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

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal <u>Mrs. Karen Lynn Trejo</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name <u>Ward (E. W.) Elementary School</u>
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>8851 Adoree Street</u>
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City <u>Downey</u>   State <u>CA</u>   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) <u>90242-4501</u>

County <u>Los Angeles</u>

Telephone <u>(562) 904-3591</u>   Fax <u>(562) 469-7220</u>

Web site/URL <u>http://www.dusd.net/ward</u>   E-mail <u>ktrejo@dusd.net</u>

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* <u>Dr. John Garcia Jr.</u>   E-mail <u>jgarcia@dusd.net</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name <u>Downey Unified School District</u>   Tel. <u>(562) 469-6510</u>

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 <u>Mr. Donald LaPlante</u>
(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   <u>13</u> Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   <u>4</u> Middle/Junior high schools
                                          <u>3</u> High schools
                                          <u>0</u> K-12 schools

                                          <u>20</u> 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)
   [X] 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	14	18	32
K	43	38	81
1	46	57	103
2	50	52	102
3	53	45	98
4	55	53	108
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	261	263	524

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate):   2.1 % Asian
                                         1.9 % Black or African American
                                         94.3 % Hispanic or Latino
                                         0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                         1.5 % White
                                         0 % Two or more races
                                         100 % Total

 (Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 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 *to* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	38
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	34
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	72
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	481
(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, Hindi, Urdu, and Spanish

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 26 %

                                                       135 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 80 %

            Total number students who qualify: 421

8. Students receiving special education services: <u>19</u> %

    <u>99</u> 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>18</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>8</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>36</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>35</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</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: <u>4</u>

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.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   <u>28:1</u>

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%	95%	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 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.

Ward is committed to developing the whole child by empowering them to become decision-makers and risk-takers who are proficient in all curricular areas as 21st century learners.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

At E.W. Ward Elementary our teachers, administrators, and support staff are committed to providing each of our 524 students with a positive and challenging technologically-rich learning environment. We strive to provide our children with an education that empowers them to become responsible, productive citizens in the 21st century.

Ward Elementary School is one of thirteen elementary schools in Downey Unified School District (DUSD) in Downey, CA, in a suburban neighborhood in Los Angeles County. Our school is tucked into a neighborhood one block away from the 105 freeway and the Downey metro station. Ward Elementary students primarily live in apartment homes or with multiple family members in single-family homes. Ward qualifies for Title 1 funding on a school-wide basis as many of our students identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged. The students at Ward are primarily Hispanic or Latino, making up 94.8% of our school's population. Our English Language Learner (ELL) population consists of 25.8% of our students and 18.89% of students are identified with disabilities school-wide. 80.34% of our students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

Ward has a rich history tied to technology, as Downey was once home to Rockwell International and the Boeing Company, both of whom contributed to aerospace advancement including the space shuttle, Columbia. Throughout the 1990s, Ward Elementary was supported by Rockwell through their "Adopt a School Program" as their employees provided after school tutoring for our students. Today, our school's Robotics Club, "Day of Design in Engineering," science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics STEAM program, Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and our overall emphasis on technology implementation through our 21st Century Learning Communities (21st CLC) iPad initiative is a testament to our desire to sustain a lasting focus on technology in our classrooms. Additionally, we were the winners of the 2011 iLearn Apple Program Award based on our innovation, leadership, and educational excellence.

The staff, parents, and community at Ward are committed to developing the social, emotional, academic, and physical well-being of all students. We support the development of the whole child through our Character Counts program and the recent implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The student Technology Team creates weekly videos that align with our PBIS expectations. These iMovie announcements help to instill and encourage our school-wide "Pawsitive" values while pursuing our goal of technology development across the curriculum. Students earning Pawsitive tickets shop at our online "Wardazon" school store as an incentive for following our PBIS expectations around campus.

Ward qualified for and received the Distinguished School Award in 1993, 2010, and 2020. Achieving this honor led us on a positive trajectory as our community became aware of our school's outstanding academic gains. The award validated the teacher's efforts and overall sense of pride in their work and their students' outcomes.

Since earning the California Distinguished School Award, Downey Unified School District's technology plan and curriculum goals have been based upon the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the use of technology to best support teaching and learning. Ward Elementary School, specifically, utilizes a variety of academic supports and district initiatives to meet student's academic needs. Balanced Literacy is utilized across the district to provide students with an instructional program to support the development of reading and writing skills of every student based on CCSS within the English Language Arts (ELA) framework. Programs such as shared reading, interactive read-aloud, interactive writing, and guided reading support our goal to meet all students' learning targets in ELA. In mathematics, Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) is used to foster a student-centered approach to teaching math that engages and supports students thinking of math concepts in context to apply their thinking to real world situations. Across all subject areas, technology is utilized to support and include all students in their learning. All of our fully-credentialed teachers continue to be supported by our district's professional development in CGI, Balanced Literacy, PLTW, writing, and technology, much of which is teacher-driven and determined upon individual needs.

Our community is supported by an effective two-way partnership utilizing technology to bridge communication through a school run Twitter account, Facebook, and Class DOJO. These applications allow access to upcoming dates, events, and important reminders related to our school. As a school, we have adopted a Growth Mindset where we encourage all students to persevere when challenges arise in their learning of new topics. We have worked to achieve a positive school climate focusing on emotional asset building for our students as they are validated and affirmed through the use of Restorative Circles across the grade levels. These class meetings provide a safe, open forum for students to share and learn how to communicate their thoughts and opinions with one another while creating classroom communities that teach students to handle situations that arise in and out of the classroom.

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 E.W. Ward Elementary, our teachers, administrators, and support staff strive to provide an academic experience that focuses on critical thinking skills in all curricular areas. That will lead students to become decision-makers, risk-takers, and lifelong learners in the 21st Century. Our staff utilizes a variety of instructional strategies to help provide and support First Best Instruction (FBI) in their classrooms throughout each day. FBI correlates to our district's current learning and teaching initiatives and supports students' individual needs as part of an overarching philosophy that encompasses our school site's core curriculum with the CCSS.

Our overall philosophy builds student content knowledge based on cognitive abilities and supports. In ELA we use Balanced Literacy to meet the specific needs of students through the use of guided reading, shared reading, interactive read alouds, and interactive writing. We incorporate CGI in math to allow students to build their math concepts and connections based on their current understanding of numbers, both in number sense and how numerals work together to form future understanding. We promote our students social-emotional growth by building a strong Character Counts model supported by our PBIS program on campus.

The instructional approach we use is collaborative and based on CCSS. Collaboration is utilized in a variety of ways including weekly grade level professional learning communities (PLC) whose main goal is to collaborate to improve learning through action-based research collected each school year as well as whole school-site staff meetings to map out current successes and needs. We use formative and summative assessment data to guide our instruction across our grade levels, allowing teachers to form both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings based on instructional goals and the needs of the students we serve. These overarching instructional approaches and philosophies lead to our end goal as part of our district-wide vision that, "All students graduate with a 21st Century education that ensures they are college and career ready, globally competitive, and citizens of strong character."

1b. Reading/English language arts

As part of our E.W. Ward Elementary School's Mission statement, we, as educators, are committed to developing students to become self-motivated learners, providing all students with a positive and challenging learning environment, and empowering them to become responsible and productive citizens.

In ELA, our district utilizes Balanced Literacy to meet the needs of students through the use of guided reading, independent reading, shared reading, interactive read alouds, independent writing, guided writing, and interactive writing. Teachers work as grade level teams with the support of our on campus categorical resource specialist teacher to assess students' reading levels and analyze individual reading strengths and needs with the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) reading leveling assessment. These BAS results assist in creating instructional groupings that are tailored to the individual learning needs of the students in each grade. When working with guided reading groups, teachers work together to create smaller homogeneous groups in collaboration with two on-site interventionist educators, one school-site resource specialist program teacher, and the categorical resource specialist teacher allowing all teachers the ability to strategically target and support the needs of their small groups.

In addition to small groups, students are taught units of study throughout our ELA curriculum which has been developed and modified with ELA teams made up of grade-level representatives across the district and edited each year based on student success and support measures. These units overlap and revisit standards taught, and are planned so that all teachers in the same grade level are teaching the same unit, same skill, and same concept at the same time. Skill delivery is modified to reach the needs of classroom students based on ongoing formative assessments to meet the cognitive and learning abilities of students in each class. Flexibility is encouraged by each teacher to incorporate project-based learning that provides differentiation

for students through learning stations, reteaching, and small group assistance where students receive additional support. Tiered instruction is incorporated with the use of on campus interventionists who provided a second layer of instruction for those students who need small group learning opportunities or an extra push to meet grade-level expectations in an area of study. Furthermore, students who continue to struggle have the opportunity of before and after-school intervention with grade-level teachers to provide extra support with the curriculum and acquisition of essential skills and knowledge.

Assessments allow for grade levels to support and reflect on classroom teaching in their PLCs to help identify student needs as well as groups of students who require additional remediation. These assessments include i-Ready, BAS assessment results, unit formative assessments, and grade level growth monitoring activities created by teachers including google forms, worksheets, and project-based learning tools.

E.W. Ward Elementary is additionally supported by the expertise of district Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) in a variety of subject areas. In ELA, TOSAs are available for teacher support and development of subject content both in the coordination and implementation of district initiatives. TOSAs bring fresh strategies and resources collected from research to help assist with student achievement as needed. They coordinate professional development based on current teacher needs and requests, and they support stronger teaching practices across grade levels with the help of effective pedagogical knowledge.

1c. Mathematics

In mathematics, E.W. Ward Elementary utilizes CGI. This curriculum allows for a student-centered approach where classroom teachers pose a variety of questions, scenarios, and opportunities to work with numbers allowing students to find meaningful strategies that work for them. These questions focus on the thought processes behind solving problems and the investigation to expand students' math acquisition and mastery to promote learning with conceptual understanding.

Rather than a one size fits all program, CGI allows educators to listen to students, ask guided questions, and engage with student thinking to push understanding and track their cognitive thinking as part of a problem-solving trajectory which allows for strategic planning of their academic needs. Teachers start with what students already know about number sense and mathematical reasoning and build on it to move them toward deeper levels of understanding and reasoning. Listening to students, teachers can guide whole group share outs to help support those students who need a push by providing reasoning behind solving with justification and communication from their peers along with the demonstration of strategies to solve problems.

Inquiry allows teachers to support students learning from one another with partnerships, whole group share outs, and use of mathematical tools based on students' current mathematical development. Teachers further facilitate student learning by asking probing questions and sequencing mathematical skills based on the cognitive development of how students are using strategies to problem solve. The information collected from formative assessments helps them determine what each child understands and then decide how to help the child extend their understanding and mathematical thinking. Students use what they already know to develop math constructs through their exploration to find more efficient ways to think and solve problems.

Assessments drive CGI's pace and daily mathematical teachings intending to expand what students already know. Daily formative assessments include whiteboard work, think-pair-share, thumbs up/thumbs down, technology share and response applications, as well as carousel sharing of ideas. Technology supports these ongoing assessments to allow for quick response and access to student thinking, peer support, and whole class participation utilizing apps such as Flipgrid and Draw and Tell. Additionally, visual and verbal share outs explain and walkthrough the thinking processes, mental math routines, and operations to build number sense. The overall goal of CGI is to uncover an individual student's mathematical understanding while pushing toward CCSS success at each grade level. These assessments in collaboration with summative assessments provide teacher clarification to group those who have mastered skills, identify those who need additional supports including reteaching and intervention, and support those who have an understanding but need to overlap their thinking to push toward the next level on the problem-solving trajectory for mastery of a math concept. These ongoing practices and assessments showcase that teachers who use these observations to guide their math instruction off of students' current mathematical thinking and success have higher

achieving students overall. CGI provides support for those who need more effective strategies and those who need a challenge with a higher level of thinking as they may go beyond what is expected of them without a ceiling of what students should or should not be able to do.

1d. Science

E.W. Ward Elementary utilizes two programs to support the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to guide student inquiry within the sciences. These curriculums include PLTW and Mystery Science. PLTW is an engineering based science curriculum that allows teachers to plan opportunities for students to engineer ideas based on specific learning goals within NGSS targets. Mystery Science provides students a central mystery, discussion questions, supplemental reading, and a hands-on activity. Each lesson is organized around a key question and ends with a hands-on activity designed to help students find the answer to the key question.

DUSD has provided its elementary and secondary schools with a unique opportunity to support teachers through the use of an approach to learning that uses science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM) as access points for student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. During STEAM time, students work with a teacher specialist who is dedicated to STEAM concepts during a 90-minute time frame every other week. In class, students are walked through hands-on exploration, engaged in open-ended questions to support critical thinking, and are met with multiple modalities of instruction. Classroom teachers can collaborate with their PLCs to analyze, develop, and guide instructional practices with the confidence that their students are learning valuable curriculum from experienced DUSD teachers. Additionally, TK-5th grade is offered STEAM: Day of Design opportunities. These challenges provide students the opportunity to explore several ideas in the areas of engineering, technology, and the Applications of Science as stated in the NGSS, including the principles of the scientific design process: engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate; all within the constraints of a set list of rules and objectives.

Students in 3rd and 4th grades are also afforded the opportunity of an additional PLTW curriculum where students work collaboratively to build, control, and maneuver robots. A culminating Robotics Showcase is hosted on campus and students who meet the necessary criteria move to DUSD's "Robolympics" to compete against the 12 other elementary schools within our district.

At E.W. Ward Elementary, teachers utilize project-based learning as well as unit assessments to track student understanding in science. Mystery Science includes an end of lesson, as well as an end of unit assessment that provide opportunities for students to showcase their learning in a variety of ways including that of multiple-choice, short answer, and hands-on opportunities. These multiple testing modalities allow all learning styles to demonstrate understanding and prepare students for future assessments such as the CAASPP.

Additionally, project-based learning opportunities allow for the teaching and assessment of skills and ideas combined with 21st CLC skills. For example, in first grade, students learn about polar animals and how their seasonal adaptations help them survive throughout the year. Students take this learning and create a Book Creator assignment that includes grade level vocabulary, demonstrates seasonal changes in fur, diet, habitat, and other necessary adaptations to help them survive. Cross-curricular opportunities also present themselves with the incorporation of ELA skills and strategies with the need for understanding informational writing and the use of text features to create a cohesive project to share with their peers. These projects allow teachers to assess student learning using a rubric to guide where the learning is going based on how students' projects are showcasing their understanding within the unit of study.

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

E.W. Ward Elementary integrates a variety of cross-curricular opportunities for students to engage in academic activities to use and refine ELA skills in conjunction with relevant social studies practices and content. This partnership aligns key ideas, conceptual understandings, and content including reading informational text and writing. These key ELA skills encourage higher-level thinking, involve collaborative

learning, and use informational resources. Deeper connections to text features, timelines, and reading for understanding are essential when combining ELA with social studies and provides a real-world connection to project-based learning opportunities within the classroom setting. This cross-curricular focus is further supported with subscriptions of Scholastic News and Storyworks Jr. periodicals that showcase yearly celebrations including that of Veteran's Day, Labor Day, and other celebrations as units of study that connect reading, writing, and social studies.

To further engage students in cross-curricular investigations, third grade students engage in a social studies, science, and ELA unit on Native Americans and their life. The Los Angeles Autry Museum is invited to provide a hands-on program nurturing critical thinking, focused on the understanding of the first Angelenos, the Tongva. Students use problem-solving to learn about the past by looking at, asking questions about, and investigating a variety of objects. Students are then able to interview a Downey Historian about the History of Downey to showcase the research of their city within an ELA and social studies unit of study.

Lastly, E.W. Ward Elementary hosts an annual geography day that focuses on where we are in the world in comparison to other locations. Students and teachers are asked to wear shirts that represent locations from any location in the world. This sparks conversation and grade-level appropriate investigations about where to find these destinations on maps and globes, utilizing 21st CLC skills.

The integration of project-based learning and cross-curricular teaching within our social studies curriculum allows teachers to align learning goals to provide students the ability to showcase what they know. These opportunities allow teachers to scaffold student learning through inquiry, guided activities, and peer collaboration that allows for the presentation of facts and choice of focus as they go.

When using a project-based learning model, students are provided the opportunity to address a real issue and solve it using inquiry over a given timeframe. Teachers can utilize assessments in the form of group check-ins, student checklists, and project rubrics throughout the project to make informed decisions that allow for the adjustment of instruction to help guide students to meet the learning goals within the timeframe allotted. For students, assessments within project-based learning provides opportunities to help identify what areas of additional support or scaffolding is needed.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

E.W. Ward Elementary serves transitional kindergarten, TK, aged students who turn the age of 5 between September 1st and December 1st. In this program students learn school academic readiness such as beginning literacy, math and writing skills. Downey Unified has developed a TK curriculum that merges California Preschool Foundational Skills and California Common Core Kindergarten Standards. Students are exposed to phonics through letters and their sounds and word families. Specific reading instruction includes concepts of print, story elements and small group guided reading. Student's writing focus includes names, sight words and beginning and ending sounds. In the area of math students focus on colors, shapes, identifying and writing numbers 0-10, seeing and creating patterns, counting collections and simple addition word problems. Students are assessed triannually using the ESGI online assessment. This is a one on one assessment to measure student academic learning. The program gives customized reports of strengths and weaknesses which provides information to parents and teachers. TK classrooms teachers use the data from assessments to formulate small group instruction given by the classroom teacher as well as the interventionists.

In addition to academics the TK program supports the whole child. Classroom teachers and staff focus on developing student's social emotional skills such as attending to a task or lesson, classroom routines, interacting appropriately with peers and being a contributing member of a learning community. Students practice Character Counts and PBIS starting from their first day of school. Classroom teachers facilitate developmental play such as role play, independent play and collaboration to foster creativity. Creativity is also encouraged through art, music and movement. Students use songs, movement and rhythm as part of daily learning.

E.W. Ward also serves TK aged students receiving special education services. Students are placed in the program through the IEP process. The SDC TK program is driven by the IEP and student's goals and objectives. Classroom teachers follow and adapt the same curriculum as the general education TK program with an emphasis on language and social emotional development. TK special education classrooms also have paraprofessionals to assist in delivering instruction and managing student's needs. Students are mainstreamed into general education TK when deemed appropriate and part of their IEP.

The TK program helps students master school readiness skills and creates role models and leaders that are prepared for a classroom setting. Students who have been through the TK program have been shown to be more independent, are able to make their own decisions, demonstrate developed language skills, good self-control, confidence, and start at a higher academic level.

2. **Other Curriculum Areas**:

E.W. Ward Elementary strives to provide opportunities to a variety of curriculum areas including that of the arts, physical education, technology, and character development. As stated in the E.W. Ward Elementary's mission statement, "The staff, parents, and community are committed to developing the social, emotional, academic and physical well-being of all students." DUSD is a Character Counts Exemplary School District where DUSD schools focus on the six core values that define what is considered a good character. These are called, The Six Pillars of Character. They include Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. Each year, DUSD schools focus on reflecting these core values, teaching each pillar and celebrating awareness twice a year. These values are embedded into our school culture. In addition to Character Counts, E.W. Ward Elementary has begun its implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. To envelope the whole child, we focus on teaching desired results and behaviors so that there is clarity within expectations while on campus and in the classroom environment. Focusing on what they can improve and what they are doing right helps students identify what they can do well to connect and make good choices in other areas of their school day. Restorative circles are also being used to maintain and mend relationships teaching students how to handle situations that occur in and out of the classroom.

On campus, E.W. Ward Elementary teacher's plan weekly physical activities to support California's requirement of physical education, teaching health-related benefits of regular physical activity and support the skills needed to live a healthy lifestyle. Playworks is a national non-profit organization contracted by DUSD who provides and promotes principles of play. These principles focus on physical health by providing inclusive, safe play to low income students in urban schools and develop conflict resolution and a focus on choice when choosing physical activity.

The use of technology in our classrooms has given a voice to all students. From students who struggle with writing on paper to those who are developing English language skills, technology provides access to the curriculum in a variety of ways. Technology is used daily at E.W. Ward Elementary. Formative assessments, project-based learning, research options, and sharing of skills with their peers; students are working to use and incorporate technology as a voice for every student in the class. These skills are essential in supporting and building our diverse learners at E.W. Ward Elementary to be prepared as life-long learners in the 21st Century.

STEAM/PLC planning allows for a clear, targeted STEAM curriculum including that of Project Lead the Way and Meet the Masters' art curriculum. The Arts are also integrated through the exploration of music, movement, photography, fine arts, and more.

The Downey Symphony is housed at the City of Downey's Civic Center Theatre. With the understanding of the importance of music in children's lives, four to five members of the Downey Symphony visit each elementary school site and review and demonstrate music concepts to the students from grades TK-5th. On campus, classes hear different genres of music and learn about different tempos within songs from long ago and today. 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders have the bonus of attending the Downey Civic Theatre to see the full Downey Symphony in musical action. This concert is a memorable experience for students.

Downey Foundation for Educational Opportunities (DFEO) affords students several after-school opportunities by offering participation in the arts, physical education, and technology. From soccer and basketball classes, art design, and dance with a final performance on a theatre stage at the Downey Civic Theatre, DFEO has student success in mind.

DUSD's Nutrition program provides every student, regardless of income or living situation, free breakfast to start the day off healthy and ready to learn. Nutrition services provide options that fit a healthy daily lifestyle and consist of a complete nutritional meal. All meals, foods, and beverages sold or served on DUSD campuses are based on the current state and federal requirements based on USDA Dietary Guidelines and recommendations. In addition to meeting these requirements, DUSD focuses on a "harvest of the month" allowing students the ability to try new and healthy fruits and vegetables they wouldn't ordinarily have the opportunity to, such as jicama and frozen peaches.

3. **Academic Supports**:

3a. Students performing below grade level

The first level of intervention at E.W. Ward is in the student's home classroom. The classroom teacher uses the rapport they have with the student to discover factors that could be impeding the student from being successful. A student who does not feel safe or isn't having his physical or emotional needs met is not in the best position to learn. If the student or their family is struggling, they are referred to the district's True Lasting Connections (TLC) center which can get them in touch with local community resources. TLC is composed of caseworkers that support DUSD families to ensure that each student receives the physical, emotional, and intellectual support he or she needs.

Students who continue to struggle with academics are given small-group instruction through our intervention program. Interventionists work with the classroom teacher to give students small group instruction to meet their specific needs. Interventionists work both in the classroom and with small pull out groups. Student's needs are identified through assessment, and interventionists specifically target those skills. Students are carefully monitored for progress.

The next step for students who have yet to make satisfactory progress is to refer them to the student study team (SST). The student study team is a multidisciplinary approach to discuss the student's challenges and devise a plan moving forward. The Student Study Team includes parents, administrators, school psychologists, classroom teachers, resource specialists, speech pathologists, and any other support staff as needed. At these meetings, a plan will be put into place and if deemed necessary a student may be referred for psychoeducational testing to rule out a learning disability. Students who are identified with a learning disability begin the individualized educational plan (IEP) process and will receive the appropriate special education services.

3b. Students performing above grade level

DUSD's curriculum goals are based upon the implementation of the CCSS, for grades TK-12. CCSS-based diagnostic and instructional tools, such as i-Ready and Illuminate, collect summative assessment data to support and create individualized data-driven instructional plans for each student. Technology applications such as Readworks, Flipgrid, Google forms, Google Slides, and Google Docs provide classroom teachers formative assessments to evaluate student ongoing performance and plan for future academic needs.

The use of these tools allow classroom teachers to support students learning in math through CGI as part of a problem-solving trajectory that allows for strategic planning of their academic needs. In ELA, balanced literacy supports student learning and provides opportunities in conjunction with 21st CLC goals. These skill sets integrate the use of project-based learning opportunities that can be supported with extra challenges to allow those at grade level and above to continue to push forward. In guided reading, those who are working at grade level competencies can delve deeper into reading questioning, stronger comprehension, creating connections, and writing about reading to guide and prepare them for future expectations. Teachers at E. W. Ward Elementary works toward high expectations with continued rigor to encourage all students to continue learning.

Through differentiated instruction, teachers are continually looking for students who acquire concepts and knowledge more quickly. They use flexibility in the classroom to either regroup these students or transition them into more independent studies to provide them with choices for more challenging and engaging activities or projects. This freedom encourages them to further explore and gain a deeper understanding of what the class is studying.

3c. Special education

E.W. Ward Elementary school strives to provide an exemplary education to all students, some of which have identified learning disabilities. Our vision of special education is that it is a service and not a place. We use our resources to make sure that every student is learning in the least restrictive environment, to access the curriculum, and meet their specific needs as designed in their IEP.

The special education program currently provided at E.W. Ward Elementary includes the resource specialist program, special day classes, and designated instruction and services including speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, counseling, and adapted physical education. Building on our culture of inclusion, special education students are mainstreamed into general education classrooms as deemed appropriate by their IEP. Special education teachers and general education teachers collaborate to hone their skills to make the curriculum accessible to students. Students may be given a review of a lesson in a small group setting, testing may be provided in a quieter environment, and classwork is modified to meet the needs of students and to work together to meet their individual goals.

Special education teachers use a variety of ways to present curriculum and make accommodations to ensure their students are successful. Additional programs used by special education teachers include Links to Language, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), and Linda Mood Bell. Students with special needs utilize various types of technology to successfully access their curriculum. Students use multiple forms of technology that help them express their thinking using their strengths. For example, students with deficits in writing may utilize programs that allow them to record their voice or use a voice to text feature. Students learn the valuable life skills of how to integrate technology to help compensate for challenges to build a stronger future.

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

English language learners have specific needs that require action. English language learners need systematic instruction in Foundational Literacy (phonological awareness and phonics) as well as many opportunities to use language in a meaningful way while also learning how the English language works. To access grade level content, they may require scaffolding which includes visual supports, academic vocabulary instruction, sentence frames, cooperative grouping, and extended language practice.

At E.W. Ward Elementary, students work in collaborative language rich classroom environments. Students are given opportunities to share their thinking, encouraged to ask and answer questions of each other, and share their ideas and opinions with their teachers and peers. Students have access to technology like Google Translate and Immersive Reader to support their academic learning in the classroom. This aids in the transfer between their primary language and the target language of English. In addition, instructional technology is used to support CCSS by allowing for collaboration among peers, showcasing their understanding, and addressing individual student needs.

Daily language support tools utilized include Immersive Reader, Voice Record Pro, EPIC, and Rosetta Stone. These programs help English language learners by providing language rich language models and practice as well as tools to help them express their thinking. Additionally, English language learners with an IEP have a specific English Language Development standards-based language goal that is monitored throughout the year.

Input and advice from parents of English Learners are truly valued at E.W. Ward Elementary. Parents are invited to meetings throughout the year at the school and at the district office to discuss EL programs, receive parent education so they can help their children at home with academics, and to advise the school on

additional programs or instruction they feel their children would benefit from as part of our English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) and District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC).

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

Students who attend E.W. Ward Elementary, come from a variety of family backgrounds and living situations. If the student or family is struggling, they are referred to the district's TLC, center which can get them in touch with local community resources. TLC is composed of caseworkers that assist DUSD families to ensure that each student receives the physical, emotional, and intellectual support he or she needs. TLC additionally provides resources for families to receive counseling, homeless support, bill assistance, low cost health services, parent education, food and clothing support, supplies for school, and referral service based on an individual family's needs.

Communication is essential in caring for and making students and their families feel supported and involved. A number of staff and support staff speak a secondary language to help communicate and aid families when communication needs are necessary. Technology applications such as Class DOJO allow teachers and families to communicate with over 50 language translations so that every family can receive updates and announcements in a language they understand.

DUSD's Nutrition program provides every student a free breakfast to start the day off healthy and ready to learn. All meals served on DUSD campuses are based on the current state and federal requirements. Over 80% of E.W. Ward Elementary students receive a free lunch based on socioeconomic need.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. **Engaging Students:**

Student engagement and safety are one of E.W. Ward Elementary's primary objectives. Students who feel safe and cared for, learn at higher rates and can attain higher levels of understanding based on their personal feelings of safety and support. Our first tier of support includes access to technology that is available to all students to support their academic learning. Instructional technology is used to support CCSS allowing for collaboration amongst peers, showcasing their understanding, and addressing individual student needs. In the classroom, students use technology as a tool to help acquire, evaluate, present, and distribute information. Students across the grade levels are involved in project-based learning within student-centered environments that allow them to voice their learning and make connections using apps such as Explain Everything, Chatterpix, Flipgrid, KidBlog, Adobe Spark, and Popplet. Applications such as Book Creator, Pic Collage, Green Screen, and Google Slides allow students to collaborate and present their understandings with one another.

The staff, parents, and community at E.W. Ward Elementary are committed to developing the social, emotional, academic, and physical well-being of all students. We support the development of the whole child through our Character Counts program and implementation of PBIS.

To ensure proper use and encourage digital citizenship, E.W. Ward Elementary integrates a variety of opportunities to learn about safe digital usage including an Elementary digital citizenship video showcasing students throughout the district and dedicating a week to Cyber Safety and week to Cyber Bullying for all grades on campus that aligns our school-wide goals as part of our PBIS framework. The student body Character Counts Council and Technology Team create weekly videos that align with our PBIS expectations. These iMovie announcements help to instill and encourage our school-wide "Pawsitive" values while pursuing our goal of technology development across the curriculum. Students earning Pawsitive tickets shop at our online "Wardazon" school store as an incentive for following our PBIS expectations around campus.

Additionally, E.W. Ward Elementary uses Restorative Circles across the grade levels. These class meetings provide a safe, open forum for students to share using a relationship-building approach to teach students how to handle situations that occur in and out of the classroom. Students learn how to communicate their thoughts and opinions with one another while creating classroom communities that support one another. In addition to restorative circles, E.W. Ward Elementary supports mental health for all students with the presence of on-site mental health personnel who provide both individual and group therapy sessions to support student needs. The main goal and overarching mission are to foster and support students' mental and emotional well being.

2. **Engaging Families and Community**:

Our community is supported with an effective two-way partnership utilizing technology to bridge communication through a school run Twitter account, Facebook, and individual class and school-wide Class DOJO accounts. Regular communication through these applications allow access to upcoming dates, events, and important reminders related to our school. Additionally, Class DOJO provides parents the opportunity to message teachers with over 50 languages translated for easier contact and open communication regardless of the language needs within our school population. Our school principal provides regular telecommunication phone calls and Class DOJO messages providing updates, reminding parents about upcoming events, and relaying messages of care and pride when we share successes about what our school is doing.

Personal connections to families begin at the start of the day where teachers and staff greet students and their families as they enter the campus each day. Oftentimes, inviting music is played and students engage in friendly conversation with teachers. Parents have the opportunity for face to face questions with school site staff allowing for open communication creating a sense of belonging for all.

In addition to morning greetings, E.W. Ward Elementary provides a great balance of evening activities and school day events which include a Literacy Night with In-N-Out, evening Trunk or Treat, Book Fairs, after-school themed dances, special person breakfasts, volunteer assemblies, and themed candy gram sales to express care to our families, students, and staff.

Our Title 1 coordinator provides ongoing parent learning opportunities with school day and evening classes that cover a wide variety of courses from how to help your child in CGI math to how to work with a child who is being defiant. Families also have the opportunity to be part of a school site council (SSC) who works with the principal to plan the needs of the school. This includes monitoring the use of school district funds and reviewing school site surveys to plan for improvement of school climate.

Parent communication further is supported by the use of an At Home folder that the school site purchases each year to support parent-teacher correspondence and allows for important documents to be sent home and returned as needed. Lastly, student study teams work with classroom teachers to support students who require additional academic, social-emotional, and behavioral accommodations while communicating these needs to parents and families.

Nutrition plays a large role in student learning and family support. DUSD's Nutrition program provides every student, regardless of income or living situation, free breakfast to start the day off healthy and ready to learn. Meals served on DUSD campuses are based on USDA Dietary Guidelines and recommendations. Additionally, DUSD participates in Seamless Summer meals which provide students ages 1-18 years of age free breakfast and lunch meals throughout the summer months. A variety of school sites host this free meal distribution four to five times per week.

3. **Creating Professional Culture:**

Teachers at E.W. Ward Elementary feel valued and supported with leadership that focuses on trust and support. Open communication is essential and valued by the administration. Transparency of information is provided to all teachers and staff when information is received.

On campus, collaboration is utilized in a variety of ways including weekly grade level PLCs as well as school-wide PLC's whose main goals are to improve student learning through collaboration and open sharing of ideas. At grade level PLCs, teachers work together to share best practices to amplify their teaching practices creating a learning environment where all students can reach their highest academic potential.

E.W. Ward Elementary is additionally supported by the expertise of district Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) in a variety of subject areas. These educators support staff in the areas of English Language Learners, STEAM, CGI Math, ELA Balanced Literacy, and Technology. Each school site is assigned TOSAs to support and guide FBI utilizing current strategies and shared ideas to provide the highest quality of teaching. TOSAs provide this support in numerous ways. To begin, TOSAs provide annual professional developments based on feedback teachers provide in surveys throughout the year. They support teachers individually in classrooms by coming in to observe or teach lessons to provide feedback and model teaching strategies. Next, TOSAs provide site grade level support during STEAM release times to answer questions, review assessment data, and assist in driving instruction.This is also a great opportunity for TOSAs to share new research and emerging tools for providing instructional practices for success. Additionally, teachers are given opportunities to attend professional development to encourage and provide assistance to teachers who are life-long learners. This allows each grade level the ability to meet the needs of their students with current instructional practices that best support the success of all students learning.

4. **School Leadership:**

A strong, caring, consistent administration values teachers and staff to provide them the support and freedom to try new learning practices to grow. Our school principal and vice-principal lead with a vision of trust and support. An open door policy allows for honest communication and creates a feeling of family on campus. The principal values teachers' decisions and opinions considering each idea knowing that each

teacher, support staff, office member, and school site staff has the student's best interests and needs in mind. We, as a whole staff, work as a team, led by school site administration who advocates that the school's success and student achievement is our success, as a whole.

As a teacher on campus, the leadership at this school has provided and encouraged many opportunities to improve our professions including flexible observation times, support, and awareness of professional development opportunities, as well as encouragement to share successes found in our classrooms with our peers. Teachers and staff treat each other like family and hold ourselves to the pillars of character! Participation in all activities both school and district-wide is encouraged and engaged with by attendance from both the principal and vice principal.

The principal and vice-principal regularly attend PLC and grade-level meetings, visit with parents before and after school, drop in to classrooms, connect with students during the school day to provide emotional support, and care about every child on campus. You can find our principal laying on the carpet having a conversation in play with a student or walking down the hallway with a fourth-grader just to support their emotional well being, without judgment, just love. Students emotional well-being is put at the forefront when situations call the attention of needed support from administration. Student advocacy and support are top priorities when working alongside classroom teachers. Our campus provides a nurturing student environment. Both teacher and student success are celebrated, community resources are made available to families, students are encouraged to share their talents and participate in community events and contests, and teachers are supported for all their efforts.

School site administration attends multiple district meetings, collaborating with other school administrators to support and reinforce positive school culture. Professional development is implemented at each district bi-monthly principals meeting. Professional development book clubs assist principals and vice-principals throughout the district to come together for a common goal. For example, the book "Good Leaders, Ask Great Questions," by John Maxwell allows for self-reflection questions to build self leadership and pose questions to assist in building staff strengths as leaders in their classrooms. Shared ideas and supports are implemented in the coordination and implementation of district initiatives to build school site climate. Additionally, administration takes pride in the social-emotional well being of their site staff ensuring necessary time off, professional development, and support when unforeseen circumstances arise.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At E.W. Ward Elementary, teachers and students engage with technology throughout the school day across all curricular areas. This practice, in conjunction with 21st CLC has enabled us to embed our curriculum with technology-rich assessment and instruction. Our goal, in alignment with our school's mission is to implement 21st CLC with all E.W. Ward Elementary students so that they become decision-makers and risk-takers who are literate and proficient in technology.

With access to individual classroom iPads, resource laptops, and computers available in our campus computer lab, students can utilize technology in a variety of ways throughout our instructional day. In conjunction with our 21st CLC, these resources have proven to be our most instrumental academic support to provide and encourage student success.

These resources have proven to be a critical tool in developing language skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Our teachers emphasize student development of effective communication skills and mathematics competency toward becoming knowledgeable and productive citizens of an ever-changing global society through classroom technology. Student's success now and in their future relies on their understanding of technology.

The use of technology in our classrooms has given a voice to all students. The learners who are developing their English skills now each have a platform to share their thoughts in writing on Kidblog, share their spoken words on a Flipgrid, and explain their math strategies on Explain Everything. With these applications and a plethora of others at their fingertips, our diverse learners have a motivational, student-driven, and comfortable tool to use to express their thinking and communicate with their peers and teachers. Beginning English learners have translation websites instantly available to make their learning content comprehensible. Parents and teachers communicate efficiently through the use of the Class DOJO application, which is capable of translating for our non-English speaking parents. Additionally, students at E.W. Ward Elementary who have visual processing disorders have access to text through Immersive Reader. Again, students gain independence and ownership of their learning through technology, allowing them to access challenging text, research, and take assessments independently, fostering ownership of learning. Our diverse learners at E.W. Ward Elementary are prepared to be life-long learners in the 21st century.