

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

Official School Name Garfield Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4487 Oregon Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City San Diego State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92116-3018

County San Diego

Telephone (619) 362-4300 Fax _____

Web site/URL <https://garfield.sandiegounified.org/> E-mail mmurphy2@sandi.net

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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Lamont Jackson E-mail ljackson@sandi.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name San Diego Unified Tel. (619) 362-4300

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Ms. Sabrina Bazzo
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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):
- 126 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 24 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 22 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 172 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	24
K	31
1	39
2	53
3	43
4	46
5	29
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	265

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1.4 % Asian
 - 15.9 % Black or African American
 - 59.9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1.6 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 15.9 % White
 - 4.9 % 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: 18%

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

COVID-19 included closure of many businesses and this presented many economic challenges for families. We had a significant number of families relocate out of the area.

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	35
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	43
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	239
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.18
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	18

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

Amharic, Tygrinya, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilocano, Samoa, Spanish, Ukranian, Russian, Creole Haitian, French, and Albanian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 25 %
65 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 78 %

Total number students who qualify: 207

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 40 %
Total number of students served 106

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>21</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>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>31</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>49</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>2</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 2 %
Total number of students served: 5

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

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.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	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 17:1

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	90%	96%	96%	95%	95%
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.

Garfield Elementary provides students with equitable access to learning spaces that envelope them in kindness and inspire belonging. We are a "thinking" culture designed for problem solvers. We center high quality, research authenticated instruction anchored in language development that inspires San Diego students to bravely achieve the goal of career and college readiness.

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

https://www.sandiegounified.org/about/policies_procedures/nondiscrimination_statement

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

Garfield Elementary School reopened after closing due to the pandemic with a new vision: Kind heart! Fierce Mind! Brave Spirit! The educators and families of Garfield Elementary adopted this vision in response to rebuilding our community following our return to in person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We sought to ingrain this vision into the minds of each and every member of our community in celebration of the resilience shown by our students who triumphed in the face of the difficult experience of moving from in-person learning to online learning and then back to in-person learning under the new conditions established by the CDC. Our students demonstrated an ability to be flexible and adapt to the change of masking, regular handwashing, and keeping a 6 ft. "bubble" around them. They showed up like the leaders we want them to be! Accepting change has become a goal of every adult after watching students' model that change does not mean the end, but instead, a new beginning with immense possibilities---it's all about mindset! The study of how mindset effects learning, social relationships, and our thinking patterns and thus our emotions and behavior can be found in classified meetings with staff, meetings with teachers, and parents as well as with students in their monthly Connection Meetings with the principal in their classrooms. Our students' response to the life events brought on by the pandemic have served as a springboard for changing our overall approach schooling. We have learned so much from our students and in response have become more reflective about our work. Our goal is to create a school culture where students know they are cared for and have a strong sense of belonging a culture of inclusion that celebrates differences and centers human dignity by executing district and site policies designed to create a safe space for all students, families, and staff.

Upon our return to in-person learning, our students demonstrated a desire for connection with their peers that showed up quickly in a reduction in complaints of bullying or pattern mistreatment and an exceptional all-around reduction in student conflict. This data was reflected in our state data related to suspensions. We noted quite a few students with a high interest in making others feel cared for and a resistance to negative exclusionary behaviors. Garfield educators capitalized on this positive energy, and we experience students with kind hearts open to showing compassion to themselves and others. We are proud of the resilience shown by students and the educators of Garfield are inspired by the bravery students displayed by soldiering through a pandemic and returning to school READY TO LEARN!

Garfield's roots run deep in America's finest city. The original school began in 1913 in the Normal Heights community of San Diego, California. Prior to the rebuild in 1999, Garfield was located near what was then the original San Diego State College. San Diego Unified School District included Garfield in a remodeling and rebuilding project in central San Diego in the North Park neighborhood and the school was officially dedicated by the Board of Directors in May of 1999. San Diego is California's second largest district in the state and Garfield is one of 172 schools. We provide education for students from ages 4-11 years old and offer both general and special education for students in transitional kindergarten through 5th grade. Our school is named for the 20th president of the United States, James A. Garfield. President Garfield served 9 terms in the House of Representatives and while a member of the House, he was a staunch supporter of the Emancipation Proclamation. President Garfield openly advocated and praised the passage of the 15th Amendment granting Black Americans the right to vote. The patriotic work of our school's namesake is essential to our school's focus on ensuring human dignity for all and our district's effort to center anti-bias and antiracism work.

Garfield is small in size, but rich in tradition. The educators serving at Garfield have a firm commitment to the craft of teaching and have built a brand around creating spaces that bring belonging and connection front and center. The North Park community of San Diego is fortunate to have educators that ask two central questions whenever change is needed: Does this change support kids? How will we measure the impact of the change in the lives of students? These questions challenge us to center the needs of children and not the preferences of adults. Educators at Garfield have a deep sense of ownership and understand that student success is not determined by a student's economic, cultural, or linguistic background. Our belief is that student success relies on our ability to harness collective teacher efficacy and create an instructionally coherent program that meets the needs of the students we serve and engages their families as partners in learning. Teachers at Garfield understand that ALL student success is determined by teachers cultivating a

growth mindset and a commitment to staying in touch with current research specifically in educational neuroscience. The educators and staff of Garfield stand by this quote from educational neuroscientist, Louis Cozolino: "Our ability to learn is regulated by how we are treated by our teachers, at home and in the classroom." As such, educators at school and caregivers at home have access to workshops, publications, and articles on trauma informed care, relationship building, and developing a mindset that is ready to learn about cultures different from our own. The educators at Garfield are committed to not only providing high quality teaching and learning that can be monitored through data analysis, but also seek to do that work from a place of care and empathy that is felt by students and their families.

Garfield is a Title I school that has been entrusted with our district's goal of ensuring that every school in San Diego provides the neighborhood it serves with a campus that is physically and emotionally safe, welcoming, and inclusive regardless of a student's zip code. Care and belonging matter in San Diego and Garfield aims to be a school that manifests the highest goals imaginable for children in our community. Every year, the educators at Garfield take the time to intently focus on research that shows a clear connection between how we as humans are cared for and how that care and feeling of safety impacts learning. Educational neuroscience is the foundation of our professional learning, and we believe every human brain that comes through our doors owns the capacity to learn and is limitless. We tie all professional learning to the science of how the brain learns and openly challenge our assumptions about students and focus on the conditions created by adults.

San Diego embraces diversity and Garfield joins our great city in valuing cultural and linguistic diversity and our embrace includes neurotypical and neurodivergent learners. We provide both general and self-contained special education classes and we are most proud of our plan for "neverstreaming" and inclusive education.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Garfield is a Title I school with a third of students identified as multilingual. 78% of our families are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Our students need access to systematic literacy and language development that is designed to prevent gaps in instruction that lead to learning loss. As a result, we use the California Common Core Standards (CCCS) aligned with our state standards for English language development as the foundation for our ELA program. Garfield educators are engaged in action research to determine the impact of using a cognitive science lens in addressing the opportunity gap faced by marginalized groups of students. Effective instruction includes students having sequential access to the common core standards in every grade and ensuring lessons provide explicit, direct, and interactive instruction in the system and structure of the English language. The educators of Garfield believe both English learners and English only students need scaffolded access to direct instruction in speaking and listening in English to increase their ability to negotiate complex text and develop word knowledge. At the core of instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening is the study of the system and structure of English. We use an English immersion approach that benefits both English only and English learners with the goal of infusing language development across all subject areas. Speaking and listening are prerequisite skills needed for composing written messages in English. As such, instruction in the language system of English is vital to creating independent writers who have a strong command of the language. Educators at Garfield receive spiraling professional learning in educational neuroscience that takes the focus away from the teacher as problem solver and thinker and transfers those roles to students. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English focuses on teaching students HOW to learn by thinking critically. Ultimately, the goal is for students to be intentionally aware of themselves as problem solvers with the ability to think deeply about text.

To meet this end, all students have access to high-quality instruction across every classroom and grade. Educators at Garfield create coherence by ensuring that students have access to common curriculum. Guaranteed viable curriculum (GVC) is the standard for curriculum adoption in our district. GVC are teaching tools that meet specific criteria. One of those criteria is clear learning targets aligned to the common core standards and used to establish success criteria. Additionally, GVC includes differentiation for advanced learners, English learners, students with special needs, and students in need of intervention. GVC also includes ways of teaching students to monitor their own progress using proficiency scales that are normed by grade level. Finally, GVC accelerates student learning using program assessments designed to inform instruction. Our students have access to four ELA programs that are guaranteed viable curriculum. Benchmark is our district adopted curriculum and we bolster our ELA program using the DBQ Project, ACT Now, and Lucy Calkins Writers' Workshop.

As it relates to teaching listening and reading comprehension, the "how" on teaching reading follows tried and true research on the impact of teaching students to be problem solvers using explicit direct instruction on the use of Reading Strategies and Reading Skills. Reading Strategies identify what the "reader" does while reading text and Reading Skills are what the author includes in the text that must be unpacked by the reader using specific strategies. Readers at Garfield are taught the academic language for the Reading Strategies, learn a gesture to remind them of the strategy, and have language stems or frame sentences to aid readers in discussing ideas about texts using academic language during whole class and partner discussion. The use of Reading Strategies as a springboard to explore student thinking through discussion is a method our teachers use to create equitable access to learning for students by making sure to decrease the divide between home and school. Creating space for the funds of knowledge students bring from home creates inclusion, is culturally responsive, and gives our educators an opportunity to grow their own cultural competency using the diversity of culture and thought that is found right in front of them in the classroom with their students. All reading instruction challenges students to first identify the success criteria for using a Reading Strategy with text and what Reading Skills they will learn to unpack. Educators then immediately move students into collaborative conversations to make a connection with the learning target and the essential questions for the text.

Formative assessments from Benchmark are used to assess student learning and summative assessments are done using FAST and Fountas and Pinnell. Formative assessments for reading are also done weekly using Achieve 3000. PLCs select shared rubrics for writing for assessment in all writing domains. Writing is identified below as one of our signature exemplary practices and instruction and assessment in this area is described in that section of our application.

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

Envision is CCCS aligned and is our district adoption for mathematics. Central to CCCS for Mathematics is the inclusion of the 8 Mathematical Practices which are highlighted in all Envision lessons. PLCs use both NY Engage and Envision to provide interactive lessons that support our English language learners. NY Engage aligns language objectives with content objectives and supports our work integrating ELD during math. PLC's mine the talents and experience of the entire team by creating a yearlong plan to create coherence between the two curricula.

The power in our mathematics instruction comes from teachers' adherence to systematic teaching that is explicit, direct, and interactive. The target is to teach at the pace of learning with frequent checks for understanding. Our work with educational neuroscience has had a profound impact on how teachers plan math instruction and brain-based teaching purports that cognition drives participation. We know the one doing the work is learning at the highest level. As such, teachers open instruction centering students and focusing on language development and activating critical thinking. Clear learning targets are posted and discussed. Most language objectives in mathematics are focused on teaching students to know and use content language in mathematics. Lessons begin with students deconstructing the learning target, clarifying unfamiliar words, and discussing their background knowledge in groups prior to the teacher calling upon students to share their thinking. A high leverage move teachers make in math is discussing the Math Practice that is highlighted in the lesson. Identifying success criteria is also a key element of instruction in mathematics to help students assess their progress at the end of the lesson. We serve a substantial number of ELLs and highly supported guided practice is essential to increase the number of students meeting the learning target by the end of the lesson.

For assessment, teachers use the independent practice students complete at the end of every lesson to collect formative assessment data daily. Teachers also use the assessments from our adopted program for formative assessments as well as collecting summative data using our district's FAST assessment system. A new strategy we are using this year is allowing students to reassess. The goal of assessing is measuring learning and not producing grades, as such, students who perform lower than 70% are provided reteaching and are reassessed.

Analysis of our summative data from state testing revealed that our students struggled in mathematical communication. Mathematical communication is the ability to reason and think critically about mathematics as well as translate that thinking into language. To close the learning gap in mathematical communication, our PLCs use Board Math and Problem of the Month (POM). Board Math provides daily review across the various domains of mathematics (algebraic functions, numeracy, geometry, etc.). Teachers bring students to a communal area and work through problems orally. Students collectively read and discuss problems using protocols for collaborative conversation and solve them as a team. POM is used school wide to promote problem solving and to give students practice in the first of the 8 mathematical practices: "Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them." PLCs craft POMs around a shared theme and develop students' mathematical reasoning by working on non-routine word problems. Classes then connect and share how they each solved the problem. POMs work from the principle of "low floor, high ceiling" and allows multiple entry points and increases the teacher's ability to provide differentiation.

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

Teachers offer instruction for Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) using the University of California's Lawrence Hall of Science (LHS) exploration kits that include the teacher's guide to the standards and lessons as well as all materials needed to allow students to have hands-on science experience.

LHS is designed to give students a peek into how scientists use cognitive exploration to answer questions and find solutions. Teachers also use our district-created Garden Science program which is also aligned to NGSS. Science instruction using these platforms guide students in thinking scientifically by using multisensory learning to conduct investigations.

Central to instruction under NGSS is teaching students to gather evidence to explain phenomena. Science is taught by introducing students to natural phenomena and students are then trained to use science knowledge to make predictions to explain naturally occurring events in the earth. Instruction centers on engaging students as thought partners sharing evidence-based ideas that first allow students to make predictions about phenomena and then move on to investigating the phenomena. Instruction also includes teaching students how to create solutions to problems making phenomena the context. The investigation process integrates ELA and includes reading informational text and writing in science about real-world applications of their findings in science.

Our work with garden science is in partnership with our PTO and local community partners. Our parents secured the help of two local organizations as well as parents of our school to help build and maintain garden beds that allow all students in all classes to use our district's garden science program. The curriculum provides instruction in life science using fun, hands-on activities. Students experience life science outdoors and can connect with nature through their classroom gardens. Students learn how soil, water, sun, plants, and animals are all interconnected. The overall goal of garden science is to help students understand how their classroom's garden life process relates to their own lives and the wider environment where they live. Garden science gives classes many opportunities for outdoor learning and teachers plan field trips for students to explore natural habitats throughout San Diego.

Teachers use the assessments that are included in LHS. Teachers also use students writing from their science notebooks to measure student learning. Assessments in garden science are project based as they are done collaboratively.

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

Multidisciplinary methods of teaching are used for social science. Our Houghton Mifflin curriculum is not only used to guarantee students have access to California State History-Social Science standards, but also to teach reading and writing. We also fold in social development and integrate English language development using Harkness Discussion Strategies. Our approach to teaching social studies includes educational tours to state parks in San Diego and visits to Fort Cross to study California history and study of American history at the Maritime Museum of San Diego.

Our most impactful work in social studies is the use of the DBQ Project which is designed to prepare students in grades 4-5 for the rigor of Honors and Advanced Placement courses in secondary. SDUSD seeks to ensure students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds have equal access to advance placement courses in secondary education. We support this work at the elementary level by making sure students experience age-appropriate rigor in preparation for advanced placement work. The DBQ Project gives students access to complex text, centers discussion, and addresses the CCCS standards for persuasive writing. The DBQ Project provides students with primary and secondary sources for analysis of historical documents. The use of the DBQ Project creates space for high energy debate which is a part of every DBQ experience. The work begins with exposing students to multiple documents to use as sources to build their knowledge around an historical event. Students then move on to what appears to be their favorite part of the program, Harkness Discussion Strategies. Teachers use Harkness to promote dialogue in class about units of study. Reading, thinking, and discussion are focus points during social studies instruction and teachers use Harkness to drive discussion among students by asking probing questions. The highlight of the Harkness approach is that it centers students and shifts the focus away from teacher-student dialogue and to student-to-student dialogue. Harkness teaches students how to draw conclusions from reading expository text and build an argument based on sources they have read. Most importantly, it teaches students how to disagree in a respectful manner, honor different views, and work collaboratively. Writing is an integral part of student learning in social studies and every DBQ Project unit of study includes a culminating persuasive writing task that challenges students to use multiple sources to defend their position on an historical event.

Assessments in social studies are done using our Houghton Mifflin program and student understanding is assessed using the culminating persuasive essays produced for the DBQ Project. Since Harkness is a large part of social studies, teachers also use the Harkness Discussion Participation Rubric which allows students to self-assess and set goals for moving from beginning, emerging, proficient, to advanced in specific skill areas like preparation, listening, mediating, poise and focus.

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

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

Our program for 4-year-olds is our Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK) program. With language development in mind, our program offers learning experiences anchored in building our youngest students' English speaking and listening skills as well as disrupting possible future reading challenges. The core curricula used are Benchmark and Heggerty for English language arts (ELA). For math, our district Math Department convened a committee of early education teachers to create curriculum that connects the California Preschool Learning Foundations and CCCS math standards for kindergarten. These lessons also center the 8 Mathematical Practices and ensure students use manipulatives as they build skills in numeracy.

Teachers in UTK must have a keen understanding of the role language plays in literacy and focus a lot of attention on using songs, chants, and poetry to build students speaking skills. Our students in UTK also have direct instruction in structured student interaction or collaborative conversations to build their language skills. Teachers in early education use the protocols for collaborative talk to teach students how to engage their peers in discussion. Our Benchmark program also has English language lessons that teachers use in alignment with shared reading texts. Parents have access to workshops by our UTK teachers to share strategies on language development that can be used at home.

We believe a program centering phonological and phonemic awareness has the power to disrupt patterns that thwart reading progress. As such, our teachers use Heggerty curricula to provide consistent, explicit, and interactive instruction in manipulating spoken English. Teachers use a systematic approach to moving students through basic to advanced levels of instruction in phonological awareness. Students start with syllabication then move to onset rime and then to phonemes (single letter sounds). Understanding phonemes is key to developing phonemic awareness and teachers do both whole group and small group work developing students' ability to manipulate phonemes. All current research shows that mastery of phonological and phonemic awareness are success indicators for students on their way to developing proficient reading skills. Our focus on phonological and phonemic awareness aligns to our work in K-3 by making certain students who start in kindergarten arrive with the primary building block for developing emerging reading skills and that is phonemic awareness.

Our kindergarten teachers report that the impact of UTK is evident in literacy in math and ELA but identify UTK's greatest impact in the area of special education. Kindergarten teachers report a significant decrease in the number of students arriving without having intervention in speech and language development. UTK teachers identify students who need special education support for language and articulation and this early identification and intervention has led to more students graduating from our special education for speech before 3rd grade. Deficits in language and articulation can lead to students not mastering phonemic awareness and this intervention by UTK teachers has been invaluable.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Garfield provides a VAPA pathway and the arts are offered to students in grades UTK-5. Students in UTK and kindergarten have weekly ballet lessons. Students in grades 1-3 have weekly lessons in visual arts using a variety of media that are anchored in literacy. During art class, art is linked to reading and writing. Students in grades 4-5 have choir and band. Twice a year, students lead an art exhibit as all teachers teach art weekly. The first show connects art and reading literacy. The second show integrates math and science with art. Parents are invited to recitals for ballet, choir, and band. In addition, there are 3 whole school performances held for parents to attend throughout the year as each class also has choir lessons led by classroom teachers.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students have weekly access to sixty minutes of instruction in Physical Education (PE) that are designed to meet California's Physical Education Model Content Standards. All instruction in PE is delivered by a teacher holding a physical education credential. Our PE teacher also creates a yearlong plan using the standards and lessons are provided in the area of aerobic movement skills, nutrition, and health. Individual goal setting is part of the instruction for our 5th grade students as they have state mandated fitness assessment that is administered by our PE teacher. For the other grades, classes establish team goals and are expected to collaborate and help each other learn as they work toward a common objective.

All special education classes participate in PE and also have access to adaptive PE with a special education PE teacher.

Teamwork is a focal point to all lessons in PE and used as a way to build community and ignite motivation. Our PE teacher's use of goal setting is aligned to our professional learning in educational neuroscience. A core principle taught by our PE teacher is that goal setting allows students to biologically program their brains to create new behaviors and strive for change. Students use notebooks to document their goals and write reflections about their learning during PE.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

SDUSD began to provide "1 to 1" access to technology prior to the pandemic. This means that every student in our school was provided a Chromebook in the 2017-2018 school year. That same year, teachers were trained on using the Clever platform and provided direct instruction to their students in caring for and using the tools and supports provided by their Chromebook. The goal was to first get students familiar with how to use the Chromebook and its many resources prior to having them use applications on Clever. Students were also taught by teachers how to troubleshoot problems with their devices to foster their independence. Our students' familiarity with technology resulted in our students having a smooth transition to online learning during school closures.

Now that we are back to in-person learning, our goal is to ensure that technology does not take the place of teaching by establishing agreements as a team to include technology in our daily master schedule that is used schoolwide. We have established timeframes that are shared across grade levels for students to have skill building practice using Achieve 3000, Smarty Ants, and ST Math. The goal is to have an accountability measure in place to make sure that technology is used to bolster instruction and not replace it. Students with disabilities who need communication devices to engage peers and staff have iPads. The applications on the iPads for communication are mostly used by students with autism and teachers as well as paraprofessionals do one to one instruction with students to build their fluency in using the devices to talk with speech. Newcomers are also provided devices for translation that they use in class and at home. We have a significant number of Russian and Ukrainian students who are at the beginning level of learning English. Our goal is for students to use their first language while learning English and the translation devices aid them in understanding concepts taught by the teacher. We want ELLs to feel safe and confident being in a space where the language of instruction is English and the translation devices help us meet that goal. The

translation devices have proven to also be a great support in helping ELLs and English only students form positive relationships at recess and they are an invaluable resource to teachers when working with students in class. Our teachers work to increase student talk time using collaborative discussions and the translation devices aid students during group discussions.

We have a deliberate and intentional focus on students being fluent in the steps for the writing process and this includes publishing their writing. All classrooms have their own printers to facilitate publishing of student writing. Access to printers as well as Chromebooks prepares our students for the secondary experience and students arrive in middle school with technology skills that support their success.

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

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Intervention for students not meeting grade level standards has two targets: early identification and regular assessment of students' response to intervention. At the start of the school year, we use the first two weeks to conduct beginning of the year (BOY) assessments for reading, writing, and mathematics. At the close of our BOY assessment window, PLCs have release time to analyze data and identify those students whose data show "some risk" and "high risk." Our district testing system gives teachers specific information on each student's area of challenge within a subject area. In an effort to address mindset, we do not identify students by their performance level as we see the data as their present level and not their permanent level. We believe that tailored instruction and regular practice produces progress for all students. As such, students are not identified by performance level, but instead by the type of intervention they will need. Students whose data identifies them as "high risk" receive our Intensive Level Intervention while students identified as having "some risk" receive Strategic Level Intervention. Students who assess at these levels are also placed on a 20-day assessment cycle to increase the frequency of monitoring their progress. Data from our BOY assessments is used to create guided reading groups that occur daily in the classroom.

Students in need of Intensive Level Intervention receive both guided reading support in the classroom and also receive explicit direct instruction in phonological awareness with our Reading Recovery teacher or our Intensive Intervention Support teacher. While students working below grade level continue with small group fluency and comprehension with their classroom teacher all year in guided reading, they also have lessons with the Intensive Intervention Support teacher focused on developing their phonological/phonemic awareness and ability to identify high frequency words with automaticity. Intensive groups receiving pull out support have a class capacity of 10. The smaller class size allows the teacher to provide one to one support when needed in intervention and quickly assess students. Our goal is to have all students reading at grade level by the end of 2nd grade. As such, we have a Reading Recovery teacher on staff who meets one on one with first grade students diagnosing challenges and helping students progress to proficiency. Reading Recovery is used to reduce the possibility of students arriving in 2nd grade not on grade level.

Students in need of strategic intervention stay with their classroom teacher for guided reading, but the teacher also includes mini lessons focused on phonological awareness and high frequency words. These students are also assessed on a 20-day cycle.

The efficacy of our intervention work is grounded in regular assessments to monitor students' response to intervention to determine if the supports we are providing are producing gains. Assessments for students' response to intervention is designed to allow teachers to modify the work they do with students if data shows the teaching strategies used are not closing learning gaps.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

As previously mentioned, we assess students at the start of the year to gain baseline data on their proficiency level. Students who assess above grade level are provided enrichment to the program versus acceleration. The goal is to differentiate the lessons prepared by the teacher and take advanced learners deeper and not faster. Enrichment lessons are included in our adopted curriculum for math and reading. These lessons provide differentiation in ways that turn lessons into project-based learning opportunities. Benchmark is divided into units of study. Teachers allow groups of students working above grade level to do research on the unit of study in place of engaging in reading lessons that they have already mastered. This method allows students to build their knowledge in a specific topic by working for an extended time to investigate complex questions presented in the unit. Technology based research and discussion by groups turns into student created presentations that extend the learning in the unit.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Our support of students with disabilities applies the same targets we use for students performing below and above grade level. The goal is to identify learning disabilities early and closely observe students' response to interventions included in their individualized education plans (IEP). We use our RTI plan described above for students working below grade level to ensure we are not over identifying students to our special education program. Students who receive intervention are closely monitored to determine their rate of progress. Students are only referred to received special education services if they demonstrate that they are not making adequate progress in our intervention programs. Our intervention teachers also use the 20-day assessment cycle to determine if the strategies they are using are having an impact on student learning. Students who are not making adequate progress are referred to our Student Study Team (SST) which is made up of parents, classroom teachers, our principal, counselor, school psychologist, and education specialists.

The role of the SST is to ensure that we thoroughly review intervention data, attendance information, and the student's academic progress the previous year. This team also carefully investigates students' physical and mental health information to determine if there are medical issues hindering a student's progress. This work is vital because we want to accurately identify the type and severity of a student's disability to ensure that benchmarks are established that allow us to determine their rate of progress more closely.

Garfield provides support for students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. We provide both push-in and pull-out support for students with mild to moderate learning disabilities. For students with severe disabilities, we provide two well-staffed, self-contained classrooms. These classrooms include teachers who hold moderate/severe special education credentials and are staffed with paraprofessionals at a ratio of 1 adult for every 4 students. Our moderate/severe classrooms also have a maximum capacity of 12 students per class. We offer one moderate/severe classroom for students in grades UTK-2 and another class for students in grades 3-5. All students in our moderate/severe classrooms are fully included in the general education setting. Transition plans are written that define the conditions needed in the general education setting for students to thrive and subject areas they attend with their typically developing peers. All students in moderate/severe classes use the same daily schedule as their general education peers and attend recess, field trips, physical education, art, and lunch with typically developing students. We want our typically developing students to take on an inclusive mindset, so we do not separate students with disabilities. Our students with disabilities also need to feel acceptance and belonging and we make sure that happens by keeping students together.

3d. English Language Learners:

An outcome of educational equity is ensuring that multilingual students have daily access to both designated ELD (d-ELD) and integrated ELD (i-ELD). Garfield uses a tiered approach to d-ELD. Groups are developed based on cognitive development and language level. Students in tier one are newcomers or students who are at the beginning level of learning English. Tier two are students who are at the emergent level or higher and have not been reclassified. There are two groups in each tier that are grouped by cognitive development. One group is comprised of students in grades K-2 and the other group is for students in grades 3-5. Students have daily lessons from the ELD component of our Benchmark curriculum. ELLs also have tutoring after school that includes 30 minutes of work with Rosetta Stone and 30 minutes of

homework support.

Integrated ELD (i-ELD) challenges teachers to use a multidisciplinary approach to teaching language. Garfield teachers fuse instruction in speaking and listening in English across all subject areas using language objectives. Teachers connect all learning targets or content objectives to language objectives to create opportunities for ELLs to learn language during each subject area. Student engagement with language objectives is evidence of i-ELD and these objectives target vocabulary, language functions, morphology, and grammatical structures. Other high yield strategies used for i-ELD is the use of total physical response, anchor charts and graphic organizers as well as the use of songs and poetry to build language skills. Heterogeneous classrooms that allow ELLs access to their English only peers in cooperative grouping is another strategy used in all classrooms. All teachers use collaborative conversations to increase student use of English in the class and all teachers from UTK-5 have been trained on the protocols.

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

We are fortunate to have a department that supports us as we care for and educate our students facing homelessness. A liaison from our Youth in Transition department ensures that wrap around services are provided for students who lack a fixed, nighttime residence (homeless). We ensure that students facing housing challenges have immediate access to enrollment and our transportation department assists in ensuring students have transportation to and from school. We are fortunate to also have an on-site counselor who provides support to our families facing homelessness. Our counselor is diligent in keeping teachers abreast of resources available in our district and through the county of San Diego. Our Youth in Transition department provides clothing, school supplies, and hygiene products for students. Upon arrival to our school, all students facing homelessness are provided a backpack with school supplies and they are able to visit our book room and choose books they get to keep.

Tutoring is available before and after school for students as well as mental health services if they are needed. Our school provides free breakfast and lunch as well as a take home package with healthy snacks.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our professional learning for this school year is grounded in educational neuroscience. A focus of educational neuroscience is student engagement or, better said, how cognition impacts participation during instruction. A key area where teachers focus to increase students' metacognition and participation is through systematic instruction that is designed to increase student-talk time and decrease teacher-talk time at the start and throughout the lesson. Teachers use explicit, direct, and interactive approaches to delivering instruction. Research proves that goal setting increases students' cognition, so all lessons begin with a discussion of the learning target that calls out for students what they are supposed to know by the end of the lesson. The teacher also opens the floor for students to share their background knowledge related to the learning target. This creates a high energy discussion that includes deconstructing academic language they do not understand and making connections between the "known and unknown."

Positive learning environments require inclusion of all students so that students gain a sense of belonging and experience the classroom as a safe community. For this to happen, students need time for collaborative conversations with a partner or in groups as well as the assurance that they will be "called in" to the learning. We have made a concerted effort to move away from just calling on the students who volunteer quickly by raising their hands. We have the goal of "calling in" every student to share their thinking by the end of the school day. To do this, we utilize technology that allows for teachers to call upon non-volunteers using random turns. Teachers use tools that select student names and track who has and has not been "called in" to share their thinking. Teachers create emotional safety by providing processing time for students to think. Teachers elevate their work in this area by changing their own mindsets and not calling on students in search of correct responses, but instead making it clear to students that we are interested in hearing their thinking.

Our social and emotional work in the classroom is aimed at meeting our district's target of college and career readiness. The vision for college and readiness for the work force requires students to develop their emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills. Each of these areas play a major role in students' readiness for college and the workforce. All classes use the Morning Meetings strategy from Responsive Classrooms. Morning Meetings is a behavior management technique that targets students social and emotional needs. Teachers bring students to a common area for 15-20 minutes after breakfast which is served in the classroom. During Morning Meeting, students greet one another and pose a question to one another using a sentence stem. This is followed by each student sharing what they are thinking about and how it is making them feel. The class then moves on to setting a shared learning goal or intention. At the end of the day, the class goes back to the intention and discuss how well they did in meeting the expectations.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family engagement is essential to ensuring all students make adequate yearly progress. We engage our families through PTO, English Language Advisory Council (ELAC), and School Site Council (SSC). One of the ways we increase parents' and caregivers' engagement in school is through planning our PTO meetings around our VAPA events. Typically, our PTO uses the first 20 minutes of every performance to present information to parents and share opportunities for volunteering. This allows all families to participate in PTO whether or not they are paid members. PTO functions more as our liaison to families and coordinates family events to draw our community to our campus. Our PTO sponsors our garden science and coordinates volunteers who donate supplies and clean out the garden beds during the summer months. PTO also ensures that every classroom has a group of parents who assist with garden science. Additionally, our PTO sponsors monthly attendance challenges to help us decrease the number of students struggling with chronic absenteeism.

A local church and our neighborhood Rotary Club are our community partners. They support VAPA by providing art supplies and covering the cost of field trips to local museums and in school visits from artists.

A strength for Garfield is ELAC. The move to using Zoom for meetings has greatly increased participation as most of our families have two working adults and time is limited. ELAC meetings are designed to show parents ways they can enhance student learning. We attribute our high participation in ELAC to our continual reminder to parents that English is an addition to their child's linguistic repertoire and not a replacement for their native language. We provide workshops for parents during ELAC that encourage parents to read to their child in their native language. We also provide workshops on the building blocks for reading, using our technology-based programs, and developing students' automaticity with math facts.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Creating a professional culture is essential for retaining credentialed and classified staff. A professional culture is a climate where teachers are well informed of operational and instructional expectations and are included in the development of policies and procedures. One way we measure the professionalism of our culture is by how well staff new to our school can become acclimated to our community. Garfield has a high retention rate for both certificated and classified employees and this is achieved through a systematic process of making sure all staff are aware of our vision, mission, policies and procedures. It is systematic in that it does not only happen at the start of the year. We have a mid-year climate meeting to reflect on agreements we made in the Fall.

At the start of the year, the team has a full day meeting where we review our staff handbook which outlines both site and district operational procedures. At this meeting, we also review our vision and mission statement and determine if we want to change or modify any language. The goals from our Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) are also reviewed. Clarity on expectations and making sure staff know and understand our professional expectations is the primary work we do to make sure staff feel valued and have a sense of belonging. Shared understandings create community and reduce conflict. PLCs have made agreements to use shared master schedules and assessments to facilitate PLC collaboration time and we revisit those agreements to make sure everyone remains committed to the goal of creating schoolwide coherence.

Our professional learning plan for the year is created by our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and aligned to our district's goals. At the end of the school year, ILT meets with administration and reviews data from our district common assessments. The goal in analyzing the data is to find trends that show where a significant range of students have challenges and to identify academic strengths we can build on through professional learning. Our goal is to have spiraling professional learning throughout the year that focuses on creating equity by ensuring students have access to English language development, intervention, advanced enrichment, and behavior management practices. New to our professional learning plan this year is addressing the needs of two other marginalized groups: students with disabilities and Black Youth. The professional learning for students with disabilities has focused on making sure general education teachers know how to execute the modifications and accommodations called out in IEPs. For Black Youth, our work has been in ensuring that our classroom libraries reflect diversity inclusive of Black culture as well as making sure our classroom management practices are unbiased and equitable. Additionally, to increase the participation of parents of students with disabilities and Black Youth, we have moved to personal invitations sent by teachers for parents to participate in School Site Council, ELAC, and PTO.

4. School Leadership:

Garfield has one site administrator who has been assigned to our school for 2 years but has over 16 years of site leadership experience. Centering the needs of students and supporting teachers are the core beliefs of our school leadership. Our principal uses a distributed leadership framework that is inclusive of all stakeholders and is designed to allow our team to co-construct learning spaces that are emotionally and physically safe while at the same time promoting high student achievement. Our administration's goal is to ensure that our school provides high quality instruction not just for some students, but for all students regardless of their economic, linguistic, or cultural background. Our site leader uses decision making models aimed at increasing every teacher's capacity to apply an equity lens to their individual instructional program and look for practices that may hinder the achievement of marginalized groups of students.

Professional learning is central to the work of centering students and supporting teachers and our principal works collaboratively with our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to map out professional learning for the year. Professional learning is crafted using feedback from teacher surveys and trends noted during formal and informal performance evaluations of teachers. Professional learning is planned by our school leadership collaboratively with ILT using multiple sources of assessment information with the goal of making the needs of students the focus for all continuous learning. Professional learning is also planned that is designed to make the work of planning instruction easier for teachers.

Creating student centered discipline practices that are systematic and fair aligns with our core belief of creating emotional security. Our principal provides guidance and support to teachers in spending the early weeks of school explicitly teaching behavior expectations for the classroom, recess, lunch area, library, bathrooms, and hallways. These routines and expectations are retaught throughout the year by our principal during monthly Connection Meetings. During these meetings, our principal meets with individual classes to discuss the benefits of responsible decision making and share data about their class attendance and set goals to reduce absenteeism. Reducing chronic absenteeism is a target for our leadership and we have made significant gains in improving attendance by connecting with classes and bringing awareness to the advantages of meeting our goal of having every student in school every day, all day, and on time.

Teaching requires high cognitive demands and support from the site leader is crucial in making sure teachers are not overextended. Our principal works to keep our calendar manageable and spaces out meetings and professional learning in ways that increase the amount of time teachers can reflect and refuel so they can perform at a high level. Teachers are also supported by receiving timely, actionable feedback on instruction. Our principal provides monthly informal feedback to teachers based on our district's Quality Learning Intentions. Teachers are also evaluated yearly using San Diego Unified's Educator Effectiveness & Evaluation plan (E3). E3 marks the transformation of our district's evaluation system. E3 is designed to foster continuous growth for classroom teachers and is anchored in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. A signature leadership practice of our principal is monitoring instruction and providing meaningful feedback with consistency.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Garfield is a multiracial and multilingual learning community. Culturally responsive teaching and learning requires cultural competence. The two concepts are mutually inclusive---one cannot exist without the other. Cultural competence is developed by learning and experiencing different cultures. In short, different kinds of people need to be together and experience each other to grow in cultural competency. Our students are a major source for our staff to develop their cultural competency and the diversity among our staff adds to our ability to provide a learning environment that values differences. We are fortunate to have staff from diverse cultural backgrounds who are open to communicating and teaching about the many cultures at our school. For example, Garfield serves a significant number of Eritrean and Ethiopian families. We also have staff from this community that have been supportive in helping us become aware and inclusive of the customs and practices of East African families. Our teachers openly seek out opportunities for families to create projects at home that students can share that promote their cultural values. Primary students do an All About Me project each year and present the project to their class. The assignment calls for students to interview family members and share about their family's history. In our upper grades, students do country reports which are research projects which require students to study a country and identify similarities and differences with their own culture. All classrooms have a designated bookcase that houses multicultural texts. We separate the books from the rest of the classroom library as a reminder for teachers to choose a book to share that highlights diversity. Familiarity with people from diverse backgrounds drives inclusion. The more our community elevates multiculturalism and refrains from centering only one culture, the more likely we are to help our students develop an inclusive mindset.

Our professional learning with teachers this year on culturally responsive teaching was a book study of *Textured Teaching: A Framework for Culturally Sustaining Practices* by Lorena Escoto German. Our teachers agreed that we would adopt 4 practices outlined in the book to sustain culturally responsive practices on our campus. One of those practices is for adults to show up focused on showing empathy and

care toward children and one another. We also agreed to be reflective about our beliefs about people from cultures different from our own and interrogate our biases. To do this, we all had to also agree to identify our own culture and be reflective about our own frames of reference.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Our practice that has been most instrumental to our school's success has been our Schoolwide Writing Event (SWWE). Our SWWE drives writing instruction for the entire year and the goal is to teach students how to use the writing process. SWWE is anchored in collective teacher efficacy and is collaborative planning, teaching, and assessment of student writing. The desired outcome of the plan is to help teachers plan and teach writing as well as calibrate how we assess writing using rubrics. The event occurs 3 times a year and opens in the Fall during our beginning of the year assessments. PLCs select a shared theme and draft prompts for expository, opinion, and narrative writing. Each event addresses a different writing domain. We typically start with informational writing in the Fall.

We begin with a preassessment of student writing and give the students a prompt along with an editing checklist and the rubric. For the preassessment, teachers do not teach students what to do. The purpose of preassessment is to find out what students know how to do. During preassessment, teachers see what students do when it is time to work through the writing process. PLCs then meet to discuss how students approached the writing and make note of any prior knowledge students used that they learned from the previous year. From here, PLCs plan writing instruction to a new prompt, but this time, teachers teach through each phase of the writing process. The PLC drafts lesson plans together for each phase of the writing process: brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. A timeframe is chosen to do the writing instruction and release time is provided for calibrated scoring using the rubric selected by the team. This same approach is done in January for opinion writing and again in the Spring for narrative writing.

SWWE is ongoing professional learning led by the PLC in teaching writing that allows teachers to do calibration to promote equity in both instruction and scoring. Equity is achieved in that all students have access to explicit direct instruction in writing and equity is also achieved by investigating how each teacher uses the rubric for determining student progress in writing. For calibration, teachers choose writing from specific student groups to evaluate our work in reaching diverse learners. Each teacher brings the writing of an English language learner, Black youth, student with disabilities, advanced learner, and a student working below grade level in reading and writing. In addition to calibration to ensure equitable scoring, teachers also analyze writing and use their findings to drive writing instruction. A huge benefit to our use of SWWE is that teachers new to the profession are provided mentoring by their PLC in teaching writing.