

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Catherine Louise Bailey

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

Official School Name George C. Payne Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3750 Gleason Avenue

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

City San Jose State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 95130-1399

County California

Telephone (408) 874-3700 Fax (408) 241-4932

Web site/URL http://payne.moreland.org/ E-mail cbailey@moreland.org

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\*Ms. Mary Kay Going E-mail mkgoing@moreland.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Moreland School District Tel. (408) 874-2900

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 Ms. Heather Sutton  
(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. 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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 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, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	28	11	39
K	54	48	102
1	53	46	99
2	52	47	99
3	55	45	100
4	47	48	95
5	54	49	103
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>	343	294	637

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 28 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 32 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 26 % White
  - 9 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 3%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	637
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.030
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 26 %  
167 Total number ELL

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

Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Assyrian, Cantonese, Farsi, Filipino, French, German, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Mandarin, Marathi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Servo-Croatian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28 %  
Total number students who qualify: 177
8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %  
72 Total number of students served

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

<u>16</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>13</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>26</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
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 24:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

<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.

Payne, a positive learning environment, is engaged in productive collaboration, effective communication, and critical and creative thinking. Our community empowers productive and caring global citizens.

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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At Payne Elementary School, we create a positive learning environment in which all members of the school community are engaged to collaborate productively, communicate effectively, and think critically and creatively. Our diverse staff, families, and community partner together to empower every child to become a productive, caring citizen of an ever-changing global society.

Payne is one of five elementary schools in the Moreland School District (MSD). MSD, located in San Jose, California, sits in the heart of the Silicon Valley and represents the economic and culturally diverse surroundings. Payne serves 623 Transitional Kindergarten through fifth grade students on a traditional school calendar. Payne also serves 14 preschool students in the district preschool special day class. Our student population consists of approximately 26% English Learners, 37% socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and 11% students with disabilities. Thirty-two percent of Payne Elementary students are Hispanic, 27% are Caucasian, 28% are Asian, 3% are African American, and 9% are two or more races. Payne's diverse families represent 27 languages.

The current administrative team at Payne offers unique insight to the diverse school community. New to Moreland in 2015, the principal is able to present new perspectives while collaborating with an assistant principal who has worked at Payne in various roles for over 15 years. Working together to balance history and successful past practice with a collaborative vision has created a dynamic leadership team. Instructional leadership, collaboration, creative problem solving, and student support are prioritized by the administrative team.

Payne's staff is comprised of dedicated and knowledgeable certificated, classified, and specialized staff members. Twenty-five general education teachers and three special education teachers are supported by a School Psychologist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Resource Specialist, Instructional Coach, and multiple special education aides and intervention specialists. Although the staff works diligently as individuals, the school demographics and population demand a team effort. Staff members have clearly shifted their paradigm of "my" students to "our" students. This is true of the entire staff at Payne, from the yard duty supervisors to the secretarial staff and from the custodians to the food service providers. Payne's collaborative staff works together to provide a family-oriented, nurturing, and safe place for students to learn, grow, and develop intellectually and emotionally; we all act on the principle that students come first.

Through ongoing collaboration, staff members determine what they want students to learn, how to check for understanding, how to provide enrichment, and what to do if students need further instruction. Teachers reflect on their instructional practices to determine whether or not they are effectively meeting their current students' needs. With a strong sense of purpose, Payne's teachers eagerly embrace opportunities for professional development related to data analysis, research-based instructional practices, differentiated instruction, and positive school climate.

Individual teachers at Payne do not work in isolation to meet the academic or social needs of their students. Payne teachers are not delivering the same curriculum to each student regardless of learning ability. Instead, teams of teachers are collaborating to realize the academic and social potential of every student based upon data, resulting in students experiencing high levels of academic and social success. An influential change at Payne has been the full integration of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. With new standards driving instruction, new strategies and curriculum needed to be implemented. The teamwork and interdependence of the teaching staff has never been more paramount.

Payne family members are also called upon to be a part of the Payne team. Community building events are encouraged and prioritized just as much as fund-raising among the school community. Just as with the teaching staff, Payne households look at all students as part of their greater family unit. Students are collectively cared for and encouraged. Payne staff and families rely on each other for support and offer mutual respect as teammates in the process of raising productive and "Paws"-itive citizens.

Nobody exemplifies “Paws”-itivity quite like Blue, the cheerful Panther mascot who attends monthly Spirit Assemblies and occasionally greets students as they arrive at the front of the school. Panther Pride is evident when Blue makes the rounds as students, staff, and community members happily receive and return high fives.

“Paws”-itive Panther tickets are distributed and behavior is celebrated whenever a student is found upholding the ideals of Blue the Panther.

Payne truly is a positive environment in which students flourish. The climate is caring, hard-working, and respectful. It takes a village to raise a child and the Payne team works daily to raise hundreds. As stated in our student Panther Pledge, “Nothing is impossible at Payne School!”

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Reading is the foundation for differentiated instruction at Payne, as the skills taught are used in all subject areas. Formative and summative assessments are used to properly place students in flexible reading groups. Fountas & Pinnell is used to assess reading level in primary students and Scholastic Reading Inventory is used for older students. These assessments, along with Study Island benchmarks and teacher observation, are regularly reviewed to evaluate student progress and determine proper student placement.

A primary focus of reading instruction is time on text. Teachers dedicate resources and instructional time to the practice of reading nonfiction and fiction text at students' instructional level. Various strategies and resources are employed to ensure time on text is productive and purposeful. The most emergent readers at each grade level spend half their class time in guided reading groups with a credentialed teacher and/or an intervention specialist. Primary teachers use a modified Leveled Literacy Intervention program, enhanced by early literacy instructional techniques. Independent practice includes researched-based computer programs such as Imagine Learning. Teachers analyze progress reports in order to ensure student growth. In the middle level reading classes, teachers give students voice and choice to increase engagement in reading through menu assignments, literature circles, and direct instruction around comprehension. The most advanced readers are given even more choice, focusing on critical thinking through resources such as Junior Great Books and online Hyperdocs.

An analysis of text in the Teacher Resource Room revealed the need for new text titles. A purchase of sight word books and chapter books with greater cultural and gender relevancy enhanced the library. As a result, emergent readers have teaching tools that lead to more effective intervention and proficient readers are discussing social justice through books that allow for more meaningful conversations.

Common Core Math instruction has focused on differentiation within a new math adoption (Eureka Math), blending foundational skills with problem solving applications. At grade level meetings, during Instructional Rounds, and through off-site classroom visits, teachers have discovered new strategies for implementing the curriculum. Small group instruction, technology (Zearn, IXL, Prodigy) and hands-on games and manipulatives provide both intervention and challenging enrichment to students. Math talks at all grade levels lead to meaningful mathematical discussions. In addition to building knowledge, supporting learning and developing communication skills, math class has become an opportunity to expand respect within the diverse community of students.

The transition to the Next Generation Science Standards provides real world problems and hands-on experiences to drive inquiry based instruction. Teachers begin with an overarching question and facilitate student investigation to master concepts. Science standards are supported through design thinking and engineering challenges in the STEAM lab and reinforced with engaging presentations from The Lawrence Hall of Science, The Children's Discovery Museum, and Edventure More. Through these organizations, students are introduced to scientists who connect classroom learning to the real world.

Social Studies provides a foundation for civic learning at Payne. Authentic learning lessons have been developed at each grade level to ensure students are using critical thinking skills to analyze events and people from the past in relation to their own lives and future. Some examples include a first grade Project Based Learning lesson that focuses on how community workers make a difference in the world locally, Interactive Notebooks in fourth grade that include both right brain and left brain activities for each lesson encouraging students to think from different perspectives, and the Social Studies Alive curriculum in fifth grade that asks students to question events from history instead of simply memorizing them.

By weaving critical thinking skills, collaboration, and respectful communication into all major curriculum areas, civic learning has become an almost indiscernible part of daily instruction. Students commonly ask "Why?" and are led through meaningful discussions about how they can make a difference in the future. Third graders exemplify this as they spend the year exploring the theme "Kids Can Make a



Difference” in all areas of instruction.

With a focus on social-emotional cognitive development, the Transitional Kindergarten class at Payne integrates early learning and elementary school systems. Child directed learning centers such as science exploration, dramatic play, fine motor activities and hands-on activities are balanced by explicit and direct teacher instruction. A typical day in TK includes a morning message, an opening routine that incorporates communication and collaboration, ELA choice and Math choice times with small group teacher instruction, rhyme time, PE, and free choice. Payne’s Transitional Kindergarten prepares our youngest students to succeed in traditional Kindergarten classrooms and beyond.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Payne is defined by so much more than the major curriculum areas. Teaching the whole child is emphasized and non-traditional curriculum areas are developed and seen as essential as we create global citizens. Instruction in Performing and Visual Arts, Physical Fitness, Technology, STEAM, and citizenship occur on campus daily.

Starting Arts, a nonprofit arts organization, has provided quality arts education at Payne for several years. TK and Kindergarten students learn dance for six weeks, first through third grade receive music instruction for eight weeks, and fourth through fifth grade students focus on improvisation and theater skills. Funding for these programs comes from the district level, Moreland Educational Foundation, and Home & School Club. It is a priority at Payne to ensure Performing Arts instruction for all grade levels.

Music instruction is expanded through the Band and Orchestra program. Students who choose to participate select an instrument, are given instruction on that instrument, and learn to play as part of a group. Most of these students continue to play in the award-winning Middle School Band and Orchestra upon leaving Payne.

Visual Arts is provided through Art in Action, a parent volunteer program. Once or twice month students participate in an art lesson within the STEAM lab. After learning about an artist who has made a difference in the world, students replicate an artistic technique through their own projects. The student art on display at Open House is both beautiful and inspiring!

Physical Fitness is prioritized at Payne. We do not simply count minutes to ensure requirements are met. Credentialed teachers from Rhythm & Moves (a district contracted agency) provide a comprehensive curriculum to teach sports and sportsmanship. Units of study such as field hockey, dance, and soccer culminate in a Field Day celebration of fitness.

Further instruction around health and fitness is provided through our weeklong study of healthy choices for Red Ribbon Week, our Body & Mind Wellness Fair, the school-wide Turkey Trot, and the Panther Prowl Walkathon. Within classrooms, teachers use resources from the Dairy Council to teach nutrition while providing frequent brain breaks through movement. Direct instruction explains to students the purpose of the brain breaks to demonstrate the relationship between fitness and learning.

The use of technology is integrated throughout the Payne campus. Primary classrooms utilize iPads across all curricular areas, while district support has provided third through fifth grade students with 1:1 Chromebooks. Common Sense Media lessons allow teachers to demonstrate responsible and respectful use of technology, including topics from internet safety to cyber-bullying. Following a scope and sequence, students progressively learn important skills from using a mouse to preparing and presenting multimedia projects. After teaching students how to use technology, teachers incorporate the digital tools to creatively support instruction and encourage students to innovatively integrate the use of technology into their learning.

Weekly school-wide participation in the STEAM lab allows for equity and access to important 21st century skills around technology and engineering. Using a variety of investigative methods (design thinking, inquiry based instruction, tinkering), students follow an NGSS-aligned curriculum scope and sequence that

was developed for Payne students by our STEAM Teacher Leadership Team. This year, Payne's STEAM program will be featured at a Santa Clara County Office of Education STEAM Symposium as an example of how to create a unique school program without purchasing outside curriculum.

Instruction continues outside of the classroom at Payne. Lunchtime clubs offer instruction in a variety of high-interest topics such as sewing, video production, mindfulness, and even Pokemon. Student leadership is encouraged and our fourth and fifth grade student leaders provide peer instruction during lunch on recess games and during Spirit Assemblies on character traits and positive behavior choices. After school, students can choose from a variety of fee-based and free enrichment programs such as gardening club, art lessons, percussion band, and cooking.

Payne students are both interesting and interested. The consideration and development of non-traditional curriculum areas prioritizes the goal of creating kind, respectful, and productive citizens of a global community.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Making the Common Core State Standards and other curricular areas relevant to students and applicable to the real world are important components of Payne's instructional program. The instructional methods not only accomplish these goals, but also provide systems for building 21st Century skills in students. Payne understands and values that future employers will want our students to be able to do more than read, write, and compute. Instructional strategies focus on collaboration, creative and critical thinking, and communication.

Staff members use Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies to teach students best practices to support collaboration. Teaching specific structures means all students are productively using team and group learning moments. Collaborative work at Payne ensures interdependence and interaction among students. Cooperative strategies also create a learning environment in which students are participating equally, but are held individually accountable. Examples of this include literature circles in multiple grades, second grade's study on community structures, and student leadership's work around a variety of school issues. Teaching collaboration explicitly maximizes group instructional time and increases positive group behavior in non-academic settings.

Inquiry based instruction across grade levels at Payne is another key instructional method. Utilizing extensive training in Project Based Learning (PBL), each grade level teaches reading, writing, and researching strategies through social studies and science units. The process requires students to think critically and present creatively. An ideal example is the third grade solar system PBL unit. Working collaboratively to answer the driving question, "How can you create an advertising campaign to persuade others to visit a planet in the solar system?" students list the questions that needed to be answered in order to create a final campaign. By requiring students to ask the questions and answer them, they use increasing Depth of Knowledge levels.

Graphic organizers are effective tools in Payne classrooms. Teachers have committed to using Thinking Maps in every grade and class. Each map reinforces a different type of critical or creative thinking. For example, all students use a Double Bubble map when comparing and contrasting sets of information. By remaining consistent with graphic organizers across grade levels, instructional time is not wasted teaching new organizational methods. As content becomes more complex, students are able to focus on processing the material rather than the method of organization.

While the strategies described above are productive for most students, some need further intervention to master the skills and standards of the grade level. As teachers have concerns about student progress, they meet with their grade level team to complete a Problem Solving Plan (PSP). The teachers on the team look at assessment results and brainstorm intervention ideas, such as moving the student to a different flexible reading group or providing differentiated resources. If progress is still limited, the PSP is discussed with the Tier 2 Leadership Committee, a team of teachers from all grade levels. At this point, additional intervention may be required. Intervention for the youngest students (TK-1) is done during the school day. Intervention

assistants are reallocated as needed to the classroom setting. In second through fifth grade, students may be referred to before and after school intervention. Second graders may be referred to Panther Plus, math or reading intervention programs led outside of the school day by teachers. Intermediate students are referred to Panther University, an after school program that reinforces both reading and math grade level skills. Taught by credentialed teachers and intervention specialists, the program makes use of Thinking Maps, games, and strategic lessons to support struggling learners. Students regularly “graduate” from Panther University; the intervention is all that is needed to get the students back on track.

Assessment is critical to Payne’s instructional plan. Many formative and summative assessments are used and discussed during weekly grade level meetings. Systematic formal and informal assessments are given in the classroom. For example, exit tickets are used in math, daily guided reading provides opportunities for running records, and rubrics and checklists give students feedback in writing. Formal assessments include Study Island benchmarks three times a year, Fountas & Pinnell literacy assessments each trimester, or more frequently as needed, and Scholastic Reading Inventory. The section titled “Strategies for Academic Success” describes in detail how and when these assessments are analyzed by teacher teams.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Student voice is valued at Payne. Project Based Learning, Inquiry Based Instruction, Thinking Maps, and school-wide homework menus support student voice and choice. First grade Wonderful Wednesdays and second grade Fabulous Fridays offer classes such as dance, art, STEAM, fitness, and nutrition. Similarly, students are given choice outside the classroom. Lunchtime clubs, after-school enrichment opportunities, and recess games support student interests while offering opportunities to learn new skills. Prioritizing student voice and choice has led to high engagement and involvement, motivated learners, and a positive school-wide environment.

At each grade level, students are exposed to growth mindset instruction and activities. Teachers use a variety of strategies, including Class Dojo, to encourage students to be flexible learners. As students build their capacity to cope with difficulty and challenge themselves as learners, the learning environment becomes charged with positive perseverance.

The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program is an integral part of Payne's school culture. Twice-weekly announcements emphasize positive character traits through Paws and Ponder messages. "Paws-itive Panthers" are rewarded with school spirit bracelets. Monthly Spirit Assemblies celebrate the Student of the Month in each classroom, recognizing excellence around the monthly character trait.

The Cornerstone ABC Reader and Los Dichos programs invite parent volunteers to provide monthly guidance around positive behavior. Students learn tolerance, practice communication skills, and celebrate cultural differences through books and activities.

When students need social-emotional guidance, Payne provides strategic interventions. Counseling and Support Services for Youth (CASSY) therapists work with students individually and/or in group settings. When students experience behavioral setbacks, they are referred to Check & Connect (C&C). C&C students are paired with staff members who check in throughout the day to guide goal setting and behavior choices. Uplift Family Services provides more intensive behavioral support when necessary.

Payne teachers' commitment to excellence through continuous improvement is the key to student success. District and site administration highly values their contributions and provides support through targeted professional development, shared leadership opportunities, and ongoing communication. Instructional resources and training are offered through staff meetings, grade level collaboration sessions, and online tutorials. Teachers are an important voice in decision-making and event planning at Payne. Administrators visit classrooms often, followed up with notes and conversations. Online documents facilitate communication, recording teacher comments, suggestions, and requests, along with administrators' response, creating a virtual collaborative conversation.

The "Paws-itivity" at Payne is widespread throughout the students, staff, and parent community!

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

It is only with the support and assistance of parents and the surrounding community that Payne is able to maintain its excellence.

Payne employs a variety of strategies to engage and communicate with families. Our Community Liaison reaches out to students and their families, providing Spanish translation as needed. Payne's newly designed website posts important information and calendar events. Monthly school newsletters and weekly classroom newsletters keep families up to date on all Panther news. Parent education workshops introduce parents to relevant topics such as Homework, STEAM, and Growth Mindset, while Family Education Nights invite families to learn about science, math, and literacy together. Ongoing communication is

cultivated through Wednesday envelopes, ConnectEd, Remind, Twitter, email, and student-led conferences.

Parents are encouraged to be a part of the Payne learning community. Multiple activities within parent committees (Home & School Club, School Site Council, and English Language Advisory Committee) engage parents as leaders. These committees plan school-wide events including the International Fair, Family Dinner Nights such as Taco Night and Asian Cuisine Night, the Walk & Roll Bike Rodeo, and Parents on Patrol.

While communication and involvement demonstrate a high regard for parents and families, Payne recently made changes to the homework policy in order to further demonstrate respect for families and their time together. Each grade level has created a monthly homework menu in lieu of nightly assignments. Families choose which task to undertake and how much to accomplish. Students who go home to empty homes or illiterate parents are able to choose activities that can be completed independently. This research-based decision has shown more support for families, and resulted in a more positive relationship between school and community.

The surrounding community is also invited to be a part of our Payne family. Students interact with the community through field trips to locations such as Filoli gardens, Villa Montalvo, and Emma Prusch Farms. Similarly, community organizations reach out to our campus frequently. For example, the Second Harvest Food Bank worked with Payne to collect canned food, students collected over \$1500 for Pennies for Patients, San Jose Barracuda hockey players delivered math lessons, and Land Systems Landscaping donated supplies and labor for the Payne Community Garden.

Each day at Payne the calendar is full and visitor badges are frequently distributed. Payne community members are welcomed and treasured for the support and encouragement shown to our Payne Panthers.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Professional development has always been a priority in the Moreland School District; this is exemplified at Payne. At a site level, teachers provide professional development for each other. During staff meetings, teachers present strategies and ideas as “Name it - Claim it - Explain it”, while district committee members share tips and techniques. At weekly grade level meetings, resources and lesson ideas are discussed as plans are created. Instructional Rounds within grade levels and across school sites allow teachers to observe each other and hold follow-up discussions.

Within the past year, groups of teachers have attended professional development in a variety of topics. New teachers attended training that had been previously offered to the rest of the staff (Thinking Maps, Kagan Cooperative Learning, Project Based Learning) to provide consistency on campus. Additional trainings were offered to teacher leaders in specific areas of professional development including Fred Jones Tools for Teaching, Computer Using Educators, and Project Based Learning with STEAM.

At the district level, content specific trainings in the past year include Eureka Math, Fountas & Pinnell, Early Literacy, and English Language Development (ELD). An annual Techstravaganza Day provides teachers a selection of technology topics from which they can choose areas of interest. During monthly district grade level meetings, teachers are given further training and support in technology, math, and ELD.

Of particular note, six Payne staff members, including the assistant principal, attendance clerk, and four teachers, attended a two day retreat at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Along with representatives from throughout Moreland, Payne staff members viewed the museum and participated in workshops. The new learning around tolerance and social justice has been brought to the entire Payne staff through staff meeting discussions and activities.

The Museum of Tolerance trip is a good example of how professional development often originates with a few and spreads to many. As staff members are given training opportunities, there is always a plan for sharing the information with the staff, and with the entire Payne community when appropriate.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Shared leadership is a priority at Payne. Each staff member is a part of two committees, a school committee and a leadership committee. School committees plan events such as the Science Fair and Celebrate Literacy Day. While the administrative team is available as needed, school committee members are given the responsibility and freedom of organizing the events. Members often involve students and families in the coordination, guaranteeing that these occasions are the most anticipated events of the school year.

Involvement within leadership committees is more expansive. These committees support school-wide decisions, affecting overall management of the school. Grade level representation ensures equal participation and dissemination of information. Recent leadership committees include Curriculum & Instruction, School Advisory, PBIS, Tier II, and Student Activities.

The Curriculum & Instruction committee has been pivotal in revamping Payne's homework policy. After completing extensive research around the purpose and effects of homework, the committee came to the conclusion that a change was needed. Committee members led grade level discussions and succeeded in gaining support of their team members.

The School Advisory committee was initially founded as a voluntary group of staff members who met at lunch to advise the Principal in her new role. Incredibly effective and helpful, the administrative team decided to keep it as a leadership committee. Members are called upon to represent their grade level in making decisions as new situations arise. For example, the School Advisory team worked to support the National Blue Ribbon application process with ideas, feedback, and composition.

The PBIS committee ensures that Payne remains on track with its positive behavior plan. Recently, the team determined that more support was needed in teaching students the guidelines of Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible. The PBIS committee created five school-wide expectations, five encouragement strategies, and five enforcement techniques.

When a teacher is concerned about a student's academic or social-emotional progress, she completes a Problem Solving Plan. The Tier II committee meets to discuss these students. The team provides intervention strategies and resources to support the teacher and student. The Tier II committee has reinforced the idea that each student's progress is the responsibility of the entire staff.

Student Activities is Payne's newest committee. This committee has created and organized ways for students to be involved as leaders. The SA committee has also developed the thriving lunchtime club program at Payne, enriching the school day for many students.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Increasing demands of a diverse community, combined with the academic challenge of Common Core State Standards make it a necessity for teachers to work together to build a comprehensive framework for learning that will target all students. Teachers at Payne must examine data for multiple subjects as well as look at specific needs of students in order to develop a program that will ensure each child will succeed.

Payne teachers systematically analyze data, holding themselves accountable for their work as both individuals and grade-level teams. After each assessment period, grade-level teams are released from their classroom for a day of benchmark data analysis, student intervention tracking and planning, and long-term curriculum mapping facilitated by Payne's Instructional Coach. Through this agenda, teachers discuss which standards have been taught and mastered, which standards should be reviewed, the next steps in curriculum development, and how to support students who are struggling with specific standards. Teachers are given time and space to share concerns, new ideas, and effective strategies without any sense of isolation or competition.

The diversity of individual student results within each grade-level substantiate that flexibly grouping grade-level students between classrooms for reading instruction best provides opportunities for appropriate intervention, acceleration, and enrichment for students of all levels. These groups are deemed flexible because students are moved between groups based upon ongoing assessments and academic needs.

To better support each individual child in math, teachers use flexible grouping within their classrooms to better meet the range of math needs at their grade levels. Math flexible grouping, in the form of small group instruction and centers, allows students to work in groups based upon individual learning needs as well as fluid movement between groups as students meet expectations.

Throughout Payne Elementary School, using formative data to increase student engagement, target instruction, and guide students towards proficient or advanced levels has become a school wide focus. Flexible grouping is a natural outcome of teacher collaboration and systematic use of data analysis to best meet the educational needs of individual students.

Systematic data analysis, teacher collaboration, and flexible grouping has proven effective at Payne. Since implementing the strategy, English Language Learners have decreased by 10% school-wide as more students are reclassified as English Language Proficient (RFEP) each year. As a result of targeted instruction and support, during the 2016 - 2017 school year, twenty-seven students will be reclassified as English Language Proficient. Ongoing data analysis of benchmarks and other formative assessments shows continual growth overall and within subgroups at Payne.