

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Sandi Jay Jones

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

Official School Name Gus Winston Cain Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 801 Highway 110 South

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

City Whitehouse State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 75791

County Smith County

Telephone (903) 839-5600 Fax (903) 839-5604

Web site/URL http://whitehouseisd.org E-mail jones@whitehouseisd.org

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Daniel DuPree E-mail dupreed@whitehouseisd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Whitehouse ISD Tel. (903) 839-5500

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 Vince Primo
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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	24	21	45
K	46	42	88
1	39	44	83
2	36	49	85
3	46	48	94
4	47	40	87
5	39	39	78
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	277	283	560

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 8 % Black or African American
 - 16 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70 % White
 - 5 % 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: 23%

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	68
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	66
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	134
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	595
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.225
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	23

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 43 %
Total number students who qualify: 241

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
68 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>11</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>51</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>4</u> Mental Retardation | <u>4</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	40
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	5
Paraprofessionals	20
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 14:1

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%	9%

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.

We believe that every student deserves the opportunity to be educated in a way that prepares them for a successful life. We also believe that we, the school, have the power to make this opportunity a reality. Our students only have one opportunity at school success and because of this our clocks are set to one time.....NOW!

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

“We believe that every student deserves the opportunity to be educated in a way that prepares them for a successful life. We also believe that we, the school, have the power to make this opportunity a reality. Our students only have one opportunity at school success and because of this our clocks are set to one time.....NOW!”

Gus Winston Cain Elementary is set in a small town adjacent to the Rose Capital of the United States, specifically in Whitehouse, Texas. Whitehouse is a close knit community comprised of middle to lower class families with a population of approximately 8,000. The community is very diverse and consists of families who receive government assistance, trade workers, and college graduates. Whitehouse Independent School District is recognized for its commitment to students’ high academic achievements, family atmosphere, and small town traditions.

Cain Elementary lives its vision wholeheartedly and with the belief that failure is not an option. This mindset drives us daily in doing whatever it takes to ensure that each of our students leaves Cain Elementary on or above grade level in reading, writing, and math. Our goal is always that our data shows college readiness for all.

At Cain, we have the privilege of shaping the lives of 560 students ranging from Early Childhood Education to the 5th grade level. Our campus community is comprised of 43% low socioeconomically-disadvantaged, with 34% of our population being at-risk. This also includes 70% White, 8% African American, 16% Hispanic, 5% two or more races, 6% Limited English Proficient, and 12% receiving special education services. As a Title 1 school, we have remained steadfast in student success. Each year, our changing demographics present new challenges that must be overcome to ensure success for all. A newer challenge is our district’s growing mobility rate. These students tend to arrive with gaps in their learning. At Cain, we provide targeted intervention to accelerate student learning and meet individual needs. The percentage of low socioeconomically-disadvantaged students served in our school is also rising. We know that before a student can focus on academics, their social, emotional, and physical needs must be met. Our staff members work hard to build relationships with students, teach tools for academic success, and provide for basic needs such as food, clothing, and supplies for school.

Cain has been recognized as a Title 1 High Performing School for numerous years. For the past three years, the State of Texas has honored Cain Elementary with various Distinction Designations in Academic Achievement in Reading/English Language Arts, Math, and Science. Distinctions were also awarded for Top 25 Percent in student progress, closing the performance gap, and postsecondary readiness.

Ensuring that every student has the opportunity to be college ready requires a dedication and commitment on the part of all stakeholders. In other words, we know we must continue to maintain a culture of universal achievement. One way Cain Elementary embraces this culture is evident by simply walking our hallways. You will find college symbolism throughout our building, which we believe immerses students in the reality that college is attainable for all students. We believe in our power to influence every student to be academically successful. Every classroom has partnered with a different college or university around the country to learn facts, information, traditions, acceptance criteria, and varied aspects of college life.

As a campus, we base our work on five systems: Collaboration, Standards Alignment, Intervention, Assessment, and Data Analysis. In our school’s efforts to establish an ever-improving culture of universal achievement, we work daily to build and improve our systems and routines for meeting the needs of every child.

Cain Elementary has a tradition of strong community involvement through our Parent-Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) and other community support groups, such the Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, and Education Foundation. These organizations help support events throughout the school year, which include our Spring Carnival, Book Fair, Fundraiser Events, Field Day, the Kiwanis Bringing-Up Grades (B.U.G.) Program, and our school-wide Reading Incentive Program. Student and staff achievements are celebrated each six weeks at a school-wide, themed celebration. Awards, recognition, and entertainment are provided, in part, by the above organizations. Additional traditions unique to Cain Elementary are our Pickle Patrol, where pickles are used as incentives to encourage students to work hard and reach their goals, our annual Veterans' Day Celebration involving various community and state representatives, and our Tunnel- Cat Program. This program allows classrooms to partner with High School athletes and provides incentives before games. In turn, the athletes visit classrooms throughout the year. This is highlighted at district sporting events when elementary students are selected to run through the Wildcat Tunnel with the players before athletic events.

All students set and monitor their own personal goals, while being given the opportunity to grow their leadership skills through involvement in Student Council, National Elementary Honor Society, the Wow Workers Job Program, and/or the Kiwanis Kids' Club. These students participate in service projects and community outreach opportunities. These achievements are also celebrated in our regular campus assemblies.

All staff members have made the joint commitment to the academic success of all students, and we refuse to accept defeat.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) is the state-adopted curriculum that describe learning objectives at each grade level and subject area. In addition to the TEKS, Whitehouse Independent School District 1 has a district-adopted scope and sequence in all core subject areas. The driving force of our reading and writing instruction is Balanced Literacy. Our goal is that each student develop independent reading and writing ability. The TEKS provide reading strands which lend themselves perfectly to the Balanced Literacy Instructional Approach. The English Language Arts and Reading strands are: Reading, Writing, Research, Oral, and Written Conventions, and Listening and Speaking. Balanced Literacy begins with creating a genuine appreciation for good literature. Whole group mini-lessons, opportunities for independent learning, and teacher led small-group instruction are components of this comprehensive reading program. A focus is given to all aspects of reading comprehension. Students are immersed in a myriad of literature genres. The key component is our guided, targeted model whereby the teacher provides routine small-group instruction. The model includes a strategic plan for teaching writing that begins with interactive and shared writing in Pre-K. Early grades teach basic writing skills and design activities for fostering a love for written expression. Individual student conferencing allows teachers to focus instruction at the level of the student to enable them to progress as writers. Ultimately, students learn all components of the writing process and are able to formulate both narrative and expository compositions.

At Cain Elementary our math curriculum is built around four mathematics strands. These include: Numeric Representations and Relationships, Computations and Algebraic Relationships, Geometry and Measurement, and Data Analysis and Personal Finance Literacy. Teachers use the M. A. T. H. (M-Math Facts, A-At Your Seat, T-Teacher Table, H-Hands On) instructional model. Each student receives small group, needs-specific instruction, followed by research-based work stations. Data disaggregated from spiraled assessments guides the focus of each classroom work station. Students who are performing below level are pulled to the teacher table for intensive, targeted re-teaching. This model provides opportunities for project-based learning and enrichment that challenge students. Our math curriculum builds upon itself to give students a strong understanding of foundational skills. Manipulatives strengthen their basic understanding. Students are fully engaged in mathematical thinking and concepts through daily spiral review. Instruction challenges students to solve real world math problems using processing skills and tools. Students in first through fifth grade are required to keep an interactive math journal. Example problems, steps, pictorial models, and strategies for solving are included for each new concept, as a reference for future instruction and a resource for parents.

Teachers plan science instruction using the 5E Model (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate) to address all Science Strands. Science Strands are as follows: Systems, Physical Properties, Change/Past Events, Likeness/Adaptation, Matter and Energy, Form and Function. The goal is for students to build a foundation of science concepts from hands-on experiences and new ideas. Before a new concept or vocabulary is explicitly taught, students are able to explore and practice in a relevant way. This curricular approach was chosen because it provides an opportunity for exploration and levels the playing field for all learners. The elaboration component of the lesson is tiered, allowing every child to be challenged, whether below, on, or above grade level. Data collection, monitoring change over time, and reflective writing are all examples of the elaboration piece of the 5E Model. Teachers are provided with a district-level mentor coach who can answer questions and address misconceptions that have potential to hinder understanding.

Social studies instruction is integrated into reading and writing and provides needed opportunities for authentic, blended learning. Cross-curricular integration of related topics allows students to build basic understanding of the strands of this content area. The strands include: History, Geography, Economics, Citizenship, Culture, Technology and Society. Teachers use high interest, leveled readers and expose students to primary sources. This allows for teachers to apply differentiated instruction for meeting individual needs. In addition, our state-mandated technology applications are integrated into project-based learning activities centered on social studies content for each grade level.

Cain Elementary offers, to qualifying students, four-year-old head start and pre-kindergarten, as well as the required three to six year old early childhood education program. The goal of these programs is to provide children with a sound experience aimed at preparation for success. We know that specific learning experiences in a Pre-K classroom must be aligned with standards to be mastered in subsequent grade levels. We follow the Texas Pre-K Guidelines, which align to the TEKS. These not only include all content areas, but also include social, emotional, and physical components. Students are immersed in literacy and numeracy through play-based instruction. Students are taught routines, procedures, and expectations of school and how to get along with others. These components provide the data to support later success in kindergarten and beyond.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Physical and health education at Cain Elementary involves promoting lifelong physical activity as outlined in the TEKS. All students at Cain participate in our P.E. program three times per week for fifty minutes each session. The curriculum provides cognitive content and learning experiences through a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills, physical fitness, and team, dual, and individual sports. Other core curriculum areas are also integrated into these activities. For example, many games involve money calculations, spelling, and sight-words practice. In P.E. at Cain, students are taught to exemplify good character traits at all times. Conflict resolution, teamwork, and integrity are discussed and modeled regularly so students can transfer these traits into the classroom and their everyday lives. Our P.E. coach has a partnership with a local community college. The college's athletes, drill team, coaches, and staff volunteer their time to speak with our students during P.E. about scholarships, college acceptance, and the importance of core values. They have also taught our students active dance routines and skill-based P.E. activities, such as soccer and tennis.

At Cain Elementary, we are committed to creating well-rounded students. An integral part of this effort is accomplished through our fifty-minute per week music program. The design of our music classes allows students to master the goals in a fun, engaging way. Through our music program, our students are exposed to many different types of music from many historical periods. Students are taught music specific vocabulary and are taught to read, write, and reproduce musical rhythms. Students use creative expression daily through singing, dancing, manipulating puppets, playing an array of instruments, and utilizing technology. Each grade level participates in a music program where they are able to showcase their talents for parents, students, and community members.

Our campus operates an integrated technology applications program as well. It is directly taught through a fifty-minute weekly course designed to support social studies and science knowledge and skills. Students are assessed for levels of competency related to technology applications. These applications include: Technology Foundations, Information Acquisition, Solving Problems, and Communication. From this, activities are automatically generated to build skills in needed areas for each individual child. Teachers use both locally generated lessons, as well as our commercially purchased program to help students master the strands addressed in our state's technology standards. Project-based opportunities allow our students to extend their learning beyond the technology class each week. The program model is used in grades Pre-K through fifth.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

At Cain, we believe our students only have one opportunity for school success and because of this our clocks are set to one time.....NOW! Due to this belief, we use every instructional minute and every staff member to support our goal of student success. At all grade levels, and in all subject areas the small group instructional model is at the core of our teaching. This model of daily instruction ensures that we meet all students at their instructional level and move them forward. The teachers plan and deliver targeted instruction based on students' needs. During the time spent at the teacher table, the teacher gains constant insight into individual learning needs, where learning is breaking down, a student's learning style, and how to best help a student master a concept. The teacher is able to provide specific and immediate feedback to grow students. In addition to the small group daily instruction that takes place on a regular basis in the classroom, we utilize other staff members as well. For example, all paraprofessionals, no matter what their

assigned duty, have been trained to facilitate guided reading lessons. This includes fluency work, word study, phonics, and comprehension strategies. Our reading and math Response to Intervention and dyslexia specialists participate in collaborative grade level and P.L.C. meetings where both hard and soft data is analyzed. They work in conjunction with classroom teachers to create a prescriptive plan for each student. Our small group instructional model provides opportunities for the teacher to target content specific instruction and to facilitate integrated learning projects that challenge high performing students as well. For example, our fifth grade students have the opportunity to utilize an enrichment curriculum for real world, project based activities. This requires higher level thinking as well as in-depth research and presentation. Students who are identified as gifted and talented are served in an additional enrichment program once a week. Additional opportunities for success are provided during targeted extended day instruction by teachers and part time reading/math interventionists and by specialized computer programs in our lab. Creative scheduling allows us to utilize all staff members and every minute of the day. This, in turn, gives students every opportunity for success.

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

In order to make informed instructional decisions for our students, we rely on all available data sources. A universal screener is given at the beginning, middle, and end of year to all students. This screener is based on national norms and is the initial tool we use to identify students who are at risk in reading and/or math. District six weeks tests are given in core subject areas to evaluate content taught in grades one through five. This data allows us to look for campus and classroom level performance, and adjust instruction as needed. Trends at both the campus and district level are analyzed so that vertical alignment needs are addressed. Subject area instructional coaches are heavily involved in the data sharing process for this reason. Data gained from weekly, common assessments proves to be invaluable in scaffolding and planning for small-group instruction. Teachers are also able to track student growth through frequent Rigby reading assessments, daily formative assessments, and teacher made anecdotal notes. All stakeholders attend collaborative meetings where we discuss, share, and analyze all forms of data to drive instructional decisions and foster student growth. Students take ownership in their learning and monitor their own progress by setting individual and classroom goals. Keeping parents informed is always a priority. Systems are in place school wide to keep parents informed. Examples of how this is accomplished include our weekly folder communication and student-led conferences, whereby students meet with their teacher to assess and discuss their progress on individual academic and social goals. Our online Family Access System is another avenue parents can utilize to stay informed of their student's grades and progress. Progress reports, report cards, and parent-teacher conferences are also available to parents. Data is also gained from the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (S.T.A.A.R.) Test. A detailed student report is sent home at the end of the year to assist in answering any questions parents may have. Our data also allows us to keep watch on our targeted groups of students who are not performing at the rate of their overall peers. At Cain, we currently see a trend among our Hispanic ethnicity group in third grade reading. Our interventions are designed to incorporate best practices which meet the needs of this specific population, such as vocabulary enrichment and incorporation of English-language proficiency standards in the core content areas. At Cain, we know that effectively analyzing all forms of data and planning for individual, differentiated instruction is the key reason we have been able to maintain a high overall level of performance on standardized measures of student progress.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

“There’s just something about this school.” We hear this comment spoken on a regular basis by various stakeholders such as substitute teachers, present and past staff members, parents, and community members alike. This speaks to the culture and climate of Cain Elementary. At Cain, we use the language of hope so that every stakeholder is valued and treated with respect at all times. Celebrating the growth of both students and staff members happens daily. Accomplishments are recognized through morning announcements, positive reinforcement at staff meetings, and in personal acknowledgments. Students are recognized for their individual efforts through Blue Ticket Drawings and the coveted Cain Cool Cat Award. These awards are given to students who demonstrate good character and serve as role models for other students. Classes are encouraged to use teamwork and collaboration to earn the Golden Spatula Award for weekly lunchtime behavior. Wildcats Wows are also earned through a group effort. This allows students to earn rewards or privileges at designated prize levels. The Cain Family looks forward to our end of six weeks celebrations where staff and students dress to match the theme, dance like crazy, and take time out to recognize one another. Teachers and staff play a pivotal role in shaping the climate and culture of the school. Everyone works to model and implement Cain’s “Guidelines for Success,” which is a set of student expectations based on our character education core beliefs. By using common language and maintaining the same expectations throughout the school, students and staff are held to high standards of excellence. Growing teacher leaders is a top priority at Cain. Teachers are recognized for their strengths by being utilized as coaches and mentor teachers, and being given leadership opportunities. Teachers set goals for growth and are supported through Professional Learning Communities, individualized professional development, and curriculum coaches. Grade levels take ownership of staff meetings by acting as “hosts,” which is an opportunity to showcase their grade level’s practices and facilitate vertical curriculum discussions. Students also know that they are valued as members of our school family and understand that each staff member is there to help everyone reach their full potential. Once a Cain Kid, always a Cain Kid.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family involvement is both integral and essential to the success of Cain Elementary. We realize this is not accomplished with support from only within our school, but requires members of our community as a whole. Cain students are highly motivated to pursue their college dreams largely because of the active role many colleges have taken in our Cain Kids’ lives. We work to educate our families through our yearly activities so that they, as well, know the value of lifelong learning and continuing education. We seek a variety of participants for supporting our students in their efforts to achieve and understand that after high school comes college. As examples, we have recently gotten LSU athletes to send handwritten letters encouraging students to continue their educational endeavor and work for success in every area of their lives. Cheerleaders from several colleges have joined our P.E. classes to teach dances, and others have taught our entire student body coordinated college cheers. College mascots have joined in on our Six Weeks Celebrations, and post-secondary students and community members have taken time out to read with our third graders. During each of these interactions, these representatives have helped to reinforce the importance of goal setting, strong academics, community service, and outstanding character. This is part of the ongoing initiative to prepare our Cain students to be college ready. This type of involvement has enabled our students to make real world connections to college and career readiness. We have had alumni donate college gear and give inspirational speeches. A local bank gave a generous donation to purchase college t-shirts (that we wear every Monday) for students who could not afford them. Cain students are excited to be greeted in the morning car rider line by Whitehouse High School Varsity football players. These players take the time to speak with classes emphasizing the importance of teamwork, grades, and character. Other Whitehouse High School extracurricular organizations have volunteered their time to make an impact on our Cain students as well. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the drum line, the choir, members of the basketball team, mascots, and the drill team. The level of community involvement is directly related to the success of our school through donations of time and resources for our Spring Carnival, Field Day, Family Movie Night, and numerous other events throughout the year. Parents

play an active role in their students' education and take full advantage of online educational resources and information systems provided by the district. Families and the entire Whitehouse community are committed to the success of our Cain kids.

3. Professional Development:

Lifelong learning for the staff at Cain is embedded into our school's culture. Learning opportunities are multi-faceted, data driven, and research based best practices. We follow a professional development model in which all staff members receive support at individualized levels to foster teacher growth, which in turn, allows our students to be successful. Whitehouse I.S.D. provides professional development by looking at the district as a whole, guided by the District Improvement Plan (D.I.P.). District administrators and staff identify specific areas of need and train staff accordingly. For example, due to the increase in Whitehouse I.S.D.'s changing diversity, staff participated in a poverty simulation which gave insight into cultural differences in socioeconomic status. Cain Elementary uses designated professional development days and staff meetings throughout the year for training in school wide initiatives. Our Campus Improvement Plan is the catalyst for these trainings. Our staff has taken part in numerous book studies that focus not only on the instructional model, but also on continuing to develop a conducive climate and culture for learning. Specifically, one book study served as a reminder for the staff that we need to work together as a team for a common goal, and that the work begins in the training room. A nationally known speaker and author spoke to our staff to support the importance of positive behavior reinforcement. Professional Learning Communities (P.L.C.) at Cain are the heart of our learning. These focus on grade level goals and student need driven by data analysis. The collaborative culture we have achieved at Cain has allowed us to continuously analyze the following four questions. "What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? How will we respond if they already know it?" These questions drive the course of action for Cain's staff. One identified area of need was the lack of consistency and delivery of guided reading lessons in grades K-2. Short, focused learning opportunities were delivered by the instructional coach to ensure fidelity and mastery of this instructional method. As a result, all students' instructional reading levels have increased, making them more successful lifelong readers. Individualized support is provided to teachers based on classroom walk-throughs, evaluations, and teacher selected goals. The ultimate goal of professional development at Cain is to ensure that all students leave on or above grade level in reading, writing, and math.

4. School Leadership:

Without question, the philosophy of the leadership team at Cain Elementary is more about "we" than "me." The sole purpose of the leadership team is to guide others to make them the best, to simply be one member of a team to act as servant leaders. The overall goal is established for the purpose of modeling values, ethics, and lifelong learning. The leadership team work as "Maverick Leaders" and include members at the administrative, counseling, classroom, professional, and para-professional support levels. Due to Cain's team mentality, leadership roles go well beyond the principal, assistant principal, and counselor. Talents of grade level leaders help others identify their own strengths and leadership qualities. Innovativeness and risk taking is encouraged and celebrated. Creativity is key. The role is not about being in charge, but instead as a means of support, encouragement, and coaching that is successful for the overall campus program. Everyone works, learns, grows, and corrects mistakes in team fashion. Ideas are free flowing, and all stakeholders are allowed to have input into how the campus can continually improve and/or maintain success. In making daily decisions, the driving question is always, "What is best for students?" This contributes to our high level of organizational health which drives student performance to advanced and distinguished levels. Talents and strengths are maximized, and weaknesses are supported. In making daily decisions, the driving question is always, "What is best for students?" Decision making is a collaborative effort which always involves any needed stakeholder. Best practices are maintained and when needed the campus administration apply transformational style to solve challenges and move the campus forward. Staff can readily find answers to questions regarding policies, procedures, and campus specifics in the comprehensive Cain Campus Communicator Handbook. Information is disseminated quickly through text messaging applications, e-mail correspondence, a call-out system, and Cain's online calendar. This allows the leadership team to maximize time available to be present for teachers and staff

throughout the campus on a regular basis. All stakeholders know that members of the leadership team and other campus stakeholders are, and are expected to be, “all in” when it comes to achieving long-term, sustainable, positive outcomes for students served through our campus.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Cain Elementary is committed to providing a secure, productive atmosphere for everyone involved. Therefore, a school-wide discipline management plan is in place to support maximized instructional time, and assist our students in developing positive character. Our campus has adopted individual classroom Guidelines for Success which includes six core values that are necessary to be successful in the school environment. These proactively address the character traits related to being trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and displaying good citizenship. Using this plan in all areas of the building means that student expectations are clear and consistent. At our annual Back-to-School Assembly, we discuss and model our expectations, and reinforce this in individual classrooms and other areas throughout the year. For the first twenty-one days of school, we highlight an identified character trait or procedure that we practice throughout the school for that day. We believe that building relationships is key to growing character and academic success. We focus on making teachable moments for building positive behaviors, rather than consequences. Negative behaviors are also corrected utilizing a restorative discipline model, whereby the root problem is addressed that is causing the undesired behaviors and bad choices, and the focus is on returning the student to the classroom. Our approach does not focus on punitive measures, but focuses instead on giving students the tools needed to make better choices. Classes and groups work as teams to earn class rewards, such as Wildcat Wows and the Golden Spatula Awards given at intervals throughout the year. For example, classes can earn rewards that range from class pajama days, scavenger hunts, or even a mystery field trip. Students' individual efforts are recognized through ticket drawings, the Cain Cool Cat award, and other classroom teacher incentives. Academic achievement and character development are celebrated each six weeks at our school-wide themed celebration. Staff and students dress to match the theme, community members participate, and awards are given to staff and students to celebrate growth for the six weeks period. Kids and adults alike all look forward to this opportunity to come together and dance, cheer, and celebrate each other. Since implementing this school-wide system and focusing on being proactive rather than reactive, all of these practices have proven to be effective in reducing discipline referrals, as well as the school's rate of repeat offenses. This, coupled with our strong history of academic success, has left no doubt that what we are doing is effective.