U.S. Department of Education
2023 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>Ms. Katie Griffin</u>
                   (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)
Official School Name <u>Senita Valley Elementary School</u>
                   (As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>10750 E. Bilby Road</u>
                   (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City <u>Tucson</u>   State <u>AZ</u>   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) <u>85747-5999</u>

County <u>Pima</u>

Telephone <u>(520) 879-3100</u>   Fax <u>(520) 879-3101</u>

Web site/URL <u>https://sve.vailschooldistrict.org/</u>   E-mail <u>griffink@vailschooldistrict.org</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>Mr. John Carruth</u>   E-mail <u>carruthj@vailschooldistrict.org</u>
                   (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name <u>Vail School District</u>   Tel. <u>(520) 879-2000</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>Mrs. Allison Pratt</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, 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   <u>10</u> Elementary schools (includes K-8)
    (per district designation):   <u>5</u> Middle/Junior high schools
        <u>5</u> High schools
        <u>1</u> K-12 schools

        <u>21</u> 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)
    [X] 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	111
1	120
2	114
3	114
4	113
5	130
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	702

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   <u>1</u> % American Indian or Alaska Native
   the school (if unknown, estimate):   <u>2</u> % Asian
   <u>3</u> % Black or African American
   <u>34</u> % Hispanic or Latino
   <u>0</u> % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   <u>48</u> % White
   <u>12</u> % 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: <u>13</u>%

   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, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	47
(2) Number of students who transferred **from** the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	42
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	89
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	669
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

   <u>Turkish, Tagalog, Arabic, Spanish, Japanese, Ewe, Chinese, Filipino</u>

   English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: <u>3</u> %

   <u>20</u> Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: <u>25</u> %

   Total number students who qualify: <u>172</u>

8.   Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 12 %
                     Total number of students served   84|

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.

20 Autism	1 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	9 Other Health Impaired
7 Developmental Delay	10 Specific Learning Disability
3 Emotional Disturbance	29 Speech or Language Impairment
1 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
2 Intellectual Disability	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9.   Students receiving special education services with a 504:   2 %
                     Total number of students served: 14

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 5

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.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	24
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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   28:1

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	93%	96%	96%	95%	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 X

   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.

The mission of Senita Valley is to create and embrace an academic environment where learning is exciting, social responsibility is the norm, and friends and partnerships are nurtured for life.

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

https://www.vailschooldistrict.org/page/employment-human-resources

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Senita Valley Elementary (SVE) is a highly sought after lighthouse school in the award winning Vail School District in Tucson, Arizona. Like other schools across the nation, Senita Valley stood firm in the storm of a global pandemic and has been strengthened as a place that shines light on our community. From its start in 2008, SVE has been described as a place where people of all ages want to be and where students, staff, and community thrive.

Community is foundational to the success of SVE. A team of community members, staff, parents, and students were brought together to help build the mission, vision, values, and culture of the school. The mission statement described our school well as a place that creates and embraces an environment where learning is exciting, social responsibility is the norm, and friendships are nurtured for life. The vision describes our staff and students as striving for high student achievement through excellence in instruction with the support of an actively involved community. Beacons of light naturally draw people in; SVE represents that vision fully.

All aspects of our campus boast community which is what makes SVE such a unique and successful home for so many. Our K-5 elementary school is book-ended by the Community Programs Before and Aftercare Program and by Rincon Vista Middle School, with whom we share campus resources and space. One of the best aspects of sharing our space with Rincon Vista Middle School is seeing our previous students; many hugs are given, quick stories about successful days are shared, and the sense of community continues to be strengthened.

As a repeat Arizona Education Foundation A+ School of Excellence recipient, having earned the distinction in 2014, 2018, and 2023, and as an ASBA Golden Bell recipient in 2014, SVE is well aware of what excellence looks like and is continually evaluating its best practices. But, we understand that complacency prevents growth. We ensure that we continue to move the needle forward with achievement, relationships, community building, and more.

SVE was not immune to the challenges of the last several years, especially regarding the pandemic. But because our relationships with the community and families are of paramount importance, we built five separate models to meet the needs of all of our families throughout the pandemic, from fully remote to fully in-person learning. We faced those struggles together and came out of the hardships stronger than before. This direct focus on building culture impacted our students as well, as shown in neighborhood parades, Mustang Connection notes mailed by staff to all of our students, and intentional conversations with families and students who were absent or struggling with the constant changes.

We have anticipated that we will continue to see students struggle with the social, emotional, and even academic fallout because of the pandemic, but we now have systems in place with additional community support to help us ensure very child finds success and joy as they learn, grow, and flourish in our community. The Mustang Leadership Academy and LASSO are two programs that were formed because of the needs the pandemic presented within our students; the Mustang Leadership Academy has formed and evolved as a highly engaging social and emotional program that motivates all of our students to be leaders, and LASSO is a read aloud program that speaks to the hearts of all of our students and gives them an opportunity to fully appreciate literature.

One aspect our district has faced due to the state and national decline in birth rates is the declining enrollment in our community and state. We have maintained the firm belief that we want to impact as many students are we are able. In order the combat the possibility of declining enrollment, we will continue to build on our academic growth, community atmosphere, and viewpoint of building social and academic leaders. In looking at our current enrollment numbers, 18% of our students are open enrollment; we fully understand that keeping our doors open to the community beyond our boundaries is important because we know that SVE is a place where every student and family will flourish and be loved.

There is something special about a community who comes together in a common place through struggle,

hardship, joy, and sadness; SVE serves as a common place with a common goal of doing what is best for our kids. SVE is the heart of our community where even families who are not enrolled with us join us for events to enjoy the strong sense of community that is built and nurtured here. While we have not walked through the easiest of times, we have walked through hardships together because that is what is best for our students. A lighthouse is a beacon of light that draws ships home, even when the waters are tumultuous; Senita Valley is home.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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

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

The Balanced Literacy program at Senita Valley encourages active student participation in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language skills. Whole group lessons are taught using the Essential Elements of Instruction and incorporates Webb's Depth of Knowledge. Group, partner, and independent work is based on teacher-created lessons that focus on highly rigorous and meaningful activities. After whole group instruction is delivered, students are placed in differentiated groups to complete in-depth, standards-based centers that allow for them to work together and apply the skills that were taught in the whole group lessons, as well as skills that were taught previously. During their centers time, the teacher has the opportunity to pull ability-based groups to the back table and give those groups of students the opportunity to practice the standards being taught at their individual level. During this time, teachers are also able to reteach standards that students struggled with; teachers highly value this opportunity to provide individualized instruction for students, and students clearly thrive academically as well.

At the request of teachers, a specific writing block was incorporated into the daily schedule to provide the opportunity for students to work on foundational writing skills. This writing time is modeled after the reading block and allows for direct instruction, guided practice, and individualized instruction for small groups of students.

Students' academic achievements are evaluated on a regular basis through a variety of formal and informal assessments. These assessments directly measure students' achievement with regard to the Arizona College and Career Readiness standards.Teachers use formative assessments in Reading and Writing, such as Curriculum Based Measures, weekly formatives, and quarterly benchmarks to assess the mastery of grade level essential standards. These formative assessments provide teachers, students, and parents with timely feedback regarding student mastery of objectives. The data is used to modify instruction to better meet the needs of students. Based on classroom and grade level results, teachers use the data to construct lessons in efforts to improve weaknesses found in specific areas.

AASA and AzSCI are state assessments designed to measure a student's understanding of the state standards. Assessment summaries are reviewed, shared, and discussed with teachers at the beginning of the year during Senita Valley's Data Dig. The data is used to identify and reflect on areas of strengths and weaknesses to improve instruction for the current school year.

Teachers participate in monthly Data Team meetings that provide an opportunity to examine and analyze all the different forms of student assessment data. The team works together to collaboratively analyze assessment results, set or modify goals for improvement, and discuss teaching strategies in order to drive instruction and meet the goal of success for all students.

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

Senita Valley's approach to math instruction aims for higher level thinking skills through fluency, conceptual, and procedural methods. It is our focus to develop a strong foundation for higher order thinking and problem solving skills aligned with the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards. At each grade level, students participate in Math Project Based Learning activities that have an emphasis on higher order thinking and hands-on learning, while allowing them to apply math solving skills in real world situations. The beginning of each lesson starts with five questions that are related either to the current standard or are standards that have previously been taught. Similar to the reading and writing blocks, teachers deliver direct instruction and then allow students to work together and independently on teacher-created tasks. During group or independent practice, teachers have the opportunity to work with small groups of students who need extra instruction and support with the standard.

An additional resource for students is a daily fluency time called Spring Math. Spring Math has specific grade level skills that are given to students in a timed format. Teachers use different forms of motivation to help students pass each skillset and move onto the next skill; one can often see a teacher "racing" their students and completing the same timed task, or student signatures on the board as proof they passed that particular skill.

Students' academic achievements are evaluated on a regular basis through a variety of formal and informal assessments. These assessments directly measure students' achievement with regard to the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards. Teachers use formative assessments in Math such as Curriculum Based Measures, weekly formatives, and quarterly benchmarks to assess the mastery of grade level essential standards. These formative assessments provide teachers, students, and parents with timely feedback regarding student mastery of objectives. The data is used to modify instruction to better meet the needs of students. Based on classroom and grade level results, teachers use the data to construct lessons in efforts to improve weaknesses found in specific areas. Senita Valley currently has several program and practices in place to respond to these needs including Math Reteach and Enrich, small group interventions, and skill specific tutoring.

AASA state assessments are designed to measure a student's understanding of the state standards. Assessment summaries are reviewed, shared, and discussed with teachers at the beginning of the year during Senita Valley's Data Dig. The data is used to identify and reflect on areas of strength and weakness to improve instruction for the current school year.

Teachers participate in monthly Data Team meetings that provide an opportunity to examine and analyze all the different forms of student assessment data. The team works together to collaboratively analyze assessment results, set or modify goals for improvement, monitor results, and discuss implementation strategies in order to drive instruction and meet the goal of success for all students.

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

Our science curriculum incorporate real life experiences into instruction. New science standards allow students to explore and investigate by learning to construct logical explanations. Each grade level has access to engineering kits that are structured in a way that teaches about a pioneer in the engineering world, as well as the skills necessary to solve a problem. Students are then able to practice their new-found knowledge in a hands-on way and solve a similar problem to what they had initially learned about. One great example of this is the Egg Drop. Students are taught about gravity and structural engineering, and then are given the opportunity to come up with a design they feel would best protect an egg from a long drop. The excitement students have with this particular activity is palpable, even if their designs don't protect the egg from breaking.

Because there is not enough time in the classroom for students to do hands-on experiences, the STEM teacher helps provide real-world experiences to students in her specialty-area time. Science standards are also woven into the math and reading blocks so students have as much experience to the science standards and content as possible.

The science standards are assessed in the same way as math and reading standards. A variety of formal and informal assessments are given throughout the week, and concepts are retaught as needed.

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

Social Studies content is delivered similarly to science in that it is woven into the reading and writing blocks during the day. Programs such as Junior Achievement and Biztown provide students with an understanding of economic and business concepts. Junior Achievement in particular is a day where volunteers from the community go into each classroom and teach content that gives students a better insight into economics and our community. Students come away with a better understanding of business and economics, and volunteers come away with the pride of being able to impact our students.

Social Studies content is assessed in a variety of ways; the ability for teachers to do more project-based learning and assessments is easier in the Social Studies block than others. For example, one grade level teaches students about different presidents. Instead of having students solely research and write a paper on a specific president, they have the opportunity to also create a statue of that president and present it to the class. This type of engagement allows for students to connect with the content richly.

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)

All of our students have the opportunity to participate in our Art program once a week which is called Studio. The goal of Studio is to give students an opportunity to interact with music and art state standards, but in a way that is also conducive to connecting them with our broader community. For example, the year-long art project for our kinder-fifth grade students was teaching them about different types of cultural art around the world and then giving students a chance to recreate that type of artwork themselves. The project was then displayed for students to proudly show families and community members. Each of our grade levels also works on music standards in Studio that are then displayed in grade level music performances. Some of these performances also connected our students with important topics, such as our fourth grade musical that was performed right before Veteran's Day. All fourth grade students learned the different songs of each military branch and then created posters to represent the different branches that are present in our community. Another performance done by our fifth grade students was right before Christmas; the fifth graders learned about different celebrations held around the world and then sang songs in reference to those traditions.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Traditionally our PE class, which is held once a week for all of our students, includes education of overall health focusing on nutrition, mental health, social skills, and cooperative learning. Students develop physical skills appropriate to their age through play. Students learn about the dangers of smoking and the importance of healthy eating, as well as maintaining an active lifestyle. Our PE teacher has made connections with high school athletes in our district, as well as athletes from the University of Arizona; both of those groups of students have been invited to Senita Valley at various times throughout the year to interact with our students and play with them during their recess times. The U of A students in particular helped with our annual Turkey Trot; the students who struggled with running laps were cheered on by the rest of their grade level, and the U of A athletes ran alongside them. The perseverance and dedication to a healthy lifestyle from these older athletes is inspirational to our elementary students and will be something that stays with many of our kids for the rest of their lives.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

During weekly Library Enrichment, students work on multi-week research projects where they collaborate and conduct online research to develop creative presentations. Students are taught to evaluate and navigate websites, and our social/emotional curriculum is woven into those online tasks as well. Our students also

have an opportunity to practice typing in library enrichment, check out books to be able to take to their classrooms, and learn about different authors. In STEM, our students work collaboratively on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math concepts using the engineering design process. They are given a variety of materials to design, create, and test their creations through different challenges. All of our specialty classes are taught to our students once a week, but the projects they work on continuously build on the previous week's lessons so that the time with students is precise.

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

After the pandemic, it was clear that students needed additional support with their reading skills. Thus, LASSO (Literature Activities Supporting Student Objectives) was formed. LASSO is a block of time that has been built into the daily schedule for all students kindergarten through fifth grade. Teachers choose a chapter book that is a grade level or two above the average Lexile reading level and simply read aloud while students follow along in their own copy of the book. This time allows for students to listen to fluency and for teachers to ask questions related to the reading standards. Teachers have created a database of those questions to support other teachers when they read that particular book to their class. This also is an opportunity for teachers to incorporate real world examples of positive character traits that we teach our students such as empathy, compassion, integrity, and honesty. There is also a principal read aloud time that is recorded each month of families to watch at home; the monthly character trait and subsequent questions are also woven into these short read-alouds. LASSO has quickly become the favorite time of day for both students and teachers.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Senita Valley identifies students who need additional instructional support through various programs. The System to Enhance Educational Performance (STEEP) is a program that is used for the implementation of response to intervention. These school-wide screenings in reading are given three times a year. Students who fall below proficiency despite a "Can't Do/Won't Do" check are given a three-week individual intervention to promote growth in oral reading fluency. Students who show minimal progress during these interventions are provided with intensive instruction by a specialist on a daily basis and are referred for a special education evaluation if appropriate. Other struggling readers are pulled into small group lessons with a reading specialist overseen by the resource teacher. Math progress is monitored and interventions are designed using the Spring Math online platform. We also have the opportunity for students to work with classroom paraprofessionals and our Reading Specialist to help with basic reading or math skills on a regular basis. Students who struggle with reading in particular also have the opportunity to have the standards spiraled and taught at their specific level with their teacher during their centers time. Students who struggle meet with their teacher at least four times per week to have their reading instruction individualized.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students in third through fifth grade are identified for the Gifted and Advanced Learning Program via the Cognitive Abilities Assessment. Through teacher and parent referrals, students are recommended as potential candidates with testing taking place three times throughout the year. All staff is provided training to help identify qualities of giftedness, are are taught gifted teaching strategies that can be implemented in any classroom at any grade level.

Students who score a 97% or higher in their age percentile rank on one or more areas of the CogAT are accepted into the program. The program focuses on verbal, quantitative, and non-verbal activities, as well as social/emotional aspects of giftedness. Activities include standards-based projects and a capstone project in the spring. Starring Your Story, a program recently piloted by our gifted students, was a weeks-long project in which each student wrote a mystery story that included a plot, different scenes, and fully developed characters.

Opportunities for Wise Learners (OWL) was developed out of a need to serve high-achieving students who

did not qualify for gifted services. Students qualify for OWL by scoring in the 92nd-96th in their age percentile range on one or more areas of the CogAT, scoring highly proficient on AASA, or through teacher referral. OWL relates to the overall curriculum similarly to gifted and is structured as a pull-out program.

Potential candidates for Advanced Math take a summative assessment; if they score an 80% or higher, they are placed in a math class that is one grade level above their current level. Students are continually assessed on standards taught in the classroom daily and participate in collaborative projects and hands-on assignments to increase their math knowledge. Strategies that enhance learning are mathematical visuals, instructional math videos, graphics, and even catchy songs to clearly demonstrate math concepts in a fun and engaging way.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Senita Valley students who experience difficulty accessing the general education curriculum within their classrooms are referred to the Student Solutions Team (SST) for additional guidance on strategies for the teacher to implement. The SST is composed of five classroom teachers, the Behavior Specialist, and the School Psychologist. To begin, the teacher gathers data through observation and assessments and presents their concerns to the SST. After additional data is collected, the team meets to determine if the student requires additional interventions or educational testing. The SST continually checks in with teachers to monitor student progress.

Once an IEP is written, students are provided specialized instruction within their classroom that addresses deficits and assists them in accessing the curriculum. Lessons revolve around the standards being taught that week so students are exposed to the concept on their instructional level. Students' IEP goals are progress monitored weekly and instruction is modified/adjusted to encourage growth. Most students in the inclusion program at Senita Valley arrive with qualifying categories already identified due to early interventions. The program uses targeted support from special needs paraprofessionals who support the students within the general eduction classroom while assuming student competence and facilitating independence. Students receive minute to minute learning no matter their ability with accommodations and modifications within the general education classroom with their same-age peers.

The SVE Behavior Specialist runs a successful "Check In/Check Out" program for students in need of additional behavioral support and monitoring. Students earn a certain number of points per goal on their check in/check out sheet for each section of their day. This structured incentive program builds positive behavior in the classroom and strengthens the students' relationship with their peers and teachers.

3d. English Language Learners:

The English Language Learner population at Senita Valley has increased over the past few years, and specific and effective plans have been put in place to accommodate the needs of those students. Our English Language students receive an hour of targeted instruction every day to help support their English language development. This targeted instruction looks different for each student, but typical supports we provide are pull-out or push-in instruction, as well as online programs our English Language students can access during times like reading centers. We have three staff members who are specifically assigned to help the individual needs of each child who qualifies for our English Language program. While programs are utilized to specifically support their needs, such as individual iPads with Google Translate, teachers have recognized that pairing our English Language students together with classroom leaders helps them not only develop their language, but also their confidence in academics and social situations. In terms of building confidence with this group of students, we have also provided opportunities for them to have a structured intersession time during our Fall Break and Spring Break. This additional learning opportunity is structured in a way where our English Language students have a chance to become more confident in their English speaking skills and also have fun on field trips in the community.

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

Senita Valley is also home to the Ventana Institute, a structured Emotional Disability Private Placement Program, that serves third through fifth grade students district-wide who have severe, challenging behavior as a result of an emotional disability. Students who potentially qualify for the Ventana program are placed through a referral process with our district Behavior Education Support Team (BEST) who then works through an intensive data collection process with the student in their general education class before potential qualification for our Ventana placement. This program has a structured, tiered incentive system that encourages positive student behavior. Students participate in Community Based Instruction (CBI) to support their learning and coping skills, and all students participate in a weekly social group where they build peer interaction skills. The students in this program are supported in various ways, such as in their weekly visits with therapy dogs, and students are provided the opportunity to practice their skills with school community projects and taking care of classroom pets. When students have demonstrated the ability to do so successfully, they are given the opportunity to integrate back into specialty area classes, recess, and regular general education classes at Senita Valley. The Ventana Institute is the epitome of hope for our students who are part of that program.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Senita Valley, we strive for 100% engagement of all students 100% of the time through our Bell to Bell philosophy. Teachers constantly check for student engagement and understanding; in each lesson teachers check for understanding through verbal and nonverbal cues, whiteboard responses, monitoring discussions, group work, and independent assessments.

The culture of Senita Valley is upheld through school-wide programs such as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and the Be Kind Campus program. Over thirty after school clubs and activities are offered on campus to help students enrich their learning after school while engaging in positive and collaborative interactions. One such club is our Be Kind Club. This club is connected to the Ben's Bells Project, a local non-profit community organization created to encourage people to spread kindness and positivity. Multiple murals have been created with Ben's Bells and represent our campus well. Relationships and positive interactions are a valued aspect of our school's culture.

The Mustang Leadership Academy is the all-encompassing name for the character education program at Senita Valley. The Mustang Leadership Academy is the focal point of character instruction and development in our students, particularly by promoting leadership character traits and implementing positive behavior incentives. Staff members and a group of parents were invested in the creation of the program, specifically in developing the monthly character traits that are taught to our students. There are multiple programs that have been created within the Mustang Leadership Academy, including the Leadership Lunch Group, the Little Leaders after school club, and the Leadership Peer Mentoring program.The Leadership Lunch Group was created for first through fifth grade students who have a significant potential for leadership but need specific direction and guidance in those skills. The after-school leadership programs are also targeted for students to build their leadership skills and then coach peers in their classrooms, on the playground, and even outside of school.

Within the Mustang Leadership Academy, students can also earn school money to buy a wide variety of items at the school store every other Friday. Students are encouraged to demonstrate not just academic achievement to earn school money, but also leadership qualities such as kindness, following directions, and being prepared to learn. The Mustang Leadership Academy teaches students from kindergarten through fifth grade to uphold the same expectations school-wide, and this common language has been proven useful to not only school staff but also within our students' homes.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Communication to parents and community members is conducted in multiple ways. Before school starts, we have Meet the Teacher Night where families are invited to their child's new classroom. In addition, teachers record an informational video highlighting the curriculum, expectations, and goals for the grade level. Our school sends out a weekly newsletter to notify parents of school-wide events, tutoring and after school clubs, and any other information parents should know about campus activities. Teachers send out weekly newsletters and weekly formative reports communicating the child's performance on that week's formative assessments. The principal sends out a monthly newsletter to families as well, and there is an annual Town Hall the principal hosts to share school data and goals with parents.

Senita Valley hosts a variety of annual school events including Red Ribbon Week, Love of Reading Week, Junior Achievement Day, and our Turkey Trot. During Red Ribbon Week, the Pima County Sheriff's Department is invited to show and explain how they keep our community safe. During Love of Reading Week, we take the opportunity to show the value and importance of reading. Community members including firefighters, police officers, border patrol agents, local news anchors, and more come to the school and read to students. Another popular event, the annual Turkey Trot, is held before Thanksgiving as a way to encourage exercise and fitness.

Our students also participate in district sponsored events to benefit the community such as the Diaper Drive (Southern Arizona Diaper Bank), Vail Community Food Bank Drive, and shoe and pajama drives to benefit the Tucson Tribe and Casa de los Ninos. These resources also directly impact some of our own Senita Valley families.

Our PTSA organized events like the Spell-A-Thon, Spring Fling, Mudventure, the Mother/Son Dance, Daddy/Daughter Dance, Paint Night, and more. In the past, these events have raised over $30,000 which has been used for improvements around campus, instructional classroom materials including classroom sets of Chromebooks, shade covers for our playgrounds, and more. When families and community members are involved and volunteer their time, students witness the value of giving back. When students volunteer and give back, they feel a sense of belonging and ownership. Whether families donate their time or money, they are fostering and modeling a desire to help others. Community service mirrors one of our school's guiding principles states, "It takes a village to raise a child".

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers are incredibly valued and supported at Senita Valley. As one of the most important stakeholder groups, teachers are encouraged to be innovative and share their insights into classroom best practices, academics, and social/emotional learning for students. Senita Valley utilizes instructional time in the classroom well, but also models that same effectiveness with utilizing teachers' time regarding professional development. Teachers are often asked what support they need, and professional development is tailored to them from there.

One example of the impact that teachers have regarding sharing their opinions and needs is writing instruction. Teachers felt like they struggled in delivering writing instruction to students, as well as not being given enough time to teach writing strategies and give specific feedback. A few professional development sessions were designed to give teachers the tools they needed in order to feel more successful in that content area, and the master schedule was rearranged to incorporate a block of time dedicated specifically to writing instruction so it would not have to compete with reading instruction. Both of these were effective in increasing writing scores; more importantly, though, teachers felt like they have a voice and that they were heard.

There are a multitude of leadership opportunities at Senita Valley for our students through the Mustang Leadership Academy, but there are also ample opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles. An obvious leadership role is that of the Instructional Team Leader for each teacher group; there are also leadership opportunities with being National Elementary Honor Society and Student Council club sponsors, or being part of the Technology Team, PBIS Team, Achievement Team, Student Solutions Team, and more. These leadership opportunities allow for teachers to not only get paid an additional stipend for their time and effort, but also impact our school in a positive way beyond the classroom.

Finally, our community is incredibly effective at showing support for our teachers and staff. there have been many times that a local church or other community organizations have provided lunch or treats for our staff just to show their appreciation. Whenever teachers need supplies, our families are quick to provide whatever is needed. Many grants have been given to teachers to be able to spend money on things they need as well. Our teachers work hard, and our community works hard to show their appreciation.

4. School Leadership:

The principal of Senita Valley is a member of ASA and multiple committees across the district to best represent Senita Valley. She is the Honorary Commander of the 755th Operations Support Squadron at Davis Monthan Air Force Base, which is a position that bridges the gap between the Vail community and Davis Monthan community. She partners with educational leaders to develop plans that extend student learning and consistently attends seminars, conferences, and professional development to maintain Senita Valley's high level of achievement. Staff, student, and community feedback is sought after and valued; decisions are made with multiple members' input and a careful process with the students' best interests in mind.

Setting a positive example for leadership begins with administration and is modeled to team leaders for each group of staff on campus. Staff apply for all leadership roles, writing a letter about their "why" and how they can best impact others in that leadership role. When the Instructional Team Leaders (ITLs) are selected, they attend a retreat where leadership goals, beliefs, and processes are expanded. The retreat is a time where all aspects of Senita Valley are looked at through the lens of what is best for kids, digging into what is needed to help the students achieve their potential. ITLs also meet weekly to discuss agenda items related to curriculum, school structure, goals, community events, and items that staff need to be informed on.

The district coaching program is another leadership opportunity that teachers can be trained for to support staff on campus. The coaching program is imperative to the academic success of our school. Master teachers serve as Cognitive, Literacy, and Math coaches and specifically support new staff to ensure teaching responsibilities and expectations are communicated and implemented.

The principal strives to build leadership skills not only in students but also in her staff. She builds confidence in her staff to develop their own leadership styles with the freedom of innovation within the guidelines of decisions being made in the light of what is best for students. She has mentored multiple aspiring principals in their leadership programs, and has been intentional on giving them the tools they need to be successful in any leadership opportunity that may present itself in their futures.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Senita Valley clearly embraces the diversity of all students; all students are welcomed and all students are taught that they can be leaders, regardless of their background or ability levels in the classroom. The Mustang Leadership Academy is build on the "ACT Statement". The ACT Statement is recited daily by all students and encourages students to ACT, which stands for: "In the Vail schools, we Are respectful and trustworthy, Care about each other, and Take responsibility." We foster open communication with our students and their families that encourages different viewpoints without judgement or condescension.

Senita Valley staff employs a variety of strategies for all learners to meet their diverse needs and maximize their learning potential. Our teachers intentionally build strong, meaningful relationships with their students on a daily basis. Even when students from other classes rotate to another teacher's classroom for Reteach and Enrich, our teachers make an effort to know each child's name by having name tents out for them. Teachers listen and respond to student questions and concerns in a way that makes them feel valued and respected; they are purposefully aware of students' home lives and interests outside of the classroom. Often in meetings like the Student Solutions Team or the Achievement Team, the teachers are already familiar with the children who are being discussed because teachers strive to know as many students as they can, even outside of their own classrooms.

Home visits are an additional way that teachers can connect with their students and their families outside of the classroom. Often these visits are a time where a teacher plays a board game with a student in their home, or does a craft with them, or attends their sporting events. The stories from both students and teachers regarding these visits are always shared with a smile.

Within the classroom, teachers incorporate learning strategies into each lesson that allow personal connections within content areas. At the beginning of each lesson, teachers ask questions to activate prior knowledge and elicit responses that contribute to group discussions. Students are empowered to share their thoughts that bring different points of view to these discussions because of their diverse experiences, which in turn, enhances their "buy in" and understanding of the lesson. Students often work with a partner, or in small groups, to complete an assignment which builds confidence through collaboration for our students.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The program that has been the most instrumental in the success of Senita Valley is Math Reteach and Enrich, a program that has been in place since the school opened. Because standards are taught at such a rapid pace, it is imperative that students have the opportunity to have the content retaught if necessary. Math Reteach and Enrich is a data-based program that utilizes weekly formative data to help differentiate between groups of students. At the end of the week of math instruction, teachers analyze the math formative data to determine if each individual student understood the concept to proficiency, or if they were minimally or partially proficient. Students are then grouped together for either the Reteach class or the Enrich class for the following week. Reteach and Enrich is done on a daily basis from 12:30 - 1:00 for the entire school; specialists are also assigned to each grade level as additional support.

Once students are placed into groups on Friday, teachers update the spreadsheet in their pods to indicate which classroom students will go to starting on Monday during the Reteach and Enrich block. The parameters for the Reteach group is that the teacher who had the most students in proficiency as based on the previous week's formatives is the Reteach teacher since they clearly understood how to deliver the content effectively. The Reteach group should be small, no more than about 20 students; if there were more students who did not pass the formative, two Reteach groups are then created. The Reteach students stay with the Reteach teacher for the entire week. The final parameter is that the resources that are used for the Reteach class are all new; the students in that class should have the opportunity to relearn the content with new and engaging resources instead of sitting through the same lesson from the previous week.

The Enrich classes all rotate throughout the week, so a teacher will see three to four different groups of students based on the grade level sizes. The specific parameters for these classes is that the standard must be enriched to the highly proficient level, teachers have minimal to no direct instruction with the students, and the resources are hands-on, project-based activities that the students can complete in half an hour by working collaboratively. Worksheets cannot be used during an Enrich class in order to be able to provide that group of students with a true math-based enrichment.

This program is a direct contributor to the success of all of our students as demonstrated by increased formative, benchmark, and state test scores. Math Reteach and Enrich is the epitome of doing what is best for kids.