial community in the United States, and the scene of the violent 1894 Pullman strike. Pullman is also notable for its role in the Black labor movement spurred by the influential Pullman Porters and is now home to the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum. On February 19, 2015, President Barack Obama designated Pullman as a National Monument. It became the first unit of the National Park Service in Chicago. Poe was part of the movement to gain this designation and was represented at the signing ceremony.

At Poe, we are proud of our past, but we are more excited about our future. Classical schools traditionally offer a liberal arts education rich in the study of the humanities. While we embrace this traditional, Poe considers itself a neo-classical school as we equally embrace Science, Technology Engineering, and Math and seek to prepare our students for success in the 21st century. The pillars of our mission are learn, lead and serve. It is these tenets and our other core values of family and community engagement, health and fitness, arts and enrichment, and technology that have encouraged and challenged all students to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. These values are the key to our success are detailed below.

Academic Achievement - Poe traditionally ranks among the top schools in the city and state. Poe students are expected to excel academically in all subjects. We have a culture of high achievement. Our students, Poe Ravens, seek continuous growth and development and share responsibility for maximizing their learning. We set goals and develop action plans to achieve them. They are aware of their learning styles and seek opportunities to explore their own interests, while closely monitoring their progress. They know that their excellence is in their effort so they try their best and are not afraid to take risks. At Poe, we embrace failure as learning opportunities that ultimately lead to our success.

Leadership - Poe Ravens REP (Respect, Effort, Pride). We embrace these character traits as well as essential life skills such as communication, initiative, problem-solving, goal setting, collaboration, creativity, and self-management found in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. These are the qualities of leaders. All Poe students are leaders. We are first leaders of our lives. We make our own weather and determine our own success. We lead by example and are always responsible for our actions.

Citizenship and Service - We are citizens of the world grounded in our community. We proudly honor our heritage and history and we welcome all who want to share and contribute to our mission. Poe Ravens know that they have an abundance of gifts and talents and as responsible learners and leaders in a global society, we have an obligation to make a positive impact not only on our community but on the world.

Relationships (Family and Community Engagement) - The Poe Classical school community is a tightly knit family. Students are at home when they come to Poe. Our small population, low student and teacher mobility rate, and our commitment to know students as individuals allow us to form deep personal connections with every one of them. Additionally, we seek lasting relationships with parents, community members, and partners. Our students, our family, and our village make Poe unique among schools.

Health and Fitness At Poe - We strongly believe in healthy bodies and healthy minds. The physical and social-emotional well-being of our students contributes to their academic success. Health and fitness permeate through every aspect of student life. Ravens follow a path to being lifelong learners but also form

habits that will sustain lifelong health.

Arts and Enrichment -We are committed to providing our students with a well-rounded educational experience that is rich in arts and enrichment activities. We believe that our students have talents outside of academic learning and they should all be explored and developed. Our whole child approach to education ensures that Ravens sing, dance, play instruments, and sports. The key to each of these activities is live performances and demonstrations. Students have multiple opportunities to perform.

Technology - Poe students are all digital natives. They have never lived without computers and don't know a world that was not connected. Technology permeates all facets of our school. Our instruction covers these areas and our pedagogy blends the best of traditional teaching methods with computer-based programs to create a personalized learning model that addresses the individual needs of our students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum:**

The instructional program at Poe Classical is accelerated and highly structured for strong academic achievement in literature, mathematics, language arts, world language, and the humanities. It's designed to provide a challenging liberal arts program for students with high academic potential with an emphasis on critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving. As a result, we use a personalized learning curricular approach to address our accelerated instruction and need for differentiation to address different learning styles and to promote student growth.

Poe Classical follows a balanced literacy approach to reading/language arts instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards. We deliver explicit systematic instruction that builds solid foundational skills in phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, word analysis, and application of skills. Students are immersed in complex texts that include a balance of fiction and nonfiction. Students are engaged in three modes of writing which include argument/opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative in which they write in response to multiple texts and cite text-based evidence. Our literacy block is a blend of whole group and small group instruction with differentiated lessons and learning stations that allow for student choice and engagement with skill application. Digital resources offer additional personalized learning experiences based on student performance data and interest inventories where students are in control of their own learning.

Poe Classical provides a rigorous personalized approach to math instruction. Our math curriculum is built around Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and the Standards of Mathematical Practices. The three components of rigor: conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application are addressed daily to support our student's ability to grow their math ability and confidence. Foundational skills are built through whole group direct instruction, hands-on activities, small group instruction and collaborative practice. Student advance and build deeper conceptual understanding through math talks, real world problem solving personalized digital resources, and project-based learning. Digital resources, in particular, allow us the ability to customize and personalize instructional planning, presentations, and differentiate instruction for every student's ability level based on performance data which includes acceleration and remediation when needed.

Poe Classical's science curriculum addresses the Next Generation Science Standards and STEM through interactive, visual, and differentiated learning strategies to address the needs of all learners. Foundational skills are targeted through the development of strategies to read and understand informational text including interacting with important visuals and graphic organizers. Our interactive curriculum supports science inquiry, evidence-based reasoning, and engaging students through a variety of hands-on open-ended inquiry investigations. It is through essential questions, inquiry, and real world investigations that we connect the big ideas of science making it relevant to student's lives.

Poe Classical's social studies curriculum supports the National Council of Social Studies. It places a strong focus on developing thoughtful, literate citizens that have a deep understanding of civic issues, connected communities, and global conversation. It teaches students to embrace cultural diversity and democratic values through inquiry processes, collaboration, and communication skills. We connect social studies and literacy across disciplines. Like our science curriculum, foundational skills are developed through reading strategies for informational text. Students are challenged to draw evidence from informational text and address essential questions by writing in response to reading. Blended learning experiences include interactive work-text and digital resources that motivate students and connect them to the real world. Personalized learning opportunities allow for student choice and research.

Social Studies really comes to life, however, through our community service and civic engagement efforts. Since 1998, Chicago Public Schools has required high school students to complete 40 service-learning hours in order to graduate. Three years ago, CPS began a pilot program to engage Middle School student into service learning and Poe was asked to participate. We readily accepted the challenge. Our inaugural project

was a week of exploration and celebration of our historic Pullman community. We visited the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum, the Pullman Visitors Center, participated in a walking tour of the neighborhood houses, and visited the local senior home to gain real world account from those who actually lived the history we were studying. Students then created presentations about the experience and we invited the community leaders to our school to thank them for the lessons and celebrate their accomplishments. Since this initial endeavor, our commitment has been expanded to include school-wide events such as our annual walkathon through the neighborhood, and to include more student-led community projects like our support the community garden and food pantry Civic engagement at Poe epitomizes our mission to learn, lead and serve.

2.   Other Curriculum Areas:

At Poe, we strive to provide a well-rounded education to our students. In addition to the core academic subjects, all of our classrooms receive an hour of instruction in Music, Physical Education and Spanish two times per week. In fact, we consider these classes to also be core subjects and same expectations are held for students and teachers as with Reading and Math. Students who show exceptional promise or a keen interest in these areas are also afforded opportunities to pursue them deeper in before/after school programs and activities.

Poe is renowned for our award winning music program. Our full-time music teacher delivers a rigorous program that builds musical skill and appreciation. At the primary level, students are introduced to and given the chance to solidify their foundation for music. Through instruction based on Kodaly and Dalcroze principles, students discover basic musical concepts through singing, playing instruments, moving to music, and listening. At the Intermediate level, students continue to master their skills through singing, playing instruments, rhythm, movement, composing, and listening. Students specifically put the skills of reading and playing alone and in an ensemble to use through performance on the recorder. Finally, at the upper level, the focus is advancing student musicianship through ensemble performing and intense application of skills.

In addition to the core music curriculum, we offer additional opportunities to help enhance our music program and expand student's experience to other disciplines in the Arts. The Raven Ensemble and Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Bands allow students to perform with musical ensembles. Partnerships with local organizations such as the Beverly Arts Center, Barrel of Monkeys, Music Education Services, May I Have This Dance, and Intonation Music provide experiences in music, visual arts, dance, and drama to the entire student population. Utilizing these community organizations exposes our students to a wide range of media and foster self-expression and creativity at a very personal level.

Physical Education at Poe is based on self-awareness, self-control, self-discipline, success and fun. The philosophy that guides our instruction is if a child is aware of what they are doing and what they are able to do, then they eventually will be able to also correct themselves, self-improve and make better choices. All of the activities in the class are geared around the student ability to be both independent and team thinkers. The activities are also played at a level so that everyone enjoys the great feeling of achievement and completion. The primary goal of physical education is to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to engage in physical activity throughout their lifetime.

PE at Poe transcends that gymnasium. Health and Fitness is one of our core values and it is incorporated in all areas of the school. Students receive health classes in the classroom and instruction in all subjects that include movement - small groups, projects, centers, etc. Students also have recess and brain breaks throughout the day. Additionally, we offer many other opportunities through afterschool programs where students can participate in team and individual sports such as basketball, football, and track. Poe received special notoriety two years ago for implementing a swimming program with a local recreational center to address the disparity of accidental drowning accidents among minority students.

Spanish has been a hallmark of Poe's curriculum since we became a selective enrollment school. Beginning in kindergarten and progressing through 6th grade, Poe students received instruction that allows them to master the fundamentals of Spanish and often test out of introductory classes upon entering high school.

This past year as our school has been more deeply exploring blended and personalized learning, we started to think differently about our traditional Spanish program. We decided to include it in our personalized learning pedagogy. We are piloting Middlebury Interactive Language program. Students now receive both teacher-led and computer-based language instruction with a proven methodology that we hope will lead to greater listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiency upon completion. When completely rolled out, our new program will also allow students a choice of the language they want to learn and give them 24/7 access to instructional that can accelerate their learning. Spanish at Poe is transitioning to World Languages and Cultures.

Technology is not offered as a separate class at Poe. Instead, through our pursuit and blended and personalized learning, it is integrated into all subjects.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Academic achievement is the first and most important pillar of our mission at Poe. We have had a rich history of academic success and we are consistently ranked among the top schools in our State. However, we have come to realize that the world has changed and we must do even more to prepare our students for a lifetime of success in and beyond school. In addition to mastering content, we want our students to become self-directed learners who can seek challenges, persist in solving them, shift strategies to find the best solution, seek help when necessary, and respond positively to setbacks. We have used and continue to use a variety of instructional methods to create the outcomes we desire for our students, however, personalized learning is the pedagogy that we have been developing and pursuing that we feel will be most transformational for our school.

Personalized learning seeks to accelerate student learning by tailoring the instructional environment—what, when, how and where students learn —to address the individual needs, skills and interests of each student. Students can take ownership of their own learning, while also developing deep, personal connections with each other, their teachers and other adults.

This year at grades 5 and 6, we applied for and were selected to become a Summit Basecamp School and adopted their personalized learning model. It incorporates all of the elements of personalized learning and also includes aspects of differentiated instruction, problem-based learning, explicit instruction, and of course, technology-based support, On a daily basis, students engage in personalize learning time to work independently and in groups with peers on content mastery, and in teacher-led project-time where they develop more enduring cognitive skills through working on projects with a partner or in small groups. The third component of this approach is mentoring. Each student is assigned a mentor to provide guidance and support and that aforementioned personal relationship to help students progress through the year.

To ensure high levels of student learning and achievement our instructional methods and interventions must first adhere to the common cores state standards. Teachers must continuously study them and unpack them as part of the teaching and learning framework for professional development. Interventions must then target the needs of the individual students based on assessment data. Interventions are accomplished through teacher directed activities but students also get personalized instruction using technology. Computer-based programs such as ALEKS, Study Island, i-Ready and Khan Academy are used to supplement teacher lead instruction.

We use two high stakes nationally normed assessments in the Chicago Public Schools, PARCC, and NWEA. PARCC data isn't available until the school year is over so its data is summative and used to measure performance from the prior year and to view schoolwide and grade level trends to plan for next year. NWEA data is more formative. This exam is taken at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to track changes throughout the year. It allows for goal setting and progress monitoring. Additionally, each quarter of the school year, students are given diagnostic tests with i-Ready, or benchmark assessments with Student Island computer-based instructional programs to monitor progress with mastery of grade level standards. Progress monitoring assessments are also administered between the benchmarks and diagnostics approximately every 3-4 weeks as student complete assignments. In addition to computer-based assessment data, our teachers gain insight into student learning from examining classwork, homework and unit, tests,

chapter tests, and teacher developed instruments.

Teachers constantly analyze data for their own class or subject to inform them about student progress. Data analysis also forms the basis of the PLC step 4 in the teaching and learning process as teachers collaborate across grades to improve instruction.

We are a high achieving school, and personalized learning helps us maintain our high levels of achievement. Personalized learning allows our students to work at their own, often accelerated, pace and gives them opportunities to delve deeper into activities that are of particular interest to them. For example using Summit Basecamp students have required power focus areas, but can also complete additional and challenge focus area content. Finally, we extend our learning outside of the classroom by field trips, civic engagement projects and before/after school and summer school programs such the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA) Fusion science program.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

Poe is a unique school with many advantages. Most of our kids are above average academically and have very supportive families. Our neighborhood is historically significant and has recently been designated as a National Monument. We have a small population of students where every student is known by every adult. Throughout our history, we have been able to develop and maintain a strong and viable school culture that is conducive to student achievement. Our goal is to move from good to great.

Beyond cultivating our built-in advantages and supports, we have been very intentional about improving our school. Two programs best illustrate some of our recent initiatives in advancing our school culture: Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the Leader in Me

PBIS is a systems change process for an entire school with the underlying theme of teaching behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject. We chose to focus on expectations surrounding the themes of respect effort and pride (rep) - Ravens REP This effort served us well but it wasn't comprehensive enough by itself, so two years ago we added the Leader in Me school transformation process. Based on Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, the Leader in Me has helped us refine our mission and vision, and place leadership as the cornerstone of our school culture. We are still early in the process but we have seen students become more active in the school activities such as taking over morning announcements and planning events - duties once performed by staff. They have also become more independent and self-directed in their learning by setting goals and working independently.

Our school environment is also conducive to the success of our staff. Many of supports that are available to students are also available for staff. For instance, Stephen Covey's 7 Habits work equally well for staff. In fact, before introducing the program to students the transformation process began with all of the adults in the building. Every staff member received full training and is expected to incorporate the habits into their daily lives. Similarly, PBIS incentives that are offered to students are mirrored with the staff. During the month of February, for example, we had a kindness challenge for students where they were encouraged to engage in random acts of kindness to each other. The same contest has held for staff with prizes for the winner. The greatest support for teachers, however, doesn't originate from a program, but from the relationships that have developed from working together in a successful school for so long. Teachers teach and learn from each other model the behaviors we expect from our students.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

At Poe Classical, we firmly believe in the old African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child". We equally feel that it takes a village to educate a child and we have worked hard to have a strong village of staff, family, and community members who all work together to provide the best education possible to our students. The strategies that we have found most successful with building our village include communication, partnerships and community investment.

For us, engaging families and the community begins with effective communication. To communicate with our current families, we use traditional forms of communication such as newsletters, bulletins, and phone calls. We also pride ourselves on being very accessible to our families and much communication, for example, is accomplished in informal face-to-face meetings on the playground before and after school. One of the primary tools that we use for communication to our families is ParentSquare. It is an electronic, two-way, communication system that allows us to post messages, including photos and videos to groups of parents or to the entire school community. Our success with ParentSquare and our desire to reach others outside our school community has led us to establish a social media presence with Facebook and Twitter accounts

Inner city schools often struggle with parent and community involvement but this is a strength at Poe. Parents are our number one partners and chief stakeholders. The fundamental expectation of parents is to

make sure our students are at school every day on time, and ready to learn but they are also expected to assist with homework, volunteer in the classrooms and for field trips, and provide financial support to the school.

Parent support in not enough to allow us to achieve the level of greatness that our students deserve. We also have successfully fostered partnerships with businesses and community organizations to supplement the resources of the school. For instance, we contract with the Beverly Arts Center to provide additional Arts opportunities to our students and we have a partnership with Children's Research Triangle to provide additional counseling and therapy for students in need.

Since Poe is not a traditional neighborhood school, we have to work hard to maintain close ties to our surrounding community. This is important to us because we once were a neighborhood school and the community in which we reside, Pullman, is so rich in history. We would be doing our students and our community a disservice if we were not actively involved. Our students contribute to the neighborhood by visiting the local senior home, working in the community garden and visiting the museums and incorporating Pullman history in our curriculum.

3. Professional Development:

Poe Classical School prides itself on being an innovator and leader in elementary education. We are constantly seeking ways to improve teaching and learning at our school. Building the capacity of faculty and staff through professional development is crucial to achieving our goal. Recently, we have embarked on developing a PLC in our school to implement a professional teaching and learning cycle model of professional development. This six-step process —study, select, plan, implement, analyze, and adjust is our approach to helping teachers collaboratively, and more effectively plan and implement lessons aligned to their state standards.

Before the process begins, teachers review student achievement data to identify a specific standard or standards on which many students are not meeting their goal. This work leads to the development of our Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP) - a two-year school improvement plan required of all CPS schools that establish or refines our mission, strategic priorities for the year, and the steps the school will take to accomplish our goals - including professional development.

To provide support for teachers to implement the process and to provide training to learn identified instructional strategies we utilize a number of resources. First of all, our Assistant Principal acts as an onsite instructional coach. She observes teachers, assists with planning lesson, models techniques, and leads teacher team meetings. She is also our liaison with the District/Network offices to coordinate training and support from district staff as necessary.

In addition to the district/network personnel, other support from outside the school includes attending conferences - both live and through webinars, and occasionally bringing in expert trainers. For instance, 7 Habits training was done by a Franklin Covey provider.

The greatest support for teachers, however, comes from other teachers. Teachers work together formally in grade band meetings to implement the professional teaching and learning cycle, and informally before and after school to share ideas and best practices. For instance, our Kindergarten teacher has been pursuing guided math for a couple of years in her classroom and she recently held a morning PD to share her successes with all the teachers in the building. Teachers also take part in book studies and reading professional articles to improve their skills.

Lastly, the principal ensures that adequate resources are allocated for professional development, this includes funding and time. Actions such as modifying teachers' instructional schedules to allow common time for collaboration and planning; and releasing staff members from certain duties ensure that their full attention and energy are devoted to instructional issues.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Poe Classical has elements of many of the most established leadership constructs (Democratic, Servant, Innovative, Laissez-Faire, etc.), but our approach can best be described as Situational Leadership because we must flexible and adaptable to thrive in a rapidly changing world. However, the foundation of our leadership philosophy is grounded in the timeless principles of fairness, integrity, honesty, teamwork, and human dignity that form the basis of Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of highly Effective People.

Our leadership structure is more readily defined. It operationalizes our philosophy and consists of teams of representatives of all the school stakeholders: administration, faculty and staff, parent and community members and our students themselves. They work together to ensure that policies programs resources focus on student achievement.

Our Principal forms the first layer of leadership at Poe. He is primarily responsible for working with the school community to set the direction for the school and make sure that all programs and operations are in accordance with our mission and vision. To help ensure that his focus is on instruction, for example, last year our principal began working with the National SAMs Innovation Project. SAMs is a professional development process using a unique set of tools to change a principal's focus from school management tasks to activities directly connected to improving teaching and learning.

The Building Leadership Team (BLT) is the next layer of leadership at our school. The structure of our BLT is aligned to the core pillars of our mission: learn, lead, and serve. Our Principal and Assistant Principal provide the primary support to teachers and staff to improve learning. Our Counselor is in charge of the Lead box which consists of social emotional learning and implementation of our major leadership initiative for students and staff, The Leader in Me. Our final box, Serve, is lead by our Spanish Teacher and consists of community service and outreach with a global perspective.

Teacher Teams have the most direct effect on student achievement. Each of our teams has a lead teacher who leads the efforts of their colleagues as they meet to review student achievement data and collaborate on strategies to improve teaching and learning. Additionally, since we have only 7 classroom teachers, all teachers take on some form of leadership in the school such as chairing a committee, coaching a team, or serving on the Local School Council.

Parent and community members join our principal and teachers to contribute to the leadership of the school through formal organizations such as the Local School Council (LSC). The LSC provides oversight of the school and is primarily responsible for approving how school funds and resources are allocated, developing and monitoring the annual School Improvement Plan, and evaluating and selecting the school's principal.

Finally, students are represented by Student Voice Committee SVC. The SVC is a student council meet with the Building Leadership Team to voice student concerns of students, but more importantly, initiate programs and projects to address matters of importance to them. For example, students lead an effort to raise money to install new water fountains in the school and are currently working to upgrade our school library.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There is no single practice that makes Edgar Allan Poe Classical Elementary School so successful. Instead, it is the alignment of a combination of factors that have enabled us to succeed. Two years ago, we adopted the Leader in Me program at our school. It is based on Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. These are universal, timeless principles of personal and interpersonal effectiveness, such as responsibility, vision, integrity, teamwork, collaboration and renewal, which are common to all people and cultures and equally relevant to children and adults. We found it attractive because it captured many of the principles that we already practice, but it provided us a framework and a common language to instill these values more deeply in our school culture. Furthermore, it provided us a roadmap to explore other areas of leadership and personal development that will ensure our academic and socio-emotional prosperity for years to come. Our history of excellence and our future success is undergirded by these 7 Habits. So, upon reflection, if there is one practice that has been most influential to our success, even if we didn't yet have a name for it, it has been our adherence to the 7 Habits.

The first three, which form the basis for internal development, are provided as an illustration of our strategies for success.

Habit 1: Be Proactive - This habit is about taking responsibility for your life. It is the foundation of our growth mindset and fuels our spirit for innovation. We are successful because we expect the best and nothing less, so we strive for it. We know that we are responsible for our success and no outside forces can stop us.

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind - Habit 2 is based on imagination--the ability to envision in your mind what you cannot at present see with your eyes. It is about goal setting and having a plan. At Poe, teachers and students set goals. For instance, each year we strive for 100% of our students to meet their NWEA growth targets. A longer range goal is that each of our students is accepted into a top selective enrollment academic center (middle school) after completing our K-6 program.

Habit 3: Put First Things First - Habit 3 is where Habits 1 and 2 come together. Once the mindset is right and the corresponding the goals are set, action plans are developed. Habit 3 is about life management as well--your purpose, values, roles, and priorities. Students practice this habit when they complete their assignments before recess. Our Principal exhibited this habit by striving to spend more time on instruction and less on school management functions and becoming a SAMs principal to accomplish this goal.