

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Gabriel Guven

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

Official School Name Valley Christian Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1450 Leigh Avenue

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

City San Jose State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 95125-5351

County Santa Clara

Telephone (408) 559-4400 Fax (408) 559-4022

Web site/URL http://www.vcs.net E-mail gguven@vcs.net

Twitter Handle	Facebook Page	
<u>https://twitter.com/VCschools</u>	<u>https://www.facebook.com/va</u>	Google+ _____
YouTube/URL	<u>lleychristian?ref=br_tf</u>	Other Social Media Link
<u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC</u>		<u>https://vimeo.com/user35487215/v</u>
<u>fU2pVDNVucDUWVXHTyxjqA</u>	Blog _____	<u>ideos</u>

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Clifford Daugherty E-mail cdaugherty@vcs.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Valley Christian Schools Tel. (408) 513-2500

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Vera Shantz
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	33	31	64
1	28	28	56
2	38	39	77
3	45	32	77
4	41	43	84
5	51	39	90
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	236	212	448

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 16 % Asian
 - 4 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 32 % White
 - 41 % 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 2014 – 2015 school year: 2%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	449
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.016
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0%
 Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
22 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	18
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	11
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 25:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes No

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

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

VCES provides a nurturing environment and quality, Christian education in partnership with parents, equipping students to serve and impact their communities and the world.

PART III – SUMMARY

When the current principal stepped into his role as principal just over seven years ago, he inherited a school with good teachers, committed families, and sufficient facilities, yet it lacked a connectedness among the people within the community. The parent board, in conjunction with the principal, implemented several new annual community building events including the Pancake Breakfast, Family Camp, Sports Nights at the Valley Christian High School campus, and Family Fun Night. These efforts created a sense of belonging. With over 50 years of history, the school represents an established symbol of excellence. Most recently the school encapsulated this tremendous history and pride in the award-winning “I AM A WARRIOR” marketing campaign. Accompanying the campaign is the A3 theme (Academic Achievement, Artistic Beauty, and Athletic Distinction) which is the philosophy underlying school programs. Located in the heart of Silicon Valley, the school attracts many upper, middle class families expecting a cutting edge, innovative school. Parents are also drawn to the K-12 nature of Valley Christian schools. Parents value quality education and come expecting it beginning at the lowest levels. From caring teachers, to the strong sense of community, to the caliber of people present, the school embodies its vision - The Quest for Excellence. The school also prides itself in dual accreditation through both WASC and Association of Christian School International. This last year, ACSI recognized the school as only one of five exemplary schools in the nation! Academic achievement stands out as one of the school’s major accomplishments. Students in every grade perform above grade level in all internal and external benchmarks. For example, the school’s newest academic program, SOAR Math (Students Optimizing Achievement Results) allows the top 10% of fourth and fifth graders to participate in math competition and accelerated math in lieu of traditional instruction.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Curriculum extends beyond the limitations of a textbook. Fortunately, as a private school, Valley Christian Elementary School has the unique opportunity to select the highest standards and to develop a K-5 rigorous curriculum. Teachers carefully review and approve all standards for all subjects and grade levels in view of state, national, common core, and subject specific private associations on an ongoing cycle. Under the guidance of the K-12 curriculum director, each grade level works collaboratively to develop a living, breathing scope and sequence. The curriculum exceeds, meets or modifies state, national and subject specific association standards to achieve the highest academic quality.

In reading/English language arts, foundational skills are articulated K-5. Beginning in kindergarten, students learn cursive through the Slingerland method. This allows for a fully-integrated approach to language arts instruction. Kindergarten students learn the basics of phonemic awareness, begin reading, and even compose original sentences by the end of the year. By fifth grade, students write a variety of original essays. Teachers recently saw the need for teaching more intentional reading skills and strategies for reading non-fiction. In the first two years of implementation of Journeys by McGraw Hill, teachers and students are reporting back high levels of excitement over the new curriculum.

Teachers rely heavily on data-driven methods in developing reading instruction. At the beginning of each grading period students take the STAR reading assessment. From there, the data influences individual reading goals for the Accelerated Reader program. This data also shapes reading groups for below and above grade level students. Teachers utilize instructional aides and parents to help with this differentiated approach to reading instruction. VCES hopes to instill a passionate, lifelong love of reading coupled with the required reading fluency skills. To support this effort, the school recently reduced homework to allow even more time for sustained, silent reading at home.

In mathematics, the school has taken great strides in recent years to improve the level of individualized instruction. Tools such as ALEKS, Dreambox, IXL, and Khan Academy are used throughout all grades to target individual skill development both at school and away from school. For students performing below grade level, teachers use centers similar to the approach used for the language arts. Recognizing the need for targeted remediation for students well below grade level, the Student Support department recently added a one-on-one math assistance program. Two years ago, the school proudly unveiled the SOAR mathematics program. They accelerate their traditional math instruction into two days, leaving a full day for Math Olympiad competition preparation as well as STEM projects.

In recent years, science instruction has taken a new life with the launch of the AMSE (Applied Math Science and Engineering) Institute. This initiative increased the amount of hands-on science instruction and brought additional after school opportunities including robotics, coding, and Lego club. Just two years ago, the school added a dedicated science lab. The room is utilized for science lab instruction, led by a dedicated science teacher.

Social studies relies heavily on project-based learning. In the 2014-2015 school year, teachers set a goal to add one new project-based unit per grading period. Teachers often use real world projects and problems to guide instruction. The project-based orientation to the curriculum is the main approach for meeting the needs of high and low learners. In recent years, the second grade team was recognized by Atlanta-based Connect for the development of such a unit on the life adventures of Ernest Shackleton. In all, the social studies curriculum aims to give students a better understanding of the past locally, nationally, and globally so that students can learn how to live to the fullest in the future.

Alongside the other core academic areas, VCES offers Bible instruction. Beginning in kindergarten, students learn the basic characters, stories, and character traits of Scripture. As they progress through the grades, Bible instruction moves to a thematic approach. For example, fifth grade students receive a crash course in Old Testament history. Each classroom assigns weekly Bible verses in an effort to help children internalize

key concepts. Most importantly, teachers model biblical principles in the way they act both in and out of the classroom – this oftentimes affects students more than purchased curriculum.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The school offers top quality programs taught by qualified, passionate educators at the highest level both during the school day and after school. One of the school's established core educational values stands as the foundation upon which these programs are built. It states, "Comprehensive programs challenge all students to develop their God-given talents to achieve their unique purposes." The following description of the enrichment, or pull-out, classes gives evidence of these values in action.

Nearly six years ago, Valley Christian Elementary School developed an intensive program to expose, identify, and grow students' visual and performing arts skill sets. In essence this mini conservatory, called Kidservatory, encompasses all visual and performing arts activities on campus.

At the lower levels, all K-3 students meet weekly for vocal instruction in addition to the basics of music. Through the Orff method of learning, students learn rhythm, beat, melody, and play parts with xylophones, conga drums, and various small, unpitched rhythm instruments. All fourth grade students participate in a yearlong rotation of offerings in the performing arts. Students rotate every eight weeks through orchestra, choir, brass band, and woodwinds. Fifth grade students select an instrument of their choice to play throughout the year. They can choose from orchestra, band, or keyboard. Fourth and fifth graders may audition for hand chimes, a special weekly pull-out class during the day. Participants master techniques unique to hand chimes and are exposed to basic music reading and performance skills. The culminating offering is the fifth grade Kidservatory class. This unique class encompasses an accelerated offering of visual and performing arts on top of traditional fifth grade curriculum. Students participate in drama/choir twice a week (including biannual performances), music appreciation weekly, four days of band, strings, or piano, and specialized field trips including visits to the opera, symphony, and art galleries.

The school also places an emphasis on physical education, health, and nutrition education. All students participate in physical education class twice a week. The goal of the program is to promote fitness for life and a love for exercise. A major component of the program is the President's Physical Fitness testing. The weekly, optional after-school Little Warrior Nation program gives kindergarten through third grade students broad exposure to athletics, strong role models in the form of future NCAA Division I high school athletes, and it complements the already busy world of youth sports. The program develops character, relationships, and love for fitness rather than just a chance for competition. High school athletes travel to the elementary campus to offer clinics in a variety of sports from softball to volleyball. All fourth and fifth grade students have the option to participate in monthly "Inside Looks" at the high school. These game-day experiences allow students access to the locker room and sidelines on game day. Other efforts to improve overall physical health include an on-going wellness committee comprised of parents, an annual wellness fair with local vendors, and annual wellness assemblies. Previous speakers include a dental hygienist, a nutritionist, the Dairy Council, a chiropractor, and high school athletes.

For foreign language, the school offers Spanish weekly to students in grades 1-5 and bi-weekly to kindergartners. One of the main goals of the program is exposure to the concept of hearing, reading, and speaking a foreign language. The program lays the basic building blocks for future success in a junior high foreign language program. By the end of fifth grade, students know numbers, colors, and a basic conversational vocabulary.

All students K-5 participate in Computer Science class bi-weekly. The main goal of the program is to develop responsible digital citizens. The National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) act as the baseline for standards. By fifth grade students ought to type up to 25 words per minute. Though the class teaches the use of Microsoft's Office Suite pervasively, it also aims to develop multiple proficiencies in terms of platforms used. Thus, students use PC desktops, windows-based laptops, iPad tablets, access and store work on local servers, and working in the cloud via Google accounts and Moodle (fourth and fifth grade only).

Finally, all students visit the library bi-weekly to receive library science instruction as well as to select new reading material.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Valley Christian Elementary aims to help all students learn to their highest ability. This occurs by framing learning in a variety of ways. The school invests heavily in both professional development and time to develop the faculty's differentiated instruction skill sets. Several teachers recently attended the annual DI conference in Las Vegas offered by the National Conference on Differentiated Instruction. Consultation and training through Julie Adams also gave teachers a plethora of instructional strategies addressing areas such as neuroscience, Common Core standards, close reading, critical thinking, PLC's, and pre, during, and posting learning strategies. The annual Terra Nova/Benchmark analysis cycle helps identify needed areas for improvement in overall instructional methods.

Access to computers has always been a budget priority and VCES currently enjoys greater than a 1:1 student to computer ratio. This flexible access has allowed students and faculty to investigate how to meaningfully use computers in the classroom and best-of-breed digital tools. Also, teachers continue to utilize a growing number of targeted apps for individualized learning. At each teacher meeting, teachers take time to share these apps with each other. The technology available fosters problem solving and critical thinking skills, creates authentic learning environments, and addresses multiple learning styles in a standards-driven classroom. Accelerated Reader may be the best example of technology supporting every student individually. At the beginning of each grade period students complete an assessment which informs their reading level and reading amount for the term. Students, teachers, and parents all have access to progress throughout the trimester. The individual focus results in tremendous growth.

For students who are not working at grade level, the school offer a variety of programs to provide support to them. Instructional specialists and educational therapists provide one-to-one support. Students who have a diagnosed learning disability or other difficulties requiring extra assistance or accommodations are given accommodations in class and when taking tests as stated in their accommodations plan.

The greatest strategy to address the needs of accelerated learners come through the aforementioned approach to differentiated instruction. Challenge projects, project-based Learning, online tools in core curricular areas, and centers reflect the strategies used. As previously stated, the new SOAR Mathematics program aims to give advanced fourth and fifth grade students the math challenge they crave. Students accelerate math instruction so they can enjoy math competition and STEM challenges.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

In terms of Terra Nova standardized test data, teachers meet every fall to identify the three to five highest and lowest strands from the entire battery and use this information to craft their academic action plan for the year. Overall Terra Nova math scores reflect slight growth, or a consistent holding pattern. The following year, teachers reflect on the previous action plan and summarize results.

Other language arts data from the internally administered Star Assessment shows scores that place all grade levels above the grade level equivalent. Teachers rely heavily on the STAR Assessment and the accompanying Accelerate Reader program. By recently adding the Home Connect feature, the school has experienced a greater sense of connectedness between reading goals and progress at school and home.

Additionally, the school has made tremendous strides in implementing bi-annual internal benchmark assessments for core academic areas. Teachers analyze the data in a similar fashion when analyzing Terra Nova scores. These results of all academic scores from all major assessments are shared formally with the teachers and the school board each fall in a face-to-face presentation from the principal. The aim is to recognize and celebrate success as well as to identify areas for growth. Since its inception nearly six years ago, the annual data dashboard has transformed the academic culture of the school in positive ways. Parents also receive similar data in report cards, summative standardized testing results, and the annual President's Report – all of which are available both in print and online.

The school recently began dis-aggregating Terra Nova scores based on subgroups. The early analysis of subgroups greater than ten students per grade level reveals no major discrepancies in performance.

Finally, elementary teachers rely on proactive communication to communicate academic progress as evidenced by the use of weekly reports to indicate missing work for the week. Teachers also take tremendous time preparing for formal conferences. The number of web-based tools that makes this school to home communication possible continues to grow. Parents can access live grade via the PowerSchool grade database 24/7 beginning in fourth grade. Parents have also grown reliant upon the high volume of information available on teachers' websites. Information such as online math and language arts books and resources, curricular documents, and weekly newsletters can be accessed on the teachers' sites.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

When the current principal stepped into his role, he brought the vision for a connected school community. By caring for each person, all other school goals could be accomplished. In recent years, teachers have given great thought to ways they can improve intrinsic motivation of the students. They begin by establishing a culture of care. Classrooms remain student-centered allowing for voice and choice in the learning process. Also, teachers take a positive, relational approach to discipline. They rely heavily on their recent Love and Logic training to do so. Other motivating strategies include marble jar parties, academic honor roll, and weekly Principal Awards presented in chapel. Students feel cared for, which leads to greater engagement and motivation.

Other factors that have created a better student environment include extensive facility upgrades. Within the last few years the campus added field turf, new lunch table coverings, and playground updates. Though seemingly simple, these changes mean a great deal to the children. They take great pride in their school facility.

When teachers feel cared for, the students feel even more cared for. One of the main vehicles for encouraging teachers and staff comes in the form of the PTPF (Parent Teacher Prayer Fellowship). Recruiting some of the most involved, dedicated, and professional parents, the principal leads this group with the purpose of supporting the teachers. The PTPF provides coffee carts, monthly treats, the Christmas Love Gift, parental support, and Teacher Appreciation Week. The love and attention these parents provide often times compensates for the lack of financial gain available to teachers. The PTPF also adds to a positive student culture by coordinating the annual end of year all-school party and scooter race. Students often identify the end of year party as their favorite day of the year. School pride runs high at VCES.

In addition to the PTPF, many regular practices at teachers meeting provide motivation for teachers. Each meeting begins with Kudos awards. The principal offers qualitative feedback to an employee that went above and beyond. Opportunities to serve also provide motivation. Several committees such as the curriculum committee, Challenge Success, and the leadership team offer opportunities for service and career development. Finally certain deeply held traditions help value teachers such as the start of school all-family potluck, the Christmas breakfast, and the end of year dinner celebration.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Student success and school improvement for Valley Christian in recent years can be tied to the support of parents and the extended community. One of the most valuable and readily available resources comes in the form of parents. Dozens of parents can be found on campus every day participating in a range of activities from making copies, to helping with science labs, to participating in reading groups. The willingness to have parents present on campus adds tremendous value to the school.

Being a part of a K-12 system gives the school access to unique high school clubs such as sign language, nano education, sports, leadership, the International Space Station, and more. Elementary students immensely enjoy the opportunity to see living breathing examples of what they aspire to be in a short time. Secondary students can be spotted on campus on a regular basis sharing their expertise with the younger students.

Several outside organizations have made an impact on academic programs in recent years. The Stanford-based Challenge Success partnership has given the access to resources aimed to create a balanced learning environment. Also, over the last three years the school has benefited from the expertise of the One-to-One institute. They provide individualized consulting and training in the area of 21st century learning. They have been instrumental in the successful iPad program implementation. Beginning with effective learning theory and pedagogy, the Institute leads teachers in more effectively influencing their students with technology. Finally, Julie Adams has given teachers a better understanding of how to more effectively

improve instruction and learning. Aimed with the latest research, Julie has consulted with school to analyze its academic strengths and weaknesses and has provided customized training of the faculty.

In the fall of 2014, all fifth grade students participated in the first-ever STEM challenge which featured representative from local organizations such as Lockheed, Cal Poly, Cisco, and Intel. In this learning opportunity aimed at leveraging local STEM companies, parents of the school came and shared their experiences professionally in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. Students then worked collaboratively on building their own edible cars. Several of the ideas shared by VCES parents in the field of STEM translated to actionable steps for the students in this exciting project-based activity.

3. Professional Development:

Praised for it in recent accreditation reports, professional development stands out as one the school's strengths. Attracting, retaining, and training the faculty remains a top goal year after year. In recent years, the school implemented Professional Learning Communities across campus. These PLC's provide an avenue for teachers to learn from one another. Though less formal than traditional professional development days, they bring an enhanced culture of lifelong learning to the school. The annual budget process, called Ed Forum, reflects a major annual commitment to PD with over \$3,000 per classroom teacher allocated in recent years.

Leading up to the one-to-one iPad roll-out the school emphasized 21st Century Education in its professional development plan. The school worked the last two years with the One-to-One Institute on a customized training strategy. A series of webinars coupled with an online class and an all-day face-to-face training gave teachers the needed skills to foster inquiry based learning within the 21st century classroom.

Other effective technology training came in the form of the VC Connect conference. An original creation of the school, this all-day PD day focused on teachers learning from teachers. All faculty members were invited to submit the proposed seminar topic for approval by the school leaders. Feedback from surveys showed high teacher motivation and appreciation for such an event. This past fall, the school hosted the third annual VC Connect Conference with the same sort of response from teachers. The conference has grown into the most well-received training day offered all year, and the theme changes year to year based on the needs of the faculty gathered from surveys and administrative planning.

Perhaps one of the greatest indicators of a commitment to lifelong learning is the high presence of teachers pursuing graduate degrees. Five of the eighteen classroom teachers are currently pursuing their Master's degrees, and three completed an MA last spring. This is in addition to the five classroom teachers that already have their M.A. Valley Christian encourages and supports these efforts by loaning up to \$15,000 to each candidate. Upon completion of the program teachers receive a \$10,500 annual bonus with the goal of raising this to \$12,000 annually. The principal also is pursuing his doctoral degree. Clearly, from the top down, professional development is highly valued.

4. School Leadership:

Valley Christian Schools stands out as one the largest K-12 Christian schools in the nation. As such, the school has an extensive organizational chart. Being a K-12 allows for added expertise in several key areas. The executive team is comprised of the President/Superintendent, COO, and CFO. The senior leadership team includes the elementary, junior high, and high school principals, marketing, development, curriculum, athletics, conservatory, and IT. Together, this team serves each campus of the Valley Christian system. Not many elementary schools benefit from the added levels of specialized leadership.

In terms of philosophy in leadership, the elementary school principal enacts several important practices. Modeling at the top is something the principal highly values. How can a leader expect his followers to exude kindness and care if he is not willing to model it himself? As such, the principal takes great pride in knowing the names of every student in the school. He maintains a highly visible profile by greeting members of the community in the morning, frequently visiting classrooms, attending field trips, helping with after school pick-up, and eating lunch with students. It is a core leadership belief that relationships

provide the context for influence. When students, parents, and employees feel cared for at the core, they are then ready to work at improving academics.

The school leadership values feedback. They have used tools such as the 360 profile, mid-year and end of year surveys, focus groups, and informal conversations with members of the community to identify areas of strength as well as areas for growth. The school also adheres to a 24 hour response to communication policy. This sets a tone that all communication within the organization is important. In terms of problem solving, the school believes that problems should initially be resolved by the parties involved. Parents are often directed to first go to a teacher with their concern rather than going straight to the principal. Finally, the local leadership of the elementary campus does not believe in a top-down approach to leadership. The organization values organic change coming from the teachers. The principal aims to balance work load with the hard work required for innovation and advancement. As such, this modeling, collaborative leadership style creates a school environment of trust and motivation where teachers can in turn lead and influence their students academically.

PART VI * INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCESS

Weekly chapel stands out as the one practice that makes the school so successful. When the current principal assumed leadership almost eight years ago, both teachers and students saw little value in chapel. The music was non-engaging, the teaching was uncoordinated, the speakers were hit or miss, and the weekly assemblies lacked energy. Much has changed since then.

PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. Non-public school association(s): Christian

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes No

3. What is the educational cost per student? \$11996
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$6642

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 8%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 14%

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: Terra Nova 3
Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	73
Percent of total students tested	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	92
Number of students tested	12
2. Other	
Average Score	84
Number of students tested	29
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 73 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school.

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>Terra Nova 3</u>
Grade: <u>4</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	79
Number of students tested	75
Percent of total students tested	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other	
Average Score	74
Number of students tested	32
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 75 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school. There were not more than 10 Asian students tested in Grade 4 so those scores are not reported here.

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>Terra Nova 3</u>
Grade: <u>5</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	85
Percent of total students tested	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	90
Number of students tested	17
2. Other	
Average Score	66
Number of students tested	32
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 85 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school.

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Terra Nova 3</u>
Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	73
Percent of total students tested	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	12
2. Other	
Average Score	74
Number of students tested	29
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 73 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school.

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Terra Nova 3</u>
Grade: <u>4</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	69
Number of students tested	76
Percent of total students tested	94
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other	
Average Score	68
Number of students tested	32
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 76 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school. There were not more than 10 Asian students tested in Grade 4 so those scores are not reported here.

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Terra Nova 3</u>
Grade: <u>5</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw-Hill</u>	Scores are reported here as: <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2014-2015
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	85
Percent of total students tested	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	88
Number of students tested	17
2. Other	
Average Score	71
Number of students tested	32
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: The report from ACSI for the school includes the 85 students that were tested without accommodations. ACSI pulls students that were testing with accommodations and reports those scores separately. These students do not qualify as "alternatively assessed." Therefore their scores were not reported here. No grade has more than 10 students that were assessed with accommodations.

For the ethnic breakdown, ACSI provides labels that are slightly different than Blue Ribbon. The Blue Ribbon category for "two or more races" was used to report scores from Terra Nova data that was identified as "Other" as it represents a population that comprises more than 10% of the school.