

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Dianne Williams

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

Official School Name Cordova Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 35 North Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Cordova State AL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 35550-1238

County Walker County

Telephone (205) 483-7666

Fax (205) 483-1026

Web site/URL

https://www.walkercountyschools.com/cdvel

E-mail williamsd@wcslive.com

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Dennis Willingham E-mail willinghamd@wcslive.com

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Walker County Tel. (205) 387-0555

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. Brad Ingle

(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, leave blank.*

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 2023 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- ☐ Urban (city or town)
☐ Suburban
☒ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

| Grade | # of Students |
|----------------|---------------|
| PreK | 0 |
| K | 86 |
| 1 | 68 |
| 2 | 56 |
| 3 | 72 |
| 4 | 62 |
| 5 | 0 |
| 6 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 |
| 8 | 0 |
| 9 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 |
| 12 or higher | 0 |
| Total Students | 344 |

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: ≤1%

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

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

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate | Answer |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year | 0 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 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, 2021 | 342 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | <.01 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | <1 |

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

Spanish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 65 %

Total number students who qualify: 224

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 20 %
Total number of students served 69

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>9</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>6</u> Developmental Delay | <u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>37</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. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 1 %
Total number of students served: 2

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 11

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

| | Number of Staff |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Administrators | 1 |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 21 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 6 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 5 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1 |

12. 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 16:1

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

| Required Information | 2021-2022 | 2020-2021 | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 94% | 97% | 92% | 92% | 96% |
| High school graduation rate | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

14. **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 2022.

| 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% |

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

Yes ☐ No ☒

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

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission is quality education to ensure success. Our vision is a dynamic educational system where students become lifelong learners, leaders, and trailblazers. Our values are achievement for all students, accountability for all stakeholders, and access to safe schools.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.walkercountyschools.com/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=8448&dataid=6882&FileName=englishhandbook.pdf>

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

N/A

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Cordova Elementary School (CES) is a Title I school that sits on the top of a hill overlooking Cordova, Alabama. CES is one of eight elementary schools in the Walker County School System, and we serve students in kindergarten through fourth grade. We have a long tradition of excellence. We have worked hard to ensure student success and instill a sense of school pride. Our parent and family involvement plays a crucial role in making our school so successful. We serve a diverse population which enriches our community. Our school was built in 1953 and has seen many changes. Most of the local industry has closed or moved over the years. On April 27, 2011, Cordova was hit by a series of tornadoes that wreaked havoc in our area. The majority of our downtown buildings and several homes were destroyed. Sadly, four lives were lost that day. We rallied as a town and supported each other through this tragedy, and people from all over the state were there with a helping hand to get us back on our feet. In spite of the changes in our small town, the school stayed strong, and remains a beacon of hope on top of the hill. Due to economic changes, our free and reduced lunch numbers have varied between 50-60% of our student population.

Despite these changes, Cordova Elementary has succeeded due to a combined effort from students, parents, and our faculty. The teachers and students have risen to the challenge with a sense of determination and commitment, evidenced by the last two Alabama State Department of Education report cards where our school received an A. They continue their role as lifelong learners by taking on new initiatives. All of our current teachers are Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) trained or in the process of being trained. Our district has adopted the Marzano High Reliability School initiative. The Level 1 goal is to create a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture. Last year, we were recognized as the first elementary school in the State of Alabama to achieve Level 1 status. We were recognized by the Alabama State Board of Education and also at the Marzano Summit in San Antonio, Texas. Currently, we are working on Level 2 which focuses on effective teaching in every classroom. This past year we were recognized as a High Flyer School by the Alabama Education Lab. High Flyer Schools have high academic achievement despite having a high poverty rate and low per student spending. Students at these schools outperform the State averages in reading and math proficiency on the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) standardized tests. This honor highlighted our hard work and achievement.

We continually strive to meet the needs of our students by using our data to improve our instruction. Continual progress monitoring reveals gaps in learning. We use this information to determine if our interventions are effective and make changes if they are not. We currently use STAR, STAR CBMs, Freckle, Walker County Schools Common Assessments, Open Court Assessments, My Math, and other formative assessments to gauge where our students are. We discuss this data in our Problem Solving Team meetings to ensure we are meeting the individual needs of our students.

Students also have the opportunity to attend our After School Program three days a week. This program offers students a rotation of math and reading instruction and Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) activities. Students are grouped based on their needs and receive extra support through this program. We also have Robotics and Archery teams that continue to grow and succeed in their competitions. Our students participate in a variety of activities such as gardening, peer helpers, making morning announcements, and leading our school creed. We encourage community involvement and service opportunities through community service projects throughout the year. We love to see our former students come back and serve as guest readers during our Read Across America Week. We also have guests from different organizations and businesses who volunteer as guest readers. One of our keys to success is allowing our students to have access to books both paper and virtual options. We purchased MyOn which is a digital library that complements our school library. This ensures students always have access to quality books on their interest and reading levels. This is a great resource as we continue to encourage our students to be strong readers.

Our school continues to see success due to the hard work from our students, parents, teachers, and community members. This is a team effort and we are proud of the continued progress. We are thankful for the opportunity and honor to be selected as a possible National Blue Ribbon School.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Cordova Elementary School's (CES) curriculum is guided by the Alabama Course of Study and is based on the conceptual framework for English Language Arts (ELA). This framework creates a foundation for learning that is closely aligned to the Science of Reading. We are in the process of using proficiency scales to ensure our students achieve full understanding and application of the standards. Our teachers have weekly grade level meetings to collaborate on the curriculum and adjust instruction to meet the needs of their students. ELA teachers and the instructional coach work on lessons that provide opportunities for differentiated instruction. We have several different programs that support implementation of the science of reading in the classroom. Some of our programs include: Open Court, Heggerty, Reading Horizon, Tools4Reading, and Nifty Fifty. Teachers work to build language development and word recognition by teaching background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, and literacy knowledge. Teachers also focus on the importance of phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition. Over the last several years our teachers have been involved in professional development to strengthen and expand their knowledge of reading and writing instruction. Our goal is to create skillful readers who are on a path to success.

Our curriculum is taught through differentiated instruction which meets the needs of our students. This is where the magic happens. Our school has a plethora of resources and programs, but it comes down to the hard work of teachers who prepare engaging and thoughtful lessons that allow for meaningful learning. CES provides support for students through quality instruction, enrichment, and intervention based on their specific needs. CES knows the value of reading and our students have access to thousands of books of various genres, topics, and levels. Students visit the library daily and have access to thousands of more books through our online library called MyOn. Teachers use various strategies during Tier I and Tier II instruction, such as, multisensory strategies, cooperative learning, interactive conversations, literature circles, and many more.

Teachers use technology to reinforce learning and target specific areas of weakness. Our teachers have access to a variety of resources to monitor student learning, such as STAR, Freckle, Moby Max, Flocabulary, and Generation Genius. Through continued monitoring and data analysis teachers, interventionists, and the instructional coach work together to determine student placement in tiered instruction groups. All students receive daily small group instruction by highly effective teachers to reinforce skills taught in whole group instruction. Tier II students receive small group instruction from their classroom teacher which helps understanding of the lessons. Students in Tier III receive an additional small group time provided by the interventionist for that grade level. Students are grouped specifically by their deficiency area and receive targeted instruction to help close the learning gap. CES also provides after-school instruction to students who need additional support in the areas of reading and math. During this time we also provide science based instruction that incorporates reading and math in fun and engaging ways.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Cordova Elementary School (CES) uses the Alabama McGraw-Hill My Math curriculum as the framework of our mathematics instruction. My Math is a research-based curriculum with vertical alignment and common vocabulary throughout each grade level. This curriculum provides students with real-world applications of mathematical concepts to promote problem-solving and enhance understanding. My Math offers a good balance between developing computational fluency and providing rigorous tasks to promote higher-level thinking skills. The My Math curriculum includes built-in support for students above and below grade level expectations to allow access and equity for all learners.

Our school implements a three-tiered approach to direct mathematics instruction. Tier I consists of the whole-group math lesson which incorporates the eight Student Mathematical Practices listed in the Alabama

Course of Study for Mathematics. Various types of formative assessments including, but not limited to, peer discussion, observation, digital responses, exit tickets, and work samples, are utilized to assess each student's level of mastery of the lesson. Students who do not demonstrate mastery will receive Tier II instruction which consists of explicit, small group instruction designed to clarify misconceptions and reinforce key concepts. Manipulatives and other concrete, visual tools may be used to help students develop understanding. Any student who does not demonstrate mastery during Tier II is provided Tier III instruction by a highly-effective interventionist. Tier III provides intensive intervention for those students showing deficits in prerequisite skills or struggling to master new concepts.

Star Math is a customized, computer-adaptive, summative math test students take at least three times each year. The Star Screening Report graphs student placement above and below benchmarks based on Star scores. Teachers can use Star Math Reports to identify specific areas of need and to measure growth.

All of our students enjoy one-to-one access to digital devices. This allows our teachers to incorporate technology into virtually every lesson. We use the Freckle Computer program to facilitate student practice in math. The program assigns each student a customized, standards-based learning path and continuously adapts to the student's needs and progress. Teachers can also assign a specific standard for some or all students to practice. In addition to Freckle, our teachers use a number of other digital resources, such as but not limited to, Prodigy, MobyMax, Generation Genius, Flocabulary, and Multiplication.com.

A key component to our math instruction program is the gathering and analyzing of student achievement and growth data through multiple forms of digital and paper/pencil assessments. We have weekly grade level meetings in which we reflect on the students' strengths and weaknesses and ways we can adjust our instruction to better meet the needs of all learners. These meetings help teachers identify learning gaps, share resources, and discuss strategies to improve student achievement. Our teachers participate in vertical alignment meetings to ensure our curriculum is fluidly aligned throughout the grade levels and sufficient scaffolding is in place to help our students develop mathematical understanding.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

At Cordova Elementary School, all Alabama Course of Study Standards in science are taught in grades K-4. Science is taught for 30-45 minutes each day. It is taught in a whole group setting and integrated throughout the curricula. Our teachers use a variety of methods to teach these Course of Study Standards. As an Alabama Math Science Technology Initiative School (AMSTI), kits are used for engaging science lessons. These AMSTI lessons provide students with hands-on lessons through experiments and the use of critical thinking skills, enabling them to think and act like scientists. Other programs are used to supplement our science instruction. Mystery Science, Generation Genius, and Flocabulary are programs used to provide engaging lessons in science. Science is also immersed in our reading series from McGraw Hill. This reading series contains numerous nonfiction texts based on scientific and expository topics. Teachers also collaborate with other professionals from various organizations to plan and provide engaging science instruction. A nutrition teacher from Body Quest visits our third graders once a week to participate in lessons about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Fourth grade students participate in 4-H lessons once a month which involve Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) projects. Cordova Elementary received a grant for the cultivating of a student garden. Here, the students planted, nurtured, and harvested vegetables that were then donated to our community's senior citizens. Students are provided with field trips which deepen the understanding of science all around us. Some of these field trips include the Birmingham Zoo, McWane Science Center, Rickwood Caverns, Pumpkin Patch, and the Barnyard Petting Zoo. Teachers in K-2 use formative assessments to check for understanding. In grades 3-4, teachers use formative assessments to check for daily understanding in science and summative assessments are given at the end of each science unit.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

At Cordova Elementary, Social Studies learning standards are addressed using the theme integration and direct teaching approaches. Theme integration includes social studies information into lessons taught in the other three core curricula, especially the Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. The direct

instruction approach allows the teacher to reach the Social Studies standards not completed through theme integration. Formative assessments are received via teacher observations of students, oral and written student reflection, and classroom feedback. Summative assessments are received from student quizzes and student projects. We analyze the data collected from these assessments to determine student performance by reviewing the results and comparing them to previous levels of achievement, while searching for areas of improvement. Areas needing improvements are noted in grade-level faculty meetings conducted weekly. Suggestions for development are offered, and each teacher later implements appropriate strategies for mastery achievement. Examples of these types of assessment include journal writing (in which student responses are compared to curricular standards), tests produced by Social Studies Weekly in consumable and online formats (in which student response data is used to indicate how well the standard is mastered), and assessments from the other three core curricula (in which student success of standard mastery in social studies is separated by the teacher from elements of study of the other four core areas).

In order for our teachers to assist students in reaching mastery, they draw upon both primary and secondary resources. These resources are combined when presented to students in an effort to apply the information to the students' lives and background knowledge. Specific strategies offered in the books, *Leaders of their Own Learning* by Ron Berger, and *The New Art and Science of Teaching* by Robert J. Marzano are utilized in Cordova Elementary classrooms. The results garnered using these pursuits have been satisfactory.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Cordova Elementary School (CES) provides three art teachers, one hour weekly, through a grant from the Walker Area Community Foundation. The art curriculum provides third grade students the opportunity to learn and experiment with different forms of artistic processes. The art class allows students to be unique and creative in sculpting, design, and painting. Students are taught how to use art materials in a variety of ways and are allowed freedom of expression when creating their artwork.

The music program at CES strives to develop a love of and an appreciation for music in our students. The music program provides students with opportunities to explore music through hands-on experiences and performances. Three yearly musical performances are provided by students for families and the community. Each Christmas, all grade levels perform a musical presentation for families. Our 4th grade elementary choir performs at the local nursing home and the Senior Citizens Center, and our 4th grade also performs a Christmas musical written by one of our teachers that focuses on kindness. CES offers a yearly talent show where individual students perform musical numbers and other talents for families and the community. Families and community members are actively involved in constructing stage sets and providing needed materials.

The Walker Area Community Foundation provides a storyteller to our fourth grade students. Students enjoy listening to stories which engage their interests and imaginations. They learn to appreciate the spoken word and understand the lessons to be learned through stories. The storyteller shares local oral history using both verbal and visual language to strengthen the listeners' ability to interact with and develop or enhance the story line. The storyteller and the listener both become part of the story, making it an enjoyable experience for both.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

At Cordova Elementary School (CES), kindergarten through 4th grade students participate in Physical Education (P.E.) daily. We have a fixed P.E. schedule that allows the students to participate in P.E. class for 30 minutes each day. Our P.E. program teaches our students about the importance of physical exercise as well as healthy eating. The P.E. coach follows the 2019 Alabama Course of Study, which focuses on motor skills, specialized sports skills, and game play. Each year, our 3rd and 4th grade students participate in the Physical Fitness Assessment. Our P.E. curriculum also includes an archery program for 3rd and 4th grade students. We have had an archery team for 9 years now, each year we have qualified for local, state, and national competitions. CES 3rd grade students participate in the Body Quest Program through the Alabama Extension and SNAP-ED curriculum. It employs a combination of theory-driven classroom instruction, technology, and includes approaches to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. To continue supporting healthy eating habits, our school started a vegetable and flower garden. Students participate in planting seeds and cultivating plants during their P.E. classes. We have received several grants for our garden, the largest one being \$5,000.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

All students, grades kindergarten through 4th grade, participate in a Spanish class for 30 minutes every 2 weeks. We have a Spanish teacher who comes to our school every Wednesday and works on a rotating schedule. This teacher meets with half of the student population (2 homeroom classes from each grade level) one week, and then she meets the other 2 homeroom classes from each grade level the next week. The Spanish teacher teaches the students basic Spanish words and conversational skills. For example: the alphabet, numbers, colors, greetings, names, and holidays. The Spanish teacher has created an additional resource, a YouTube channel. This allows students to practice foreign language skills with parents at home.

2d. Technology/library/media

The library is a vital part of students' education at Cordova Elementary School (CES). The library media program allows students an opportunity to visit the library during 30-minute regularly scheduled classes each week. During these classes, students participate in library lessons, story time, Makerspace activities, and book check out. The library media specialist follows a library course of study that was created by fellow experienced librarians within the Walker County School System. In addition to library classes, students also have the opportunity to come to the library and exchange books throughout the school day. There are also flexible scheduling times throughout the week when teachers can collaborate with the library media specialist or use the library for class activities or lessons. Our library media specialist also has a reward system for students who participate in our Accelerated Reader program, which is called "Book Cave." In addition, our school sets an Accelerated Reading goal at the beginning of each school year, and students who reach or exceed that goal are able to go on a lunch field trip with the school principal and library media specialist to a local restaurant.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

Robotics Club is a third and fourth grade competitive team organization that utilizes engineering, strategy, and teamwork. Cordova Elementary School implemented this program in 2019 in collaboration with Bankhead Middle School and the Boy Scouts of America. It prepares our students to transition to the fifth grade level of competition. The 2022-2023 school year was our first year participating in competitions in third and fourth grade. Students who want to join the robotics club submit an application, and are chosen based on their application, teacher and principal recommendation, and parental consent. Cordova Elementary School funded the team fees for the first year. Robotics competition kits have been provided by the Walker County Board of Education through funds and grants. Members meet 1-2 days a week for an hour and a half after school. Competitions are on weekends, and teams can qualify for state and world competitions. This preparation has assisted the fifth and sixth grade students in qualifying for state and world VEX robotic competitions.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Cordova Elementary School (CES) uses data derived from observations, academic classwork, attendance, behavior, and assessments to determine instructional practices. Assessments can be informal, formative, common, and summative. State Assessments used include STAR Early Literacy, STAR Reading, STAR Math, and the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP). Our school holds weekly data meetings and Problem-Solving Team (PST) meetings frequently throughout the year. PST meetings consist of general education and special education teachers, administration, the reading coach, the PST chair, and the counselor. The team meets to determine the appropriate support for students who are not performing on grade level. The team also utilizes state assessment (ACAP) scores to determine methods to improve outcomes. Teachers implement standard-driven Tier I and Tier II instruction, focusing on students' prior knowledge and learning target goals. They also implement interventions that target a specific skill deficit. These deficits are identified through classroom assessments. If the students require more intensive support, Tier III instruction is recommended and is provided by a highly effective interventionist. CES has three interventionists that work with these students. These interventionists are retired teachers that provide specific instruction needed by the students. Students who fall within the 40th percentile and below on STAR Early Literacy and Reading, will receive bi-weekly Curriculum Based Measurements (CBMs). CBM's consists of 6 one-minute assessments. These include letter naming, letter sounds, phoneme segmentation, receptive nonsense, expressive nonsense, and oral reading fluency. Students are assessed bi-weekly until grade level benchmark goals are achieved. Students performing below the 40th percentile will receive a Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP). SRIP's include student progress, CBM deficit, and interventions being implemented. Parents attend SRIP meetings and are provided with the following: a copy of the Alabama Literacy Act, the detailed intervention plan, and at-home intervention suggestions. Our school offers after school labs and summer school assistance. Here, reading and math interventions are offered, along with the Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) program.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

All second grade students are screened for the gifted program through teacher observations and the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). Students in other grades can be screened based on a teacher or parent request. If a student qualifies for gifted, a Gifted Education Plan (GEP) is developed to meet the needs of that individual student. Once the GEP is completed, students attend gifted classes one day a week with other identified gifted students from the Walker County School System. These students are transported to a centralized location to participate in hands-on and inquiry based activities. This year students researched, designed, and fabricated a model of a volcano and an ocean ecosystem. Students are not penalized for missing regular classroom instruction to attend. Classroom teachers accommodate gifted students by providing them with modified instruction.

Classroom teachers provide differentiated instruction aligned with STAR data and classroom performance to teach students at all performance levels. Leveled programs, such as MobyMax and Freckle allow students to work at their individual levels. In the general education setting, students who perform above grade level are provided enrichment opportunities. Students are able to participate in Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) activities to promote higher level thinking skills. For example, students are encouraged to use independent thinking to plan, design, and create variations of Valentine's Day mailboxes. Classroom teachers encourage students to apply knowledge and research to complete project based learning activities. These activities require students to analyze, evaluate, and then use critical thinking skills to create a solution to the proposed problem.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Cordova Elementary School (CES) services 69 students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP), with various exceptionalities. All staff members work collaboratively to best serve the special education population. Our mission is to provide students with IEPs with an intensive and high quality education in their least restrictive environment. We encourage inclusivity, including all school activities and programs. Some of these activities and programs include Veteran's Day Program, Awards Day Ceremonies, Special Olympics, Christmas Musicals, and more. Using tiered instruction, the Problem Solving Team (PST) uses

data driven instruction to work toward closing any academic and functional gaps. Implementation of intervention and appropriate accommodations are used to achieve student success and show mastery of deficits. Parents/guardians receive updates of student progress through a variety of methods including Remind, phone conferences, Google Meet, in-person conferences, daily/weekly communication logs, report cards, and progress reports. Each student with appropriate accommodations participates in comprehensive screenings used to guide growth for emergent, struggling, and high achievers in math and reading to show progress throughout the school year. Students take the Star assessment a minimum of 3 times a year. Teachers, administrators, and instructional coaches analyze Star data to drive instruction and guide interventions. CES students are also required to participate in the summative Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP). ACAP is the state mandated assessment administered in the spring of each school year. Our school provides additional services such as Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Adaptive Physical Education, and Mental Health Services to meet the individual needs of each student. Our administrator and Special Education staff are trained in Behavior Management and Crisis.

3d. English Language Learners:

There are no barriers for the English Language Learners (ELL) enrolling in our school. All students are given a home language survey when they enter an Alabama school. If another language is indicated on the survey then a language screener is given to the student. The screener determines if the student is in need of ELL services. Once a student is identified as an English Language Learner, then one of the three ELL coaches from the system develops an Individualized English Language Plan (IELP). This plan can be developed using teacher observations, benchmark assessments, and the standardized ELL Assessment. Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) is Alabama's English Language proficiency assessment given to ELL students once a year. This assessment measures student proficiency in the four domains of English language development: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The IELP plan is implemented by the classroom teacher and monitored by the ELL coach. CES teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all ELL students. These students participate in assessments and school activities. CES currently has a low population of students in the ELL program. In order to encourage inclusivity, students kindergarten through fourth grade participate in Spanish lessons. Cordova Elementary School teachers receive professional development on providing services for ELL students and on the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards. The ELL coach and the teachers work with the students from the identification process of qualifying as an English Language Learner to the time the student achieves English language proficiency and is no longer identified as an ELL.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

At this time, we do not have any students at Cordova Elementary who are classified as homeless. However, should a homeless student enroll, there are no barriers to enrolling them. Our district provides school supplies to all students. Also, we have various local churches and businesses that we partner with that provide resources for our school clothes closet and food bags through our Backyard Blessings food program. We work hard to meet the needs of our students.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Cordova Elementary School (CES) believes that every student deserves a positive environment where they feel safe, nurtured and loved. Each morning the faculty and staff can be found waiting on buses or opening car doors. Students are greeted with a heartfelt “Good morning!” and words of encouragement to begin their day. The homeroom teachers are waiting at their doors to deliver warm smiles, high fives or hugs. This helps the students get their day started on a positive note.

CES is a vital part of a small town with a very big sense of community pride. We instill this pride in our students during morning announcements as two students lead the school in saying “The Blue Devil Creed.” In this creed, we declare that our students are special, they have attainable goals, they can achieve and learn, and they do it all with a great sense of pride. We feel this is a great confidence booster that allows students to see that they have the ability to achieve greatness.

Recognizing student success provides an opportunity to foster the importance of learning and social-emotional growth. Faculty members nominate students who show exemplary character for Student of the Month. CES celebrates student achievement by holding several award ceremonies during the school year. Students of all grade levels are acknowledged for academic achievement at the end of each grading period. These ceremonies are highly anticipated by students and families.

Kindergarten through fourth grade students participate in the Renaissance Accelerated Reader (AR) program. This program allows students to read books on their level and develop comprehension skills. Each grade has an AR goal that students strive to reach. Those reaching the AR goal with an 85-90% accuracy rate earn a trip to the Book Cave. The Book Cave is held monthly in our library where the students trade AR points for incentives. At the end of the year, all students reaching a specified goal have the privilege of eating lunch with our principal off campus. The student that earns the most AR points has the honor of choosing the restaurant.

The Afterschool Labs program provides students the opportunity to continue learning in the areas of reading, math and Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math (STREAM) three days a week. This furthers student engagement and assists students in meeting academic goals.

We also like to have lots of fun with our students. We participate each fall in homecoming activities with our high school. We enjoy Read Across America week that culminates in a read-a-thon with many guest readers. We end our year with a May Day celebration which students enjoy.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Cordova Community plays an important role in the success of Cordova Elementary School (CES), and we are very conscientious in our attempts to engage our families and community. Throughout the year we host various functions that allow families and community members to celebrate the students’ accomplishments, such as 9-weeks Awards Day. We also host programs throughout the year that allow the students to perform for family and friends. The Christmas Musical is one of those events. There are events designed to recognize members of our community as well, for example our Veterans Day program. Our attendance during these programs is tremendous. We actively encourage our parents to attend parent-teacher conferences, Parent Visitation night, back-to-school orientation, Title I meetings, and Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings when possible. To maintain communication, we use a variety of methods, especially for those parents who are not able to attend school functions due to work or other obligations. These forms of communication include Remind 101, monthly school newsletter, school Facebook page, the school website, Classroom Dojo, Google Classroom, phone, and email. Cordova Elementary wants to include and involve all stakeholders in our school.

Our local churches and businesses collaborate with the school to help meet the needs of our students.

Several have donated money and clothes for students who are in need. With the donated clothes, CES maintains a clothes closet for students in need. In addition, we have a Backyard Blessing Program that provides food for our students who need food assistance. Every Thursday bags of food are delivered. On Friday the teachers discreetly give out the bags, ensuring that our students have something to eat over the weekend. Other community involvement includes the local fire department. The fire department works with the school during Fire Safety Week. The students are able to interact with the firefighters and actively engage with the fire truck. Each year when the firemen visit the school we also conduct a fire drill. The Cordova Police Department and our School Resource Officer (SRO) conduct drills and programs with our faculty and staff to ensure student safety. We work with businesses to promote student success and improvement. Recently, CES participated in a county-wide citizenship program, Super Citizen, where we recognized four community leaders that have made a difference to our school and community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Cordova Elementary School promotes a professional culture by encouraging, supporting, and valuing our teachers. We have steadfast relationships with each other that we have cultivated over many years of working together. Our relationships are built on respect and support for one another.

Each year faculty, staff and stakeholders participate in creating our Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). This involves analyzing data and determining student needs and goals for the school. The leadership team seeks professional development that could address any areas of need. The CIP provides a framework for meeting the needs of our students, teachers and school.

Our principal knows the importance of investing in the professional development of teachers. If there is a need for additional training in an area, it is researched and provided. Teachers are not expected to implement programs without adequate training. Each teacher has three professional development areas on which to focus during the school year; one is dictated by the local district, one is decided by the school, and the third is decided by the teacher. The teacher then has the opportunity to seek training in an area to meet their individual needs. This professional development is provided by the state, the district, or the school.

Many CES teachers have completed Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training. This valuable training teaches the science of reading. With this knowledge, teachers are able to provide students with explicit instruction to improve reading. This type of innovative training continues to build our professional culture.

We have E-Days built into our school calendar that allow teachers to participate in additional professional development. These opportunities may be provided in our home school or at another location.

New teachers are provided a mentor for two years. This program proves to be beneficial in offering a much needed support system. The mentor gives encouragement and is committed to the success of that teacher.

Teachers have weekly grade-level meetings. This time encourages teamwork and cohesiveness among the teachers. They can plan lessons, activities and teaching strategies. Veteran and novice teachers collaborate to share knowledge, experiences, and new and innovative ideas. Once a month teachers meet with our principal and instructional coach to have PST meetings during this time. These meetings afford teachers the opportunity to look at student data and discuss strategies that could benefit students.

4. School Leadership:

The Cordova Elementary School (CES) leadership team works together to create and foster an atmosphere of community and collaboration on campus. The leadership team, led by the principal, reviews policies, procedures, and programs needed to ensure student achievement at the beginning of each school year. The school principal has an open door policy but needed to shift to a more democratic approach to leadership. This change provided others better opportunities in the decision making process. The school-wide leadership team, which includes the principal, designated assistant principal, instructional coach, counselor, librarian, grade level teachers, two parents, one student, and two members from the Superintendent's office, meet at

the beginning of school to discuss and plan for school improvement. All faculty and staff members are encouraged and given the opportunity to provide input for school improvement through written correspondence or verbal communication either openly or confidentially, throughout the school year. The school uses this information at the beginning of the year to begin the process of developing the school-wide continuous improvement plan. Online surveys are used to solicit feedback and school improvement ideas from families and community stakeholders. The surveys play an important role in the development of the school-wide continuous improvement plan.

The primary focus of the principal and the leadership team is providing what is best for the students. The principal is visible in the morning to meet and greet all students with a smile and a hug when needed. The principal helps to load students in cars at the end of the day. This provides the principal daily opportunities to discuss with parents or guardians any ideas they have for school improvement. The academic coach works closely with all teachers needing assistance with curriculum and instruction, especially new teachers. The academic coach provides coaching cycles to all first or second year teachers. All new teachers are provided a veteran teacher as a mentor for the first two years of their teaching journey. The school leadership team uses Remind, Blackboard, monthly newsletters, weekly calendars, daily feedback, school website, Facebook and an online grade reporting system to ensure daily positive contact with parents and community. The librarian and principal post pictures, videos and important information to the school's Facebook page and the school website. All faculty and staff can submit pictures to be posted on social media. The principal at CES believes strongly in leading by example and communicates high expectations for faculty, staff and students. The principal believes the facility, grounds, curriculum, scheduling, academic achievement and school safety are all intended to focus on what is best for the students and to ensure all students achieve success not only at CES but in the future. Through dedicated leadership and by example the principal has created a culture of core values that fosters a love for learning and sets high academic expectations for all stakeholders.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Since 1953, Cordova Elementary School (CES) has set atop a high hill nestled among the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Through these years we have serviced the town of Cordova, Alabama and its adjoining rural communities. The socio-economic background of this area for the past 200 years has been heavily connected to the mining of our local anthracite coal. Students come from Caucasian, African, Native American, and Hispanic ethnicities. Cordova Elementary strives to provide a culturally responsive atmosphere in our teaching and learning. CES provides students with learning opportunities that are effective in a variety of services and programs to accommodate diverse populations. Our media specialist at CES supplies the library with books that interest students of all backgrounds. When ordering these library materials, both teachers and students are asked for input. Students are tested for the Gifted Program in second grade; those who qualify attend Gifted classes throughout the school year. CES also provides services for our English Language Learners. All WIDA standards are displayed in each classroom and are taught to ensure that these students are successful both academically and socially. Homeless students are enrolled at CES regardless of any barriers. Neighborhood Bridges and McKinney-Vento are two examples of programs that have been established to aid these students. Backyard Blessings is a local outreach service from area churches and civic organizations. This program provides non-perishable food items for students who may need extra food over the weekend. At CES, the Special Education department is continuously addressing the needs of our students who are diverse learners. Our counselor at CES provides individual, small group, and class counseling. In these classes, she addresses a range of topics to meet the needs of all students. In her lessons, she utilizes a variety of activities that represent different backgrounds so that all students feel represented. We have a School-Based Mental Health Therapist who works with students in need of specific mental health services. All students, however, are serviced with the Rhithm program twice a week. This is a computer program that allows students to log in and express how they feel. After doing this, students are given videos to watch depending on their mood for the day. Teachers are also alerted of any students who are at high risk emotionally.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Encouraging and enabling student growth based on data analysis is the driving force at Cordova Elementary School (CES). The Leadership Team, faculty, staff and students analyze both formative and summative data for progress monitoring of academic achievement and growth. The Leadership Team's use of data analysis plays an important role in instruction at CES and is used regularly to guide instructional practices, strategies, and decision making. CES uses multiple formative and summative assessments to monitor student growth. Multiple online assessments are used in conjunction with paper and pencil assessments. For monitoring both math and reading progress CES uses the Star assessment. The Leadership team at CES analyzed the data from Star, Star CBM's, Freckle, MOBY MAX, Mystery Science and teachers' developed standard based formal and informal classroom assessments to monitor student achievement and growth in reading, math, and science.

Teachers use curriculum aligned with state standards to develop rigorous weekly common assessments that focus on developing higher order Depth of Knowledge skills in students. The data from these combined assessments aid teachers in preparing students for the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) summative assessment.

The Leadership Team holds monthly Response to Instruction (RTI) data analysis meetings to discuss and develop strategies for identified struggling students and set enrichment goals for high achieving students. Classroom teachers provide Tier I instruction and Tier II intervention in the classroom. The instructional coach and intervention teachers provide Tier III intervention for struggling students during the school day, outside of the regular classroom.

Student Reading Improvement Plans (SRIPs) are created in collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, instructional coach and principal. These meetings provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to be aware of deficient areas of the student. Plans are monitored throughout the year by the Leadership Team and adjusted based on student performance. All struggling students are invited to attend a two hour after-school intervention session. The after-school program provides customized academic instruction designed to meet the students where they are. Transportation and snacks are also provided free of charge. The Leadership Team and grade level teachers meet monthly to review all data for the purpose of evaluating students' academic progress. Lesson plans and specialized intervention are adjusted to reflect students' identified strengths and weaknesses. Students track their progress and adjust goals as needed in Star, and all other assessments. The teacher and a member of The Leadership Team will meet one on one with students to review, discuss, and set new goals based on their academic progress. The principal, teacher, or instructional coach will meet individually with students before the summative assessment to review data, encourage, and set a scaled score goal for the assessment. Keeping a clear focus on student growth and high expectations enables all stakeholders to work together to obtain maximum student success. This practice has been instrumental in improving student achievement at CES.