

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):
- 24 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 9 High schools
 - 3 K-12 schools
- 44 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	0	0	0
K	34	28	62
1	27	24	51
2	28	38	66
3	33	50	83
4	38	33	71
5	32	32	64
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	192	205	397

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 13 % Black or African American
 - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 68 % White
 - 3 % 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: 28%

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

Our school mobility rate was 28%. Under normal conditions, this seems rather high; however, our parish and school system were tragically affected by The Great Flood of 2016. In August 2016, a “Hundred Year Storm” dropped 7.1 trillion gallons of water into our area. This caused massive flooding which destroyed 70% of the 54,000 homes in our parish. The entire parish cancelled school for 21 days. Many children and teachers were displaced for quite some time, and later began to trickle back into the parish several months later. This catastrophic event was the cause of this unusually high mobility rate.

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	66
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	41
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	107
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	376
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.28
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	28

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9 %
36 Total number ELL

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

Hindi, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 62 %
Total number students who qualify: 246

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %
39 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>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>12</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
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	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
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.

Learning together, for a very bright future, every single day.

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

Lewis Vincent Elementary is a quaint, suburban elementary school tucked behind a major thoroughfare just south of Denham Springs, Louisiana. Even as our school began to recover from the catastrophic flood of the fall of 2016, we opened our doors to share our campus with a sister school, Southside Elementary. This is a motto for our school, community first!

The mission of Lewis Vincent is simple. We strive to prepare our students for a bright future, every single day. It is our belief that our children can learn and grow under our direction. Our school improvement plan focuses on the needs of all students and provides ways for students and educational staff to receive assistance and support that we can use to foster success. We have put our efforts and funds into a new intervention initiative. This intervention program was set to launch the fall semester of 2016 when the flood hit our area. Our teachers and staff decided to implement our new program in the spring semester of 2017, instead of postponing it until the following school year. With the support of part time tutors, teachers, and other staff members, each student at each grade receives 45 minutes a day of tiered interventions.

We are committed to providing as many educational opportunities as possible for our entire student body. Our school's population consists predominately of low income families. Currently at 63%, this number has steadily been on the rise since our community's families experienced the flood. Also, the ethnic make-up our school has experienced significant changes. In the interest of the families we serve, it has been a long-standing tradition to provide our students opportunities that go beyond the basic curriculum. We strive to identify our students' strengths and weaknesses, and provide opportunities to strengthen their academic skills. Our mission is to give them the necessary abilities that will prepare them to go out into the real world and become respectful, responsible citizens.

In order to promote our mission, "learning together for a very bright future every single day," our administration and staff encourage attendance and positive behavior. Our attendance is 95% and suspensions and expulsions are infrequent. Students who qualify are allowed to participate in attendance and behavior incentives that consist of, but are not limited to, free dress, parent-student picnics, reindeer games, water days, various prizes, etc. This year, the administration also implemented the Principal's 200 club. The Principal's 200 club is a school-wide all positive prevention focused intervention. It consists of several evidence based behavior management practices. It utilizes verbal praise, public posting, mystery motivator, variable reinforcement, and group contingency. Teachers and staff seek out students who are exhibiting exemplary behaviors and/or stellar citizenship. These superior students are recognized daily as they set positive examples for their peers. Students that receive this recognition visit the office staff and receive special rewards, recognition on our social media sites, as well as a text or phone call to notify their parents or guardians. The students name is displayed on a two hundred grid matrix, and this is utilized to recognize the winners. These incentives have positively affected the climate of our school and have decreased discipline problems.

Over the past several years, we have made it a focus to provide before and after school tutoring programs. These tutoring programs do not just focus on students who are struggling – we also include students that we feel might reach that "next level" with a little individualized instruction. We are also currently considering and researching the possibility of adding a pre-school program. As a result of working cooperatively with our parents, tutors, and teachers, we are closing the gaps for our students.

Our school houses 43 dedicated, compassionate, and hardworking teachers and support staff. It is through our commitments and perseverance that our school achieves high standards and exemplary school performance scores. Our teachers and staff are family; the camaraderie resonates throughout the building. This is one of our strengths. The administration has an open-door policy and parents and teachers alike feel comfortable approaching our staff members for assistance. Our community is family oriented and very supportive. When the flood devastated our area, 85% of our families were affected and 48% of our teachers and support staff were affected. We supported each other through it all. There were tears, and laughter at times, but whatever our students and parents needed, we provided! The outpouring of love and empathy for others was, and still is, evident in our community. Everyone is considered a valuable member of our school

family. We know Lewis Vincent is blessed! We know we are unique! We know that what truly makes us extraordinary is...our students!

We are honored to be nominated as a Blue Ribbon school; however, win or lose, we know that our hearts are with our students. Our long-term goal is for our students to be successful for life! We will be here, every day, to help them learn and grow.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Our school curriculum is based on Livingston Parish and Louisiana State Standards. Our state implemented these standards a few years ago, and most of Louisiana public schools utilized them in grades K-12. Livingston Parish Public Schools wrote curriculum units for both ELA and Math requiring state standards for each grade level to be mastered by the end of each year. Teachers are required to document the standards within their daily lesson plans. Connecting grade bands, standards are scaffolded and build upon themselves. Skills are continually reviewed and placed into new contexts to challenge the students. English Language Arts curriculum covers multiple skills. Curriculum skills taught are: phonemic awareness, oral reading skills, spelling, writing, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, literacy skills, drama, public speaking, reading informational text, reading literary text, etc. The instructional strategies implemented for the ELA curriculum are: direct instruction, tiered small group instruction, peer tutoring, accelerated reader, computer-based programs, self-guided learning, and contracted tutors who provide assistance to students. Students are required to master these skills in the ELA curriculum so that they may become college and career ready.

Math is another pertinent part of our core curriculum. Mathematical standards include basic computation skills, word problems, algebra, geometry, fractions, vocabulary, measurement, etc. Modeling, application, supporting content, and expressing mathematical reasoning are other areas of focus as our LEAP state assessments require students to respond to these areas of mathematical skills. Student learning is achieved through direct instruction, manipulatives, hands-on activities, peer tutoring, modeling, interventions, computer-based programs, and extra remediation time.

Another area of the core curriculum is social studies. In grades K-2, the areas of focus are: history, geography, civics and economics. In 3rd, 4th, and 5th the curriculum focuses on the seven key concepts: economics and trade, migrations and settlement, physical and human systems, politics and governance, society and culture, conflict and comprise, and continuity and change. In 3rd grade, the key themes are based around the history and traditions regarding Louisiana. In 4th grade, the main concepts include American colonies under British control to independent democracy, and in 5th grade, the course of study is based on early American history. Instruction and student engagement is through direct teaching, reading informational text, hands-on activities, research projects, mapping skills, guest speakers, and community related projects.

Finally, science is also a piece of the Livingston Parish core curriculum. The Science curriculum focuses on the study of matter, ecosystems, engineering practices, weather systems, molecules, energy, Earth Systems, structures and processes. Instruction and active student engagement is achieved via direct instruction, videos, websites, computer programs, and hands-on experiments. The use of investigations is a key component of teacher instruction.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The state of Louisiana and Livingston Parish also have standards for physical education, art, music, and foreign language. The students are taught PE every day for 30 minutes, by one of our two certified PE teachers. PE has two cluster grade bands- Kindergarten to 2nd grade and 3rd to 5th grade. In the Kindergarten to 2nd cluster, the curriculum focuses on healthy reasons to be physically active, cooperation and respect, self-direction, safety, knowing and following procedures to ensure safe practices, cardiovascular, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, physical activity knowledge, movement, locomotor and non-locomotor skills. In grades 3rd-5th, the curriculum focuses on motor skills, movement patterns, strategies and tactics, principles and critical elements, physical activity knowledge, cardiovascular endurance, musculoskeletal fitness, flexibility, planning, self-directions and safety, cooperation, respect, and resolving conflict. Health is another area the PE curriculum covers. Instruction and active student engagement is achieved by direct instruction, station activities, organized games, and organized play. Teachers focus on concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health. They also

analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors. Student engagement and instruction are achieved by direct instruction, project-based learning, videos, websites, and participating in the Jump Rope for Heart program.

Spanish is the foreign language program taught to our 5th grade students at Lewis Vincent. The students have Spanish class every day for 30 minutes. Livingston Parish has created the curriculum for elementary Spanish. The standards focus on learning basic skills: numbers, days of the week, days of the month, and beginning simple conversations in Spanish. They also focus on identifying and comparing sound patterns in the target language and by applying knowledge for the Spanish alphabet. In the past, we have achieved this through direct instruction, projects, small group instruction, and videos. This year, we have incorporated a computer program, Rosetta Stone. This program encourages English speaking students to learn Spanish at their own pace, while allowing Spanish fluent students to receive instruction on the English Language.

Library is the third ancillary program we offer to our students. Each week, our students visit our library for 45 minutes. Livingston Parish developed the curriculum for library skills. In grades Kindergarten through 5th, the curriculum standards are correlated with the Louisiana content standards and benchmarks on the LEAP 2025 standardized test. The focus skills in this curriculum are: defining/focusing/appreciation/orientation, selecting tools/resources, extracting/recording, processing information, organizing information, producing findings, and evaluating efforts. Our librarian also focuses on specific grade level ELA standards appropriate for each grade. Student engagement and learning are achieved via direct instruction, technology lessons, projects, websites, and videos.

The fourth ancillary program we offer to all students is computer lab. Students visit the computer lab at least once a week. They attend this class for 45 minutes. During this time, the students work on computer programs: Type to Learn, Success Maker, LEAP 360, STAR Reading and Math, and Moby Max. The curriculum focus is on ELA, math, and technology. Instruction and student engagement are achieved solely by computer programs.

Students who excel in academics, art, music, and drama are eligible to participate in our gifted and talented programs. These students must qualify for these programs according to the state guidelines. They attend these classes at least once a week for a thirty-minute period. These students are offered direct instruction, create original products, the opportunity to perform in public forums, and complete creative projects. Our curriculum is very diverse while meeting the needs of all our students. Students are provided with ample opportunities for learning and exploration.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Over the past few years, there has been a paradigm shift from teacher directed lessons to student centered learning. Teachers often incorporate students having extensive choices in how they demonstrate their knowledge of the concepts being taught. The teachers have begun to incorporate strategies to improve their instruction. Some of the methods used frequently at Lewis Vincent Elementary are: reflections/response, tiered activities and lessons, heads together, think/pair/share, reading buddies, guided inquiry, gallery walks, and quiz/quiz trade. Tiered lessons that are differentiated for each student have increased student engagement. The students can work on lessons that begin at the level of instruction they need in order to accomplish grade level expectations.

At the beginning of each year, the students are given phonics screeners, curriculum benchmark tests, reading fluency tests, and STAR reading tests. All four of these assessments are utilized to develop individual intervention plans. Teachers instruct and coach students five days a week through small groups to work on their deficits. Detailed notes are taken on each child, by the teacher, documenting instructional interventions and tracking student progress. The focus of our interventions is in written expression, reading, and math. We also implement a technology focus through student access in our two computer labs, or through classroom laptops. The students work on Success Maker, Moby Max, Type to Learn, LEAP 360, etc. to improve core skills, as noted above. We combine all these efforts to close the achievement gaps for our struggling learners.

In order to meet the needs of our on-level and above level students through daily interventions, we provide individual learning channels for them to follow. Students participate in self-guided projects, computer-based learning programs, partner assignments, and individual tasks. Teachers conduct constant informal and formal student observations with the intention of tracking student progress. Our contract part-time tutors play a key role in the success of our intervention programs. These combined efforts provide the needed tiered instructional approach which leads to student success in closing achievement gaps.

Our parish provides each school with a data package which we analyze and use to plan and set individual student goals. Depending on the grade level, different assessment choices are examined and used to monitor student progress. Throughout the year, thorough evaluations of pre, post and check point data are examined by teachers. This is then used to plan teaching methods which benefit students as they work and learn through tiered small groups. In order to close the achievement gaps of student subgroups, we provide the following educational programs for our students: before school remediation, early day ELL computer lab sessions, RTI - academic, behavioral & speech interventions, and instructional tiered small groups. Lewis Vincent Teachers conduct team meetings, weekly, to assess student progress. Our school encourages and provides an atmosphere of "open-minded" approaches with the intent of improving student growth. We seek alternative methods of teaching and learning with the aim of providing innovative instructional practices for our students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Lewis Vincent implements a variety of motivational programs which incite and encourage student engagement. In the classroom, teachers employ a variety of classroom behavior plans. Most, if not all, include a system of progression with a second chance policy. Our staff members frequently use affirmations and "warm & fuzzies." At the school-wide level, we promote a positive school climate through consistent implementation of our PBIS program and our newly implemented Principal's 200 club. To improve student engagement, we encourage innovative teaching practices, flexible seating options and parental involvement. Our school also emphasizes the importance of literacy through the Accelerated Reading program and Speed Games. Lewis Vincent Elementary students enjoy the educational competition that these programs provide.

Community support and involvement are essential components that lead to overall student success. To encourage parental and community involvement, we plan various events throughout the year. We invite parents twice a year to our Parent Picnic events. Parents are also invited to eat lunch with their children on Fridays. In addition to Friday lunches, parents are welcome to attend our holiday lunches at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Right before the school year begins, parents are invited to "Meet the Teacher." Usually in September, we plan Open House for each grade level. To further engage our families, we sponsor several family night events. Family math and reading nights are always popular with our community. Parents, grandparents, and former Lewis Vincent students enjoy attending and participating in educational reading and math activities and games. As we honor our community veterans at Lewis Vincent Elementary's annual Veteran's Day program, students and families experience entertainment and historical activities. All entertainment is provided by the children who learn the Preamble, "Star Spangled Banner," and several other patriotic songs. One of our most popular community events is "Puttin' on the Hits." Students audition and perform musical acts for the community - everyone is invited to attend! Our administration believes in and provides an open-door policy for our parents and families. Providing a positive environment, encouraging parental involvement, motivating students, and emphasizing engaging learning practices are several examples of how we create an atmosphere where teachers and students feel valued and supported in "learning together for a very bright future."

To improve our school culture, the administration often solicits teacher ideas and suggestions. Each year the staff is broken into two groups: School Wide Positive Behavior Committee and School Improvement Committee. During this process the teachers analyze the data presented by the administration. The teachers then develop the plan for the following school year. Teachers also have the opportunity to serve on several other committees (leadership team, parent involvement committee, student affairs, and data teams). Another way administration provides opportunities for the staff to present information is through their open door policy. Since this policy has been implemented, the staff feels comfortable approaching the principal with new and innovative ideas. As this policy has evolved, the principal has noticed the importance of including staff recommendations as part of the decision making process. Overall, teacher moral has improved and the staff is more team oriented. One of our priorities at Lewis Vincent is to connect students, teachers and parents. Due to our open door policy this goal is becoming a reality.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Making parents and community leaders an important part of our school community has been the key to success. Parents are invited to all programs, family nights, and field trips. They are also provided opportunities to volunteer in our school. Our parents enjoy putting together teacher appreciation meals, making copies, participating in school beautification projects, volunteering their time to help coach school athletic teams and clubs. Offering parents opportunities to take an active role in their children's education has been essential in developing a positive relationship between all stake holders. Relationships and bonds have been formed between teachers, support staff, and administration. When parents attend these events, they complete an evaluation. This survey/evaluation is completed anonymously so parents feel they can answer them honestly. The school improvement team then reviews the information gathered to better plan

for future events.

Community leaders are also invited to take an active role in our school community. Our 5th grade students take part in the D.A.R.E. program. This program is provided through our local sheriff's office. We also have a School Resource Officer assigned to our school. The sheriff, Jason Ard, has made a commitment to providing the students with positive role models outside of our own school's staff. These deputies work with our students on incorporating the "decision making model" and how to not only be a successful student, but also a successful member of society. In honor of their commitment to our students, we host a "Blue Day Breakfast." Local law enforcement is invited to attend this breakfast organized by our 4-H club. During this event, officers are provided the opportunity to interact with our students, receive cards created by our students, and take a tour of our facility. Our local fire department is another integral part of our school community. They facilitate each of our fire drills and teach fire safety. They are also present for our Accelerated Reading parties and Spring Fling events providing their smoke house and jump house.

Our local school board members and school board support staff are also important stakeholders at Lewis Vincent Elementary. They are invited to the LVE community events and are always welcome to visit our campus during our regular school day. During competitive events throughout the year, we invite them to participate in the selection processes. They take part in our Student of the Year selection process, Puttin' on the Hits judging, and 4-H food festival. Other local businesses are involved in our student-centered activities. Exxon Mobil allows their employees to volunteer at our school. In return for their volunteer hours, we receive a monetary award. These funds are used directly for the students. This money helps us purchase science materials, instructional materials, and technology tools. Laser Interferometer Gravitation-Wave Observatory (LIGO) is another local organization that is a key component of our math and science programs. They facilitate our Science Club meetings each month. The students conduct experiments and discuss the mathematical practices used in science. At the end of the year, our Science Club takes a field trip to their facility. While there, students interact with scientists and engineers who are practicing real science applications, and experience hands-on science activities through the LIGO interactive exhibit hall. The Civil Air Patrol assists in our yearly rocket launch event sponsored by our Science Club.

As you can see, the Lewis Vincent Elementary community consists of many people. We all work together to make our school a place where everyone is welcome. We work together to educate our children, both academically and emotionally. We strive to make our students successful in everything they do at Lewis Vincent. You always hear, "It takes a village to raise a child" - here at Lewis Vincent Elementary it takes an entire community's effort.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development is a vital aspect of our school's success. We carefully study our Faculty Needs Assessment results and make informed decisions when choosing topics of interest for professional development. We organize, plan, and offer several opportunities for professional learning communities for our staff. One area of focus was improving math intervention instructional practices in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. We created a data team which included a representative from each upper grade level. This team participated in several trainings throughout the school year. Our team delved into creating valuable assessments which identified pre-requisite skills students need in order to be successful at grade level. We then used this data to determine which intervention strategies to implement to meet individual student needs. Next, we examined the mid-test and posttest to monitor students' progression towards mastery of the standards that were taught.

The second area of professional development was effectively incorporating the "push-in" model of interventions. Our teachers continued attending workshops facilitated by Billy Snow. They learned about grouping students according to their academic levels, not their assigned grade levels and/or teachers. Our teachers began to meet and create groups based on the data collected. Students then began receiving interventions they needed. For example, some students were performing above grade level in ELA, but needed additional support in math. Those students only received interventions in the area needed. The teachers have used the strategies learned during this professional development to improve our interventions.

Throughout the year, teachers are encouraged to attend outside professional development sessions. In the 2016-2017 school year, all 23 teachers attended two professional development sessions outside of the two we conducted at school. Some of the professional developments they attended were Discovery Science Education, interactive math strategies, using informational text to teach social living, alternative classroom seating, interactive notebook, Kagan strategies, and maker-space. Our teachers understand that, in our profession, we must continue our education. They understand we can always improve what we are doing for our students. Our motto on professional development and improving ourselves is "We can always be better."

4. School Leadership:

Four years ago, our administration changed at Lewis Vincent Elementary. The administration consists of one Principal and one Designee. With the administration change, the focus shifted to a student first philosophy. When the new administration came on board, they began to focus on putting the joy back into teaching. They reminded the teachers why they got into teaching in the first place. The administrators urged the teachers to begin developing relationships with their students and parents. Quickly, the climate began to change. Students realized their teachers and administrators genuinely cared about them as a whole. The administrators are continually building relationships with the teachers, students, and parents. This was evident when the flood occurred. The administrators called each teacher, personally, to ensure they were safe. The principal even found a teacher in a shelter and tried to bring her, and her family, to her own, personal home. The administrators continually called the staff to see if anything was needed, signed them up for materials, and accepted supplies for them to use in their homes and classrooms. This event banded our staff together. We became even more of a family. Once the teachers were taken care of, the focus shifted to the students. The district provided Lewis Vincent an area to act as a command center. Quickly, the administrators, along with teachers who did not flood, began contacting students. The administration made it very clear they just wanted the students back at Lewis Vincent when we were all able to return. We wanted our family together again. During the process of getting the school reopened, the administrators worked daily with the clean-up crews and construction workers. The weekend before we opened our doors, both district and school leaders took time to help prepare the classrooms of those teachers who flooded, so they could focus on their own homes. When everyone returned to school, the focus shifted to the emotional side effects that this devastating flood had on the children. The administrators wanted the students to not worry about damaged or missing school supplies, ruined spirit shirts that they would wear with pride on Fridays, or if they could afford field trips. The guidance counselor coordinated a plan to ensure all student fees were taken care of and that each student was provided with a brand-new spirit shirt. On the first day of the restart, when the students rolled onto campus, they were greeted by a sign that read, "Welcome Back" as well as the teachers greeting the students with hugs and words of encouragement. The students also returned to their original classrooms where school supplies and new backpacks were waiting for them. Staff members also made sure each child was outfitted with needed uniforms before the end of the day. Parents were welcomed to assist students in collecting supplies and greeting their teachers and friends. All these things that were provided for our Lewis Vincent families, were coordinated by the administration. It is evident that this administration is student focused because when another school could not return to its campus, many of its classes were invited to join the Lewis Vincent family. Administrators made sure those teachers and their students had what they needed as well. This event showed that the administration cared about "the children in the community."

The administration has demonstrated they are true servant leaders. They often jump in to help teachers when emergencies arise. They will immediately clear their schedules and go into the classrooms, so students do not miss out on important instruction. The administrators know the students and the students know them. They are visible on campus. Each day, you will find the administration seeking out the students on campus, giving them hugs, reminding them of their personal goals and more importantly asking them how they are doing. They not only check on the students, they also check on the teachers. The two white vehicles in the parking lot that are the first to arrive and the last to leave each day, belong to the administrators at Lewis Vincent. They don't leave until they know each child has made it home safely and each teacher has had an opportunity to see them if she needs to discuss the day's activities. Both principal designee and principal are dedicated to providing whatever it takes to make their teachers and students feel

safe, secure, and happy. Because of the relationships built on and off campus, everyone here strives to give their best, each and every day. This is evident with the ongoing discussions between the administrators and teachers throughout the year. They allow the staff to voice their concerns or suggestions. However, the doors to the office are always open with supportive, compassionate leaders inside. Parents and guardians know the administration wants them to play a major role in their child's education. They provide both during school hour activities as well as after hours activities for the parents to participate in and to feel a part of the LVE family. The administrators keep the line communication open for parents through social media accounts, email, and face-to-face conferences. Just as our success would not be possible without parental support, it is truly the hard work, compassion, loyalty, and love for the teaching profession that has brought our school to the status we currently love and enjoy. As administrators we realize we cannot make all decisions, but we must involve others. Lewis Vincent Elementary mascot is an Indian, and as with a traditional tribe we depend on each other to strengthen our community ties.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that has been the most influential in Lewis Vincent's success is the intervention program. Each day for forty-five minutes, the students are given small group tiered lessons. The students are grouped according to their skill levels. A variety of sources are used to determine the deficit for each child. The data sources used are: LEAP 360, district created benchmark tests, unit pre-tests, Reading A to Z levels, phonic screenings, language screenings, written expression samples, STAR test results, Moby Max and DIBELS. The small group size is 3-5 students at a time. The teacher works with the tier III level students, part time tutors and paraprofessionals work with tier II students, and above grade level students are self-guided groups.

This strategy allows the teachers to work below grade level with the students that need that instruction without interrupting their required grade level curriculum. The high achieving and on-level students are pushed to extend their learning during this time as well. By using this strategy, we have time to work on the learning gaps of our students.

Teachers meet once a week to review progress monitor notes and to plan for interventions. The school purchased resources and manipulatives for the students to use during the intervention times. These resources are located in a resource room and are available to all teachers and students. The resources are organized by skills, not by grade level. This allows the teachers to pull the level they need for specific skills that students need during interventions. When the teachers collaborate, they decide whether or not students are making progress and how to change the interventions being used. If a student has mastered the skill, they then move them into another group. Our groups are very fluent because we use the data to determine the groups.

During the interventions, we work on written expression, math, and reading. If students only have a deficit in math, they only receive math interventions. If they need all three areas, we work on written expression one day, math two days, and reading two days. We also move students around from class to class. We group them according to the skills they are missing. Students are not bound by their homeroom teachers. This type of out of the box thinking has allowed us to focus on students and their gaps. We are continually striving for success for our students. We find our students have begun to improve and gaps are being bridged. We are excited and look forward to the day, when after a few years, we accomplish our goal of having these students master grade-level skills.