

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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 113 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 50 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 61 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 224 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
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	14	5	19
K	41	43	84
1	40	46	86
2	48	34	82
3	50	39	89
4	61	50	111
5	77	59	136
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	331	276	607

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 75 % White
 - 8 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	640
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%
15 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Malayalam, Oromo, Turkish, Japanese, Navajo, Russian, Polish, Spanish, Telugu, Amharic, Taglog

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6%
Total number students who qualify: 35

8. Students receiving special education services: 4 %
24 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>4</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
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, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
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 28:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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 2017.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

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

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

Swigert strives to create innovative, intellectually curious students who share a sense of stewardship for creating a better and more peaceful world. Swigert aims to develop knowledgeable, inquisitive and compassionate young people through the collaboration of students, teachers, parents and the broader community.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Swigert International School is a Denver Public School Boundary school. This means that enrollment is done through a lottery system, for students living within the enrollment zone. Any spots that remain open are all boundary students are seated, then it is open to other Denver Public School students.

Swigert is also a Denver Public Schools innovation school, this innovation status provides Swigert flexibility and autonomy with budget, calendar, staffing, curriculum and assessment.

PART III – SUMMARY

Swigert International School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) School located in the Stapleton neighborhood, tucked inside the eastern edge of Denver, Colorado. Our school currently serves 607 early childhood education (ECE) -5th grade students. In order to meet the growing population demands of the metro area, Swigert opened in 2009 as a district-run innovation school. As an innovation school, we have more autonomy over budget, curriculum, assessment and staffing decisions to better tailor our school to meet student need. The school has grown each year from an ECE-2nd grade school in 2010 to our current configuration, serving ECE students through fifth grade.

We are incredibly proud and grounded in our mission and vision. The mission at Swigert is to create innovative, intellectually curious students who share a sense of stewardship for creating a better and more peaceful world. We aim to develop knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate young people through the collaboration of students, teachers, parents and the broader community. This mission drives our daily instruction and pushes us to create meaningful and authentic learning experiences for our students, staff and community.

Our school focuses on an inquiry-driven International Baccalaureate model, where we are creating interdisciplinary units across the grade levels to support student engagement and conceptual knowledge. All of our fieldwork is tied to the conceptual learning of the unit, so students are exploring the state capital when they are in their fourth-grade government unit, or uncovering fossils at the Dinosaur Museum as kindergartners in their history unit. We strongly believe students should go out and explore the world or have experts in the field come to them to deepen their understanding. Our students also create public presentations of learning each year to showcase their learning and present it to the broader community. For example, our fourth-grade students create three dimensional houses fueled by an alternative energy source. They wrote persuasive pieces to convince their audience about why their alternative energy was the best option. They housed a mini museum in our school to showcase their learning. Similarly, the fifth-grade students made a wax museum where each student became an explorer. They wrote informational pieces, donned costumes and created backdrops to share the defining moments for their explorer to the school wide community.

As an IB school, our students also learn about the traits it takes to be a well-rounded global citizen. IB provides us with these traits and they include being caring, an inquirer, balanced, an effective communicator, a thinker, principled, a risk-taker, knowledgeable, open-minded, and reflective. We focus on these traits throughout the units of study, with second graders studying how historical inventors were knowledgeable risk-takers, for example. As a school, we celebrate the exhibition of these traits in our students with a monthly meeting with leadership where students are recognized by their teachers and their peers. This work helps us share a mental model for what it means to be a member of our community.

Our fifth-grade students create their own IB unit as a culminating project at the end of their elementary school experience. They work in groups of four to research a topic they are passionate about, focusing on subjects such as equity, poverty, pollution, etc. An important part of their exhibition is an action project based on their findings. A few examples include volunteering at a preschool to read to students, organizing a book or canned food drive, and implementing a school wide bike to school day. These final exhibition projects represent our intentional focus on creating compassionate, civic minded and critical thinking children.

While we strive to create students, who are internationally-minded learners of complex concepts, we are also succeeding in concrete academics. This year, on our Denver Public Schools School Performance Framework, our school exceeded in several areas including exceeding the CMAS median growth percentile in math, exceeding the CMAS Catch-Up Growth in literacy, and exceeding in parent and student engagement and satisfaction. We were distinguished in our growth for our English Language Development (ELD) and SPED students, as well. Our proficiency rates in literacy were above 80 percent and 75 percent in math. While we have high proficiency, we do have opportunity gaps. We have gaps between our free and

reduced lunch students, students of color and gender. By strategically adjusting data teams, building our critical needs program, and refocusing our professional learning, we plan to reduce these gaps.

We truly believe in our mission. All members of our faculty and staff do, too. And our parents choose our school because of our mission, vision and excellent academic performance. Most important to us, though, is that our students are joyful, compassionate and engaged learners with a strong sense of how to be a contributing member of a community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Swigert closely follows the standards and practices of the International Baccalaureate Organization and grounds our curriculum in inquiry-based units based on the Colorado Academic Standards in Science and Social Studies as well as literacy and mathematics standards in the Common Core). Through its inquiry-led, transdisciplinary framework, the IB primary years program challenges students to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning as they explore local and global issues and opportunities in real-life contexts.

The IB program follows six themes over the course of the year including: Who we Are, How we Express Ourselves, Where We Are in Place and Time, How the World Works, How we Organize Ourselves, and Sharing the Planet. Teachers create each unit, focusing first on the standards, then tying in a central idea, key concepts, learner profile traits and attitudes. Teachers then create a summative task that integrates the central idea and important concepts based on the standards. From this summative, teachers use backwards design to create an integrated trans-disciplinary unit that uses engaging learning experiences grounded in cooperative learning structures and inquiry. We ensure that our ECE program includes these important components of the IB program. Our four-year old students know the learner profiles and take part in the rich units of study; from exploring different art forms for how we express ourselves or studying communities around the world in their community unit. We strongly believe in the importance of early learning and engaging our youngest learners all of our school wide practices and experiences.

For math, we have adopted the Bridges Curriculum to ensure we have vertical alignment across all grade levels. This math program supports mathematical practice standards as well as emphasizes conceptual understanding. Students develop multiple strategies to approaching mathematical content and increasing their mathematical flexibility. Our teachers also pull in content from Engage New York to allow for more opportunities for enrichment and fill in any gaps they notice in the assessments and base curriculum. Our GT coordinator and Math Intervention teacher work in step with the classroom teachers to provide extensions and additional scaffolds. We are also utilizing tools for the Public Education and Business Coalition, Minds on Math institute, to create authentic and challenging math word problems for each unit.

Five years ago, we realized we had sizable gaps in our literacy skills, and students in our intervention program were not making significant growth. We realized part of the issue was lack of a systematic and purposeful early literacy approach. We now use the Orton Gillingham program in all K-2 classrooms to support early literacy skills. The OG program is beneficial to all our learners, including our English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education Student (SPED) students. This strategic instructional approach is also utilized by our intervention, ELD and SPED teachers to ensure students are getting a double dose of instruction. Our ELD, intervention and SPED teachers also use Lindamood Bell Seeing Stars, and LIPs: and, in the upper grades we use the Words Their Way program to support literacy skills. Teachers incorporate a daily skills block to ensure students are engaged in word studies and understanding word patterns. We also use the EL achieve core curriculum for our ELD students, which is a language program that uses repetition to practice the oral rehearsal of English vocabulary and grammatical structures.

In all grades we also interweave the Junior Great Books to ensure our students have access to rich articles tied to their units of study. Junior Great Books provides not only authentic articles, but also strategies for whole group critical questioning and protocols for engaging with the text. These additional curricular programs and supports align to create a relevant, strategic, and engaging instructional focus at our school.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Swigert we offer a robust specials program that supports our school wide focus on engagement and wonder, and concomitantly integrates with our IB program. All ECE through fifth grade students attend Physical Education, Spanish, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Visual Arts and Music.

Students receive Art, STEM, and Music once a week for an hour. They receive Spanish and Physical Education twice a week for half an hour. They also receive library time every other week.

With an IB focus on international mindedness, we have a strong Spanish program to ensure students are exposed and speaking a foreign language as well as learning about the culture, history and geography of Spanish speaking countries from around the globe. All students, including our ECE students, have Spanish twice a week. Our Art, Music and STEM teachers work with our core teachers to integrate their specials instruction with the IB units. For example, the first-grade students were recently studying different countries and exploring the cultural elements of Japan and Italy. In art class, they created Japanese Kites and Murano glass sculptures to honor Italy. In music, the teacher had her second-grade students write original fairy tales and compose corresponding music to enhance their unit on fairy tales and myths. This integration helps to support our interdisciplinary focus and also supports a deeper conceptual understanding. Our STEM program is funded by a grant we received from Lockheed Martin two years ago. The support from this grant has allowed us to build a strong program where our students engage in coding, robotics, design challenges, and project based learning.

We also offer an integrated explorations program which allows for inquiry and critical thinking.

Explorations are four six-week programs for 1st through 5th grade students that allow students to dive deeper into their units of study through arts integration or to engage in inquiry projects based on student interest. These explorations occur on Fridays from 2:20-3:30. During the arts integration program, third graders learned about the structure and function of local government. In their arts-integration project, students are using photography and painting to identify, capture and share examples of local government in our community. Each student took a photograph of an example of our local government and turned that image into a hand-painted puzzle. Second graders wrote personal narratives and memoirs (in writing and in art) which allowed them to share their perspective and experiences. Students created 6-Word-Memoir-Self-Portraits that represent their personal memoirs in an artistic form. Another piece of explorations is our musical. The musical is open to fourth and fifth graders and they work all year long to create an end of year musical to present to the entire community.

For after school programs we partner with different community vendors that provide everything from culinary arts, engineering, guitar, drama, and martial arts. We are also proud of a grant we received this year to provide arts enrichment and tutoring for our critical needs families. We are able to offer weekly arts as well as math and literacy small group tutoring to ensure our families in financial need are able to afford the same opportunities as all students.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Swigert we have a foundation of strong instructional practices that support differentiation and allow for students of all ability levels to find consistent success. We have an incredibly intentional and systematic program to support students who are below grade level in literacy and math. In the beginning of the year the SPED, Intervention, and ELD teachers meet together to analyze student data and determine which students need strategic support in order to catch up to their grade level peers in each content area. These teachers provide small group push in and pull out instruction based on student need and aligned to their units of study. Our intervention team utilize research based programs, including OG, LindamoodBell, and EL Achieve, to provide strategic instruction. We meet on a weekly basis to analyze student data and determine if we need to tailor or alter an instructional intervention. Intervention teachers also meet weekly with core classroom teachers to ensure we have a true double dose. Our intervention teachers' progress is monitored bimonthly using IStation, DRA progress monitoring passages and core phonics surveys to ensure a rich and multiple data set. We share this data at home with parents on a bimonthly basis.

Through this intentional process, we also realize that we are not meeting all student needs and there we provide a Multi-Tiered Support System for students who are struggling either social- emotionally or academically. If a teacher or an intervention teacher is not seeing adequate growth in these areas, he/she gathers data and we meet together as a collaborative team to create a six-week cycle to monitor growth based on a specific goal. Our team consists of our intervention teachers, the classroom teacher, Special Education, ELD, School Psychologist and School Social Worker. We bring the parents in during the second cycle to ensure we have strong communication structures in place and for parents to better understand their

child's need and how they can support their child at home.

At Swigert International School, we use assessments to guide our practice for whole group, small group and individual instructional decisions. We use a body of evidence in every content area to paint a clear picture of individual student strengths and areas of need. We not only use standardized assessments, but also create formative and summative assessments to analyze student mastery of IB themes, central ideas, and concepts. As a school wide focus this year, we are looking at how timely, descriptive and specific feedback can help support student growth and engagement; thus, ensuring teachers include this specific feedback with their formative assessments.

For grades 3-5, we administer the CMASS assessment each spring to assess standards attainment in grades 3-5 for math, literacy and science. We also use interim assessments quarterly to assess math and literacy aligned to the common core standards. We share CMASS proficiency and growth scores to all parents in a letter when the results come out in the fall. We also use these results during parent teacher conferences to inform parents and students of their results and set goals for the year. Our early literacy scores and CMASS proficiency and growth results are also shared with our PTA and SAC parent groups.

For all grades K-5, we administer the Istation assessment to determine reading level and specific instructional areas and gaps to focus on for individual students. Istation is used in conjunction with the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and the core phonics assessment survey to provide a clear and robust body of evidence to determine student reading skills and attainment. For writing, we use the common core rubrics in each genre area to analyze writing progress. In math, we use the Bridges pre-and post-assessments as well as the unit checkpoints to progress monitor and assess our students. For social studies and science, we create our own formative assessments based on our units of study as well as the science and social studies standards. These data points are shared during parent teacher conferences three times a year with parents and students. At the end of the year, students create a portfolio of their learning and share their growth in teacher led conferences.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviors and interactions. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment to support a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect. Swigert Elementary pride ourselves on having a positive school climate.

Each morning, the grade level teachers hold a morning meeting with the students to share celebrations, review IB traits, and give the students the opportunity to share their own experiences. The morning meeting is a time for students and teachers to come together and build relationships. The IB learner profiles and traits, including being caring, principled, open minded, and/or a risk taker, communicator, balanced, thinker, inquirer, reflective and knowledgeable are interwoven throughout each day as the teachers and students recognize each other for showing these profiles. Each month we focus on a certain learner profile. We share this profile with the community and celebrate ways students are exhibiting this in their actions. We also host grade level meetings at the end of each month to honor three or four students from each class who have exhibited this trait. Teachers and peers share specific examples of how these students are living out this trait, we take their photos with a certificate and hang them in our main hallway. Students and parents appreciate this specific positive reinforcement tied to the learner profile.

The social/emotional needs of the students at our school are the responsibility of all team members. Primarily it is overseen by a full-time school psychologist and a part time social worker. Swigert's psychologist not only functions to assist kids in crisis, but proactively looks to assist kids in developing tools necessary to be productive. This is accomplished through a myriad of strategies including lunch groups, restorative conversations, and delivering whole class instruction on a weekly basis in partnership with classroom teachers. We have also launched a limited program in our school around mindfulness. Select classes, either with outside or teacher led instruction, are integrating mindfulness into their daily routines. This is normally done at the beginning of the day and after busy transitions from either specials or recess. Finally, as a staff we like to model for both our students and our community that the traits we talk about don't just exist as school, but also in the real world. On a regular basis staff organizes or participates in volunteering outside of school. In 2017-18 we were able to organize an event to support Puerto Rico and volunteer at The Ronald McDonald House. This has now grown into Swigert's 1st whole school volunteer day, which will be on May 8, 2018.

Students have also taken ownership in creating a stronger student culture. A group of third grade students designed a kindness tree where any student can write on a paper leaf when they see another student or staff member being kind. These leaves are hung on a large tree in the school so we can focus on and spread kindness. A group of fourth graders created a "cheer-up" box in the front office where a student can come pick up an uplifting quote if they are feeling sad. Every fifth-grade class has weekly reading buddies with our kindergarten students.

Weekly newsletters are created and shared with the families in each grade level. "A positive parent-teacher relationship helps the students feel good about school and support their student's success in school. It demonstrates to our students that they can trust their teacher, because their parents do. Communicating well is a key factor for making this relationship work. Also on a weekly basis the teachers and administrators recognize the hard work and achievements of the students by sending through the mail an individualized postcard celebrating each student's success.

Each one of our classroom environments contributes to our school culture. Together as a staff, we have created a shared vision for our school. That means we have developed consistent expectations, grounding in the IB learner profiles, and ways of defining and meeting student behavior.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Swigert is fortunate to have an incredibly active parent community that is involved in supporting our school through volunteering and fundraising. We have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA), School

Accountability Committee (SAC), and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), parent groups that meet on a monthly basis to provide input on school budget, curricular decisions and help plan school community events. The PTA also supports our IB program by fundraising to pay for our essential training, books, and positions, including our Spanish and IB coordinator role. Our PAC parent group is focused on supporting our parents of English language learners. Our ELD teacher creates a monthly meeting to share information about the school and district, as well as answer questions around the curriculum and assessment. This meeting is supported by translators representing languages from around the world to ensure better communication.

The principal hosts monthly coffees to inform parents about practice at the school and invite conversation around topics of their choice. This year we started a Diversity and Equity parent and staff committee that works to ensure we are creating an inclusive and equitable school and community culture. The parents and staff meet monthly to create and implement ideas that celebrate and support the diversity of our school community; including ensuring our curriculum and books represent all students, offering parent workshops around diversity, bringing in parents of color to host lunches with students, and honoring international cultures within the school setting.

We also have a parent group that runs our critical needs program; providing weekly food backpacks; medical and dental services, enrichment opportunities, and clothes for our families in need. They are also involved in our annual Swigert gives day where we dedicate a day to giving back to our community. From creating blankets for Children's Hospital to cleaning up the greenway, students are engaged in purposeful activities throughout the day to help make a difference in their community. Our parent community is also very involved in our yearlong garden program.

Swigert has an important relationship with a community partner, the Public Education and Business Coalition. Through this partnership, we have five student teachers who work alongside a mentor teacher for the entire year to understand the complexity of the profession and prepare them for the role. his partnership has been incredibly valuable for both our students and staff.

3. Professional Development:

Professional Learning is an incredibly significant part of our school wide mission and vision. This year we analyzed our student data and found lower growth percentiles across the school in reading. As a school we decided to shift priorities and focus our attention on reading.

Our teachers meet weekly in professional learning capacities, one with data teams and other for IB curriculum planning. One of our school wide goals is to improve our reading instruction; therefore, we are focusing our weekly data teams on reading instruction. Bi-monthly we focus on reading planning including unpacking each standard and creating specific objectives and success criteria. On the other two weeks we are analyzing student work, which ranges from running records, DRA assessment to ISTATON. We use that analysis to create whole group and small group instructional plans. We have also dedicated half day calibration sessions to review student reading and writing proficiency after each interim. We have also created opportunities to align with one of our feeder middle schools to ensure we are teaching our fifth graders similar language and techniques in providing responses to rich literature. We have grounded this work in Reading Reconsidered and the Guided Reading plus program. Our district literacy partner comes out monthly to coach our teachers and provide additional professional development.

This year we have teachers leading professional learning once a month. Four teacher leaders have created a yearlong course to meet schoolwide areas of focus; including mindfulness, vocabulary instruction and inquiry. Every month the teacher leaders develop and implement professional learning around these timely topics. As an innovation school, we utilized our calendar to create all day professional learning days every 6 weeks. These strategically placed "green days" allow teachers to work collaboratively with their teams to plan out their IB units of study. Once a month we engage in professional learning labs. We identify a specific need and then identify a teacher to "host" a learning lab. We invite multi grade level teachers to observe and provide feedback to the teacher on a specific area of focus. This practice not only honors the host teacher, but allows all the participants to learn through authentic and relevant observation.

4. School Leadership:

At Swigert International School we have a dedicated leadership team that is student driven and focused on teacher leadership. We have one principal, an assistant principal and a dean of operations to oversee the larger picture including, but not limited to, assessment, instruction, ELD, SPED, budget, and evaluations. Fortunately, we have three teacher leaders, senior team leads, who share a joint position; they are half-time instructional coaches and half-time intervention or ELD teachers. They each support a grade level team by individually coaching teachers on instructional practices on a weekly basis, analyzing student work to determine next steps and facilitating weekly data teams focused on guided reading. The teacher leaders not only support classroom teachers on a daily basis, but also serve as a conduit to the administration to share trends and help design and implement professional development around those classroom trends.

With the support of Denver Public Schools, Swigert also has three teachers who serve as content specialists beyond their classroom roles. We have one fourth grade teacher who is a literacy specialist and two math content specialists, one fourth grade teacher and one fifth grade teacher. They lead professional learning around their content area expertise and provide learning labs for all teachers. We also have a bi monthly leadership team with representatives from each grade level and specials teams to address issues, create proactive plans around areas of concerns, or brainstorm new initiatives to better serve our students and community.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The success of our students hinges around several factors; however, our intentional focus on ensuring our students are critical thinkers in every aspect of their academic and social emotional careers here is the pivotal point of our success. Through the IB curriculum and a purposeful staff and student culture, we ask our students to engage in relevant issues that support their understanding of the world around them as well as ask them to take action to make a difference. Our authentic units of study allow all students multiple entry points to engage with the content as well as use inquiry to design their own learning experiences. All of our Specials, ELD, GT, SPED and intervention teachers collaborate weekly with teams to ensure they are integrating their work; whether it be vocabulary development or selection of leveled texts, with the current units of study. This allows all of our students access to rigorous content and the opportunity engage in the rich units. Furthermore, our arts and explorations allow students to express themselves through different mediums, including music, drama, and visual arts. Our social emotional supports also tightly tie into our learner profiles and IB units, supporting the whole child and celebrating students for their perverseness and growth rather than proficient. This close alignment across all classrooms, including specials, specialists, core teachers, and administration ensures consistency for students and sustained engagement.