

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Sarah L Roper

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

Official School Name Van Vleck Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 142 South 4th Street

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

City Van Vleck    State TX    Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77482-6468

County Matagorda County

Telephone (979) 323-5040

Fax (979) 245-1214

Web site/URL http://www.vvisd.org

E-mail cdement@vvisd.org

Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Van-Vleck-

Twitter Handle https://twitter.com/VanVleckISD

ISD/270218039754819

Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjEmglePRaydwWRTx5P2CRA

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. John O'Brien

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

E-mail jobrien@vvisd.org

District Name Van Vleck ISD    Tel. (979) 323-5001

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. Tony Kucera

(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

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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

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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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 4 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	10	13	10
K	31	42	73
1	30	30	60
2	35	43	78
3	41	32	73
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
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
<b>Total Students</b>	147	160	307

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 13 % Black or African American
  - 30 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 50 % White
  - 6 % 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: 18%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	40
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	44
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	249
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.177
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	18

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
10 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: 64 %  
Total number students who qualify: 159

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %  
27 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 13:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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.

Through a solidified partnership with the community, we innovatively challenge each student to achieve maximum potential and success in a positive safe, and stimulating environment.

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

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Van Vleck Elementary, based in the small community of Van Vleck, Texas, and is located seventy-four miles southwest of Houston, Texas. Van Vleck schools began with a small structure built in 1901 and thus began the organized educational endeavor by the citizens of Van Vleck. With the coming of the railroad, came more students in need of educating in the Van Vleck area. Van Vleck I.S.D. has grown and improved into the Twenty-First Century and currently consists of an elementary school, an intermediate school, a middle school, and a high school, utilizing a PreK-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade-level configuration. The students of Van Vleck Elementary are currently housed in a building constructed in 1974, an open-spaced school where students in prekindergarten through third grade are allowed to learn in ways suited to their individual differences. Van Vleck Elementary has the tradition of developing the total child emotionally, socially, and academically. The mission of Van Vleck Elementary is to: provide for the total development of all students, enhance learning skills and the ability to access information, and nurture a positive self-esteem for everyone.

The Van Vleck Elementary team utilizes S.T.R.I.V.E., created by the district counseling team, which teaches students that personal choices make a difference in their lives. Each grading cycle, students and staff do activities that involve staying focused, taking responsibility, respecting others, inspiring others, valuing education, and expecting success. During the first grading cycle, staff taught the students about the importance of staying focused. Students set attainable goals and wrote them as a class on the board or in their planners. The second cycle, the counselor taught all students in group sessions how to take responsibility. In the third cycle, students learned about diversity and how to respect everyone as students attended the Motivational Media presentation in the auditorium. The counselor and teachers put up colorful bulletin boards throughout the campus as a reminder to be kind all of the time. Students and staff collected food in their classrooms for holiday food baskets for needy families and they collected items to donate to the local military moms and wives to make packages to send to deployed troops. They also collected \$300.00 to help cover the cost of mailing the packages. In cycle four, students learned about teaching others to inspire one another. Students were taught during counseling special time that they need to go above and beyond to be nice to their classmates and never engage in bullying in the hallways, lunchroom, or playground. The fifth grading cycle emphasizes valuing education. Teachers are providing increased learning opportunities: interdisciplinary lessons, pull-out sessions, and fun enrichment workshops. In the last grading cycle, students are expecting success and plan to attend multiple enrichment field trips to further advance their knowledge.

There are little to no discipline issues and no bullying or harassment instances, thereby providing a stimulating and safe school culture for everyone. The philosophy of Van Vleck Elementary is to foster a positive learning environment where all students develop abilities which ensure the individuals become autonomous adults.

In spite of having 63.9% of the student population designated as economically disadvantaged and facing challenges, all students have an equal opportunity to learn in an engaging, caring, and positive atmosphere. While this number has increased every year due to economic cutbacks, Van Vleck Elementary ensures that student needs are met through maintaining a low student-teacher ratio. Also, sound scientific research and effective teaching practices are studied and used to provide guidance in professional development, curriculum and instruction delivery, and data driven decision making. One example is offering small group afternoon tutorials for students who need skill building support and assistance with homework. Struggling learners are quickly given tiered intervention so they do not fall behind. Administrators monitor progress of teachers and students using a data management and assessment program and provide immediate feedback to ensure success in all aspects. There is a 30 minute differentiation period built in to the regular school day schedule for all special populations. GT students receive enrichment of their higher level thinking skills, ESL students receive additional supports in their native language. Special Education and 504 students receive assistance to build their skills.

All stakeholders work together to achieve the mission of Van Vleck Elementary and provide valuable input to the development of the students. Parents, volunteers, and community members are welcomed and encouraged to actively participate in the daily happenings of the school and are included in the district education planning process each year to develop the campus improvement plan and attend quarterly meetings to monitor progress.

Van Vleck Elementary has attained the highest level of achievement of “Met Standard” the last three years with distinction designations in: Academic Achievement in Reading/English Language Arts, Top 25 Percent: Closing Performance Gaps, and Post-secondary Readiness, in the last two years. Van Vleck Elementary received an “Exemplary” rating twelve years prior, per the Texas Education Agency. Recently, Van Vleck Elementary was recognized in Texas as a Blue Ribbon school. Another recent accolade includes Van Vleck Elementary being selected by Educational Results Partnership (ERP) and the Institute for Educational Productivity (IPE) as one of 713 public schools in Texas to receive the title of 2015 Honor Roll School. Van Vleck Elementary is a leader in the district, county, and state because of the commitment and excellent performance by the students and staff throughout the years.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

The most important critical success factor for Van Vleck Elementary is implementing and aligning curriculum effectively. The staff uses state adopted digital and textbook curriculum and consumables. Curriculum based assessments are administered every grading cycle and semester. Data-driven decisions are made after reviewing these assessments. The pursuit of increased academic performance is the goal and monitoring student progress is tantamount. Curriculum strategies are adjusted depending upon the review of data reports, student performance, and student needs. Data is also monitored for quality assurance. Administrators and office personnel monitor proper student coding and ensure that student services are being administered correctly. Increased learning opportunities are given to students by way of tutorials, pullouts during the school day, workshops offered for advanced level students, differentiated instruction, and flexible scheduling as needed.

Van Vleck Elementary uses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and Lead4ward as their frameworks, along with state adopted curriculum. Van Vleck Elementary chose these curriculum pathways and frameworks to allow the staff to be empowered to develop their own lesson plans, provided they are meeting the requirements of covering all of the grade-level TEKS. These frameworks consist of student-centered, data-driven, and spiraling objectives. Teachers coordinate horizontally at each grade-level and vertically between the grade levels to master academic goals. Teachers use their expertise and collaborate on a variety of cross-curricular, instructional approaches to increase student learning.

The expectations and standards for achievement are set high for students and staff at Van Vleck Elementary. Struggling learners receive additional supports to enhance TEKS skills during the differentiation period built into the day or during after school pullouts. Advanced learners are given increased learning opportunities to further their knowledge and enhancement of skills at after school expos and sessions.

The staff uses a phonics-based approach as well as a whole-language approach. The reasoning for using both strategies is that students learn to read using both approaches. As the students at Van Vleck Elementary begin to read, by the middle of kindergarten, they are given activities to learn decoding strategies. Students focus on word meaning, fluency, and comprehension. Students use several technology based reading programs, i.e. iStation, Capstone, Accelerated Reader, and Core Lexia, to improve the skills of all students. As skills are developed, Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) assessments are completed quarterly. STAR Reading tests are administered each semester to monitor student progress and to determine if tiered intervention is required for students. Teachers monitor progress, academic achievement, and determine if intervention is needed for their students.

The staff uses Sharon Wells math curriculum and students build a foundation in number operations and quantitative reasoning, patterns, relationships, algebraic thinking, geometry and spatial reasoning, measurement, probability and statistics, and financial literacy. Teachers scaffold to develop conceptual understanding. Problem-solving is used to connect math to real-life situations. Students prove their answers. Vocabulary is vertically aligned and used at all grade levels to describe reasoning as students learn to identify, compare, and classify items. Students are given curriculum based assessments each grading cycle. STAR Math tests are administered each semester. Students are monitored and tiered intervention strategies are implemented for all students.

Van Vleck Elementary's science curriculum is stimulating and teachers use hands-on and digital activities to foster a further understanding of processes and meaningful content. This hands-on curriculum and use of digital resources allows students to learn in-depth concepts of science. Students learn and perform methods of scientific inquiry that intersect with technology and science. Teachers primarily use real-life investigations using Texas process standards and the rigorous framework of the TEKS and Lead4ward.

Van Vleck Elementary believes in fostering the importance of social studies and developing responsible, prepared citizens that can make informed decisions consistent with democratic values locally, nationally, and globally. The social studies curriculum allows students to explain relationships with other people, the environment, and equips them with knowledge and understanding of historical times and figures of the past. Most importantly, the curriculum integrates skills and understandings into a framework for responsible citizen participation. The TEKS and Lead4ward provide the framework that the students will learn within the different strands, such as history and geography. Social Studies is a vital part of the elementary curriculum that prepares children to understand and participate effectively in an ever-changing, global world.

Van Vleck Elementary's preschool, consisting of EE and PK students, uses Frog Street Press curriculum which is a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines. The program is engaging for both teachers and students. Students enter kindergarten with a strong knowledge base for reading and math. Van Vleck Elementary staff uses Lead4Ward framework to spiral curriculum in all core subject areas in grades K-3. Digital portfolios are kept on each student using Data Management of Assessment and Curriculum (DMAC). Grading cycle tests and TPRI information is uploaded into DMAC and are used as indicators for student progress.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

While core curriculum is the key component to increasing student achievement, Van Vleck Elementary uses several other subject areas in the TEKS that are equally as important in developing students to their complete potential and preparing them to be life-long learners and productive contributors in future times.

All students at Van Vleck Elementary receive forty-five minutes of physical education every day. The physical education Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills emphasize the importance of students engaging in movement to provide the foundation for enjoyment, development of social skills, team building, and how to foster a physically-active lifestyle. Students also participate in the Fitness Gram and gain knowledge and skills to stay healthy.

Art and Music are taught within the regular class period and the TEKS for Art and Music are embedded within each core curriculum to further enhance the study of the different disciplines. Students engage in making projects as enrichment and skill building. Also, students perform in various plays and performances several times a year.

The technology curriculum expands each year with the changing demands and trends in several areas of technology. TEKS are taught within the classroom and are integrated into all of the core curriculum areas. Students have access to multiple forms of technology, including but not limited to, digital applications, laptops, desktop computers, electronic notebooks, tablets, promethean interactive white boards, projectors, and other smart devices. Students are engaged in 21st Century learning utilizing technology during class time every day as well as during library and technology application time every week.

Students also learn the importance of research and reading during library time. Research and other library skills are taught during class time as well as weekly during library time. Students use texts, journals, maps, digital resources and other primary and secondary sources so as to enhance their skills for researching true information and documenting sources. Students read books and take tests on the computer on the Accelerated Reading program. Students learn that literacy is important to becoming lifelong learners.

All students at Van Vleck Elementary are taught health and wellness character building and bully prevention by the campus counselor. Having a school community relationship, she brings in outside speakers from local business and wellness industries to teach lessons on wellness, bullying prevention, and safety. The Child Advocacy Center representative teaches a bullying prevention program all year. The Bay City Pilot Club teaches about brain, helmet, and bicycle safety. Motivational Media provides a presentation highlighting the importance of students practicing safe and drug free and prevention strategies. She also teaches monthly character education lessons for all students in effort to help students understand, care about, and act upon core moral and ethical values. The counselor implements a health and wellness curriculum, created by the

district counseling team, going far beyond what the state required curriculum is for counseling in public schools. Using the word STRIVE, the counseling and administrative teams spell out the word and utilize the first initial of each letter in the word strive and conducts activities during each grading cycle. The counselor, teachers, support staff, and administrators utilize the S.T.R.I.V.E. character building theme which teaches students that choices make a difference in their lives. Each grading cycle, students and staff do activities that involve “S” for staying focused, “T” for taking responsibility, “R” for respecting others, “I” for inspiring others, “V” for valuing education, and “E” expecting success. Activities include making flyers, announcing positive words on the announcements, doing classroom activities centered around the S.T.R.I.V.E theme, creating and updating bulletin boards monthly. Some of the activities this year have included staff members guiding the students toward staying focused and completing checklists; taking responsibility by cleaning up the cafeteria, playground or school; respecting others by doing food drives to give to impoverished families and collecting boxes to send to the military men and women; inspiring others and learning lessons about tolerance while celebrating black history month; valuing education by attending tutorials and building skills while preparing for the STAAR test and learning about careers; and finally expecting success as they work to transition to the next grade level and setting goals for their future.

The students and staff have high expectations and are shown how to achieve goals. Students are proud of their accomplishments and proud of their school.

The main goals of implementing all of the curriculum strategies listed in this section herein is for students to develop an internal motivation and to contribute positively to the world around them. Van Vleck Elementary realizes that good academic and character education helps to improve social and emotional competencies and improves overall achievement.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

All students are tracked at Van Vleck Elementary by staff each year. Teachers identify, categorize, and monitor students in different sub-groups prior to school beginning, based upon previous performance and student coding data. Students are served according to their individual accommodation/educational plans. No student is left out of the monitoring process.

The campus uses the researched-based process of Response to Intervention to help meet the needs of various struggling learners. Progress monitoring occurs as teachers test students every week month, and grading period on various core skills. Each student that is receiving RTI has a confidential, digital portfolio that is updated by the staff frequently using our district data management of assessment and curriculum (DMAC) program. In Tier 1, the classroom, teachers first assess all students using universal screening instruments and various informal assessments. Some students may be identified as gifted and talented at this time. These students receive enrichment and differentiated instruction within the classroom to foster higher level thinking skills as well as cooperative learning styles that enhance their abilities and skills. Students that are on grade level may need no intervention and are responding to the challenging curriculum as is. Several students may need Tier 2 intervention and will need more one on one in a reading lab, math lab, or tutorials for help with their general education classes. These students receive supplemental instruction in a small group setting to support learning in areas where weaknesses have been determined. A small group of students will need Tier 3 intervention. These students have intense instruction using multi-sensory techniques and scaffolding. These students may be referred to special education, dyslexia, Section 504, and/or English as a Second Language programs as needed.

From pre-kindergarten to third grade, all students are monitored and reviewed in specific subgroups because of different needs. Teachers implement progress monitoring strategies to identify student needs and adapt methods of teaching by changing lesson plans, reviewing and re-teaching processes, changing rubrics, or altering the learning environment after determining the achievement level, interest, need, and learning profile of all students. Ongoing assessments are administered to determine the levels competency of students in each grade level and results are recorded in the individual digital portfolios. Teachers utilize differentiation strategies during the normal class time as well as flexible scheduling to enhance and challenge all students: pullouts, tutorials, inclusion, etc. Teachers ensure that students are learning the knowledge and skills as required by the state mandated curriculum requirements. Teachers identify their

students' level of competency through several forms of assessments in each subject area and plan steps for instruction in order to fulfill student achievement.

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

Van Vleck Elementary uses many different assessments for various purposes in all areas of the school curriculum to improve academic success, enhance data driven decisions for positive accountability, and provide increased learning opportunities for all students.

The staff uses multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data to show targeted improvement. Students in K-2 take the TPRI test to determine students' developmental progress. Students also take the STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments quarterly to determine their zone of proximity and progress. Third grade takes STAAR Reading and Math. The NNAT 2, SAGES, IPT, dyslexic screeners, curriculum based grading cycle tests, progress reports, and report cards are all used to collect data for student level review.

To determine where all learners may fall, teachers do Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies to place children. In Tier 1, the classroom, TPRI, a universal screener is administered to students three times a year to track individual student developmental progress. Staff members use this data to determine whether or not students need additional supports, such as enrichment or Tier 2 intervention. In Tier 2, staff members further diagnose the student's area of need and targeted instruction for areas of concern or weakness. Taking things one step further, through ongoing assessment, students may be eligible for Tier 3 instruction, which is highly intense in an area of extreme strengths or weaknesses.

Struggling learners and advanced learners are monitored using the RTI digital data management program and are challenged and given increased learning opportunities. The various data reports capture evidence of student progress and information is communicated to stakeholders.

All stakeholders meet to develop an intervention plan under the RTI, Section 504, Dyslexia, Special Education, GT, and or English as a Second Language programs, as needed. Assessments are reviewed, strengths and weaknesses discussed, and plans to establish student success are developed. Teachers and paraprofessionals conduct informal assessments on a daily class basis and feedback is provided immediately.

Observations, checklists, daily assignments, and curriculum based assessments provide valuable data as well. All data is shared during conference periods with teachers, parents, counselors, program leaders, and administrators. Everything is recorded on a student's digital portfolio in the data management of curriculum and assessment (DMAC) program. Everyone understands the process and everyone is on board with how students are performing. Teachers use information about students to alter curriculum and adjust instruction delivery.

Following assessment and data gathering, Staff identifies root causes as well as targets an improvement plan to increase student performance. Teachers monitor struggling learners through progress monitoring on DMAC under the RTI application. They seek to have students perform better locally developed curriculum based assessments, various reading & math assessments, as well as the state assessments. Staff utilizes the data reports effectively to determine student needs. The staff then provides supplemental and enrichment activities for low-level learners as well as for higher-level learners.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Van Vleck Elementary is a small town school with big values. All stakeholders strive to maintain excellent relationships. Because the climate and culture of the school community is positive, everyone works hard to maintain excellence and pride.

High academic achievement, positive social involvement, empathy, and sensitivity flourish at Van Vleck Elementary. The tradition continues where everyone stays focused and works to maintain academic excellence. Staff and parents instill in the students that anything they strive for can be accomplished. Further, students are encouraged, despite having challenges. Staff and believe that learning leads to growing. Staff members teach and model positive, uplifting social skills and good character. Students are encouraged by staff to exercise good judgment, proper manners, and self-control in everything they do.

Students learn early how to be proactive instead of reactive. They are taught about “paw pride” which is where future Leopards behave appropriately and make good choices in everything they do. Everyone knows the rules and routines of the campus. Staff encourages teamwork. As far as the possible negative social aspect, there is no tolerance for negativity and gossiping. There are no gangs in the school and bullying and harassment are non-existent because everyone looks out after one another and is kind to others. Students and staff honor one another.

Staff members, everyone from the custodians to the principal treat each other respectfully. Parents, students, and community members treat the staff with utmost respect. Staff members engage in site-based decision making and truly enjoy working with one another for a common goal. Staff members collaborate and work together as a team. Administration is transparent with decisions concerning the school and there is a strong trust factor among the employees on the campus and the district as a whole.

Staff members are equipped with resources, staff development, and other support which makes their job enjoyable and fulfilling. Staff meetings occur weekly for grade level teams and monthly for all personnel, ensuring open communication about student progress, compliance updates, current trends in education, and staff operating in a proactive manner rather than being reactionary to certain crises or issues.

Van Vleck Elementary is successful because of the positive, family-oriented atmosphere. Staff and students are engaged and motivated. Relationships are established and the consistent routine has been created so that the campus runs like a “well oiled” machine. Because of the positive culture and climate, Van Vleck Elementary continues to shine.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Successful schools have a support network consisting of students, staff members, families, community members, and business partners working together to support student learning. Van Vleck Elementary is the center of the community of Van Vleck, Texas. Families are involved with school in many ways: assemblies, field trips, student programs, festivals, campus and district improvement meetings, breakfast with mom, donuts with dad, family nights at the book fair, award ceremonies, and much more. Typically, school events are large gatherings. Van Vleck Elementary is part of everyone’s family life. Everyone in the Van Vleck community knows each other. Community members have a vested interest in the school. Students and staff greatly benefit from the overall concern and nurturing in Van Vleck. Staff members have support from the families and it is apparent with the high attendance rate as well as little to no discipline issues.

Van Vleck Elementary staff members communicate with parents and have also formed a partnership with parents to be involved in student learning. Parents sign compacts at the beginning of the school year. Expectations are outlined by staff members to parents and students through daily/weekly communications

in students' take home folders. Procedures are reviewed at district education meetings, campus improvement meetings, and Title I fall and spring meetings. Parents are also included in campus improvement and decision making strategies. Teachers communicate frequently with parents through parent portal, web pages, social media group pages, newsletters, email, phone calls, conferences, home visits, and open houses, ARD meetings, Section 504 meetings, etc. Parents are welcome to be part of the school's volunteer organization and they receive training to assist with several areas within the school.

The school is extremely welcoming. The staff members work to build relationships with parents. Personal connections are made. Parents are welcome to come and eat lunch with their students. There is a true sense of belonging felt by all. Everyone has a Van Vleck Elementary Bleacher Creature shirt and during football season, students and parents wear their shirts on Fridays to show their school spirit. Staff and parents work together to encourage students to work hard and to act appropriately at school and at non-school activities.

The school is supported by several local industry representatives and businesses: Williams Energy, Quiroga Trucking, HEB Grocery, Texas Dow Energy Credit Union, Bay Cel Federal Credit Union, Cedar Lane Baptist Church, Van Vleck Baptist Church, Matagorda County Women's Crisis Center, and Bay City Pilot Club. The larger industries provide assistance monetarily to purchase resources for students and staff. Surrounding churches and smaller businesses provide students with wellness and counseling support, clothes, food, and school supplies.

Making connections with parents and the community members has led to an increase in student achievement at Van Vleck Elementary over many years.

### 3. Professional Development:

All staff members at Van Vleck Elementary are involved with several kinds of professional development throughout the year: staff meetings, workshops, training sessions, Net 3 virtual meetings, grade level meetings, district vertical meetings, etc.

District administrators attend monthly staff meetings and quarterly trainings with Lead4ward Accountability Connect. Staff members at Van Vleck Elementary are then trained by administrators during conference times and after school. Teachers are taught how to effectively monitor data, student achievement, and implement best practices for curriculum and instruction delivery. Grade-level teachers and paraprofessionals work during conference periods, after school periodically to formulate their plans.

Staff participates in grade level team meetings and vertical subject matter meetings, as needed, to be sure they are spiraling their curriculum.

Other types of professional development sessions are held throughout the year by district administration. During the summer months, staff members are offered multiple trainings on FERPA/HIPPA laws, technology applications, stress management, classroom management, Section 504 updates, Special Education practices and procedures, CPR, etc. In August, the week before school starts, numerous compliance topics are covered during district professional development sessions. These days are filled with important activities staff members want, need, and have requested through campus planning activities.

Presenters come to the district to provide information and trainings. Also, during this time, the TEKS and Lead4Ward scaffolds and resources are reviewed. The district has developed TEKS charts for all staff members to use throughout the year as a guide. Lead4Ward scaffolding charts are provided to new teachers. PK-12 vertical teams are required to meet. Grade level teams also meet and review data, newly purchased curriculum, and student information. Federal program requirements and duty charts are given to and reviewed by all instructional staff so that everyone knows their role. Throughout the year, Van Vleck Elementary math teachers attend specialized training at a nearby district to learn different math strategies and how to teach the Sharon Well's math curriculum. Teachers attend core workshops throughout the year at Region 3 Service Center in Victoria, Texas to learn new and innovative ways to teach today's 21st century learner. Instructional coaches come and train personnel on various core subjects.

All staff are encouraged to read books, blogs, journals, etc. on their own regarding current trends in education, use of technology for themselves as well as with their students, and other educational strategies that may play an essential role in educating students. Professional development and training of the staff members helps to keep student performance at a high level.

#### 4. School Leadership:

Van Vleck Elementary has a small, but organized team of school leaders whose ultimate goal is student achievement. There is one school principal, one counselor, one secretary, and one attendance clerk who is also a certified nurse's assistant. This leadership team works with all of the teachers and paraprofessionals to nurture and guide all students. They have a shared vision of making Van Vleck Elementary a successful place to be. Staff members have important roles and are held to a high accountability. Everyone works hard for the team to serve all stakeholders involved: students, staff, parents, and community members.

Effective leadership practices are carried out by the entire Van Vleck Elementary staff. Each staff member takes pride and responsibility in his specific leadership role. Staff members model their leadership values to the students and everyone is on board with being dedicated and working hard. Staff members at Van Vleck Elementary are leaders and they all possess several skills: good ethics, positivity, dedication, communication skills, flexibility, transparency, etc. These are the keys to the school's overall success.

The leadership team works with the district administration team to ensure school policies and procedures are carried out effectively. District administrators work together to ensure student and staff success. All of the schools in Van Vleck ISD have excellent ratings and are not staged in any of the indicators on the Performance Based Monitoring Analysis System. This is attributed to the fact that Van Vleck Elementary leadership team and all of the other campus teams in the district work closely with the central office staff to effectively monitor coding and student academic, attendance, and discipline information.

Connections and relationships are established by everyone. Just like families, Van Vleck Elementary has many relationships that are encouraging, respectful, and professional. Some of these team relationships have names, such as: grade-level teams, school wide teams, ARD committees, Section 504 teams, LPAC teams, GT teams, RTI committees, etc. These leadership teams help to support student learning and improvement. These teams/committees discuss confidential information concerning student progress. These discussions often involve raw and sometimes difficult information about at risk students. These teams also gather data and conduct student level reviews to make data-driven decisions. These teams focus on student achievement, and the key to the success for these teams is that they are working together to help students.

In conclusion, Van Vleck Elementary's leadership philosophy involves everyone collaborating, knowing their role, working as a team, and being dedicated to sharing the same vision of attaining student achievement and ultimately success for the entire campus.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The most important practice that makes Van Vleck Elementary so successful is that it uses data in an ongoing way to provide feedback to staff as well as monitor and support students.

Staff collects and analyzes data at the classroom level. Teachers administer curriculum based assessments to all students each grading cycle to monitor student progress. Scanned results of student answer responses are put into the data management software for assessment and curriculum (DMAC) in Texas Schools. Teachers do this in order to continually refine curriculum and instruction delivery to students.

Teachers engage in analysis of results from the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT), Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), STAR reports for Math and Reading, NNAT2 non-verbal screener, and school-wide benchmarks to determine where students need to improve.

The staff takes specific actions, including changing curriculum and instruction, based upon what is learned from the data analysis.

Teachers assess continuously not only to monitor their students' progress, but also to reform their instruction delivery. They also assess to guide decisions about student groupings and to identify appropriate interventions for students who struggle as well as for students who need enrichment. Students are provided Tier 1, 2, or 3 instructional strategies. Classroom and testing accommodations are discussed with the appropriate campus level committees and testing conditions are considered. Data-driven decisions are made by teachers at the classroom level.

Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies and approaches to address a range of student learning styles. Their instruction and classroom assessments are fully aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills framework and Lead4Ward scaffolding to ensure that curriculum is being taught correctly in each grade-level.

Students and parents receive immediate feedback concerning the data collected so as to improve performance and provide meaning to the data. With this data, students are given opportunities for academic improvement on their curriculum based assessments. Skills are taught in whole group lessons; with inclusion support; in one-on-one during pullouts during the regular school day; in a learning lab; and/or during small group tutorial groups after school. Student data is monitored closely for federal program accommodations, at-risk information updates, and to determine if attendance, discipline or grade issues are causes for decline in student performance. Finally, reviewing student data allows for students to have increased opportunities for learning. Advanced students can attend enrichment workshops to increase their performance on standardized state assessments and struggling learners can receive additional supports to build targeted skills and increase their performance as well.