

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 Mr. James Reginald Mack III

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

Official School Name Davis Drive Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2151 Davis Drive

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

City Cary State NC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 27519-9276

County Wake County

Telephone (919) 387-2130 Fax (919) 387-2132

Web site/URL http://www.davisdriveelementary.com E-mail jmack@wcpss.net

Twitter Handle https://twitter.com/DDEdolphins 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. James Merrill E-mail jmerrill@wcpss.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Wake County Public School System Tel. (919) 431-7400

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 Mr. Tom Benton
(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):
- 106 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 35 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 32 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 173 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	74	75	149
1	66	75	141
2	80	83	163
3	105	98	203
4	107	115	222
5	120	93	213
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	552	539	1091

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 46 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 46 % White
 - 0 % 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	46
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	34
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	80
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	961
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.083
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 10 %
104 Total number ELL

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

Azerbaijani, Chinese, Danish, Fujinese, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Mandarin Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalov, Tamil, Telugu.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %
Total number students who qualify: 55
8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
79 Total number of students served

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

<u>28</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>23</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>6</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
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	3
Classroom teachers	47
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	20
Paraprofessionals	25
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

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 23:1

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%	97%	97%	97%	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. 2006

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

Davis Drive Elementary School inspires, enables, and empowers 21st century students to meet high academic standards, to utilize creativity, and to demonstrate responsible citizenship.

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

This year, Davis Drive Elementary (DDE) staff, learners, and families are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the school's opening. Our school is located in Cary, North Carolina, in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), near the Research Triangle Park. Most of our culturally diverse families have or are obtaining advanced degrees. Families at DDE focus on and highly value education.

To enable our students to develop to their full potential, we emphasize a rigorous academic curriculum, strong behavioral expectations, and stress the importance of community service. Since opening, the school has been highly involved with the community through service projects, school events, and outreach programs. Our yearly, school-wide service project supports the American Cancer Society (ACS) through multiple fundraisers. Our school community raises awareness through student and staff incentives. Our culminating event, Laps of Love, allows our school to celebrate the contributions we are making toward this cause and helps teach our learners about the purpose and goals of the ACS. In addition, grade levels are responsible for participating in individual service projects. As an example, fourth graders collect recyclables from around the campus. This service project helps our community and the environment.

Throughout the year, community members and businesses are invited to interact with staff, students, and families. The PTA provides numerous cultural arts events which include storytellers, musicians, scientists, dancers, and singers. Our administration and staff also coordinate interactions with local community members. Students get to meet, listen to, and have discussions with soldiers, law enforcement personnel, bankers, fire fighters, local government leaders, meteorologists, and authors, to name a few. The PTA also hosts one of DDE's largest events, an International Festival, that celebrates the diverse cultures of the families that make up the DDE community. Each year, our staff and families support underprivileged community members through the Holiday Cheer Program. Families are "adopted" by staff and DDE families who purchase holiday gifts that meet their needs and wants. Our PTA recently started a fund for students who forget to replenish their lunch money account. This program was implemented so all learners have access to a healthy meal. We celebrate the whole child, knowing that there is more to school than only academics.

The highest honor DDE has received is two previous National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence awards. The first was awarded in 2001 and the second in 2006. Receiving these awards has impacted the quality of staff our school has been able to hire, recruit, and retain. This national recognition encourages our staff to strive for excellence in their classrooms, for the school, and in the community. Staff members continuously grow as educators by keeping current with best practices, focusing on high student engagement, and becoming future-ready educators. Our staff members are self-motivated, driven by a love for learning, and are willing to share their knowledge. These Blue Ribbon awards attract high performing educators from local and national schools that seek high academic standards. Our staff currently has twenty-two National Board Certified teachers. Educators from other schools in the Southeast visit DDE to observe best practices and learn from our success. Visiting staff want to learn new strategies to improve the quality of education in their own schools. Passing on the knowledge of how to establish and maintain a school with high standards is the most rewarding outcome of receiving the Blue Ribbon awards. This directly impacts the learning of students in many other places. DDE has always been a highly desired school that maintains a large student enrollment. Parents choose housing with the understanding that DDE will be their base school. Knowing that our families desire a quality education for their children, encourages us to uphold the National Blue Ribbon School standards.

Other awards we have earned that attract families and staff to DDE are the NC School of Excellence Award, awarded for proficiency, which was held for 12 years, and the Governor's Entrepreneurial Award, awarded for innovation and success. Our most recent awards have been the Advocates for Health (AHA) Brains and Bodies Award, which encompasses all healthy aspects implemented in school, and the Governor's Award for Youth Fitness. In order to achieve the latter two awards, staff worked diligently evaluating all aspects of wellness in our school to maintain a positive and healthy school. These accomplishments demonstrate our school's commitment to meeting our students' academic as well as nonacademic needs.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Davis Drive Elementary offers a comprehensive academic curriculum that inspires, enables, and empowers future-ready students to meet high academic standards, utilize creativity, and demonstrate responsible citizenship. We maintain high expectations for every student to meet the learning objectives outlined by the Common Core State Standards, the North Carolina Essential Standards for Science and Social Studies, the Information and Technology Essential Standards for Media and Technology, as well as individual student learning goals. Twenty-first century learning tools are infused into instruction across all content areas including the 4C's: collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity.

All teachers are active members of Professional Learning Teams (PLT). These collaborative teams help our teachers to problem-solve and provide a solid foundation for student achievement. Rigorous instruction and common, standards-aligned assessments are planned by grade level teams. Grade level teams meet to promote vertical alignment of standards and to encourage the use of common academic vocabulary. Teachers in grades 3-5 departmentalize instruction, allowing for subject specialization.

The use of instructional technology is highly valued. Teachers use digital tools and applications to engage students, enhance the curriculum, and model digital citizenship. Each classroom is equipped with at least five desktop computers and a Promethean interactive whiteboard, as well as access to interactive response systems and document cameras. Sets of iPads and laptops are available for checkout. Our computer lab is used for content special rotations and open for classroom use during unscheduled hours. Our teachers are provided with access to technology support and professional development on-demand, as needed.

The English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum allows students to cultivate a passion for literature and develop into lifelong readers by participating as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities. The reading standards scaffold increasingly complex skills forming the foundation necessary for college and career level texts. Writer's workshop provides students with extended time to practice writing while they immerse the standards in the writing process.

The literacy blocks include speaking, writing, reading, and listening. By integrating these standards, we provide purposeful and strategic opportunities for students to learn, stretch, and grow in confidence, experience, knowledge, and skills. In the classroom, a balanced literacy instructional framework scaffolds students' learning and fosters their success. Based on the Daily CAFÉ framework, students receive explicit instruction in foundational literacy skills, word recognition skills, vocabulary development, comprehension, fluency, and writing. The teacher models new strategies, provides shared practice opportunities, and coaches students in the application of new learning in guided reading, strategy groups, and/or individual reading conferences. The ultimate goal of literacy instruction is that students independently use these literacy strategies in a variety of texts and contexts. Students read a balance of informational and literary texts to build their knowledge, gain insight, and broaden their perspective. Instructional interactive tools such as anchor charts, vocabulary word walls, and CAFÉ menus are displayed in classrooms as interactive sources of information for student use. Within the reading block, students use a plethora of both print and digital text, which includes fiction and nonfiction. Online platforms, such as Big Universe, are used to organize and enrich reading assignments. Students at DDE participate in nightly readings with their "good fit" books, encouraging home/school literacy connections while enabling students' growth as readers and thinkers.

Five strands make up our mathematics curriculum: numbers and operations, geometry, data analysis and probability, algebra, and measurement. Standards for mathematical practice are woven into every mathematics lesson in grades K-5. Integrated practices are implemented to make sense of problems, persevere in solving them, model, attend to precision, look for and create structure, use appropriate tools strategically, and reason abstractly and quantitatively. DDE sets a high bar for our district in mathematics. Each classroom has a protected block of time for math instruction. The district supplies our math curriculum framework from which we determine strategies and assessments needed to drive our instruction and meet the needs of our student population. Our mathematics curriculum is supplemented by online resources, such

as Study Island and First in Math. Every classroom is supplied with a wide variety of math manipulatives to ensure hands-on exploration and to provide foundational skills for real world problem solving.

The North Carolina Essential Standards form the basis for our science and social studies instruction. Science is hands-on and taught with inquiry based learning and exploration. Students have opportunities to actively share their learning through our annual STEM night, a school-wide recycling program, science field trips for each grade level, and through “real-world” guest speakers, both live and virtual.

Our social studies instruction is immersed in ELA standards. Our instruction emphasizes critical thinking, which allows students to develop good citizenship through making informed decisions about the world around them. Students are prepared to actively and responsibly participate in culturally diverse environments. Global awareness is encouraged through activities such as Flat Stanley travels, virtual and live field trips, Junior Achievement leaders, and other local, state, and national guest speakers. Nonfiction books, Time for Kids, and Scholastic News supplement this curriculum. Science and social studies are integrated into all facets of our curriculum.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our school provides regular instruction in art, music, physical education, and integrated media and technology (IMT) to help students acquire essential skills that enhance the core curriculum. Non-core classes are provided to all students K-5, including self-contained classes for students with autism. Students attend art, music, and physical education (PE) on a five-day weekly rotation; students also experience IMT classes on a regular rotation. Students receive instruction to use various presentation tools to explore and present projects to peers and the school community.

Specialists work collaboratively with each other as well as with grade level classroom teachers to integrate content from core subject areas. This enhances student learning while providing students with skills that further develop creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking (4Cs).

Visual art classes allow students to develop greater technical proficiency with various mediums and techniques. Creativity is fostered through the study of artistic styles and cultures. Masterpiece and contemporary works are routinely viewed and discussed to promote greater aesthetic, cultural awareness. Students draw connections to core content areas through the use of math, science, literacy and technology interwoven throughout projects. Projects often require mathematical skills such as: measurement, proportion, scale, and patterns. The close observation of our natural environments, climates, organisms, and animals is visually interpreted in all grade levels. Students read art periodicals, listen to art-related stories, and write reflections about their own work as well as their peers'. An art club gives interested students an opportunity for enrichment. Students also participate in exhibitions at various venues.

In music, students are introduced to historical composers and styles. Concepts are explored in the classroom through singing, playing numerous instruments, musical composition, and performance. Reading musical notes and understanding rhythms enable greater creativity and self-expression. Students demonstrate and document their growth by collaboratively using technology applications such as Seesaw. Students explore the science of sound by conducting experiments in music class to explore vibrations, pitch, and volume. In addition, our music teachers offer an extracurricular chorus club. This club performs a musical each year both at the school and in the community.

Physical education classes support school-wide initiatives in health and wellness. Fitness is improved through exercises, relay races, and organized play. These activities foster an awareness for maintaining health. Visual literacy is incorporated by having students create infographics to display throughout the school to support our annual Health and Wellness Fair. Our PE teachers integrate vocabulary words, spelling, math facts, geography, landforms, and history into games. Through activities in PE, students are able to learn to collaborate, cooperate, and communicate. Each year, students participate in a county-wide First-in-Fitness event and a school-wide field day.

In the IMT special, students learn information and technology skills from a three-person team comprised of

the library media coordinator, technology teacher, and science specialist. This team collaborates to facilitate opportunities for project-based learning that integrate research, technology, and science. For example, fourth grade students worked with both the library media coordinator and technology teacher to research how types of landforms form and created stop motion animation videos to demonstrate this formation. Students also collaborated with the science specialist to further research landforms and create models using stream tables in our outdoor learning space. The Library Media Coordinator, art teacher, and fifth grade ELA and social studies teachers collaborated to develop a unit that integrated multiple content areas. Students conducted research, designed and printed 3D stamps for use in art class, and used green screen technology to create artwork that helped them make connections to important figures of the American Revolution. Students presented these projects at the North Carolina Technology in Education Society conference (NCTIES).

The school counselors at DDE implement a comprehensive school counseling program that focuses on student outcomes and teaches student competencies. The counselors use data to show the impact of their program on student achievement, attendance and behavior. Davis Drive has twice received the Recognized American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model Program (RAMP), an award that recognizes exemplary school counseling programs in the nation.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

We strive to meet the diverse needs of all learners in our school. Teachers are skilled at differentiating instruction to meet students' needs through practices that include whole group, small groups, individual instruction, student collaboration, and individual pacing. Differentiation for students is also addressed daily in the classroom during "PIE" time (Protected Intervention and Enrichment), a scheduled time that provides opportunities to pursue individual assignments and projects and allows teachers to work individually with students to address their needs.

We have an effective literacy intervention program. Students performing below benchmark in reading are identified through universal screening assessments, classroom performance, and teacher input. Our literacy teachers deliver resource intervention instruction two or four times a week. Analysis of assessment data is used to plan lessons focusing on essential components of reading. Progress is monitored frequently and instruction is adapted accordingly.

Teachers in our academically or intellectually gifted program (AIG) are key in meeting the needs of students. In kindergarten through third grade, an AIG teacher coordinates the Kids Into Thinking program. Classroom teachers and parent volunteers are trained to implement this program of open-ended tasks that promotes critical thinking skills and aligns with the core curriculum. In fourth and fifth grade, eligible students are identified as gifted in reading and/or math. Those students receive instruction through a unit based resource program that supports the standard course of study while fostering growth in higher level thinking. In accordance with the district's Single Subject Acceleration criteria, qualified students receive ELA or math instruction in a classroom above their grade of record.

At DDE, we have a large contingency of international students, many who have limited English proficiency. Our English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor works with students in small group settings. This enables the teacher to identify and target language instruction to meet individual needs of the students. Students meet with this instructor one to five sessions each week, depending on their levels of English proficiency. The ESL teacher collaborates with classroom teachers regarding student progress. When students' English has progressed to a more functional level, the ESL teacher monitors on a consultation basis.

Students with severe disabilities are valued members of our school community. We have two self-contained classrooms for students with autism. Students from these classes also attend non-core classes, lunch, recess, and special events with peers from general education classrooms. When appropriate, students from the self-contained classes attend literacy, math, social studies and/or science classes with peers in a general education classroom to encourage academic growth and student interactions.

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

At Davis Drive Elementary, we use a variety of data to analyze instructional effectiveness, guide instruction, and measure student learning. During weekly PLTs, teachers focus on universal screenings, teacher-created assessments, observations, and other formative and summative assessments. By carefully analyzing data, decisions are made that specifically target students in the School Improvement Plan subgroups. Additionally, teachers conference each semester with all parents to share information about student performance.

Our school has a long history of exceeding performance targets set by the state. Two groups have a difference of more than ten points: economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities. Since the identification of the economically disadvantaged subgroup is confidential according to the NC Department of Public Instruction, these students are not individually targeted. However, when analyzing data, PLTs include awareness of the whole child. Grade level teams and special education teachers collaborate weekly to analyze data and determine the best way to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities and to maximize their growth. These subgroups are outperforming state expectations and are continuing to grow and improve.

Assessment data from the mClass reading assessment, progress report grades, CASE 21 scores, End of Grade (EOG) and Beginning of Grade (BOG) tests, and teacher observations is used to prioritize need and create strategic skills groups within the classroom. Based on needs identified by this data, intensive intervention groups are created and served by specialized reading and intervention teachers. These groups are systematically progress monitored using curriculum-based measures to determine growth. The data is shared with parents at least every six weeks.

Twice a year, the intervention team conducts informational meetings for parents of intervention students. These meetings explain how the North Carolina Read to Achieve program pertains to their students and how data is used to determine 3rd grade reading proficiency. These meetings provide parents with information on how assessment data is used to support students, ensuring each student receives the appropriate level of service.

A school-wide data team meets regularly to analyze data and determine how data will be used by our school. Recently, the team conducted a survey gauging student engagement, student perception of their relationships with their teachers, and student beliefs on post high school education. As a school with a high percentage of proficiency, the data team is analyzing trends of student perception and growth. As measured by EOG assessments, the goal is to maximize student growth by addressing underlying affective, attitudinal issues.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The positive culture and climate at DDE permeates the school day and building. Staff members warmly greet 1,092 students each morning. As the students walk to class, they travel hallways that display their academic work and artistic creations. This helps our students feel their work is valued and their efforts are recognized as a meaningful part of our school community. Each morning, the school watches the student news team interview a variety of guests about timely topics and forecast the weather that has been generated from our onsite WeatherBug station. This daily program keeps the school community updated with the latest school news. The engaging energy from the news is another way to get our day started with a smile and it helps create a positive environment.

Our Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) motivate children by providing positive reinforcements to stay on track and monitor their own behavior. Throughout the building, teachers and students practice our school motto of SWIM. Each class has a positive reinforcement grid to earn “squares” for demonstrating Self-Control, Winning Attitude, Integrity, and Maintaining Safety (SWIM). Each day students begin the morning by reciting the Davis Drive SWIM Pledge, which was created by fifth grade students. This reinforces school-wide expectations and student ownership.

To recognize the importance of emotional and social growth, counselors teach monthly guidance lessons and bring in outside resources to support their lessons. Theater 4 Change performed an interactive lesson on bullying prevention for our fourth and fifth grade classrooms and the Durham Bulls mascot taught a school-wide program about bullying prevention. Newbery Award-winning author, Katherine Applegate visited our school to speak about her book, “Crenshaw,” which deals with themes of childhood hunger and homelessness. We used this book as inspiration for our annual food drive, another school-wide community service project.

Currently, ten staff members remain from the original staff hired twenty years ago. A large portion of the staff has taught five or more years at DDE. The stability of the staff has resulted in a strong professional and personal bond between staff members. Davis Drive has a strong work ethic and possesses high expectations for our students and staff. This common bond creates an environment that instills resilience, camaraderie, and perseverance. Our students rise to the example that we set as staff.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Davis Drive Elementary, we believe that encouraging partnerships with parents and community members is a key factor to continuous school improvement and student success. We are part of a larger community of families, local businesses, and organizations that support our school. All stakeholders are part of educating students, expanding the potential for growth, and learning opportunities. Effective communication is critical to the successful partnership we have with our community. Through our school and teacher webpages, digital PTA newsletters, emails, social media, and weekly recorded principal phone calls, we keep our parents and the public informed of our initiatives, activities, and staff/student achievements. Clear communication helps build community support, business partnerships, and volunteerism.

DDE maintains engagement with our key stakeholders through community events such as our International Festival, Health and Wellness Fair, and STEM Night. DDE often hosts guest speakers to provide students with the opportunity to learn from community role models. Throughout the year, these classroom visits and special assemblies range from guest readers to presentations that focus on real world issues, such as fire safety, good citizenship, bullying prevention, college and career readiness, and other relevant topics. We also welcome the opportunities to mentor future educators from local universities as interns and volunteers.

In partnership with our active PTA, we work to create the best environment for student success. PTA volunteer opportunities allow parents to be in the classroom during the instructional day. This not only

allows parents to be involved during classroom learning, but also connects students to the community through a meaningful experience. In addition to classroom volunteering, our parents go above and beyond to contribute to the success of our school. For example, some parents assist as trainers for our Basic Aid Training program for fourth graders, while others volunteer their landscaping skills during our weekend campus beautification events or donate their artistic talents to decorate our hallways and bulletin boards throughout the school.

Our PTA facilitates successful annual fundraisers, such as a Read-a-thon, Parents' Night Out, and a membership drive that correspondingly bolster the health and academic well-being of our students. Our students benefit from PTA sponsored cultural arts programs that embrace the talents of authors, and performers from various ethnic backgrounds, and expose our learners to integrated arts, social studies, and writing.

We believe that the involvement of families in our school is a priority and a key factor to student success while maintaining the excellent learning environment at DDE. Along with families, we also partner with local businesses to help fund PTA activities that directly benefit the school. Partnering businesses provide resources by hosting DDE Spirit Nights, through generous donations and the provision of resources.

3. Professional Development:

Opportunities for the teachers and administrators to participate in high quality professional development is a priority at Davis Drive Elementary. Our staff understands we must continually improve and refine our skills to maximize student achievement. Meaningful and appropriate professional development at DDE is key in reaching this goal of exceeding North Carolina State Standards. The School Improvement Team (SIT) works collaboratively with our instructional resource teacher (IRT) to create an annual plan supporting district initiatives, goals from the SIP, and the individual needs of teachers.

Over the past three years, WCPSS implemented the Teacher Leader Corps (TLC) as a continuous improvement model to support our transition to a digital learning environment. Four DDE teachers joined with other Wake County educators and Discovery Education consultants to learn how to integrate a variety of digital tools to effectively engage students. After district-led TLC training sessions, our school TLC representatives presented methods to our staff for creating centers-based learning environments, authentic assessments, and the effective evaluation of student work. These tools increased our staff's capacity to differentiate processes and projects. This model is particularly effective with our high achieving student population.

As a part of the school improvement process, DDE focuses on the growth rates of our readers – specifically the subgroups of students with disabilities, English language learners, and AIG students. This student achievement goal drives the majority of our professional development. To help us reach our SIP goal, staff learned research-based best practices for effective reading instruction, attended a “smackdown” event where teachers shared successful practices from their own classrooms, and reflected on their own learning goals as stated in their annual Professional Growth Plans. Refining these instructional practices strengthens the teacher's capacity to deliver tiered instruction to match Common Core standards and meet the learning needs of all students.

At the beginning of each year, both teachers and administrators engage in self-assessments to determine what knowledge, skills, and attitudes we need to be effective in our roles. As these assessments are reviewed, additional professional development activities are designed. Grade level chairs and our IRT mentor new teachers. All staff have opportunities to take online courses and face-to-face WCPSS workshops to build their knowledge of current programs and assessments. “Wonderful Wednesdays” sessions were created to provide and introduce innovative programs such as GoNoodle, Seesaw, and Google Classrooms. These highly requested sessions are facilitated by DDE teachers for DDE teachers. Many teachers have also developed professional learning networks beyond the walls of our school.

4. School Leadership:

The staff at Davis Drive Elementary believes in the well-known quotation, “It takes a village to raise a child.” We believe that our “village,” our stakeholders, includes staff, parents, community members, and students. We are all focused on academics, yet we understand that there is much more to school than academics. We work to understand the whole child and to develop positive relationships with our students and their families. At DDE we consider the students' health, safety, engagement, support, and long-term success in college, career, and civic life.

The formal leadership structure of our school includes the leadership team, comprised of school administrators, grade level/departamental chairpersons, teacher assistants, and parents. Our leadership team meets monthly to discuss school improvement, school procedures, and to consider input from our “village.” The leadership team serves on and oversees the school-wide committees for academics and school culture. Committees meet on a monthly basis to review data, plan events, and recognize accomplishments of our school. Committee reports are shared at each leadership team meeting. Leadership team minutes are shared with all staff members.

Grade levels meet at least twice a month to plan details about field trips, schedules, activities, and to review classroom procedures. PLTs meet weekly to discuss academic and behavioral data about our students, plan effective instructional strategies, and to develop and analyze formative assessments that guide our instruction. Administrators, counselors, and instructional support teachers consult with grade levels in both grade level and PLT meetings.

Our PTA leadership meets with our administrators on a weekly basis and they hold a formal PTA board meeting monthly. These meetings provide opportunities for parent input and keep staff and parents informed about school activities.

Our administrative team meets weekly to oversee budgets, transportation, schedules, recognitions, and procedures. This team is comprised of our principal, assistant principals, IRT, counselors, and technology staff. The purpose of the team is to provide input for managing the day-to-day operations of our school.

Our formal leadership structures are designed to use input from our entire “village” to ensure academic and emotional success for all students. We believe communication is very important because it allows us to devote careful attention to all aspects of school life. Data from student surveys and the North Carolina Teaching Condition Survey clearly demonstrates that our community supports our school. Our leadership structures are in place because we are invested in the success for our school and all stakeholders are committed to supporting our “village.”

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one school-wide practice that makes Davis Drive Elementary so successful is the team driven tiered process of identifying, placing, and serving learners in literacy intervention. Our literacy support team (LST) is comprised of an administrator, IRT, literacy teachers, school psychologist, and counselors. Data analysis is key to this process. Before each school year begins, we closely examine EOG scores, previous intervention students, retained students, students who were promoted with interventions, and new students to determine intervention needs. Within the first month of school, we gather relevant data on foundational reading skills through universal screening measures. In addition, third grade students take a BOG assessment to determine proficiency in reading comprehension. The team analyzes the results of universal screening data and the BOG to determine the student's most foundational reading skill deficits. In addition, we may reference report cards or other assessments.

Students are strategically grouped for literacy intervention by intensity and type of skill deficit. The LST then creates a schedule for the literacy teachers which is comprised of six groups per day, with no more than six learners in a group. If the number of students requiring intervention exceeds the number of intervention slots, the PLTs determine who will receive small group intensive instruction and who will receive strategic support in the classroom. Students who receive intensive interventions may also be provided with individualized instruction before and after regular school hours. The level of service determines how often progress monitoring assessments are administered by the literacy teachers.

After a mid-year analysis by the LST, groups are modified to provide intervention based on current data. If a third grade student has not demonstrated reading proficiency, he/she is automatically placed in an intervention group. At the end of the year, the LST reviews Tier II and Tier III literacy plans, EOG results, universal screening data, and report cards to determine which students need adjusted interventions for the next school year. At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, data showed that 85% of the students that received reading intervention demonstrated improvement on basic literacy skills data. This data-driven practice of placing students in literacy intervention is highly successful because it is a team approach with strong support from the administration.