

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Sandi Ortiz Ishii

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

Official School Name A. J. Cook Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9802 Woodbury Avenue

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

City Garden Grove State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92844-2819

County Orange County

Telephone (714) 663-6251 Fax (714) 663-6087

Web site/URL http://cook.ggusd.us/ E-mail sishii@ggusd.us

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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. Gabriela Mafi E-mail gmafi@ggusd.us

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

District Name Garden Grove Unified School District Tel. (714) 663-6000

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 Dr. George West

(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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 44 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 10 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 8 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 62 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	13	8	21
K	22	24	46
1	23	25	48
2	23	29	52
3	19	21	40
4	29	24	53
5	29	12	41
6	26	27	53
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	184	170	354

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 68 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 18 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 4 % White
 - 9 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 12%

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	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	23
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	47
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	378
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.124
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 50 %
181 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Vietnamese, Spanish, Cantonese, Filipino, Chaozhou, Pashto, Japanese, Arabic, Hindi

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 65 %
Total number students who qualify: 238

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %
36 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.

- 8 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 4 Hearing Impairment
- 9 Mental Retardation
- 4 Multiple Disabilities
- 1 Orthopedic Impairment
- 3 Other Health Impaired
- 7 Specific Learning Disability
- 8 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 5 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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	1
Classroom teachers	14
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
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.	5

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	97%	98%	97%	98%	97%
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.

At Cook School students feel safe to take intellectual risks, are engaged in learning, and are inspired to achieve to their fullest potential by focusing on growth and perseverance.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

A.J. Cook Elementary School is one of 44 K-6 elementary schools in the Garden Grove Unified School District (GGUSD). GGUSD was established in July of 1965. Our school has a rich history beginning with its namesake, A.J. Cook. Dr. Alonzo Cook was the founding father of our city and the original land donor for our school district land base, dating back to 1874. With over 48,000 students, GGUSD is the third largest in Orange County and 14th largest urban district in the state of California. GGUSD has the distinct honor of being part of CORE (California Office to Reform Education) a consortium of 10 large urban districts seeking to innovate, implement and scale successful strategies to support student success. This collaboration was influential in Cook practices, which have supported the whole child in both comprehensive interventions and in embracing the educational paradigm shift of the Common Core standards. All of these practices have created a growth mindset community ready to embrace and effectively meet the challenges of the 21st century at Cook.

Cook is a small diverse school of approximately 360 students, with 25% of the student body coming to us as transfers from within and outside of the district. Cook's top demographic populations include 68% Asian and 18% Latino. Cook includes 8 language groups, with the dominant language groups being Vietnamese and Spanish. Our school is comprised of 50% English language learners and 26% Fluent English proficient learners. We are located in the "Little Saigon" community, which has the largest Vietnamese population outside of the country of Vietnam. Our school holds a special place in our district's history as being the first to celebrate TET, or the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, dating back to the 1970's. One of our teachers with 40 years of service in our district was the originator of this festival in our district schools and has the distinct background of being one of the original "Boat People" to come to America during the Vietnam War. Our school is a Title One school in which 65% of our student body qualifies for free or reduced breakfast and lunch. Our school serves K-6 visually impaired and blind students in the district through its Visually Impaired (VI) program. Additionally, we host two primary grade moderate to severe special day classrooms, as well as a Resource Specialist Program. Our special education children are integrated into the full fabric of our school, through special programs, awards and enrichment opportunities.

Cook has a long history of honors, which began in 2004 when our district received the Broad Award. Our hard-working staff and student body have been acknowledged for their achievement throughout the years with honors, which include the California Distinguished School in 2012. Additionally, Cook received the Title 1 Academic Achievement Award School over the following consecutive years: 2012, 2013, and 2014. Last year, we received the honor of Campaign for Business and Education Excellence (CBEE) – STEM Honor Roll recipient.

Technology is an integrated part of the learning process at Cook. We now have three mobile labs, a full technology lab and smart boards. All teachers have technology, including Special Education classes. Teachers have received multifaceted technology training. It is a priority for our students to be tech literate, as well as being given opportunities for tech leadership and enrichment. The staff jumped on board to learn the technology necessary to fully implement the Common Core standards and Smarter Balanced assessments. Teachers accepted the challenge by learning alongside our students. Through strong collegial support and utilizing a growth mindset, teachers have been able to learn and grow to the point that technology is now integrated into their daily operations.

Cook develops scholars. The scholarly habits initiative has created a common language that drives the expectation of growth in everything from habits, to healthy lifestyle, to growth in all areas of academics. Scholarly habits, which are trained school-wide, are academic preparation, perseverance, academic risk-taking, using evidence, and utilizing multiple perspectives in writing and speaking. Every student has been trained at school-wide assemblies, with incentives offered for growth in these areas. All student initiatives and trainings are also duplicated for parents at monthly Coffee with the Principal events and parent education functions. We believe in the power of parents and in the importance of sharing training knowledge that will support student growth at home.

The principal believes in guiding through vision and shared leadership. The voice of all stakeholders is critical to Cook's culture. Classified and certificated staff know and support Cook students and families.

Leadership is nurtured at all levels. Our strong PTO is the heartbeat of our school, as parents are involved through volunteerism, raising funds and creating school-wide events. Student leaders participate in leadership at school through these opportunities; Student Council, K Kids Club (Kiwanis), the Tech Squad, and Peace Ambassadors. Teachers lead through Grade Level Chairs, Instructional Leadership Teams, and members of district-wide consults. Nearly one hundred Cook students are provided expanded learning opportunities through our on-site After School Education and Safety (ASES) program, which is operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Garden Grove. ASES provides a safe place for academic intervention and enrichment in the domains of athletics, fine arts, technology and writing.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Cook Staff believes in the possibilities of each student and provides learning experiences that will challenge students and help them grow. Teachers utilize research-based curricula and strategies to differentiate instruction based on individual student needs. All lessons address the rigorous California Common Core State Standards (CCCSS).

Houghton Mifflin is a comprehensive language arts program that provides systematic instruction and diagnostic support in phonemic awareness, phonics and decoding, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension skills, writing skills and strategies, and listening/speaking skills and strategies. Foundational reading skills are also reinforced in grades K-3 with the use of Pearson Making Words Lessons for Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Spelling. Primary teachers follow a district-provided, foundational skills instructional sequence, which includes word work, high frequency words, phonics instruction with connected text, and dictation. Teacher-created close reading lessons utilizing fictional and informational text develop student comprehension skills. Through classroom lessons that include precise text based questioning and discourse, students are taught to support their reasoning and understanding with textual evidence.

The Accelerated Reader Program is used to support independent reading. Students take a standardized reading assessment through the Renaissance Learning website to determine their independent reading level. Students select weekly library books within their reading level, and will then take computerized comprehension and vocabulary quizzes. Teachers use quiz data to monitor student progress, adjust students' reading levels, and identify individuals who need more targeted interventions.

Cook staff integrates writing across curriculum areas. Heinemann Units of Study and Write From the Beginning curricula are utilized to teach the three CCCSS writing types. Students also participate in quick writes in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies in order to improve their written expression of ideas and ability to show evidence to support their thinking

Math instruction at Cook elementary follows a comprehensive approach to deepen our students' conceptual understanding, building procedural skills and providing opportunities for real world application. Units of study have been developed, in collaboration with California's subject matter competency program at UC Irvine, to align with CCCSS mathematical progressions. UC Irvine Math Project (IMP) conceptual lessons introduce math concepts through discussion and inquiry. The program provides hands-on math lessons, as well as games and activities for classroom review. These conceptual lessons encourage students to explore and discover different ways to solve problems, verbalize their thinking process and communicate their findings. Computational fluency is developed through Number Talks and Math sprints, as students develop their math fact fluency and number sense through student discussions. Further, enVision MATH Common Core program used at Cook is a rigorous, comprehensive program aligned with California Standards. The program provides differentiated instruction for diverse learners, including English learners, learners receiving specialized services, at-risk or below-level learners, and advanced learners. Daily lessons provide opportunities for review, quick checks, reteaching, practice, and enrichment. Each lesson begins with problem-based interactive learning, which allows students to interact with peers and determine workable solutions for real-world problems. Each lesson allows students numerous opportunities to develop the "Standards for Mathematical Practice". EnVision Math program provides hands-on learning, concrete representations of abstract concepts, and a technology component. Its technology allows parents to access math support at home.

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill is our inquiry-based science curriculum, which offers hands-on resources and lab materials, allowing for exploratory opportunities. Students investigate life, earth, and physical sciences through exploratory projects. The program includes differentiation for all learners. Students learn the academic language of each unit. English language learner instructional opportunities are embedded into each lesson, allowing students to improve oral and written language skills. Cook supports students in attending hands-on, science field trips. Students retain factual information from class trips such as: Long

Beach Aquarium, Dana Point Marine Institute, La Brea Tar Pits, and Orange County Science Museum. Additionally, science assemblies are provided to support standard curricula. Sixth graders attend outdoor science school in the local mountains. Students experience the excitement of using all their senses in learning about the world around them through their field-based activities.

The district utilizes the Scott Foresman social science curriculum (K-5) and Harcourt Reflections California series for grade 6. These programs offer a variety of options for students to think critically through reading, writing, hands-on activities, and technology. Again, content-specific field trips and assemblies are a rich part of the social studies curriculum, i.e. California missions and Bowers Museum. Students in our Special Education classrooms also learn about the community around them through trips to the Strawberry Festival, the GGUSD Special Olympics and local businesses.

b. Transitional Kindergarten (TK) utilizes the aligned Houghton Mifflin “Splash” program to enhance vocabulary, comprehension, and early math and writing skills. TK students learn academic and social skills that prepare them for Kindergarten, such as letter names/sounds, numbers/counting, taking turns, listening and responding to stories. Students have time to engage in activities that foster development of fine and gross motor skills, spatial awareness, and cause-and-effect relationships. Based on results from our Early Development Index data, addressing social competence, emotional maturity, and functional English were identified as needs of our youngest learners, and thus key focus areas for our TK program.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Cook staff members strongly believe that optimal learning can only occur when students are healthy. Healthy habits and practices are encouraged through daily physical education, the nutrition education programs, parental involvement, and school events/programs. All students receive physical education instruction weekly while 1st-6th grade students receive a minimum of 100 minutes of instruction every week per state law. Harvest of the Month provides materials in multiple languages for students and families to engage in hands-on exploration, tastings, and learning about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables. The goals of the program are to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables and to increase physical activity among low-income Californians. This, along with our parent nutritional trainings, encouraged Cook parents to start a successful weekly, after-school fundraising sale of healthy fruit and vegetable snacks. Healthy habits are also reinforced with the use of the GoNoodle website. Teachers use GoNoodle physical activities as transitions between lessons and as opportunities to infuse movement into daily routines. After students demonstrated great interest in our yearly Jog-A-Thon fundraiser, an after-school Reading Running Club was established for grades 4-6. School events, such as Red Ribbon Week, also encourage students to practice a healthy lifestyle and pledge to be drug/alcohol free. Cook students’ health is closely monitored through yearly vision, hearing, dental, and health screenings. The Healthy Smile program teaches students the importance of daily dental care, routine dental visits, and proper food nutrition. Cook School is one of 56 Title I schools that is serviced by the “Smile Mobile”. Dentists and hygienists provide screenings, fluoride varnish, sealants, oral health education, and referrals if necessary. Each year Cook fifth graders train for a physical fitness test. Life skills are taught in grade six to help prepare them for the independence and challenges of junior high school.

Technology is an integrated component of Cook’s curriculum. All teachers from TK- 6th grades utilize technology to collect and analyze data, drive instruction, and facilitate data-informed, student-centered decisions. Grades TK-1 focus on utilizing the school’s computer lab, mobile iPad cart, and Chrome Books to build students’ keyboarding skills and reinforce academic concepts. Smartboards are used to further engage students in hands-on, interactive learning within the classroom. Technology helps to provide students with personalized learning environments where instruction can be easily differentiated for all learning styles and ability levels. Cook has purchased Rosetta Stone language learning accounts for beginning level language learners on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Students can access their accounts at school and at home. Cook’s Visually Impaired students have talking software programs, which allow them access to technology including Google Docs, internet, iPads and Chrome Books. Grades 2-6 take district trimester language arts and math benchmarks tests on the computer, as well as weekly Accelerated Reader tests. Parents have immediate access to all of their child’s test results from their home technology. Grade levels collaborate to allow older students the opportunity to teach/assist

younger students in technology projects, such as the 1st and 4th grade Explain Everything science project. All Cook students have Google accounts, which enable them to communicate with classmates/teachers via Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Gmail. They also use the accounts to converse with pen pals at local schools, ask homework questions of teachers/peers, and complete written homework assignments. Student-created iMovies further enhance subject material. Students took part in the “Hour of Coding” and an upper grade lunchtime Coding Club was established for students interested in further challenging themselves.

Visual and performing arts are embedded throughout each grade level’s weekly language arts, science, social studies, and math curricula. Students complete directed drawings to reinforce concepts learned in science and social studies. Students learn songs to improve recall of geography, grammar skills, scientific processes, and parts of a plant. Students in grades 1-3 are provided biweekly vocal instruction from a qualified, credentialed music teacher. Students in grades 4-6 receive weekly instruction, as well as the opportunity to participate in the school chorus. Instrumental music is offered to students in grades 4-6 and also taught by a qualified, credentialed music teacher. Students are given the opportunity to learn a string instrument in 4th grade and have expanded opportunities to learn a wind instrument in 5th and 6th grade. Many teachers incorporate Art Masters’ lessons into their curriculum, where students learn about a specific artist and create an art piece in that artist’s style.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Cook’s small school environment encourages a team approach to instruction and intervention. Each week teachers participate in structured collaboration meetings, where they co-plan and co-teach differentiated lessons, share successful strategies, create supplements, analyze vertical standard alignment to challenge students, and plan intervention strategies with support staff and Boys and Girls Club.

Two instructional methods that teachers utilize and collaborate on are close reading and gradual release of responsibility. The close reading lesson design has helped Cook students become more skilled at locating textual evidence. It supports students in making connections and gaining deeper understanding of the text. The use of accountable-talk and flexible groupings encourages all students to think thoroughly about details, notice text features, and analyze the author’s language. Another key instructional method is the gradual release of responsibility. This scaffolding instructional approach moves the classroom instruction from a teacher-centered, whole group delivery to a student-centered collaborative and independent approach. Once students are working independently, students identified as needing more assistance are pulled into small group intervention.

Despite strong instructional methods, sometimes the whole child requires additional interventions to succeed. We are committed to intervening when necessary to ensure that academic and social-emotional resources far outweigh demands. District and teacher-created assessments allow Cook teachers to identify students in need of intervention or challenge. When such students have been identified in language arts, they receive supplemental assistance from our school resource teacher. The resource teacher utilizes the Language! Program, a state-adopted intervention program focusing on basic reading skills, as well as The Six-Minute Solution Primary, which focuses on fluency. Both programs contain ongoing assessments, which provide immediate feedback and progress monitoring. The resource specialist (RSP) will offer push-in and pullout classroom support in ELA and math to students identified by the Student Study Team (SST) or those students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

As a pre-SST intervention, the principal, teachers, and support staff closely monitor students who are identified at the beginning of the school year. Students at-risk either academically or social-emotionally are placed in the Principal’s Scholar Group, which provides academic/mental health support and monthly progress monitoring. The principal meets with these students regularly to discuss their progress, set goals and celebrate successes. These students also participate in a Readers Club run by the school library media tech assistant. The library media tech facilitates small group intervention to improve literacy, comprehension and test-taking skills. Teacher-led after school interventions are established based on academic need, such as phonemic awareness, comprehension, fluency, writing, and English language learning. Students evidencing social-emotional concerns have mental health counseling available two days a week from an on-site therapist and on an additional 2 days, we have a school psychologist to offer mental

health support and psychological assessment as needed. Students who qualify for intervention are given priority membership in our after-school ASES program.

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

Cook teachers begin each year by analyzing the previous year's assessment results from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and identifying a key standard of focus for the year. Last year, our school-wide focus was reading comprehension including supporting thinking using textual evidence. This year we are building critical thinking skills by identifying multiple perspectives, as we continue to build on utilizing textual evidence in both informational and fictional text.

Teachers continually utilize data to drive instruction and set clear, individualized student goals. Our district uses Illuminate, a web-based student assessment system. All formative and summative assessments, such as math and ELA benchmarks, fall and spring writing prompts, math unit tests, Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and language arts theme tests are scored and entered into Illuminate. During weekly collaboration meetings, teachers develop interventions, re-teaching activities, and ways to differentiate curricula based on data analysis. At the end of each trimester, students complete Benchmark test tracking sheets and set individual goals. During conferences, teachers and parents discuss methods to support students in taking ownership of their learning in order to reach their goals.

Cook believes it is critical to regularly inform parents of student progress. Teachers utilize the weekly Wednesday folders to communicate concerns, inform parents of interventions, and celebrate successes. Parents can also access their child's test scores from Illuminate Home Connect and Accelerated Reader Home Connect. Interpretation is provided by on-site Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking community liaisons at parent-teacher conferences, principal trainings, and with phone calls, notes, or emails to the home. Trimester benchmark results are provided in each student's home language, including a parent letter, which describes the progress toward all standards. The principal reviews these benchmarks letters and all letters of students who scored proficient or advanced are stamped with a special Principal's Scholar Stamp.

The principal hosts monthly "Coffee with the Principal" trainings for parents that focus on school and student learning. The focus for the last two years has been Common Core Standards, understanding assessments, supporting students through growth mindset and preparing their children for the Smarter Balanced online exams. One sub-group Cook has targeted in these trainings is our Hispanic population. Traditionally this population has scored lower in both language arts and math on standardized tests. Our bilingual, Hispanic principal has lowered the affective filter for Spanish speaking parents and encouraged more Hispanic parental involvement in school-wide activities. A large percentage of the Principal's Scholar Support intervention group and Boys & Girls Club (BGC) members are from our lower achieving Hispanic subgroup. The BGC provides a "Power Hour" of homework assistance to many children whose parents are unable to assist them due to the language barrier. Teachers utilize English language learning strategies throughout their lessons and check for understanding in order to close the achievement gap.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Cook is a small school with a big heart. Teachers and staff ensure that every student knows they belong and are respected. This sense of family allows for students to feel comfortable taking intellectual risks and discovering their unique strengths. Cook students have many opportunities to experience academic success, build significant relationships with caring teachers and staff, take part in extracurricular activities, and get involved in the community. Cook staff creates an environment where students understand that if they work hard and don't give up, they will succeed. Teachers model respect and kindness within the school-wide community.

Cook empowers and motivates students through the use of leadership roles, monthly student-led character assemblies, and scholarly incentive programs. Students are chosen to be peace ambassadors in grades 3-6 based on recommendations from teachers and classmates. Ambassadors are trained to prevent cruelty and bullying. They help teach other students problem solving skills, appropriate social interaction, and leadership skills. Their elected student council leads monthly character assemblies, performing skits to model scholarly behavior and work habits. Students who are observed displaying these habits/traits are rewarded with character counts slips and entered into a Friday prize lottery. Those identified by their teacher as showing improvement on their trimester goals are rewarded with growth mindset bracelets. A monthly scholarly recess is provided for students with 100% homework completion. When students reach their Accelerated Reader goals, they may attend an A.R. party. Cook students want to perform well because they know their successes will be celebrated within their school-wide community. Students who work hard to excel on school-wide goals of noting evidence and multiple perspectives in texts have their work displayed in the cafeteria and their names are displayed in lights on the school marquee. Parents are invited to trimester awards assemblies for students who demonstrate improvement or perform at proficient/advanced levels on Benchmark tests. In addition to celebrating academic growth, we believe it is important to celebrate social-emotional growth through the Student of the Month award.

Cook teachers have an equal voice on school policy and decisions. The principal listens to all staff members and values their input and ideas. Teachers and staff are quick to help each other and feel comfortable asking for assistance. Teachers collaborate daily and share best practices. Just as students feel comfortable taking intellectual risks, teachers do as well. They know that their peers and principal will support them in improving. The PTO parents are valued by all staff as a supportive resource for instructional resources and volunteer partners.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Cook strongly believes that when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, students will be far more successful. Parents know they are always welcome and their involvement is appreciated. Mothers and fathers, even grandparents, routinely volunteer to assist teachers with small groups, give extra one-on-one support, test reading fluency, and organize fundraisers. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer as Cook celebrates traditions, such as Trunk-or-Treat, Santa's Secret Workshop, TET, and the end-of-the-year school picnic. A year end teacher-hosted Volunteer Tea honors the many Cook family volunteers.

Cook staff is committed to involve and educate parents on the rigorous Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments. Back to school night, parent-teacher conferences, family literacy nights, family science nights, and open house all provide parents the opportunity to communicate regularly with teachers about their children's learning and how they can provide support. The school's Hispanic and Vietnamese liaisons translate at each event to assist our English language learner community. "Coffee with the Principal" trainings and parent education classes, such as "The 10 Education Commandments and the 40 Developmental Assets", teach parents how to navigate the instructional system and become effective advocates for their children. Our student leaders provide parents technology support at principal-led trainings. Parents are given hands-on instruction in creating family log-ins for Pearson Math, Accelerated

Reader, and Smarter Balanced practice exams. They also learn ways they can utilize these programs to monitor and assist their child's academic progress at home.

In our mission to support the whole child, Cook School engages our surrounding neighborhood. School events, such as TET, Trunk or Treat, Read Across America, and Open House are seen as opportunities to celebrate ties to the community. These events have welcomed participation by local business employees, Boys & Girls Clubs of Garden Grove, and the Garden Grove Police and Fire Departments. Cook staff believe that supporting the whole child includes supporting healthy life practices. We collaborate with organizations such as OC Wellness Physicians, the Center for Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention, and the Orange County Health Care Agency program. These groups have promoted the health of our students and families through nutrition classes, parent education, exercise and healthy eating assemblies, encouraging walking to school, and outreach at school events. Our view of the whole child includes making connections within the K-12 system. Cook hosts a chartered K Kids Club, an elementary group led by our feeder High School Key Club. We collaborate with the feeder intermediate school through Reading Buddies and invite the high school Vietnamese Student Organization each year to lead our TET Celebration. Our school facility is a hub of activity, hosting a local soccer league, Girl Scout troop, and the ASES program. A healthy school is a connected school and Cook exemplifies this broad-based community connection.

3. Professional Development:

Garden Grove Unified School District offers a variety of professional development (PD) opportunities. The goal of our district's professional development is to enrich and support the tremendous work our teachers are doing each day with our students. GGUSD keeps PD interactive in the sense that teachers are part of the PD via hands-on learning, being part of co-planning and co-teaching, or viewing demo lessons. Through the work of district personnel and Teachers On Special Assignment (TOSA) working in tandem with the district and school sites, Cook teachers are given a multitude of PD opportunities throughout the school year.

Each school year begins energetically with an opening week of PD called Super Week. All teachers are given many options of trainings to choose from in order to enhance their current teaching practices or refresh understanding of previously learned PD. In addition to Super Week, GGUSD offers PD during the school year. Each month a PD calendar is published and sent to teachers as a menu of opportunities which range from the creation of units of study to further development of best teaching practices within our base programs and visual arts, as well as developing technology skills to help bring our students into the 21st century. In addition to Super Week and monthly PD opportunities, teachers attend Strategy Academy. Teachers are released from their class to view a colleague demonstrate instruction at another school site. Facilitated by TOSAs, teachers are given background of the strategy they will view, experience the demo lesson from their colleague, and collaboratively discuss implications for their own classrooms. The site TOSA assists to clarify and help teachers implement the Strategy Academy focus by providing follow-up once teachers have experienced Strategy Academy.

Teachers at Cook are enthusiastic and willing to work collaboratively with their peers and their site TOSA in order to provide an enriched and engaging classroom environment for their students. With support from the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), teachers at Cook co-plan and co-teach to form a lesson study. Once the instruction is complete, teachers analyze their teaching practices and reflect upon whether they may need to further develop their instruction to meet student needs. This type of PD provides rich understanding of teaching pedagogy and encourages collegial discussion, which challenges their understanding of best practice - truly the heart of any professional development. The PD offerings that Cook teachers experience enrich their instructional practices and ultimately positively impact the academic achievement of our students as demonstrated by their academic successes.

4. School Leadership:

Cook administration, staff, parents, and students all work together to lead our school to success. The principal has established a school environment with high expectations for all students. Her initiative has created a school-wide learning improvement philosophy that focuses on goals for individual student progress. Teachers' expertise, skills, and unique abilities are cultivated and utilized for the betterment of the school. The team approach at Cook has created an instructional climate where teachers know they are valued and respected. Although our school has a designated leadership team every teacher here is recognized as a leader. The school's climate is upbeat, professional, and solution-oriented.

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) at Cook is comprised of one teacher from each grade level. These teachers attend monthly, district-sponsored leadership trainings and coordinate weekly collaboration meetings. The principal and teachers work together to develop and align curricula, instructional methods, and assessments. Teachers co-plan and co-teach lessons to assist one another in improving instruction. The shared sense of leadership at Cook has created an environment in which teachers feel comfortable asking each other for assistance or sharing successful strategies. Teachers are encouraged to learn from one another and leadership is a shared enterprise.

Cook's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) plays a strong leadership role in engaging parents and the community. A collaborative spirit of mutual respect exists between Cook's principal and the PTO. Their shared mission of improving the school is evident in the numerous volunteer hours parents spend planning and implementing school fundraisers and traditional celebrations. The PTO ensures that all views and concerns of the parents are represented. This collaboration helps the principal understand the needs of the parents and gives insight in order to provide additional support where needed.

Students also seek esteemed leadership roles. Student Council members and Peace Ambassadors are elected by their classmates and they work collaboratively with teachers and the principal. Student Council focuses on building school spirit and teaching peers scholarly habits and important character traits. Officers and classroom representatives design character development skits and presentations for monthly school-wide assemblies. Peace Ambassadors utilize the "Peace Path" and assist fellow students in talking out their problems. The 6th grade Tech Squad supports technology instruction and troubleshooting throughout the school and the K Kids Club nurtures leadership skills. These leadership roles help students gain knowledge, confidence, responsibility, and communication skills. The Principal leads collaboratively alongside the staff, parents, and students; who are all valued members of the Cook team, together contributing to our school's success.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The advent of the CCCSS has created a paradigm shift in education. This change put Cook administration, teachers, and parents in the position of being learners, alongside the students. Cook recognized the importance of modeling the acceptance of change, the necessity of perseverance through the process, and we willingly dove into new learning and new practices. Cook embarked on a summer reading of Growth Mindset. This research helped to build growth mindset into the culture of our school. This began through professional development for the staff, student instruction at school-wide assemblies, student instruction in class, and multifaceted parent training events. Growth mindset or the belief that students can learn and become smarter if they work hard and persevere is foundational to our student's ever-increasing success.

Cook is a school that thrives on challenge and views failure not as evidence of lack of intelligence, but as an opportunity for growth and stretching existing abilities. Cook teachers recognize that by identifying these strengths and directly teaching students the difference between a growth and fixed mindset, they can help students understand that intelligence and ability can be developed. Students then are encouraged to focus on becoming intellectual risk-takers as a road to success.

The growth mindset is embedded in every aspect of the Cook community. Cook's principal is open to feedback from teachers and parents, constantly seeking to build her own skills and to celebrate students' growth. Teachers collaborate and learn from each other, always working to improve their instruction and encouraging their students to believe in their potential. They use the growth mindset in responding to data and supporting students in setting growth goals. Parents support their children by attending principal-led growth mindset trainings, partnering with teachers, and praising effort and perseverance. Making students aware of their mindsets has helped them take ownership of their learning and eagerly approach challenges, including Smarter Balanced assessments.

Through data analysis and teacher observations, students who struggle most work closely with the principal, in the Scholar Support Group. These K-6 students meet regularly to review their data, set goals and celebrate growth. The principal works closely with teachers to understand where students need the greatest encouragement or coaching and what additional interventions are needed to achieve growth. This intervention comprises 15% of the school and nearly half include our lowest performing students in our Hispanic subgroup. Students are encouraged to grow from the point of their last assessment. This process has evolved into a successful pre-referral intervention to Special Education, with the underlying premise being the belief in the possibility of growth for all our students.

The growth mindset is embedded in every aspect of our school climate. This belief has fostered an academic environment where Cook students love learning and accomplish their goals through resilience and hard work. From the moment Cook students walk onto campus in the morning, they are greeted by name by our custodian, office staff or teachers. Cook is a community of learners where students are warmly welcomed by name, and are encouraged to grow to their greatest personal potential.