

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 Ms. Cecilia Ann Gonzales

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

Official School Name Lyons Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 800 Roxella Road

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

City Houston State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77076-4431

County Harris County

Telephone (713) 696-2870 Fax (713) 696-2877

Web site/URL http://www.houstonisd.org/Domain/20236 E-mail cgonzal1@houstonisd.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*Mr. Richard Carranza E-mail Richard.Carranza@houstonisd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Houston Independent School District Tel. (713) 556-6000

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. Wanda Adams
(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):
 - 202 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 37 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 38 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

277 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	73	57	130
K	60	61	121
1	71	69	140
2	82	79	161
3	77	70	147
4	82	73	155
5	82	69	151
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	527	478	1005

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 98 % 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: 7%

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	38
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	36
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	74
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	1006
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.074
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 53 %
526 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: 92 %
Total number students who qualify: 929

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
67 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>14</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>49</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>10</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>29</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	41
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
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.	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 25:1
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	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
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

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2011

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

Lyons Elementary, an exemplary school where excellence is expected, every minute of every day, for every child.

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

E. A. “Squatty” Lyons Elementary School is nestled in the heart of Hawthorne Place located on the north side of Houston, Texas. The campus encompasses classrooms along with a covered pavilion, plant and vegetable garden, renovated park, fitness track, playground area and soccer field. It is an urban school serving 1,002 students consisting of a predominately Hispanic population within a socio-economically disadvantaged community, where 93% of students receive free or reduced lunch. Lyons Elementary opened its doors in January of 1993 to relieve another school due to overpopulation. Now, over 20 years later, Lyons is still a sought after school as well, boasting of meeting set standards in Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps and Postsecondary Readiness.

Lyons is more than a school, but a community where the administration, faculty and staff shares the educational philosophy of providing an education that allows students to obtain excellence in all areas of their lives. Lyons is “Where Excellence is Expected”! Excellence is incorporated from the beginning by collecting and tracking student data through assessments and by observing student products. This data drives the educator’s instructional plans which helps their students develop goals. This partnership with teacher, student and family emerges as 100% investment into the rigorous, engaging and effective lessons designed by the instructor. Data is frequently collected and updated to monitor the student’s overall academic growth and accommodate student’s learning needs.

Though academics is a strong focus of the Lyons’ community, the staff realizes that students’ basic needs must be met in order to achieve academic success. The needs of the students are met by building community partnerships with a basic aim to prevent health related concerns. The health partners provide dental care, vision exams, necessary immunizations, nutritional support, and wellness resources. A well child is able to focus in class and attend school regularly.

Lyons’ community partnerships extend beyond the healthcare field. To supplement learning, the students take field lessons into the community to the zoo, museums, universities, among other places. When the students cannot go into the community, the community is invited into the school. Community partners supplement lessons by bringing activities to the school. Other community visitors include pilots, lawyers, judges, and other professionals. Lyons hallmark of community visitors is the Guest Readers Enriching All Tots (G. R. E. A. T.) program. Community members read to the students and distribute grade level appropriate books to the classes. The goal of the program is to nurture a love of reading so that the students become independent, lifelong readers.

Lifelong learning is an idea that Lyons promote when providing extracurricular opportunities to the students. Lyons want the students to engage in activities where they can continue to grow their skills. Activities such as dance, cheer, coding, robotics, music, art, gardening, cooking, sports, chess and book club are incorporated into the afterschool program. Each program provides a safe, fun, exciting educational outlet along with leadership and team building experiences.

In order to provide balance, motivation and levity to the education program, the students participate in school traditions which invite parental involvement to the school. Such activities include, but are not limited to: Grandparent’s Day Luncheon, Thanksgiving Luncheon, Gifted and Talented Exposition, Fall Festival, Science Night and more. Lyons provides opportunities for students to explore diversity within cultures by celebrating Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and Asian-American Heritage Month.

Lyons’ students are given opportunities to be philanthropic, financially astute, and civic-minded. Philanthropy is demonstrated by the students and families’ participation in the penny drive for cancer research, Thanksgiving food drive and the Holiday Toy Drive. Students participate in financial literacy by attending classes on income, saving and budgeting. These financial principles are put into practice through the Lyons buck store, which work in conjunction with the school’s positive behavior reinforcement and character development plan. The students receive Lyons bucks for incentives to purchase prizes from the Lyons store. Civics is demonstrated through the students’ volunteerism throughout the campus and the

ability to vote on various topics and classroom leaders.

Since winning the Blue Ribbon Award in 2011, the community connections has increased including a recent partnership with an art initiative that exposes scholars to the arts in dance, theater and music on and off campus. The school has increased technology usage by adding an additional computer lab as well as mobile laptop carts. Educators continue to seek opportunities to improve deliverance of differentiated education to the student population by attending various professional development. Lyons has become a school where the faculty and staff understand the importance of constantly improving and collaborating with peers to achieve our school's philosophy. In addition, Lyons shares with schools around the district, city, state and country by hosting multiple visits to present its award winning ways.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Lyons Elementary, the core curriculum across content areas centers on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These standards are the foundation when designing whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. We understand that student engagement is key in the learning process. Therefore, throughout our student-driven instruction we utilize a wide variety of resources including district-wide curriculum documents, adopted textbooks, computer software, remote clickers, and a variety of online tools. We believe that when we provide our students with engaging TEKS-centered instruction that addresses the different learning modalities academic success will be achieved.

There are four main elements, all of which should be known to all educators, considered by ELAR instruction when teaching the TEKS through curriculum. First and foremost is the firm belief that reading is the basis for student success in all academic areas. It is the general conviction in Lyons Elementary that science, social studies, math, and reading teachers should be regularly consulting with the ELAR department on how to effectively touch on the TEKS and curriculum. Students locate relevant resources, present ideas, respond to the ideas of others, and improve their written and spoken response skills. Second, Lyons Elementary knows that students cannot be separated from their culture. Therefore, student background is utilized to teach curriculum; after all, ELAR TEKS are about communicating and students will do so when content is relatable. Workstations are designed to allow the healthy exchange of ideas between the students and allow them to infer and interpret an author's main idea or purpose. We believe that the most effective work is student-centered with teachers having the role of facilitators. Third, the atmosphere in the classroom, including but not limited to workstations, must breathe the TEKS being taught. Anchor charts, visuals, graphic organizers among others, are all student products and activities that create a content and student friendly environment. Fourth, there must be data to evaluate both students and teachers alike. Teachers want to know what skills are not yet learned and if s/he is not teaching a skill appropriately. We have benchmarks, skill checks, and informal assessments to collect this type of feedback. Armed with this data, lesson plans and activities can be modified according to student needs.

The English Language Arts and Reading department at Lyons Elementary understands that because children learn in different ways and at different rates, curriculum should be taught in a holistic manner. A child must read to become a better reader, but it must be engaging. We implement structured literacy frameworks and participate in reading competitions, so that children acquire such skills as phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and comprehension. In summary, making reading the center for all academics, having the right environment, and using feedback from assessments allows students to acquire and demonstrate the desired TEKS.

Lyons Elementary math instruction is based on the TEKS and focuses on developing a true understanding of the math concepts presented in the classroom. Students are taken through the Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract approach to develop critical thinking in order to ensure mastery of an objective. They participate in hands-on activities according to their levels. During the pictorial phase, students use graphic representations to demonstrate the math concepts. During the abstract phase, students use symbols and/or numbers to represent the math concepts. The lessons are designed to make connections with math and real life situations. Students are assessed in different ways, using formative assessments and computer based math programs to discern their level of learning. The assessments results determine the differentiation required to meet the specific needs of every student. This Math approach was chosen in order to meet the needs of all learners at all levels.

The science curriculum and resources that are implemented on our campus are aligned to address the science TEKS. Our grade level teachers, science lab teacher, interventionists, and curriculum specialists collaborate during weekly vertical team meetings. During these meetings, we plan lessons that target the process, readiness, and supporting science standards provided by the state. We also review district wide curriculum documents that are TEKS aligned to drive instruction. All of the science resources we use are carefully vetted to ensure that they address the TEKS. Once we are confident that we are using the most effective

resources, we then incorporate them in our inquiry-based science instruction and small-group intervention sessions. Inquiry-based instruction allows teachers to facilitate lessons while students drive the instruction. All of our first through fifth grade teachers have completed over fifty hours of inquiry-based science professional development. With inquiry-based science, we have continued to see an increase in student achievement on assessments, including the understanding and application of TEKS aligned science content. During small-group intervention, students focus on building vocabulary and science experiences to foster their science knowledge. To further support inquiry science, we utilize interactive software programs, notebooking, and science based field lessons. Our students are gaining the science foundation they need to build and apply their learning as they continue on in their education.

Teachers incorporate the Social Studies state curriculum that is essential for student learning. The TEKS are vertically aligned, so that students are progressively building their knowledge of the foundational skills from year to year. The core content includes history of our nation, geography, economics, government, and citizenship. A large portion of the social studies curriculum is embedded throughout the literacy block. This allows students to acquire vital comprehension skills using nonfiction texts. An online resource allows for teachers to facilitate differentiated lessons that are interactive and engaging. Students have the ability to interact with an online tool that reads aloud historical events, provides opportunities for research based projects, and tracks students' mastery in targeted lessons. Our students bring their learning alive to our campus through projects such as geographical dioramas, historical parades, mock election processes, and cultural performances. Through the use of technology and incorporating social studies in the literacy block, our teachers are able to provide our students the tools needed to be successful.

Instruction of the young learner in the Lyons Elementary prekindergarten program is guided by district curriculum documents based on TEKS (guidelines for what the student should know and be able to do) as set forth by the Texas Education Agency. The program used is an intentional, comprehensive and developmentally appropriate curriculum which includes the core areas of Language, Math, Science and Social Studies. A key component of this program is building oral vocabulary leading to language fluency, taking advantage of this critical time for the learner for language and brain development, an early indicator for future success in learning and reading on grade level. Monitoring the Pre-K child through checklists, anecdotal records and observations gives a prediction of how the students will prosper in the future. Overall, students are provided with the essential skills they will inherit for the rest of their educational careers.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Teachers and staff from Lyons Elementary are dedicated to producing accomplished young learners by refining their skills, abilities, and talents. This holistic approach meets student needs and inspires students through fine arts, physical education, and technology.

Lyons Elementary achieves an enriched learning environment by providing consistent access to a wide variety of visual and performing arts. From Pre-Kindergarten to Fifth Grade, students are provided every week with an hour long comprehensive learning experience that instructs TEKS-based fine arts curriculum by two certified music teachers.

Music literacy, music appreciation, and performance skills are developed by actively engaging students through use of an interactive technology program that includes online access for students at home. Application of these knowledge and skill sets lay a foundation for a wide variety of performance opportunities within the school such as Choir, Band, Ballet Folklorico, and Ballet. These groups perform throughout the year at annual campus events such as Veterans Day, Holiday, Black History Month, Cinco de Mayo, and various special occasions.

Our well-rounded students are a product of comprehensive, collaborative relationships with major fine arts organizations throughout the city of Houston. Such efforts have facilitated field lessons for every grade level; master class clinicians for student musicians; and project-based residencies for visual and performing arts opportunities. These special visits and lessons integrate the arts into the core subject area for an enriched, in-depth learning experience.

Physical Education at Lyons Elementary provides a comprehensive approach to being active. Students are taught to play a wide variety of games in a structured manner that will enhance their overall level of enjoyment while providing them with health and nutrition instruction that will give them a deeper understanding of how to live healthy. Every student at Lyons will receive a minimum of 1 hour of Physical education per week. Students in grade PK- 2 will begin the year learning classroom based games and activities before progressing into more complex sports and movement. PE instruction is geared towards showing students how to incorporate healthy habits into their own lives outside of school while also showing them fun and thought provoking ways to enjoy physical exertion. Inside of individual lessons, students will learn pertinent vocabulary and will receive instruction on how to best be successful at the particular lesson being taught. Students in grades 3-5 are exposed to a wider variety of sports that are not suitable for younger children and also place an added emphasis on goal setting and progress tracking. A student's personal fitness is very important and will be tested every year to be able to chart progress and make goal setting possible. This will immerse each and every student in a multi-year adventure to discover his/her own personal fitness levels, what they mean, and how to attain a level of fitness that is suitable for them on an individual basis.

The Lyons Computer Lab accommodates for a 1:1 student to computer ratio facilitating highly customized, individual instruction for one hour per week. Students receive differentiated instruction in subject matter that is aligned with what is currently being taught in the classroom while also adhering to the TEKS for technology. Constant collaboration between the grade level teachers and the Computer Lab teacher provides students with technology-based instruction that creates a foundation to utilize software and programs intended to reinforce what they are learning in the classroom. Students in grades K-4 use math based software that enables them to work at a suitable pace while assisting the teacher in gathering data and insight on how to better assist those in need. The software further challenges those working at a faster pace while allowing those that are struggling to receive targeted instruction focused on their weaknesses. Furthermore, each academic classroom has a set of 6-8 tablets along with 5-6 desktops to allow students to access this technology on a daily basis.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Lyons has met standards in Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness. Within our walls, you see our mission statement in action, "excellence is expected", and our educators bring exactly that. Excellence comes from good instructional methods and the implementation of effective interventions.

The foundation to good instructional methods is set in a well-managed classroom, with high academic expectations. By setting high academic expectations, our educators are facilitating scholar-driven lessons, which gives them opportunities to take independent leadership roles. In these roles, young scholars interact positively with one another in peer conversations, and make real-world connections. Excellence is demonstrated when we maximize instructional time because they are engaged in productive learning activities, from start to finish, with little time lost.

Our educators provide an assortment of techniques to support scholars in their classroom. They integrate higher order thinking skills by asking questions with open-ended responses, scaffold-thinking, and scholar generated questions. Pre-K and Kinder teachers demonstrate countless skills through scholar cooperative learning with imaginary and concrete play. Our Technology Specialist introduces and models innovative technology-based apps to teachers to check for student understanding. Also, an array of research-based online learning games and activities are available to our scholars and create a fun, interactive, and dynamic learning environment.

The differentiated instructional approaches at Lyons are managed in a versatile manner which include tactile and problem-based learning. For example, Tier 1 scholars engage in lesson driven activity rotations, scholar-led discussions, and online learning tool sessions. Tier 2 and 3 scholars are offered product and skill-based choices, such as modified work, alternative work products, and text-to-speech computer programs for reading assistance. Gifted and Talented (GT) scholars engage in and present interest-based research projects. ELL learners benefit from all English instruction in Ancillary in order to build vocabulary in the content

areas.

Lyons continues to maintain high levels of achievement year after year. We believe that excellence comes from good instructional methods, and effective and targeted interventions. To maintain this high level of achievement, we continually offer on-campus professional development that supports individual teacher growth and development which leads to increased student success.

At the beginning of the year, our campus educators collect and track assessment data to drive their instruction, and to help develop scholar annual goals. The data includes universal screeners, research-based diagnostic computer programs for reading and math, and district and state assessments. Lyons utilizes the expertise of Data Teacher Leaders in grades 3rd, 4th and 5th to support teachers dissect data and identify the areas of scholar strengths and needs for growth at the beginning of the year (BOY).

During their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teachers and Data Specialists continuously track student progress, and utilize the Curriculum Planning Guides to design effective lessons that are rigorous and engaging. Good instructional methods guide scholars towards mastery of objectives, and assures explicit and differentiated instruction. Data is frequently updated with progress monitoring, Middle of Year, and End of Year assessments. Results are always visible and accessible in a classroom data binder, and a Data Wall, for scholars and administrators to see. Scholars are invested in their learning goals and readily articulate them.

Parents are informed of scholar progress through a parent dashboard, progress reports, report cards, and conferences. For those scholars not meeting expectations, the campus Response to Intervention (Rti)/Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) plan comes into play. All members, including administrator, Educator, Diagnosticians and parents are included during this time, to ensure scholar academic success.

The area of growth for Lyons is the 10% improvement of the baseline Reading scores of scholars that have graduated out of the Special Education, self-contained alternate curriculum programs to the standard curriculum in the General Education classroom through the school Inclusion program. To prepare them for this transition, the scholar inclusion time was increased, progress monitoring was aligned with general education leveled reading assessment, and they were partnered with peers to help them assimilate to the LRE rigor. Once in the General education classroom, educators are supported with additional teaching strategies by the Resource Teacher. The scholars are given reach-in interventions, tutorials after-school, and supporting tools to assist them with daily instruction.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Lyons Elementary has been building a unique culture of excellence for many years. Lyons staff are academically aware of their ability to effectively educate young scholars. The mission statement, “An exemplary school where excellence is expected,” reflects the expectations for each teacher to use their passion for education to create an environment where students can obtain excellence in all areas of their lives. Administration, custodial staff, teachers and parent volunteers embrace the responsibility of growing a generation of young learners who are problem solvers, responsible community members, and future leaders. Staff build life-long relationships with students and parents and alumni frequently return to visit. Some have even become teacher’s aides and teachers, which makes for a staff that is truly dedicated and invested in ensuring the success of Lyons’ future generations.

Student academics are supported through many motivational opportunities for success. Students feel a sense of accomplishment when they present their projects to other students and parents who attend the Gifted and Talented Expo and the Science Fair. Students are celebrated for attending school daily. Student’s names are raffled by grade level and awarded prizes weekly. This system has proven to be successful, hence, allowing Lyons to supersede yearly attendance goals. More than half of the scholars are awarded for maintaining Honor Roll status for each nine-week grading period. All students look forward to end of the year celebrations and award ceremonies.

Social Growth is encouraged from pre-kindergarten to fifth grade through free after school activities such as basketball, cheerleading, soccer, Name that Book, folkloric dance, classic ballet, robotics, Scratch, photography club, art club and chess club. Participation in a fine arts initiative has brought many opportunities for Lyons’ students to shine. Band, choir and theater all teach determination, respect and self-confidence. Parents connect through volunteering and educational courses such as parenting, nutrition, and computer classes.

Lyons has implemented a school wide positive reinforcement system. “Lyons Bucks” can be distributed by any staff member for behaviors that go above and beyond expectations. This teaches students to look for ways to be good stewards and good citizens. They enjoy being rewarded by people other than just their teacher and they also learn the economic principles of saving and spending their “Lyons Bucks” at the “Lyons Store” monthly.

Teachers at Lyons are respected and supported by administration and the community. Team-building field trips for teachers are incorporated into the first week of staff development in the Fall. Appreciation breakfasts and lunches are a common occurrence. Opportunities for conferences and professional development are always encouraged and there is even a teacher appreciation week where community members donate door prizes. Teacher leaders have presented effective teaching strategies which have been implemented school wide and a bulletin board has been dedicated to showcase teachers “caught” practicing learned strategies.

Lyons is a unique place where the students and the teachers grow simultaneously. It is like a hive of continuous energy and activity where all involved work together for the good of the students and support each other like a community, like family.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

It takes a village to raise a child. At Lyons Elementary a village of parents, volunteers, and members of the community work together with teachers to take an active role in helping children to develop, prepare, and succeed in life. Through their combined efforts, our students feel valued, protected, and encouraged.

Various threads unite the village at Lyons. First, communication is vital. The school’s online Parent Portal imparts important information connecting them with calendars, grades, school information, academic

resources & services, school activities, and photos of the numerous events enjoyed at Lyons. Parents are also kept informed via a weekly newsletter highlighting newsworthy students and current events.

Another crucial strand of Lyons' village is our phenomenal group of dedicated volunteers. Many are hard working parents who take time off work to chaperone a field trip or to read an exciting book on our guest reading days, while others are here on a day by day basis to offer help wherever needed. In addition to parents, Lyons is most fortunate to have caring grandparents as well as enthusiastic high school & college students to lend helping hands. Whether they are here to assist during lunches, aid the librarian, help the nurse, or support teachers in the classroom, our volunteers give our teachers more time to do what they do best, teach. In addition, their mere presence proves to their children how much education is valued. The unique and exceptional traits our extraordinary volunteers possess collectively work together to help our children flourish.

Completing the strand is the outstanding involvement of our community. Our school year is sprinkled with many opportunities to include our neighbors, family, and friends. In an effort to assist families in need, Lyons is working in conjunction with a weekly program that provides take home groceries. Monthly Parenting Classes offer tips on helpful strategies to discipline children & effective tactics to help them do better in school. September brings about a celebration of Grandparents, with invitations to have lunch with their special little one. Paying tribute to their bravery & allegiance to our country, veterans are honored with a special breakfast and student performance in November. Contributions are phenomenal during our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive and Toy Drive. Lyons can always count on a tremendous show of support from the community during Science Night, Literacy/Math Night, Health Fair, Festivals, Rodeo Activities, and GT Expo & Digital Fair.

Lyons takes pride in its village of parents, volunteers, and community members who successfully work together with our school for a common goal, our future.

3. Professional Development:

At Lyons Elementary, "Where Excellence is Expected" Professional Development is a vital link between the growth, development, and learning of children and adults. Traditionally, Lyons has offered professional development which has been both, current and collaborative in nature for both teachers and administrators. Our professional development has been an ongoing mechanism for state of the art learning, relevant to today's world. More importantly it is tailored to the needs of our students. As a result of this, the students' learning is bridged by rigorous, in-depth, and complexity that surpasses the standards set by the State. In the past, professional development has been designed with the school improvement plan in mind. Since the school offered early dismissal on Wednesdays, our school was able to ensure high quality trainings for the faculty to meet as a whole; for example, Gifted and Talented technology integration in the content areas. Those meetings fostered a supportive climate, and culture cohesiveness. This addressed needs such as a discipline plan for the common areas, and areas for improvement according to data, vertical alignment, and horizontal alignment amongst grade level, thus meeting the needs of the students. At Lyons all teachers have received instruction in the areas of dyslexia, section 504, RTI, ELL learners, GT, and small group and personalized instruction in order to accommodate the needs of special populations to ensure the best possible outcome.

This year, the state mandated that all elementary school schedules be synchronized which eliminated our early dismissal on Wednesday, and therefore the time that we would use for our professional development school wide making professional development a challenge. Our faculty has had to seek trainings after school, on Saturdays, and during the instructional day to continue providing students with effective, engaging, and research based activities.

Currently, Lyons Elementary is participating in a Teacher Leadership Development Program. This provides opportunities for teachers to perfect their craft and share or coach as needed in the areas of Best Practices, Data Analysis, Differentiation, Classroom Management, and Technology. Because this program involves preparation, modeling, training, collaboration and practice, it has yielded better communication and rapport among teachers. It has promoted professional talks that would not have occurred if administration was

involved. This has led to building staff capacity which directly impacts our student achievement at higher levels. If anything, the faculty at Lyons is resilient and will overcome any professional development challenges that may come our way ensuring Lyons students' success. The programs chosen are born out of our needs assessment inventory that we take the prior year and is based on data.

4. School Leadership:

Lyons pride manifests itself in the entire staff's dedication. Lyons Elementary's motto, An Exemplary School Where Excellence is expected, is not just a phrase, but our core value. We expect excellence on the part of the staff and students, and we strive to achieve it every day. Along with expectations, we have dedication, commitment, and team work. Our mission is every minute of every day for every child. We believe in the sanctity of the instructional day, promoting lifelong learners, and ensuring an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

Lyons Elementary has had the same Principal since 2007. Supported by her Assistant Principal, Dean of Instruction, and Instructional Coordinator, the Principal provides leadership through a model that is based on empowering stakeholders to take ownership of all projects. This is how she encourages, empowers, and supervises leaders that are responsible for all projects that make Lyons a successful educational experience. Grade Level Chair leaders in each grade level, a Math lead teacher, a Reading Lead teacher, a Technology lead teacher, a Coding and Robotics leader, a Social Studies lead teacher, a Science lead teacher, an ESL lead teacher, a Response to Intervention lead teacher, a Special Education lead teacher, and a Gifted and Talented Coordinator, are some of the leaders that communicate every day with the principal to ensure the best education for our students. Teacher leaders share knowledge and training provided to them by the school district to all teachers on the campus. This model is nurtured by a transparent communication system that allows parents, students, and teachers to express their voice and to be informed of all school developments.

The collaborative administrative team answers to directives from the Shared Decision Making Committee (SDMC) which is the leadership committee on the campus. This committee establishes, monitors, and evaluates goals for budgeting, curriculum, planning, school organization, and staff development. The principal meets monthly with the grade chairs to monitor academic progress and to make important decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, staffing, testing, and budget.

Lyons success is directly linked to the administrator's philosophy which puts students' needs first. As the campus leader, she is present in all aspects of the school day and models high expectations for herself, encouraging all staff, community members, and parents to take ownership of their roles.

The leadership team aims every day to prepare our students to be successful, productive citizens of the future.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Lyons' success is attributed to the way our campus implements its unique Response to Intervention (RtI)/Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) Model. What makes this model unique is that every member of the school-wide community has a defined role and responsibility to assure that its implementation is effective, and leads to scholar growth.

The first responsibility is that of the IAT to set a proactive culture of data analysis. At the beginning of the school year, multiple sources of data are reviewed, to identify scholars that are not meeting their academic goals. Using that information, they begin to build a prioritized list of scholars to receive intervention. This information is shared directly with the classroom educators.

The IAT then selects one Rti Representative from each grade level. In that role, they will facilitate monthly RtI meetings, advocate for scholars, include a data specialist to interpret scholar data, and assure that progress monitoring is being documented. Each grade level identifies their appropriate Tier I and II interventions (the RtI triangle), universal screeners and progress monitoring tools. The RtI responsibility is shared with the educator. They review their scholar data (including the information provided by the IAT), administer BOY screeners and set benchmark expectations for each scholar.

During the RtI period, the Rti representative assures that their team has identified scholar of concern, is implementing Tier II interventions, progress monitoring, and documentation with fidelity. The updated scholar data is added to their Rti binder, and reviewed by the IAT Chair. This responsibility assures that every scholar is provided with the adequate support and opportunity for growth. The inclusion of the parent in the RtI process has already began by communicating progress reports and conferencing. This assures the scholar is doing their part in the RtI process.

By the time the educators present their scholars' case to the IAT Committee there is the assurance that all the planned interventions in Tier II level have been applied. The RtI representative role of overseeing the intervention is returned to the IAT Chair. The IAT Chair schedules the Tier III meeting, inviting all the key members to give reference including parents, interventionists, diagnosticians, LSSP, nurse, and advocates. The IAT Committee collaborates and contributes different points of view and expertise, to analyze current and historical data, refine the area to target for scholar growth and forms a plan of prescribed interventions, modeling of techniques, offering resources and a plan for tracking progress.