

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Christine Marie Donnelly

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

Official School Name Creekside Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 12362 Springhurst Drive

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

City San Diego State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92128-6333

County San Diego County

Telephone (858) 391-1514 Fax (858) 391-1511

Web site/URL http://www2.powayusd.com/pusdcses/ E-mail cdonnelly@powayusd.com

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____

http://www.schooltube.com/organization/124892/ 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. John Collins E-mail JCOLLINS@powayusd.com

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

District Name Poway Unified School District Tel. (858) 521-2800

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 Mrs. Michelle O'Connor-Ratcliff

(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):
- 26 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 7 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 6 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 39 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	19	11	30
K	41	46	87
1	47	36	83
2	40	40	80
3	37	59	96
4	57	38	95
5	51	41	92
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	292	271	563

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 26 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 4 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 51 % 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: 8%

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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	27
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	46
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	570
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.081
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 15 %
87 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
American Sign Language, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, English, Farsi (Persian), Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Mandarin (Putonghua), Marathi, Pilipino (Tagalog), Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10 %
Total number students who qualify: 57
8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
72 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.

- 23 Autism
- 1 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 2 Hearing Impairment
- 1 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 16 Other Health Impaired
- 19 Specific Learning Disability
- 55 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 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	22
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals	14
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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.

Creekside is a community of lifelong learners committed to high academic achievement and respect for all, in an environment that fosters responsibility, collaboration, communication, and celebrations.

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

Creekside Elementary School is a public school serving students living in close proximity to the campus. Boundaries are drawn by the Poway Unified School District to establish which neighborhoods will attend each school. A small number of students are permitted to transfer to Creekside from other areas based on PUSD Board Policy.

PART III – SUMMARY

Creekside Elementary School is the 21st elementary school to be built in the Poway Unified School District and was the first to open in the 21st century. This distinction has led our school to be innovative with facilities, technology, academics, and character education. We take great pride in our programs that prepare students for community leadership and college and career readiness. We have forged ahead with our 1:1 iPad program in grades three through five as well as sets of iPads in primary grades. In addition, smart boards are used in two classes and class sets of iPod touch and Chromebooks are available.

The use of Character Counts! is an integral part of Creekside school climate and we model good character on a daily basis. We focus on one of the six character traits each year with a theme that is displayed throughout the campus: this year's theme is "Realm of Respect." The royal theme branches out across the campus with princesses and knights. Staff members are introduced at Friday Flag assembly and given an oath and title such as "Lady O'Malley, defender of children." Our students love to get caught showing good character and we reward them through both classroom and school-wide recognition programs. Every adult on campus has a process to nominate students for recognition: teachers, office staff, custodians, and playground supervisors. Students often nominate adults for recognition of good character as well. We don't just expect our students to show good character, we teach them daily through modeling and instruction what it truly means to be respectful, responsible citizens of Creekside and the world. This builds school spirit and establishes a common language when dealing with conflict and has resulted in a very low rate of discipline infractions.

A unique physical aspect of our campus is that it is made up of five academic buildings or "villages." Each village building, comprised of six classrooms, shares a common space allowing for effortless collaboration between staff, students, and volunteers. The structure of the shared village space allows for cross-grade level interaction and articulation. In addition, there are a number of outdoor learning centers including covered patios, a reading garden, art centers, and a small amphitheater. Our campus is built alongside a neighboring creek that allows students outdoor learning opportunities with walking field trips to study natural science and social studies topics. The middle of the campus is a gathering place called the quad where we join together each Friday for our Friday Flag assembly to share announcements, performances, and accomplishments with the entire school community. Many parents make it a point to attend Friday Flag regularly.

We have a very active parent volunteer system and anywhere on campus you will see parents working in classrooms as Arts Attack docents, leading the Junior Achievement program, preparing for school events like the Gecko Run, and helping the teacher with individuals and small groups of students. Our parents are key to our success.

Creekside has a diverse student body. Of our 565 students, 159 (28%) have a language other than English listed as Home Language. There are 25 different languages spoken by our students. We embrace this diversity and incorporate activities, performances, and lessons to showcase our range of cultures. Every year we have a multi-cultural night that allows families to share food and customs.

Our highly accomplished faculty firmly believes in the idea of lifelong learning for ourselves and our students. 88% of our teachers hold master's degrees and one is Nationally Board Certified. The teachers are dedicated to continuing their education with monthly professional development as well as District sponsored Teaching and Learning Cooperatives (TLC). All of this work revolves around our focus to empower our students to meet the high academic and behavioral expectations we set for them. Grade level teams establish goals centered on every student's growth with data regularly examined to identify achievement gaps for student groups and individuals. Grade level and cross-grade level teams collaborate to develop strategies to meet the needs of these students. We are proud that in 2015, the first year of the new California Assessment of Student Progress and Performance, 81% of our students met or exceeded standards in English Language Arts and 82% of students met or exceeded standards in math.

Our staff and families are committed to a healthy lifestyle. Students love our Running Club program and eagerly check their lap totals. Teachers and parents can often be seen running laps with the students. Our

yearly Gecko Run is about having fun while exercising. During recess and lunch the students find ways to stay active. This healthy attitude pays off and the fifth graders scored well on the 2015 California Fitness Test: 60% passed 6 out of 6 measures and 27% passed 5 out of 6 measures of fitness.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Students receive a focused, California Standards-based program that prepares them for success in the 21st century. Our district provides research-based, state-approved instructional materials, and then Creekside chooses supplemental materials and programs to meet the specific needs of our students. Creekside strives to reflect on best instructional practices, allowing for differentiated learning.

Literacy skills are built and reinforced at Creekside in a myriad of ways. Teachers supplement our Houghton Mifflin reading program with fiction and nonfiction text designed to meet the needs of all learners and expand their critical thinking skills. The common areas in each of the five villages are filled with relevant, diverse, and complex texts to engage every child. Explicit phonics instruction, guided reading groups, and books clubs help to support students as they advance their decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills.

Creekside teachers in the primary grades implement the Daily 5 structure during their literacy block to help foster independence, choice, and stamina with regards to their literacy skills. Educators school-wide explicitly teach comprehension strategies such as questioning, summarizing, inference, and making connections, all of which help students to self-monitor their own thinking and understanding while reading. Writer's Workshop helps students to grow in a supported format: explicit modeling, peer editing, use of mentor text, and teacher-student conferencing. This format develops student skills in narrative, opinion, information, and poetry writing. Our writing instruction is well-supported with rubrics and examples of student writing. Teachers calibrate their instruction and assessment through frequent professional development opportunities. On our 2015 spring benchmark assessments, 97% of 1st graders were proficient or advanced in both reading and math. Our 2nd graders also made a great deal of growth from fall to spring: in reading 85% of those who were basic on the fall assessment moved up to proficient/advanced and in math 94% moved up to proficient/advanced.

Math Expressions, an adopted curriculum that is aligned with the California Standards, creates a strong foundation for math instruction. Teachers use real-world based math problems and rich math tasks that engage students and provide meaningful experiences. Students in transitional kindergarten (TK) through fifth grade are engaged in "math talks" regularly, which challenges them to express and defend their thinking, and fosters a deep understanding of the math concepts. Through "math talks," students lead the conversations, share approaches to problem solving, and check for understanding. Students learn that there are multiple solution strategies for a problem; they practice flexible thinking and persistence with problem solving. We strive to differentiate for high achieving students in both primary and upper grades. Primary grades use a math centers format to develop rich tasks that engage students. Upper grades use an online program that our school developed and piloted to provide supplemental challenging grade level material for gifted math students. Math Olympiad offers the opportunity to 15-20% of our fourth and fifth graders to participate in a competitive math environment.

Science instruction is integrated with the other core subjects. Many times close reading activities are based on complex non-fiction science texts. Primary grades implement thematic units of study that marry the state science standards with core state standards. Many grade levels integrate science standards into annual performances that provide students with multiple ways of learning the standards. Our new Inspiration Room provides a unique space that engages students in hands-on learning experiences to deepen understanding. Teachers are supported by a Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) impact teacher who helps to develop both hands-on and digital lessons. Parent volunteers support labs with their time. Teachers utilize a Full Option Science System (FOSS) to structure discovery-based lessons that help students question the world around them. Students are encouraged to participate in our annual non-competitive science fair with a focus on exploring their curiosity about the physical world.

Creekside has a plethora of unique experiences that bring the social studies standards to life for the students. Field trips, guest speakers, Skype classroom, and other supplemental resources enrich students' global perspective. Additionally, students in grades 3-5 participate in the volunteer-led Junior Achievement

program to make connections to real-world topics. Google Earth lessons on iPads and in our computer labs help to foster students' connection to the outside world. Fifth graders relive the colonial experience through role-playing. Fourth graders participate in the Gold Rush experience, while primary students gain a deeper understanding of what life was like in past times. All of these experiences provide students with a diverse, global view of our changing world.

Our preschool students are actively engaged in activities to stimulate and nurture academic and social growth and development. Similar to our kindergarten and first grade classrooms, preschoolers participate in being "Child of the Week," where they deliver presentations that help with speaking and listening skills. Teachers establish daily schedules with learning experiences throughout the day. Activities are planned to meet learning standards in all areas of development, including music and movement, social and emotional development, cognitive development, gross and fine motor development, and pre-academic areas (literacy, math, and content areas of science and social studies).

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The key to Creekside's curriculum is based in a thematic approach to coordinate with the core curriculum. The arts, health, and technology are integrated throughout the daily lessons and units of study. A healthy child is better able to learn throughout the day and we work with our parents to send in nutritious snacks and meals for the children.

Our PE time is spent on both physical exercise and health and nutrition. The teachers work with a PE instructional assistant to plan standards-based activities and lessons during PE. Grades 1-5 attend a 35-minute session twice a week, while our kindergartners attend once a week to help them learn skills for success in PE. Our PE instructional assistant is sponsored by the PTA to work with students during lunches three days a week on the playground to teach good sportsmanship and to offer games such as basketball and practice skills they've learned in PE class. Our PTA also sponsors a YMCA Playground Partners program during lunch to teach sportsmanship. When issues involving playground games arise, we take the time during PE and on our broadcast Gecko News Network program to address the rules of the game and model good sportsmanship. All students also participate in our Running Club. Once a week a grade level gathers at the track to do calisthenics and run for 20-30 minutes. Students wear a bar code that is scanned to earn credit towards miles run in a year. Students are awarded for reaching mileage goals and are also encouraged to run laps during recess and lunch to earn additional mileage. We have a school-wide Gecko Run each year and invite parents to participate.

Technology is blended into every grade level. Students participate in Digital Literacy lessons to increase their knowledge of online safety and best practices. Our primary grades have four iPads in each classroom and the students are often seen using an iPad to listen to a story or practice math facts. In grades 3-5 every student has an iPad mini provided through fundraising by our Educational Foundation. The iPads go home each night to continue to provide access to projects and information. Research drove this program when it was first implemented in 2013-14 in third grade and then expanded one additional grade level each year. Additionally, we have two full computer labs and in each of the village common areas there are eight computers for student use. The teachers have participated in numerous hours of professional development related to the use of technology and how to move towards the highest levels of the SAMR (Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition) model. To continue to support both students and teachers, we have a STEM Impact Teacher and a Technology Professional Learning Leader to guide professional development, student use of equipment, and to research new programs and apps. Our library media technician is also trained in iPad maintenance and apps and works closely with the teachers to teach with the iPads both during library visits and in the classroom.

Art instruction occurs both with the regular school day and is supplemented by our Arts Attack program – trained volunteer docents come to the classroom once or twice a month to teach techniques, styles, and art history while the students also produce a piece of art or a clay sculpture. Art is displayed prominently in the classrooms and office and we have an Art Show in the spring. Student art is also used to decorate for school dances, promotion, and performances.

If you walk into a primary classroom you will hear music and students singing regularly. Teachers find the time within circle time and even as stretch breaks during the day to work with students in singing. 89% of our fifth graders participate in our musical instrument program with a credentialed music teacher. The fourth graders visit a high school band performance in the spring each year to learn about the various instruments. Every grade puts on a musical performance for students and parents. We also feature musical performances at our weekly Friday Flag assemblies with traditional dances, the Gecko Chorus, and professional singers for the National Anthem.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Effective instruction is the basis of RTI (Response to Intervention) and teachers continually strive to differentiate to meet the unique needs of every child through the use of a variety of instructional methods and interventions. Practices such as close reading, number talk, peer tutors, and the use of Daily 5 to strategically deploy questions, prompts and cues sets students up for success. For students with social-emotional needs, we offer a variety of support groups that focus on friendship to motivation at every grade level. These weekly groups serve approximately twenty-seven students and are run by our counselor and student support services.

Grade level teams collaborate regularly to review data collected through multiple measures. Approximately ninety students with specific reading needs in grades K-5 meet with credentialed Reading Impact teachers for 30 minutes four times a week to focus on targeted skills such fluency, phonics, and building confidence. Teachers have access to a number of programs to further support differentiation, including a powerful program called Compass Learning, which is able to adapt to each student to set appropriately challenging lessons and build skills. These supports enable teachers to become facilitators and students to become leaders of their learning as they build their capacity to select and monitor their acquisition of skills.

As part of our PALS (Peer Assisted Learning Support) Reading program, sixteen 1st graders meet one-on-one with a 4th/5th grade buddy twice a week for 30 minutes in the library before school to practice reading. We are intentional in selecting our big buddies and actively recruit those who were also struggling readers to help them reinforce the strategies they learned in the Reading Impact program. In 2014-15 the program was highly successful and 100% of the first graders made some growth as measured by our MAP reading assessment and 63% made expected growth. Beyond the text scores lies the invaluable connection to reading and mentorship.

Our homework help club for twelve at-risk grade 3-5 students is run by Student Support Services. The students are recommended by teachers and attend twice a week after school. Peer tutors lend support in studying and homework completion. Our library is open before and after school several days per week to allow all students access the books, Library Media Technician, and computers/printers.

We have a significant English Language Learner population, 15%, and support them through both push-in and pull-out instruction. Additionally, our school has developed and is piloting a new intensive instruction program for those at risk of becoming a long-term English language learner. In coordination with our after-school Extended School Services (ESS) program these students receive 45 minutes of social language followed by one hour of intensive instruction in academic vocabulary and math by a credentialed teacher - four times a week. The eight students in the program will continue in the summer ESS program, including participation in field trips and enrichment activities, and receive four hours per week of instruction for six weeks.

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

Creekside educators regularly gather formative and summative pieces of data to assess the progress of students. Strong school to home communication ensures that families are informed of student growth and student needs: parent-teacher conferences, trimester progress notices, formal state and district assessments, and ongoing classroom assessments. Parents are also able to access their child's progress information online through our District MyPlan system. Our trimester progress notices clearly articulate what is measured in

each area. Friday Folders with corrected assignments and other information are a key to communication of progress on a weekly basis.

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) is administered to students in grades three through five once a year. In 2015, the first year of the new CAASPP, 81% of our students met or exceeded Standards in English Language Arts and 82% of students met or exceeded Standards in math. In addition to CAASPP, 5th graders tested in science using the 2015 California Standardized Testing and Reporting program (STAR) and 91% met or exceeded standards. Computer-based Northwest Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress testing (MAP) is administered two to three times a year depending on grade level, and is formative in that it gives strand data to teachers for their whole class and individual students. Each student receives an individual “growth” goal and data is analyzed based on students meeting expected or optimal growth. Goals are shared with parents.

Our teachers utilize Informational Reading Inventories, Developmental Reading Assessments, and daily anecdotal classroom observation and notes. Ongoing phonemic awareness and phonetic skills testing in the primary grades has strengthened students’ early literacy skills and identifies students for differentiation: Reading Impact program and/or PALS Reading Program for students at risk, and challenging, complex reading and math material for advanced students.

Anecdotal notes from reading groups are used to drive small group instruction during the literacy block. Reading inventories are conducted continuously and influence reading and strategy groups. Phonetic spelling tests assess the students’ understanding of phonics concepts. Standards-based unit and trimester assessments help guide mathematics instruction. Academic iPad applications help keep students engaged while gathering standards based data for the educator. Daily writing prompts are a constant source of informal data to discern whether or not students are growing as academic writers.

Grade level teams and support staff develop goals based on the feedback from benchmark assessments and CAASPP. Early in the school year, our teachers work in teams to analyze the results of assessments and identify school-wide trends, strengths, and areas needing support and formulate a comprehensive plan to support all student groups, including the significant subgroups. Grade level goals are created that align with and support the school-wide plan. Once the broad scope of work is laid out, teams narrow the focus to the practical implementation of instruction. Furthermore, pacing guides and trimester goal benchmarks are developed. Subgroups are monitored closely through “watch lists” to ensure progress in closing the achievement gap and resources are committed to support both in and out of the classroom.

If a need beyond classroom instruction is identified, then we problem-solve programs like Reading Impact, ELL Intensive Instruction, support groups through counseling, peer tutors, or academic support classes before and after school. Once a support program is implemented, we monitor progress to evaluate and adjust. We do not accept failure.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Creekside Elementary is truly an exemplar of a positive, student-centered school environment that consistently nurtures and challenges its students. We understand the importance of fun for both staff and students. Our mascot is the gecko. Just as there are a thousand different varieties of geckos, every Creekside student is a unique individual to be discovered and celebrated.

All children feel safe and accepted in their classroom because of the positive environment that our teachers work hard to establish. Our teachers believe in a Growth Mindset, which teaches students to believe that with hard work and resilience, they are capable of success. Imagine a classroom where students are not afraid to make mistakes, and will take academic risks which increase their motivation and understanding of concepts taught.

Students are highly engaged in the school academic and social activities. Monthly spirit days, Great Kindness Challenge week, theme days, and performances keep students excited and motivated for school. The national Character Counts! program is woven through the academics and activities at Creekside. Students learn valuable social and emotional skills from the explicit teaching and positive reinforcement of these character traits. The Second Step social-emotional curriculum aids students in advancing their emotional growth. The lunchtime adult support provides students with examples of cooperative play and problem solving. Our upper elementary grades serve as role models and examples for the primary grade students to look up to during our Big Buddies classroom program. The school-wide weekly Friday Flag assemblies unite our school and give us an opportunity to celebrate achievements and learning.

Our educators are warm, friendly and welcoming to students, parents and other colleagues every day. They exude positive attitudes, honesty, integrity and a nurturing spirit that ripples throughout the campus. Teachers new to the profession or to the district are provided with an extensive new teacher program that ensures they will be successful. Veteran teachers are quick to lend a hand or aid new teachers. The staff comes together to support each other and members of the community through participation in school and community events and fundraising for various charities, setting a positive example for our students. Creekside staff often come together for team building events. We learn together, grow together, and celebrate together.

Students observe and emulate teacher attitudes, motivation, and work ethic. According to the 2014-15 California Healthy Kids Survey, 90% of our students surveyed answered that they are happy to be at this school most or all of the time. They are excited and ready to learn every day because of the engaging, innovative learning activities.

Our campus can be described in two words: Creekside smiles!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our school is a place where every person makes a difference. As a school we are committed to promoting student learning through parent partnerships to involve parents in their child's education, foster shared responsibility among students, parents and staff, and encourage parents in the decision-making process. We strive to keep our parents informed and to give them voice in the direction of our school. Parents serve in formal capacity in PTA, Educational Foundation, and School Site Council, but their enthusiasm and spirit is felt every day on this campus. They want to make Creekside a great place not just for their own child, but for every child.

The Student Council coordinates our spirit days and leads several community service projects like pet food drives. Volunteers include older siblings and high school students through their high school programs like JROTC and Key Club. We have several science-based high school clubs bring experiments to campus to

supplement the regular curriculum and science fair. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts do community service projects on campus and every month our local Cub Scout troop presents colors at our Friday Flag assembly.

We turn to our parents and community partners to share their time, experience and skills to enhance the educational experience. Adult volunteers, including grandparents, older siblings, and community members run our PTA Arts Attack program for every classroom. Every year a number of grade 3-5 classes are involved in Junior Achievement which fosters work-readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy skills by giving students the tools they need for a 21st century global marketplace.

Volunteerism continues outside the school hours with enrichment activities both before and after school. Parents organize the activities, arrange for community and financial support, and volunteer their time running the activities. We are lucky to have chess club, science enrichment, book clubs, math club, science fair, multicultural nights, Read-In Nights, carnival, Gecko Chorus, Family Math Night, parent-child dances, back-to-school Posting Party, school musical performances, and restaurant nights. Every Monday morning before school we have Family Story Time in the library with parent volunteer readers. These activities enhance our students' school-to-home connection and support student achievement by offering academic and social opportunities.

Classroom parent volunteers support student learning by providing skill practice for individuals under teacher direction and facilitate small groups with academic skill-based games, spelling practice, and Mountain Math. General education classrooms average approximately 6 volunteer hours per week for academic help. The number of documented volunteer hours for the 2014-15 school year was 12,013 hours. In our most recent School Site Council survey 99% of parents agreed that "parent volunteers directly impact the overall quality of our children's education at Creekside."

3. Professional Development:

Our professional development approach includes meaningful collaboration that fosters a shared responsibility for student success, respect for individual strengths and styles, and true belief that we each make a difference in the lives of every single student on our campus.

Professional growth days are planned in part by the district and led by a site Professional Learning Leader. This year's focus is on the new state ELA Reading Standards. We continue to grow during our professional growth days, weekly time banking days and regularly scheduled bi-monthly professional development time. This dedicated time for building knowledge and skill focuses on essential practices and the efficacy of our work.

During the 2014-15 school year our school utilized funds provided by the state to implement the new math standards to create monthly half-day professional learning communities by grade level to explore essential questions, the new math adoption, and to create activities aligned with the new standards. That work now continues during time-banking and regular professional development time.

On-site professional development over the past few years has been aligned to both district focus and site needs. For example, with the implementation of a 1:1 iPad program and every classroom teacher with an iPad, it was necessary to bring in expertise from the district and outside sources to offer teachers the tools to integrate technology in a meaningful way as defined by the teachers.

The district supports a new program of Flex Time where the teachers drive their own learning. Teachers have a day built into the school year to use in a collaborative team of their choosing. Teachers collaborate to decide their topics of study, which have included ADHD support, autism conferences, creating close reading lessons, and working with at-risk students. Teachers submit their plan at the beginning of the school year and then complete a reflection as they utilize the time. Poway Unified provides a Teaching and Learning Cooperative (TLC) offering professional development classes. Staff members have participated in TLCs such as Lucy Calkins Common Core Writing, Transforming Learning through iPad Instruction, Engagement and Rigor in the Media Rich Classroom, Number Talk, and Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners.

There is regular collaboration between specialized instructors (SPED, ELL, Speech, Impact) and general education teachers. This level of communication has fostered a high level of trust. A snapshot of our grade-level planning includes everything from long and short-range goals, student monitoring, shared resources, and a shared workload. Our team model directly impacts practice in the classroom, clarification of what to teach, how to assess, and how to improve instruction.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy of the campus is to open doors of opportunity for every stakeholder. We encourage everyone, no matter the age or years of experience, to develop their abilities as leaders.

Our principal has created a culture of “What if…” Every stakeholder is encouraged to think about how we can improve the culture, campus, and learning through “what if…” statements. What if every child were engaged in every activity every minute? What would it take to reach that goal? How do we identify and tackle the obstacles to achieving it? We are here to create opportunities for staff and students to thrive. Leadership roles emerge organically from this problem-solution format.

The purpose of offering leadership positions to students both in and out of the classroom is to strengthen their connection to the school. We actively recruit students who were struggling readers in the primary grades to be a big buddy in our PALS Reading program. Our Math Olympiad team encourages those students to take their new skills into the Homework Club as a tutor and back to the classroom where they become peer models. The students in the Gecko News Network program use their talents to exemplify good citizenship and to create an engaging product. Each classroom exudes a powerful sense of leadership through student jobs and student presentations. Students are consistently challenged by the principal to work towards a goal, which range from academic goals to those that strengthen students’ character and build a sense of responsibility.

Individual strengths and interests are magnified in the many leadership opportunities that our teachers and staff are offered. Grade Level Leaders ensure that teams collaborate in meaningful ways to meet the needs of all of our students. Student Success Team coordinators aid other teachers in analyzing student behavioral and academic data to create a plan that is the most beneficial to the students. Professional Learning Leaders celebrate the opportunity to advance in a core subject area or technology field and in turn, guide colleagues on campus.

Employing the problem-solution format, parents have taken initiative to create a number of programs on our campus to enrich the academic day: Arts Attack, Gecko Chorus, Monday Math Club, Chess Club, Running Club, History Jeopardy, and Junior Achievement. These programs were built in collaboration with teachers and administration to fill an identified need.

By building connections to the school through these student, parent, and staff leadership roles, we increase the stakeholders’ voice in school and ultimately the academic and social-emotional success of the students. Everyone is part of the movement to make Creekside a better place.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One practice that leads to our success is the school-wide desire to instill a passion for reading in our students. That passion trickles down from our administration, staff, and teachers to our students. Nearly half (45%) of our grade 3-5 students not just met, but exceeded standards on the reading strand/claim of the 2015 CAASPP assessment.

The library is truly the hub of learning and provides a special place for students to research, communicate, collaborate, and learn. Our library's extended hours allow for students to utilize the space before and after school. Students listen to new and exciting literature every time they visit. The library also sponsors a used book donation and sale once a year – not necessarily to make money, but to increase access to books. Bi-annual Scholastic book fairs are much anticipated. Each school year kicks off with a gift of a bookmark based on that year's character theme.

Classrooms are full of exciting, relevant literature that students devour. The use of the Daily 5 literacy block structure increases student buy-in by granting students choice of activities and text. Reading Counts and Raz-Kids allow students to challenge themselves to expand their exposure to a variety of genres and to push themselves to read more. Students eagerly anticipate a weekly Mystery Reader (guest reader who brings a favorite book) in primary grades. Upper grades and primary grades are paired as buddy classes, who regularly read for pleasure together. All third grade students participate in Reading Olympics to earn medals with an award ceremony at the end. Teachers in classrooms offer incentives to students to try different genres of books. Special celebration days are set aside to remember and honor our favorite authors and children are encouraged to bring their favorite books from home. Guest authors frequent our campus and introduce their books to our students.

Our love of reading does not stop when the dismissal bell rings. Our principal sets reading challenges for students during vacation weeks and visits classrooms to acknowledge their achievements. The school counselor runs a book club for students who commit to reading two books every week. There is an additional book club in the spring for grades 2-5 led by our GATE Coordinators. About half the teachers gather once a month in a book club. A library swap shelf sits in our staff room. Nearly 20% of our students came to read for four hours at our first Principal's Read-in Night. Family members are encouraged to read to the students during our weekly before-school Family Story Hour. Finally, our Reading Garden creates a serene place where students can be found wrapped in the magic of the written word.

"Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift." – Kate DiCamillo