

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Jorge Araujo

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

Official School Name Desert View Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1105 Valle Vista Drive

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

City Sunland Park State NM Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 88063-0000

County Doña Ana County

Telephone (575) 589-1180 Fax (575) 589-2212

Web site/URL http://dv.gisd.k12.nm.us/ E-mail Jarajujo@gisd.k12.nm.us

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. Efren Yturalde E-mail eyturalde@gisd.k12.nm.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Gadsden Independent School District Tel. (575) 882-6200

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Jennifer Viramontes
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. 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

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):
- 16 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 24 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	0	0	0
K	37	35	72
1	42	38	80
2	34	36	70
3	33	37	70
4	25	36	61
5	30	39	69
6	34	45	79
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	235	266	501

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 99 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 1 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 15%

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	47
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	24
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	71
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	480
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.148
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 55 %
276 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: 100 %
Total number students who qualify: 501

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %
84 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	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.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
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 19:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	94%	94%	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.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No X

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.

Desert View will provide opportunities for every student to reach his/her potential through a quality education. Desert View, along with the community, will provide opportunities for students to be lifelong learners and productive members of society.

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

The nature of the community is Hispanic (over 98%), whose first language is Spanish. Desert View is a Kindergarten through 6th grade school, with a strong bilingual program including a newcomer program for 4th through 6th grade. This newcomer program is for students who arrive not speaking English. The students who attend the school are from the immediate neighborhood, many being first generation American; and many being new residents to the United States. The enrollment since the beginning has fluctuated, but continues to grow to the present number of 501 students. The median income household is estimated to be around \$29,000 annually.

Desert View Elementary is located in the southern-most part of New Mexico in the small city of Sunland Park, New Mexico. The city of Sunland Park is on the state line with Texas and Ciudad Juarez, in Mexico. The population of Sunland Park is approximately 16,000. The original Desert View school building was built in 1987 as a 3rd through 4th grade school. Two other similar in architecture schools were also built to house Kindergarten through 2nd and another to house 5th through 6th grades. During the building process of the three schools, it was determined that the schools would better serve Kindergarten through 6th grades, therefore making the school a full elementary school. The school is situated on a 25 acre lot which has proximity to a main east-west rail line and the area land fill. In January of 2013 Gadsden Independent School District began the design process for a new building. The process began immediately and the current Desert View was completed for the academic school year of 2015-2016. The school built in 1987 was demolished as soon as the new one was complete, to make room for the new school parking.

Desert View has a vision of respect for learning that includes the families, the community, the students, and the educational team. Desert View staff cares about meaningful learning. The staff, believe in strategies that help the students learn to make a living, and also how to live; this, despite the many obstacles that life brings to their environments. Many challenges are in the path of the educational achievements of our students including the reality of living in poverty, and in an impoverish area. Desert View Elementary is a full Title I school, meaning that 100% of the students qualify for free lunch. Many of our families live below the poverty guideline, and many of our families are single parent households. Many families are unemployed.

Our students do not have the same opportunities at home to compete in the same areas with other students in the district and surrounding districts, one being the technology. Technology is a key strategy used at Desert View to encourage and challenge our students to do well academically. This past school year Desert View has tripled the number of computers in the school computer labs; this has been a factor in scaffolding our students to succeed in taking online assessments. Desert View also added increase usage of online programs such as First in Math, where Desert View's usage of the program ranks second in the district and third in the state.

The creation and maintenance of a garden in the school has kept our students involved in environmental issues that involve interacting with each other outside of the classroom. Physical aspects of the student and community populations have been enhanced with activities such as Walking Wednesdays, and Fitness Fridays, where the whole school and community are invited to participate. The emotional aspects of our population need to be considered at to continue the educational process. For example, the students are presented with several presentations, that include a magician show addressing the issues of bullying, or the difficult discussion about sexual abuse, and assault.

In January 10, 2015 the school was named National Title I Distinguished School by the National Title I Association bringing the school congressional recognition and a visit by Congressman Steve Pearce. In the first year of the building with new technology the school received a school grade of an "A", bringing its first recognition by the Governor of New Mexico (Monday, August 29, 2016) for being the school with the biggest improvement on the state assessment (PARCC –Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). In the school year 2015-2016 the school achieved a magnificent 95.85% proficiency status, giving the school the highest ranking score of all the state elementary schools. In January of this school year 2017, the Secretary of New Mexico Public Education issued the school the "Effective Bilingual Multicultural Education Program" Award. This confirming that the Desert View educational team believes that all students can progress and learn, and that all students can achieve at increasingly higher levels under the right circumstances.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The mission and goals of Desert View is to align the implementation of State and Common Core State Standards for Language Arts and Literacy with the district's curriculum framework of Balanced Literacy. Research-based literacy instruction, professional development, assessment, and instruction are targeted to improve student learning and ensure that all students meet career and college readiness. Balanced literacy is a framework that gives equal attention to reading and writing instruction. As reading and writing are interdependent, instruction in one supports learning in the other. A balanced literacy program is organized to provide instructional and organizational elements by providing: strong models of reading and writing behaviors, systematic and explicit skill and vocabulary instruction, abundant and varied amounts of high-quality literature, authentic reading and writing activities, and ongoing assessment and evaluation. It is an excellent program to assist the teacher in delivering differentiated instruction.

As with Language Arts and Literacy, our mathematics goal is to align the implementation of State and Common Core Standards in order to develop logical and critical thinkers, as well as persistent problem solvers who can address real-world problems and situations. Desert View uses EnVision Math. Students are engaged in using the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice on a daily basis: make sense of problems, persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, model with mathematics, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make use of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. These eight Mathematical Practices are an approach of teaching in a way that develops a more advanced mathematical understanding. They are a guide to creating a more complex and interactive learning experience that can be applied to everyday life.

The school's goal in Science and Social Studies is to align the implementation of State Standards in order to develop scientific and civic literacy and provide all students with tools to better comprehend society and the natural world. The Social Studies curriculum is designed to prepare responsible citizens for the nation, the state, and the local community. Students must develop awareness and understanding of existing social issues and the ability to solve problems and make decisions. The goal of Social Studies curriculum is to produce effective, contributing citizens and to help the children lead productive lives. The school integrates science and social studies into the Balanced Literacy Program.

The science approach is to emphasize a hands-on learning experience. Students learn effectively when they are actively engaged in the discovery process, often working in small groups. Children are provided opportunities to have direct experience with common objects, materials, and living things in their environments.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Desert View promotes fine arts, physical education and technology programs as essential components to our students' academic success. All students participate in music, visual arts, physical and health education, technology and library programs. They are able to participate in these programs once a week through a block schedule. They attend block once a week for a total of 2 ½ hours. During this time students spend 45 minutes in computers, visual arts, music, and library. Students participate in physical education every day for 30 minutes. Due to the fact that we have 3 computer labs, our students also receive additional time in the computer labs throughout the week to further enhance their technology skills. All of our students in grades K-6 participate in the fine arts program which include music and visual arts. At the state level, New Mexico Content Standards and Benchmarks for the Arts are mandated for students in grades K-8. All students attend music and visual arts once a week for 40 minutes as part of their block program. Since students are only able to attend only once a week our teachers are very diligent in making sure that every minute that the students attend is used efficiently. The integration of fine arts into the curriculum exposes our students to learning skills and personal qualities that are essential to success in the workplace, such as task analysis, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Technology plays an important role in today's society. Therefore integrating it into the classrooms is essential. The technology that is available to teachers today provide learning opportunities that were once impossible. Students have access to virtual field trips, demonstrations, and simulations. There are moving graphics, and bright colors. Every teacher on our campus has a Dual Board, Elmo, Mobi's , IPAD's and classroom computers. We feel that these are necessary instructional tools because it makes learning for students motivating and engaging. Technology plays an integral part in our students' daily schedule here at Desert View. Technology is now embedded into every component of our curriculum. With the current computer labs on campus students increase usage time practicing technology. The school has a full time certified technology teacher who helps the students with essential technology skills. Due to the fact that high stakes state tests are computer based, many of the school funds and efforts are made to provide the teachers and students with access to technology.

Quality, daily physical education is provided by trained and highly qualified physical education teachers. Quality, daily physical education is recommended by more than 30 national organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Heart Association. Students are able to participate in physical education and health on a daily basis for 30 minutes. Studies have shown that when students are given the opportunity to participate in physical education they obtain the knowledge and skills to maintain active lifestyles throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. There are many more reasons in which physical education helps our students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge. It helps support other subjects areas as it reinforces knowledge learned across the curriculum. It serves as a lab for application of content in science, math and social studies. It also helps students build stronger peer relationships because they are able to cooperate with others and learn leadership skills. Finally it is a great stress reducer, physical activity becomes an outlet for releasing tension and anxiety, and facilitates emotional stability and resilience. We believe that all of our above mentioned programs help our students acquire essential learning skills that help educate the whole child.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

The school's Balanced Literacy program uses both whole language and phonics. The components of a 'balanced literacy' approach are as follows: The read aloud, guided reading, shared reading, interactive writing, Reading Workshop, Writing Workshop and Word study. In Reading Workshop, skills are explicitly modeled during mini lessons. The mini lesson has four parts- the connection, the teach (demonstration), the active engagement and the link. The teacher chooses a skill and strategy that they believe their class needs based on assessments they have conducted in the classroom. During the connection they connect prior learning to the skill they are teaching that day. Teachers then state the teaching point or the skill and strategy being taught and demonstrate to children how to use the skill by modeling the strategy in a book the students are familiar with. Teachers often use a "think aloud" to show students what they are thinking. Students apply the learning in their own books during the active engagement. During the link students are reminded of all the strategies they can apply while they are independently reading.

Writing Workshop follows the same flow. Students are explicitly taught skills and strategies for writing during a mini lesson. Then they go off and write independently. They choose the skills they are trying out that day. The teacher comes around and confers with students to help them with their goals. Interactive writing is also incorporated into Writing Workshop. The teacher models the writing skill of the day and the students "share the pen" with the teacher to add to, enhance, or edit the writing.

Shared reading is when the students read from a shared text. Often this is a big book, a book on screen using a website or documents camera, or the DualBoard. When possible students have their own copies also. Students and the teacher read aloud and share their thinking about the text. During mini lessons, interactive read alouds and shared reading the class will create anchor charts. These anchor charts remind students how and when to use different skills and strategies.

Guided reading is a small group activity where more of the responsibility belongs to the student. Students read from leveled texts. They use the skills directly taught during mini lessons, interactive read alouds and shared reading to increase their comprehension and fluency. The teacher is there to provide prompting and ask questions. Guided reading allows for great differentiation in the classroom. Groups are created

according to reading levels as assessed by the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Students move up reading levels once teachers conduct informal and formal assessments that prove the student has mastered the skills at the current level. During guided reading time, the other students in the classroom are engaged in reading activities by applying the skills taught during mini-lessons.

Independent reading is when students are reading self-selected text independently. Students choose books based on interest and independent reading level. Direct Instruction in phonics and Word Study are also included in the balanced literacy Approach. For emergent and early readers, the teacher plans and implements phonics based mini-lessons and the Qualitative Spelling Assessment (QSI). After the teacher explicitly teaches a phonemic element, students practice reading and/or writing other words following the same phonemic pattern. For advanced readers, the teacher focuses on the etymology of a word. Students who are reading at this stage are engaged in analyzing the patterns of word derivations, root words, prefixes and suffixes through the use of Thrifty Nifty Fifty. The overall purpose of balanced literacy instruction is to provide students with a differentiated instructional program which will support the reading and writing skill development of each individual.

At Desert View Elementary we promote students to become analytical problem-solvers. The school uses EnVision math as its adopted math program. The eight mathematical practices guide the teaching and learning that occurs in the classroom. The first practice states that students will make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. They will understand the problem, find a way to attack it, and work until it is done. The second practice has students reason abstractly and quantitatively. They must be able to break the problem apart and show it symbolically, with pictures, or in any way other than the standard algorithm. The third practice states that students will be able to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. They should be able to talk about math, using mathematical language, to support or oppose the work of others. Practice number four states that students will model with mathematics by using math to solve real-world problems, organize data, and understand the world around them. Students will use appropriate tools strategically in practice number five. Practice number six states students will attend to precision by speaking and solving mathematics with exactness and meticulousness. Practice seven has students looking for and making use of structure by finding patterns and repeated reasoning that can help solve more complex problems. In the last practice, students must look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning by keeping an eye on the big picture while working out the details of the problem. As stated above, we use instructional methods and assessments to drive our instruction.

We use the three-tiered approach to intervention to meet the needs of the students. If students are unsuccessful in their classrooms (Tier 1), they are then referred to the various interventions available within the school such as Math Navigator, Wilson's Foundations, Leveled Literacy Intervention in language of dominance (Tier 2). Through the consistent use of instructional approaches and interventions, the students are able to maintain high levels of achievement.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

One of the most motivating events of the school year is the annual Honor's Banquet held in May. This is possible with collaboration from the community. The Santa Teresa International Business Accelerator, is a New Mexico small Business Development Center Network. This organization organizes a golf tournament of over 200 participants to benefit the school's Honor's Program. The students from grades 3rd through 6th are eligible to participate. The families of the students look forward to this event. Eligibility is based on school grades, State test scores, and perfect attendance.

Another event that students look forward to is the baseball game between the sixth graders and the Sunland Park Police Department. This event is promoted from the beginning of the school year so that students work on best behavior.

Desert View Field Day is scheduled in May to celebrate the successes of the school year. This event includes all the school and personnel. The Parent Teacher Organization organizes the event with all kinds of fun booths.

The school has school wide rules so that students feel safe in their building. Students are allowed to participate in programs such Drug Free Schools and Cancer Awareness. On a daily basis on the morning announcements we mention and praise students who have high participation in the many online programs like First in Math, Imagine Learning, ISTATON, school attendance, and good character.

This year the school applied for a grant called the Braden Foundation B Strong. This foundation awarded the school with the grant which includes giving every student a brand new pair of shoes. To qualify students must earn points through showing good deeds. Teachers are of course the most valuable human resource in the school.

During teacher appreciation week in May, teachers are celebrated by administration, students and the PTO by being provided with lunch and little gifts and tokens. Administration has an open door policy for teachers.

Because of state funding constraints, teachers seldom have the time to attend out of the city conferences, so anytime there is a free opportunity and teachers want to attend they are allowed to get a substitute. This at least gives them a chance to keep up with their development. Administration has a strategic method in placing students so that teacher's rosters remain as low and as equitable as possible.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Students and families of Desert View are invited to participate in the Price's Creameries Give 'Em Five Program. This program asks the parents to collect milk carton tops and turn them in in exchange for the school to get for example, physical education equipment. This past school year we received over \$200. The community contributes to the well-being of the school by donating goods and funds for items such as the community garden and educational field trips.

The following are some consistent community partners to the school: Price's Creameries, Santa Teresa International Business Accelerator, Rotary Club of West El Paso, Coca Cola Company, Althouse Restore, Peter Piper Pizza, Little Caesar's Pizza, McDonalds, Rio Bravo Construction, Sonic Burgers, and Lenmark Construction.

Desert View is registered to be part of the Little Free Library (#1170) an International Program that includes the community of readers. Desert View set books out on a weekly basis for the community to borrow and exchange.

The parent community is invited to participate twice a year on the Scholastic Book Fair. Students can purchase books inside the school library. The proceeds are used to award honor's students at the annual school's talent show. All students are given a book for National Children's Book Week and International Literacy Day.

Science Day is another special event at the school which brings the community and parents together. Parents are invited to come and observe the science programs and experiments done by the students. For this event, New Mexico State University comes and sets up a mobile planetarium.

In the fall and spring the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Department presents different character programs to the students in which at the end of the session parents are invited to participate to listen to the students read their prepared essays to their peers and to the community of parents and teachers.

The Literary Festival is another event in which the staff, students and parents have an opportunity to work together in learning. All students 4th through the 6th grade are eligible to participate in choral reading, drama, role playing, and poetry. Students are chosen by judges (personnel from the police department, fire department, social work and nursing departments are invited to be judges) to represent the school in the district wide event. Our students are given medals for their achievements, which they love to wear.

3. Professional Development:

The school schedule is configured so that classroom teachers have what is called block time. Once a week teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities during block time. During this three-hour block times professional development takes place. The person in charge of the professional development communities is the school's instructional coach who prepares accordingly, to support the classroom teachers. The instructional coach does the training in the book room and she also does classroom observations, and visits, to support the teacher as needed.

Teachers maintain teacher binders to include common core standards, data analysis and lesson plans connected, and aligned to common core. These teacher binders include updated data of most recent state and local assessments. Teachers submit lesson plans on a weekly basis. The lesson plans are prepared online.

Another opportunity for teachers to gain professional skills is from each other during grade level meetings. Teachers meet biweekly to discuss data analysis, student progress in the lower and highest quartiles, and special education issues. Data analysis includes monitoring and evaluating student knowledge and skills, planning for future educational programs, adapting instruction to meet the needs of students, monitoring student progress towards college and career goals, and identifying students who might be at risk because of academic, environmental or emotional issues.

During district professional development, consultants and specialists are invited to come and train the staff. This includes specialists from the district like bilingual specialists, special education specialists, and social services specialists. Recently the staff had a whole day training just on the difficult issue of sexual assault. Two topical areas addressed though professional development are bilingual education special education. Because of the state and the district's financial difficulties, professional development for the teachers and administration to attend classes out of the city, and district is difficult. Most of the professional development is done in house. But, over half of our staff have attended Saturday workshops on a voluntary basis offered by the district or New Mexico State University.

4. School Leadership:

The school's administration is composed of a principal and an assistant principal. The principal has been in this school for seven years, providing an opportunity to have known the community of learners. One of the many objectives of this principal is to be available. The principal believes that an effective leader needs to be physically present. Being, outside in the mornings welcoming students and parents is a favorite of the principal. The assistant principal is encouraged to do the same. Parents, students and teachers know to find

the administration with an open door policy.

School administration believes in being academic leaders. They are involved in the block time planning slot to understand what is changing and being planned based on the annual data base. They have leadership team meetings biweekly to pick up on the different issues that affect students, programs, and staff. In these meetings a representative from each grade level and specials are invited. Administration believes that a good classroom should be student-centered. This is also a priority of the school, ensuring that decisions that are made are made considering the student's needs first. Administration believes that everyone is a stakeholder in the advancement and progress of the school.

School administration has maintained an excellent relationship with our sponsors and providers. Local politicians such as the mayor of the city is often invited to school events. The mayor has come several times to participate as a judge in the science fairs, and spelling bees. Administration has close contact with the chief of police of the city. Members of the police department come often to the school to help with presentations and to participate in the annual baseball game between the police and the 6th graders.

The administration assures that enough monies are available from the principal's fund to sponsor students to attend field trips in the community. This involves networking with many entities, including managers from the many local businesses. One of the major local activities is visiting the industrial park, where the long standing relationship with the International Business Accelerator has supported the school. They show us around the many areas in the local industry. They pay for the field trip. The International Business Accelerator donates over six thousand dollars to the school annually for the Honor's Programs, school uniforms, and field trips.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Our core curriculum is based on the National Common Core Standards. Our district has adopted the use of the Balanced Literacy approach to deliver the common core standards to teach language arts and literacy. In a truly Balanced Literacy program, how you teach is as important as what you teach. Balanced Literacy is a curricular methodology that integrates various modalities of literacy instruction aimed to guide students towards proficient and lifelong reading. The Balanced Literacy approach is characterized by explicit skill instruction and the use of authentic texts.

We use EnVision Math curriculum as the vehicle to teach the common core standards and mathematical practices. The program seeks to help students develop an understanding of math concepts through problem-based instruction, small-group interaction, and visual learning with a focus on reasoning and modeling. These approaches have proven effective with our school's population as they are easily differentiated to meet the needs of our individual students.

In addition to the core curriculum, Desert View Elementary also has many extracurricular activities that promote community involvement and the enrichment and development of students' talents and interests. We partner with our local state university, New Mexico State University, to provide after school programs such as SEMAA (Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy), Reader's Theatre, DiMA (Digital Media Academy), as well as the many academic tutoring and technology enrichment classes offered by our own staff.

The goal of SEMAA is to improve student achievement and increase participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields and activities. SEMAA also aims to engage parents in children's academic learning in a non-threatening and respectful way, as well as offer academic enrichment and career awareness.

Reader's theater is a strategy that combines reading practice and performing. The goal is to enhance students' reading skills and confidence by having them practice reading with a purpose. Reader's theater gives students a real reason to read aloud.

DiMA is dedicated to fostering digital literacy by providing hands-on training in digital media, educational technology, science, film and multimedia, safe navigation of social networking and internet websites, and many more fun activities that combine learning and technology. The goals of all these after school enrichment programs are to ultimately cultivate and nurture 21st Century skills in science, technology, engineering, math, art, literature and music.

Meeting the socio-emotional needs of our students is also very important to our campus. We have Social Workers that get to know our students, families and their needs. By attending to basic needs, we assure that students are physically and emotionally ready to devote their time and energy to academics. It is through a thoughtful and integrated approach that our strategies for academic success positively impact our students.