

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[X] Choice

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

Official School Name A. E. Phillips Laboratory School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 204 Hergot Street #10168
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Ruston State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 71272-0045

County Lincoln Parish

Telephone (318) 257-3469 Fax (318) 257-3676

Web site/URL https://www.aep.latech.edu E-mail jblalock@aep.latech.edu

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Ricky Durrett E-mail rdurrett@lincolnschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lincoln Parish Schools Tel. (318) 255-1430

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 Mr. Joe Mitcham
(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):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 12 TOTAL

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

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

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

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

Grade	# of Students
PreK	0
K	50
1	53
2	52
3	44
4	50
5	54
6	46
7	43
8	30
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	422

*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):
- | |
|--|
| <u>0.2</u> % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| <u>1.3</u> % Asian |
| <u>24.4</u> % Black or African American |
| <u>0.7</u> % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>0</u> % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| <u>70.6</u> % White |
| <u>2.8</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: ≤1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	396
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %

Total number students who qualify: 24

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 2 %
Total number of students served 10

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>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>2</u> Developmental Delay	<u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 2 %
Total number of students served: 8

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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

12. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 23:1

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%	93%	95%	94%	94%
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.

A. E. Phillips Laboratory School fosters a learning community in which members become creative, self-directed, lifelong learners and effective citizens in the technological and global society.

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

<https://www.aep.latech.edu/about/diversity.cfm> (Link for A. E. Phillips Laboratory School)

<https://www.latech.edu/eoo-statement/> (Link for Louisiana Tech University)

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

The majority of students are admitted to A. E. Phillips through the kindergarten application process. All families that apply are invited for an interview, in the winter, prior to their child beginning kindergarten. Prospective kindergarten students go through the interview process which consists of three parts; student screening, student interview, and parent interview. Consideration is given to all three areas during the selection process. Consideration is also given to siblings of students already enrolled and residents of Lincoln Parish. The goal of A. E. Phillips Laboratory School is to have a diverse student population. Therefore, A. E. Phillips is equally interested in race and ethnicity as well as religious and socioeconomic status that is representative of the diversity in the Ruston community. In addition, A. E. Phillips values a student's willingness to learn and characteristics of good citizenship. Families of students in grades 1st-8th are also welcome to apply. All applicants are considered when an opening occurs. The final decision is made by the admission committee. Financial assistance is available to cover the costs of tuition and lunch for families that qualify.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

A. E. Phillips Laboratory School is a kindergarten through eighth grade, public school, located on the campus of Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana. Ruston is located in north, central Louisiana and has a population of approximately 22,000 citizens. Ruston is a college town, with a safe, family-oriented atmosphere. A. E. Phillips is known for its strong academic focus and innovative teaching strategies as well as its emphasis on the arts. The founder of the school, Andy Eugene Phillips expressed, “School should be a happy place.” This is a guiding belief for the faculty and staff that desires for their school to be a model school and a beacon of light through educational excellence, student leadership, and service. They also desire for all students to feel welcome and safe in order to strive to meet their potential. A. E. Phillips is designated as an “A” school, a Top Gains Honoree, and an Opportunity Honoree by the Louisiana Department of Education, and has an enrollment of approximately 400 students. The demographic make-up is reflective of the community in which it serves. Families of A. E. Phillips are supportive of education and involved in activities at the school. In addition, A. E. Phillips serves as a host site for Louisiana Tech education majors. These future educators observe and practice effective teaching strategies in a supportive environment. Each year, teachers, trained as mentors, host Clinical Residents (year-long student teachers). Because of the location of the school and partnership with the university, the students of A. E. Phillips are considered the youngest members of Louisiana Tech University.

The faculty and staff of A. E. Phillips understand that students learn and develop at their own pace. Therefore, teachers support students through appropriate scaffolding, providing the proper balance of support and challenge for each student. Curricula are carefully chosen based on the connection with researched, brain-based teaching methods. Teachers strive to make learning come to life through well-designed lessons and field trips connected to classroom instruction. They work closely with members of Lincoln Parish Schools and Louisiana Tech University to learn best-practices and teaching methods and to share ideas to enhance the educational experience of students at A. E. Phillips and Louisiana Tech. The administrative team is constantly analyzing trends and data to provide proper support to teachers and students so they may excel.

At A. E. Phillips, a well-rounded education is provided. Student differences are appreciated and numerous opportunities are available for students to showcase their individual talents and interests, whether that be through academic lessons and programs, art and music classes, or participation in sports and student clubs and organizations. At A. E. Phillips, the arts are valued. Each grade level participates in a play or program, culminating in a Junior Broadway Play at the community theater, during their 8th grade year. Physical education and play are also valued and part of the daily schedules of the students. Growth in physical fitness is measured and celebrated through the Presidential Youth Fitness Program. Another practice that is valued is ensuring cultural differences are purposefully represented in lessons, books in the school library, and books in classroom libraries as well as studies on authors, artists, and musicians. Foreign language instruction is also taught at A. E. Phillips. All students in kindergarten through fifth grade learn Spanish. Spanish is offered as an elective for middle school students.

Student safety and well-being is the top priority. A. E. Phillips has a school counselor on site and the school counselor frequently conducts check-ins with students, connects families to community resources, and supports education regarding high school and career preparation. Individual student well-being is assessed through bi-annual surveys. This survey data allows the counselor and administration to provide the necessary support to individual students. The counselor also leads initiatives to support student wellbeing, growth, and preparation for college and/or career. Examples include the coordination of individualized job shadowing opportunities, Red Ribbon Week, and the Great Kindness Challenge, each held annually.

Faculty and staff strongly desire for all students to feel included. Two unique programs in which students are supported are the middle school mentor program and the “Big/Little” mentor initiative for 8th grade students and kindergarteners. The middle school mentoring program allows small groups of students to meet with their mentor (a teacher, counselor, or administrator) at the end of each week. This is a time where topics related to character, integrity, service, and goal setting are discussed. It also serves as a weekly check-in for student wellbeing and an opportunity to host inspirational guest speakers from the community.

The “Big/Little” mentoring program is in the initial stages of development and is providing more connections among students as well as providing older students leadership opportunities as they serve as role models for the youngest students at A. E. Phillips.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Teachers and administrators at A. E. Phillips Laboratory School understand that students learn differently, and at different rates, as they grow and mature; not only cognitively, but socially and emotionally as well. Students are inspired to have a love for reading and writing. Kindergarten through second grade teachers use a modified, balanced approach to teach literacy, integrating whole language and direct instruction. Using the Louisiana State Standards as the guide, curricula such as Units of Study (writing), Lively Letters (phonemic awareness and phonics), The Next Step Forward in Guided Reading (small group reading), and Handwriting Without Tears are implemented. Teachers use authentic children's literature to teach vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and author's craft. Teachers use a variety of whole group, small group, and individualized instruction, throughout the day, to ensure they are meeting the needs of each student. During whole group instruction, students are introduced to new standards and skills. Small groups are formed based on students' reading levels and groups are ever-changing, throughout the year, based on student progress. Reading levels are assessed using the Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2). During small group time, students are taught on their instructional level and supported as they strive towards their next goal. Both informal and formal assessments are conducted. Screeners, checklists, rubrics, observation notes, and assessments provided with each curricular piece, are utilized. Teachers understand the value of using data, from these assessments, to drive their daily instruction; re-teaching, supporting, and enriching when necessary. Many skills are embedded throughout daily activities to provide reinforcing experiences. Kindergarten through third grade teachers are trained in the Science of Reading. This training is research-based and supports the instructional practices at A. E. Phillips. Multiple faculty members have earned their reading specialist certification as well.

Goals of the Louisiana Department of Education are to ensure that all students can read, understand, and express their understanding of complex, grade-level, texts. Third through eighth grade teachers use the Louisiana Guidebooks to accomplish these goals, a curriculum provided by the state of Louisiana. The Guidebooks are an extensive curriculum that allows students to understand and connect with literary and informational texts. They are designed to be taught through a variety of modalities such as whole-group, small-group, partner, and individual tasks. Students deepen their knowledge of how to read and understand these complex texts as each school year progresses. Along with the Louisiana Guidebooks, students in third through eighth grade also receive daily small group instruction on specific skills, based on individual needs of the students. Teachers in third through eighth grade use a variety of formative and summative assessments (as described above). Teachers use the data gathered from assessments to guide instruction. Students are also taught to assess their work through the use of rubrics. The Louisiana Guidebooks are considered a Tier 1 curriculum. This is the highest rating provided through a vetting system for Louisiana curricula.

In all grades at A. E. Phillips, teachers encourage reading, simply for the love and enjoyment of reading. All ELA classrooms have a library. Teachers and the school librarian intentionally strive to connect students to books they will enjoy. Reading is celebrated.

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

Zearn and Agile Minds are the curricula implemented in mathematics for the elementary and middle school programs. Both are recognized as Tier 1 Curricula by the Louisiana State Department of Education. Zearn and Agile Minds are known for their rigor in educational practices. In addition to Agile Minds and Zearn, daily reviews support the curriculum. These reviews are teacher-created, with the support of the assistant principal for middle school, to align with the Louisiana State Standards and student needs. The daily reviews help students master skills and solidify their foundation of mathematical knowledge.

Teachers understand that learners progress from concrete, to pictorial, then finally, abstract learning in

mathematics. Kindergarten through fifth grade begin class with whole-group instruction using the Zearn curricula. Next, students are provided time in-class to work independently on digital lessons that adjust to the needs of students. During this time, students also work in small groups, with their teacher, to deepen and extend their math knowledge or remediate. Hands-on manipulatives are utilized in all classrooms.

Students going into sixth grade are able to apply for an accelerated math tract. The accelerated math tract begins in sixth grade and allows students to complete sixth through eighth grade math standards by the end of their seventh grade year. This allows for these students to complete Algebra I in eighth grade, for high school credit. The other option is a traditional tract for our sixth through eighth grade students. Both tracts use the Agile Minds curriculum. Middle School students are offered math elective choices such as Geometry, Statistics, Math Remediation, Personal Finance, and Math Counts. Math Counts is a course that allows students to learn advanced math concepts and skills, taught by volunteer math professors from Louisiana Tech University. Students participating in this course have the opportunity to compete in an annual mathematics competition.

Mathematics instruction is differentiated for the needs of students in both elementary and middle school. Many teachers have created stations for students: independent work stations, math talking stations, and group stations where the teacher continues to scaffold learning for students. Teachers assess using both informal and formal methods and these assessments guide instruction. In addition to formal assessments as part of the curricular programs, teachers utilize fluency sprints and exit tickets that allow teachers to assess students in the moment. Many teachers offer a chance for test corrections as well. These corrections are powerful because this practice allows for our students to become reflective of their mistakes and persevere to correctly solve mathematical problems and correct miscalculations. Teachers and administrators desire to inspire a love for mathematics and a confidence in students by supporting students in building a solid mathematical foundation.

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

Students at A. E. Phillips discover science through hands-on investigations and experiments. Lessons are taught through collaborative exploration, discussion, and writing. Kindergarten through second grade students are taught using the Mystery Science curriculum. This hands-on curriculum encourages students to think critically and better understand the world in which they live. Third through fifth grade students are taught using PhD Science. Students explore and inquire about scientific phenomena through investigation. Students take ownership of their learning by thinking and investigating like scientists. Teachers facilitate learning as students are asking questions and problem-solving in whole and small group settings, synthesizing the information gathered, and applying it to real-life scenarios. Middle school students are taught using the OpenSciEd curriculum, a Tier 1 curriculum by the Louisiana Department of Education. Students discover science through hands-on experiments and investigations while deepening their knowledge of science in the real-world. In whole-group, small-group, and partner work, students make scientific claims and back those claims with evidence from their science knowledge and experiments. Enrichment opportunities are provided as well. Students in fourth through eighth grade have the opportunity to participate in the 4-H club that allows students to learn about health, science, agriculture, and civic engagement. Seventh grade students participate in the local science fair. Middle school students are able to take Science Olympiad as an elective and compete in science competitions. Teachers are able to assess student understanding, informally, through observations and discussions, while investigations are occurring in the classroom. Students are formally assessed through quizzes and tests and demonstrate their understanding through classroom projects and writing.

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

Social studies is an essential part of the elementary and middle school instructional day. The faculty and staff at A. E. Phillips desire for students to become effective participants in America's democratic society and productive citizens in their community. The Louisiana Department of Education has provided the curriculum for social studies for kindergarten through eighth grade that teaches subjects of history, geography, economics, and civics. Along with this curriculum, teachers also use a variety of tools such as children's literature, primary sources, and technology to teach social studies standards. Elementary teachers

use the Studies Weekly curriculum that presents information in an engaging, newspaper-style text. Inquiry, research, and discussion are key instructional methods. Social studies teachers realize that learners benefit from having a variety of perspectives. Guest speakers, such as leaders in the community and state, are invited to speak to students of all ages. In elementary grades, characteristics of good citizenship are emphasized and integrated throughout the entire day school day. Although standards deepen with each grade level, these character lessons continue through all grades as well as service opportunities. At A. E. Phillips, all English language arts teachers also teach social studies because of the integration of these two subjects. Analyzing content, annotating information, evaluating claims, and understanding cause and effect relationships are just some of the skills that social studies and English language arts share. Students are assessed similarly to English Language Arts. Students are expected to think critically as they read and write for social studies. School wide events, such as the annual Patriot Day program and celebration of Veterans' Day, also serve as teaching opportunities of American History.

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

Administration and faculty at A. E. Phillips are purposeful in preparing all students for college and/or career. Graduates of A. E. Phillips have proven to be successful in further chapters of their education. Many are leaders in their high schools and colleges. Student leadership is a quality that is intentionally fostered in students from a young age. Service and leadership opportunities are provided for middle school students through participation in the Student Council and National Junior Honor Society. Middle school electives are purposefully designed to foster these skills as well. Personal Finance and Public Speaking are examples of courses that have been included to prepare students for their future. Sixth grade students have the opportunity to apply for an accelerated math tract. Students that qualify take sixth, seventh, and eighth grade math, as well as Algebra I for high school credit, in their eighth grade year. This allows students to take advanced math courses in high school. Gaining this credit in eighth grade opens student schedules to other courses of interest. All eighth grade students participate in a job shadowing experience, of their choice, with professionals within the local community. The administrative team is continually assessing how to support student growth and well-being as well as inspire leadership and service among students.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Students in kindergarten through fifth grades attend art and music as part of their regular schedule that equates to nine weeks of the school year. Students in the elementary grades attend art and music for 45 minutes while students in middle school have these courses as elective choices. Elective courses are 35 minutes, each day, for nine weeks. Through music, students learn composers, musical genres, instruments, and rhythm as well as how to express themselves through movement and singing. Students in elementary grades participate in a musical play each year. The culminating performance is the eighth grade Junior Broadway Musical. Students are offered choir in fourth through eighth grade and have the opportunity to attend Honor Choir events. The choir performs a concert twice a year, participates in the annual Patriot Day program, and also travels around Louisiana Tech University for "Sing Around Campus." In art, students are taught the elements and principles of design and how to use them in a composition. They are allowed to be creative while experimenting with a variety of art materials and mediums. Students are also introduced to famous artists, their works of art, and use their work as inspiration for their own art projects. Core teachers also integrate music and art in their instruction. The emphasis on the arts is a unique aspect of A. E. Phillips and contributes to the fun and inviting culture of the school.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

The goal of the Physical Education program is to provide fun, engaging opportunities for students to learn life skills and activities that can be enjoyed beyond their experience at A. E. Phillips. All students attend P. E. classes and are provided recess each day. Elementary students attend P.E. for 30 minutes and middle school students attend for 50 minutes. Through P. E., students are taught coordination, gross motor skills, and teamwork through cooperative activities, and team and individual sports. Physical Education teachers use the Louisiana Physical Education Standards as their guide. Students are taught various units such as pickleball, volleyball, cup-stacking, and badminton, to name a few. Students in first through fifth grade have the opportunity to join the Cross Country team. Middle school students have the option to try-out for the basketball team, golf team, girls' volleyball team, or the cheerleading squad. For larger sports that A. E. Phillips does not offer (such as football, for example), students have the opportunity to compete with the local junior high school. Students' fitness is assessed at the beginning and end of the year. The end of each school year is celebrated with a Field Day that emphasizes teamwork, sportsmanship, fitness, and fun.

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

All students are provided the opportunity to learn Spanish. Students acquire knowledge of the Spanish language by hearing it spoken by the teacher and classmates, recall activities, and modeling. Students engage in learning the skills of conversation and communication through participating in guided dialogue by the teacher and mini-conversations with other students. In addition, students complete projects and presentations, make movies, and complete writing pieces in Spanish as well as read authentic writing from children in other countries. Students are exposed to all four areas of language and communication; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Kindergarten through fifth grade students take Spanish for two weeks within each nine-week grading period, plus one extra week throughout the academic year. Each class is 45 minutes. Middle school students have the opportunity to take Spanish as an elective. Students can take Spanish I, II, or Advanced Spanish. These elective classes are similar to the foreign language class that they will take in high school. Foreign language courses provide an avenue for students to engage culturally and socially. Middle school students have the opportunity to join the Spanish Club or take a Latin American History and Culture elective to further enrich their learning.

2d. Technology/library/media

The A. E. Phillips library is open, daily, for students to check out books. Elementary students attend library classes for nine weeks of the school year. All students are frequently read to and exposed to various genres. Students often gain interest in books that they would not have otherwise read and learn life lessons through literature. To further promote literacy and a love for reading, students participate in a school-wide book character parade where students and faculty dress as literary characters. Third grade students participate in a readers' theater and fourth grade students depict vocabulary words, through costume, in an annual vocabulary parade. Author visits are also hosted as well as book fairs. The A. E. Phillips library has a website that includes links to favorite literacy and technology sites. The library's website also offers access to eMagazines, which enable students to read informational text online. The Accelerated Reader program allows students to assess their comprehension on books they've read, and students develop typing skills through games, research projects, and the production of book trailers. Students are also taught to use the Google Suite and Canva. Middle school students have the opportunity to take an elective, Bullpup Broadcast, where they produce video announcements for the school. Technology use is also integrated throughout the school day, however, teachers are mindful of the amount of time students are exposed to digital screens.

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

A. E. Phillips hosts numerous Clinical Residents from Louisiana Tech University. Clinical Residents are similar to student teachers, however, this residency program differs from traditional student teaching in many ways. Future educators are able to grow into effective teachers through a real-world, year-long, learning experience that is scaffolded under the mentorship of trained mentors. This experience is the final field experience before graduation. Currently, A. E. Phillips has nine teachers trained to be mentors to Clinical Residents. Students of A. E. Phillips greatly benefit because teachers are able to further differentiate instruction. The student-to-teacher ratio is approximately 13:1 in classes where residents are

hosted. Students from Louisiana Tech bring new and innovative ideas to teachers as well. In addition, professors of Louisiana Tech are able to teach lessons in these classes. Therefore, the resident, mentor teacher, and students all benefit from these model lessons. This partnership with the Clinical Residency Center at Louisiana Tech enhances the all-around educational experience of A. E. Phillips.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Students performing below grade level are supported in numerous ways at A. E. Phillips. All teachers use formal data and daily informal assessments to plan instructional support for students. To scaffold learning, teachers use small-group, and individually designed instruction. Much instruction in elementary grades is conducted in small groups throughout the school day. This allows teachers to differentiate instruction, as needed. Progress monitoring and systematic interventions are conducted to support students as well. Intensive and daily support is provided to students, early in their education, in order to progress them to grade level as soon as possible. Teachers work as a team with parents or guardians to ensure families are informed of their child's progress and potential methods to support their learning at home. Many teachers host future educators enrolled in their practicum or residency courses at Louisiana Tech University. These future teachers are valuable support as well. They often provide interventions or extra individual and/or small group instruction to remediate and build confidence in students that are not yet on grade level. In addition, administrators at A. E. Phillips monitor progress of students performing below grade level. Teachers and administrators tutor students and go to any length necessary to ensure students are successful. Because students have the option to attend A. E. Phillips for nine years, and the mobility rate is low, there is no lapse in support as students move from one grade level to the next. Teachers work as vertical teams to support students performing below grade level. If formal accommodations are needed, the student is referred to the School Building Level Committee (SBLC).

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students performing above grade level are supported through small group instruction and projects that allow students choice and opportunities for creativity. Teachers understand the importance of ensuring that high-performing students have mastered all skills on their grade level as well as prior grade levels. For example, during reading instruction, students are taught on their instructional level, including above grade-level texts. However, for students reading above grade level, it is important to ensure phonics skills have been mastered before accelerating the student and simply assuming these phonics skills have been acquired. Classroom libraries have books for all types of readers and supplemental activities, for all subjects, are available for students that finish assignments before classmates. These activities are designed to be engaging and enriching. Students also have choices when completing projects, thus enabling them to demonstrate their unique skills and knowledge, appropriate to their level of learning. Opportunities to express creativity also maximize student engagement. No two learners are alike, therefore, teachers are trained to meet students where they are on the continuum of learning. Goals for students performing above grade level are to deepen and expand their learning of a skill or topic, not simply accelerate to skills in future grade levels. For students in first through eighth grade that qualify, Gifted and Talented services are available.

3c. Students with disabilities:

When classroom supports and interventions are not successful and a disability is suspected, a student is referred to the School Building Level Committee (SBLC). This is a support team, for the student, including the student's teacher(s), parent(s), school counselor, SBLC chairperson, and a member from Lincoln Parish Pupil Appraisal Services. With the support of members of pupil appraisal, more specialized interventions or educational evaluations are conducted. This begins a process of providing proper specialized support for students. This could be a 504 plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan with formal accommodations for classroom instruction and/or testing. Classroom teachers provide needed accommodations to students that have 504 plans or IEPs. Students with IEPs are supported with an inclusion teacher who works alongside the classroom teacher to provide students accommodations. The classroom teacher also teaches students in small-groups, or work with them individually, to ensure they

understand the material that has been taught or to review material/skills in which the student needs extra help. The progress of students with 504 plans and IEPs are closely monitored and the SBLC meets frequently to ensure progress and make adjustments as needed. Other specialized services that are provided to Lincoln Parish Schools include speech therapy, occupational therapy, and support in assistive technology. A district psychologist is assigned to A. E. Phillips and supports faculty and staff when students are in need of behavioral support services. If a student has a medical disability, administration and Lincoln Parish Schools ensure proper support is available to the student.

3d. English Language Learners:

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

A. E. Phillips offers Gifted and Talented services to students in first through eighth grade, who have qualified through a two-part screening process (school and district level). Gifted Art is also offered for students in fifth through eighth grade, who have qualified through a similar evaluation. A. E. Phillips has two Gifted and Talented teachers provided by Lincoln Parish Schools; one serves elementary students and the other serves middle school students. The four C's of 21st century skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and cooperation) are the overall goals for these students. The focus of instruction is to teach students convergent thinking, divergent thinking, evaluative thinking, and visual spatial perception. The goal of talented art is to deepen artistically talented students' skills in the elements and principles of design by teaching them more advanced artistic techniques and mediums than they learn in the general art class. It also provides a creative outlet for students, in a small group setting, and exposes them to a variety of career paths in the visual arts. Students are taught by an itinerant talented art teacher, also provided by the local school district. All students in Gifted and Talented or Talented Art classes have an Individualized Education Plan.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Mr. Andy Eugene Phillips, school founder, said that “School should be a happy place.” This is the school’s motto, largely displayed on the wall of the library, framed in the faculty lounge, and imprinted on the hearts of faculty and staff at A. E. Phillips. Faculty and staff desire for A. E. Phillips to be a model school, not simply in terms of academics, but the whole learning experience. They believe the relationships with students, colleagues, and the community are rewards for being an educator, and strive to not only positively impact the students academically, but also emotionally. From the moment students arrive on campus, they are greeted by teachers and administrators ready to welcome them with a hug, high-five, or “good morning.” In the classroom, instruction is designed to be engaging where learners are interested, invested, and understand the reason they are learning the material presented to them. Teachers connect learning to the real-world. The faculty is trained in brain-based practices and provide engaging, innovative, and research-based instruction. Classrooms are inviting and allow for movement, collaboration, and learning stations. Flexible seating options are available in all classrooms. Students are also provided recess and physical education every day. Play is valued. Sunlight is valued. Time to simply be a kid is valued. One unique aspect of A. E. Phillips is the emphasis on the arts. All students in kindergarten through fifth grade take art, music, Spanish, or visit the library, daily. Older students have elective courses that are designed to challenge and enrich their learning as well as teach life and leadership skills. A variety of field trips, connected to in-class learning, provide enrichment to the student’s education. Many clubs and sports provide students opportunities to spend time learning and participating in areas of interest. The social-emotional and mental health of students is a constant consideration. A. E. Phillips Laboratory School has a full-time licensed professional counselor that is available to support students and connect families to community resources. Teachers, staff, and administration are sensitive to the needs of students and are quick to provide support and work alongside families to ensure all students are successful. This combination of caring support and highly effective instruction is proving to prepare students for the next chapters in their education. Graduates of A. E. Phillips are leaders in high school and beyond.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

A. E. Phillips is blessed to have family and community support. Parents and guardians are invested in their children’s education and serve as partners, with teachers and administration, to ensure the success of their children at school. Families are welcomed to each new school year with a Bullpup Prep Day where families are invited to tour the school, meet teachers, and prepare for the upcoming year. Families further support A. E. Phillips by volunteering at school events and attending programs. The Parent Faculty Council (PFC) is extremely active in leading many volunteer and fundraising initiatives.

To connect with the community, teachers often invite guest speakers to the classroom. Community leaders bring valuable insights that generate excitement and provide a unique perspective for the standards taught. By hosting guest speakers, connections are made with members of the community that are supportive of education. A. E. Phillips is also assigned Adopt-A-School partners (businesses in the community) that provide encouragement to students and staff. In addition, administration and teachers purposefully build connections with professors at Louisiana Tech University. One example is the Math Counts elective course. Volunteer math professors from Louisiana Tech teach the students more advanced math skills four days a week. Being on the campus of the university also allows for connections to be made with volunteers from Louisiana Tech athletics and campus organizations, such as the Student Government Association. This provides students the opportunity to see collegiate student-leaders and learn about their organizations and philanthropies. Students at A. E. Phillips often write thank you notes and letters of encouragement to visitors from the college and community to show appreciation for their service.

Many stakeholders support A. E. Phillips, but the faculty and staff of A. E. Phillips desire to give back to the community as well. They wish to inspire students to have a heart for service and empathy for their fellow classmates and community members. Students are intentionally taught leadership skills and provided opportunities to serve. Each year, all homeroom teachers brainstorm, with their students, a community

service project to adopt. Example projects are the donation of blankets to nursing homes, collecting “Toys for Tots,” collecting items for the Domestic Abuse Resistance Team (DART), collecting books for local “Little Free Libraries,” and decorating pillow cases to send to troops overseas. Members of A. E. Phillips desire for each student to experience the joy of blessing others so that they may grow up to carry on the tradition in their communities.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers are difference-makers in the lives of students and are an integral part of creating a positive school culture. Administration is committed to ensuring all teachers feel supported and appreciated. All administrators have served as teachers and make decisions by looking through the lens of a teacher. Administration at A. E. Phillips also seeks feedback from teachers on a regular basis regarding a variety of topics such as how-to best to support them, curricular topics, and decisions regarding the instructional day. Feedback is gathered through conversations and surveys. Administrators also ensure teachers have the instructional materials they need to create an enjoyable atmosphere and prepare engaging lessons for their students. At A. E. Phillips, professional development is based on the needs or interests of individual teachers, grade-bands of teachers, or the entire faculty. Data from surveys, instructional walk-throughs, and student assessments drive professional learning. Faculty meetings are designed to be uplifting, collaborative, and provide opportunities for professional development. In recent years, professional development has focused on curriculum implementation support and brain-based research. It is common for administrators to learn alongside teachers in training and book studies. The following outlines the support structure at A. E. Phillips; the administration is supported by the Dean of the College of Louisiana Tech University as well as district leaders in Lincoln Parish Schools. The teachers are supported by two assistant directors (one for elementary grades, and one for middle school) as well as the director/principal of the school. Teachers are supported through frequent grade-level and content meetings with assistant principals. Administrators take many opportunities to also encourage teachers. A kind note, cup of coffee, or surprise in the teachers’ mailbox goes a long way in showing teachers they are immensely appreciated. The atmosphere at A. E. Phillips is one of support, encouragement, and innovation. All stakeholders work to achieve and protect this positive culture.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of the director of A. E. Phillips is one of servant leadership. The director believes in encouraging, uplifting, helping, and empowering the faculty and staff. Highly effective and experienced teachers are hired at A. E. Phillips and are given freedom to teach in a manner that they believe will best reach individual students, while at the same time, supporting students to master grade-level standards and maintain curricular cohesiveness between classes and grade levels. The director also believes in creating an extremely welcoming, positive, and professional culture.

The director oversees the operations of the school, working closely with the assistant director for elementary school and the assistant director for middle school. These three administrators work, as a team, to make decisions regarding curriculum and instruction, schedules, and support for teachers and students. The administrative and office staff meet weekly to discuss upcoming events and delegate responsibilities so that all staff have more time to focus on their specific roles and interests within the school. The administrative team also collaborates with members of the College of Education, at Louisiana Tech, and district leaders of Lincoln Parish Schools. The director works with the Dean of the College of Education and district leaders to ensure the activities of the school align with important goals and the school’s vision. The assistant directors collaborate with professors from Louisiana Tech and district leaders regarding curriculum and instruction and provide them insight from the school setting. All faculty and staff work as a team with parents and guardians of students.

Each year, administrators study data from standardized tests and surveys to determine goals for the upcoming school year. One example is the collaboration to support early elementary teachers in the area of phonemic awareness and phonics. Students, at A. E. Phillips, read on or above grade-level. However, it was noted that some of the highest achieving readers still have phonetic deficits. Teachers and administrators were provided training, teachers’ feedback was gathered regarding curricular choices, and

materials were purchased to support word study. The addition of the assistant director for middle school position is another example of using data to drive decisions. Although high-performing, students were not achieving their potential in middle school grades. This position provides focused support to middle school teachers and students. Standardized test scores have improved in these two years. The leadership at A. E. Phillips will do whatever is necessary to ensure all students are successful. All decisions are made with the best interest of students in mind.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

The cultural demographics of A. E. Phillips are reflective of the community in which it serves. Faculty and staff desire for all students to feel valued and one manner is the way in which students are taught. Students are taught based on their individual needs, therefore, students are provided extra support or enrichment, as needed. Teachers are aware that students arrive at school with different strengths, challenges, life experiences, and background knowledge. Projects within the classroom allow students to share these experiences and background knowledge. One example is through writing personal narratives. In addition, teachers create shared experiences within the classroom such as a classroom timeline to celebrate milestones together. Louisiana's unique culture, shared by all students, is also celebrated throughout the year, especially during Mardi Gras season. The librarian, teachers, and administration have ensured that the classroom libraries and school libraries are stocked with books from authors of many cultures. Cultures are also celebrated through author studies, musician studies, art projects, and musical programs. Guest speakers are purposefully chosen from various professional fields and backgrounds. This is another way that students may connect with individuals that are similar to, or different from, themselves and represent diversity within the community. Respectfulness, kindness, and integrity are taught in all classrooms. Daily class lessons, the annual Great Kindness Challenge, and mentor groups are a few examples where positive character traits are reinforced. Relationships are intentionally fostered at A. E. Phillips. Classes, mentor groups, and 8th grade/kindergarten buddies are purposefully chosen to allow students an opportunity to build relationships with students they may not otherwise get to know. Faculty and staff at A. E. Phillips desire for graduates of the school to demonstrate these characteristics as they grow into adults and value differences and similarities in the people they encounter throughout their lives.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that is the most instrumental in ensuring the school's success is the tradition of hiring highly effective, passionate, and compassionate educators. The faculty and staff of A. E. Phillips have hearts for students and the families they serve. They prioritize students' safety and well-being, above all. They also research best practices, try innovative strategies, and continue learning and improving their craft. They are life-long learners that truly enjoy their work. Teachers are welcoming and build relationships with students and families in order to best connect with them and support students in the classroom. All members of the staff are willing to go to great lengths to help students, teach to their learning styles, and find creative solutions to challenges. They are knowledgeable on how to assess students' needs and teach to progress individual students. Yet, when faced with challenges, they are not afraid to seek help and support from other professionals in the school, district, or college that can provide wise advice. This professionalism and passion for education is evident when walking through the school. The facilities are clean and vibrant, decorated with student work, and evidence of high-quality teaching is all around. Much laughter and encouragement is heard at A. E. Phillips and the faculty and staff provide a strong support system for each other. The productive sounds of learning are also heard all around. It is evident A. E. Phillips Laboratory School is "a happy place" and the educators that work there desire the school to be a model school of educational excellence.