



## **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)
  - 9 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 5 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 38 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
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	34	15	49
<b>1</b>	23	28	51
<b>2</b>	40	30	70
<b>3</b>	32	38	70
<b>4</b>	35	27	62
<b>5</b>	23	34	57
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	187	172	359

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 12 % Black or African American
  - 84 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 4 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 25%

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

Dual-residence students make up 11% of the population. In the past two years, the homeless percentage has remained at 11% due to the natural disasters that have affected the homes in the school zone. Jackson's families initiate changes of residence due to voluntary and involuntary reasons including job change, eviction, and family dynamics.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	54
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	43
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	97
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	385
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.25
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	25

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 45 %  
162 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: 96 %  
Total number students who qualify: 344

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %  
50 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>5</u> Autism                   | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed  | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>38</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>11</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: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, 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.	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 17:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	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.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

Educate all students by ensuring access to a quality education through inspired leadership among parents, teachers, administrators, and staff, allowing students to achieve their full potential to participate in future social, economic, and educational opportunities in the community.

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**

---

Jackson Elementary School (JES) is located within the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District (LCISD) in Rosenberg, Texas. During the 1920s, JES was a segregated black high school serving students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In 1997, JES opened its doors as the neighborhood elementary. The legacy forged at Jackson High School continues its influence on JES today. Jackson’s alumni celebrate annual reunions at JES to highlight and honor the traditions created by its students, teachers, and school leaders. These graduates continue to support JES through donations for educational resources. In recent years, pockets in the community prospered; but, Jackson continues to serve overwhelmingly high populations of economically challenged families. Generational poverty is the reality of this community.

Prior to 2008, JES students were meeting state standards. However, growth steadily declined and student performance eventually fell to 55% in reading and 57% in math. Something had to change! The seeds of change began to grow in 2013, when a challenging—yet inspirational—journey was embraced by JES educators to do “whatever it took” to turn around an underperforming campus. JES started with the theme, “Dream, Believe, Succeed,” then narrowed its educational philosophy and agreed upon a set of beliefs. The school motto, “Every child, Every day, Whatever it takes,” means that every child’s emotional, physical, social, cultural, and academic needs will be met to help them achieve their full potential. This commitment required every team member to go the proverbial extra mile. It is not unusual to see a full parking lot on a late Friday afternoon or have requests for the building to be open over the weekend! JES embraced the dream of making high achievement a reality.

Today, JES serves 359 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The racial and ethnic composition of the school includes 84% Hispanic, 12% African American, and 4% Caucasian. Within these groups, 93% are classified Economically Disadvantaged, 46% English Language Learners (ELLs), 14% Special Education, with a 25% mobility rate. As a result, Jackson meets the criteria of a Title I school. JES offers a Transitional Bilingual program, English as a Second Language (ESL), and special programs including, Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD), PPCD/Pegasus, Life Skills, and Intensive Behavior Class (IBC).

Building relationships and character is an essential piece at JES. The children are greeted every morning by name and with a smile at both the front door of the school and classroom. Throughout the school year, students participate in a character-building initiative program by creating visuals that highlight essential character traits. Traits are spotlighted on the monthly school calendar, announcements, and weekly bulletin. Selected student pieces are on universal display near the cafeteria, giving parents, visitors, teachers, and students the opportunity to appreciate other students’ beliefs. Over the last six years, JES has earned a designation for active participation in the No Place for Hate Initiative. In 2015, JES was proud to be one of only 104 schools throughout the nation identified as a “Mix It Up Model School”, a national campaign that encourages students to be seated with someone new at lunch to promote the appreciation of individual differences. This was largely due to its exemplary efforts to foster respect and understanding among its students during the school year.

In the last five years, instructional practices such as unwrapping the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), deep practice, and close reading have contributed to the overall success at JES. More specifically, effective practices such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), content vertical teams, grade-level planning, common formative assessments, interventions, data analysis and continuous monitoring have been the pillars for JES student growth. JES interventions begin the first week of school and continue throughout the year before, during, and after school. Using the combined efforts of teachers and the leadership team, the curriculum is aligned vertically across all grade levels allowing everyone to share their expertise, ideas and strategies.

JES was recently devastated by the Memorial Day Flood in 2016 and then again by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. The floodwaters pummeled much of the community, causing many to lose their homes and belongings for two consecutive years. Despite these catastrophes, the JES staff focused their hearts and minds on

assistance in the form of food, clothing, repairs, and renovations for families impacted by the flooding. The JES staff also committed to personally ensuring every impacted family received vital information about available resources and support. In all, JES had 46 students registered as homeless or displaced in 2016 and 44 in 2017.

Despite these tremendous challenges, JES met state standards and even earned distinctions among comparison groups. Moreover, JES received state recognition for Top 25% Closing Performance Gaps for four consecutive years, Top 25% Student Progress for two years, and distinctions in Mathematics, Science, and Post-Secondary Readiness. No matter what, JES will always strive for academic excellence. Through seemingly impossible odds, the students at JES rose to the occasion—not once, but twice. These facts play an important reminder, that if teams can dream and believe, they will succeed.

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

---

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

JES teachers diligently plan lessons across curriculum following district guidelines aligned to state standards. English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) are embedded in every lesson to expand language acquisition and increase vocabulary. Using sentence stems, peer discussions and research-based strategies—such as talk-read, talk-write—allows students to interact while extending their academic language development. JES consistently embraces the district’s initiatives, including daily deep practice, close reading, unwrapping the TEKS and student engagement. Through these practices, students are analyzing and using critical thinking to solve complex questions and reading with a purpose for deeper understanding. Teachers carefully examine TEKS to plan engaging lessons in accordance with state expectations.

Balanced literacy is the foundation for the English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) curriculum at JES. The belief of JES teachers is that this framework encompasses the essential components to develop a strong foundation of literacy as students are actively engaged in phonics, word study, reading, and writing instruction. Reading and writing workshops have proven to benefit students by using an individualized approach. Teachers meet students at their level during small group instruction and conferencing. They use this time to build relationships with each child and strengthen their confidence through positive reinforcement.

Teachers use the gradual-release model to teach reading and writing skills by providing whole group modeling, small group reinforcement and independent practice. Teachers in kindergarten through second grade focus on building foundational reading and writing skills through phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Third through fifth grade students build deeper comprehension and develop critical thinking skills through various genre studies. JES teachers are also committed to providing students with an authentic love and appreciation for reading. It is so exciting to see teachers every year creating a beautiful thematic classroom library space. Staff members spend hours organizing a plethora of books by genres so students have a warm and cozy reading area. By providing them with authentic literacy and choices, students’ personalities and uniqueness began to develop.

For students to deeply understand Math TEKS, JES teachers abide to teach concepts using the concrete-to-abstract and gradual-release models. Students are given the time to explore, build, draw, and manipulate concrete objects to develop understanding and gradually move to abstract thinking. Lessons are planned using the 5E model (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate) allowing teachers to monitor and adjust instruction as needed. Mathematics instruction focuses on numeracy in primary grades, while intermediate grade levels shift the focus to acquiring skills tied to problem solving and critical thinking, involving real-world application. Guided math in K-5 drives differentiated small group instruction where teachers provide specific immediate feedback and scaffold, reteach, and reinforce skills. At math stations, students engage in authentic hands-on activities to promote greater understanding of state standards. Additionally, to reinforce skills at home, parents are invited to participate in Family Learning Events to explore hands-on activities. Materials in both English and Spanish, along with examples, are provided to parents to take home to continue learning with their children.

The science program affords students the opportunity to apply critical thinking skills through inquiry-based lessons using science tools and the scientific method during classroom and outdoors investigations. Through this curricular approach, students are given opportunities to collaboratively investigate, explore, discuss, explain and evaluate different possibilities to solve a problem, resulting in a high level of engagement, quality discussion, and higher-level thinking. Students have access to a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) online science program that complements the state curriculum. This program assists teachers in presenting a portion of the curriculum through hands-on inquiry with requisite skills and resources. Students complete hands-on investigations aligned to state curriculum. For example, fourth and fifth grade students travel to a beautiful local ranch, which provides a perfect natural environment for the students to explore different concepts such as erosion, weathering and ecosystems—to name a few. To

showcase student learning, JES has an annual school-wide science fair, giving students the opportunity to share the results of investigations with the broader community. Additionally, selected teams participate annually at a district-wide science competition to apply skills acquired throughout the year.

Foundational skills for Social Studies are taught by aligning lessons with state standards in numerous ways. This includes integrating community, civic awareness, chronological and geographic skills, history, and government. Teachers incorporate content with reading through inquiry based learning, research, and group presentations. The JES focus is to create responsible citizens. Therefore, Social Studies includes multiple activities that promote civic awareness. A campus-wide initiative named “Jackson’s Essentials” encourages responsibility, compassion, and proper etiquette for students to follow in and outside of school. These essentials serve to build an individual’s self-esteem in preparation for real-life experiences. Students participate in the Veterans’ Day Program, local food drives, and a Career Day which involves guests from local city offices, historical museums, law enforcement, and community members. They are invited to provide tangible experiences for students so they can learn from successful role models and better understand the community around them.

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

JES is very fortunate to be able to enrich the core curriculum with classes in Physical Education, Art, Music and Library. Students attend a different class for 50 minutes each day allowing them opportunities to explore various skills and interests. Extra-curricular instruction is aligned to state standards.

In Music, students perform using a variety of methods including singing, dancing, and playing such instruments as drums, xylophones, ukuleles and recorders. Students also examine music as an interdisciplinary subject, relating it to history and geography. Studying music from around the world provides the students the opportunity to learn and appreciate other cultures. Musical vocabulary is introduced to each grade level in increasing complexity. Through dance, students develop a sense of internal rhythm and steady beat. A sense of spatial awareness enables them to artistically express themselves through movement. Throughout the academic term, students of each grade level produce an evening performance where they demonstrate their musical ability to families and members of the community. Students in fourth and fifth grade are invited to audition for an after-school program, Orff Ensemble, comprised of xylophones, drums, and other small percussion instruments. This ensemble provides an additional opportunity for JES students to craft and showcase their musicianship.

The Physical Education (PE) program at JES teaches students the requisite skills for living a healthy lifestyle while developing social, motor, and leadership skills through 135 minutes of physical activity per week. The entire student body participates in the Mile Club, wherein they compete by grade level to determine who can run the most miles in a set amount of time. Students also take part in a government-sponsored nutrition program that encourages students to make prudent food choices for healthy living. Fourth graders participate in a program sponsored by several golf organizations that incorporates early experiences in golf to instill such important values as respect, honesty, and dignity. This endeavor, moreover, encourages a lifestyle of physical fitness in children from low socioeconomic communities. In addition to these programs, students in third through fifth grade participate in the annual Fitness-Gram sponsored by The Cooper Institute. This national non-profit testing allows the teacher to monitor the physical ability and stamina of each student. PE and Health classes regularly incorporate Mathematics and Science into the PE curriculum. Students use skip counting to count repetitions and consistently apply addition and subtraction skills to keep score. Students also learn about the physiology of the human body including the muscular, skeletal and circulatory systems. PE at JES strives to create well-rounded students who are healthy and safe throughout their lives. Third through fifth-grade female students have participated in an after-school program that encourages character building as well as physical fitness. Over the course of three months, participants practice twice a week to prepare for a 5K race. While much of each session is spent running, physical fitness is not the primary goal of the program. Every practice begins with a mini-lesson and an activity that educates girls on such important topics as teamwork, anti-bullying, and self-esteem. Each practice ends with encouraging words from all team members and one member is lauded by the team for their accomplishments during practice that day. The program acts as a strong motivator for young women.

In order to develop students' artistic ability, the JES Art Department studies line, space, color, shape, form and texture while creating various projects that incorporate a variety of media. To accomplish this goal, students use a range of art supplies in lessons that incorporate geometry and spatial reasoning in assignments. Annually students participate in a cultural arts project that promotes interest, appreciation, and awareness of other cultures and world history. Students are invited to participate in several art competitions throughout the year, providing opportunities to explore, enhance their technique and critique their own work.

The library supports the strong learning system on campus. Students participate in literacy, library science lessons and hands-on critical thinking activities to engage students in creativity, problem-solving skills and technology. In addition, teachers are supported by Classroom Instructional Technology Specialists (CITS) who help develop engaging lessons. The CITS use technology application TEKS aimed at equipping our students with important computer skills and digital citizenship.

At JES, fine arts classes are cherished as a resource not only to incorporate core conceptual ideas, but also to contribute to academic growth while allowing students to express themselves in unanticipated ways.

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

JES consistently monitors numerous assessment sources to celebrate individual progress and identify instructional areas of improvement for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The data analysis from State Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) for students in third through fifth grade gives JES an opportunity to recognize areas in the state curriculum that some students have difficulty mastering. Once these areas are identified, the TEKS are emphasized in the instructional plans by nine-week periods, known at JES as "hot spots". Hot spots are re-taught multiple times throughout the year and are spiraled in common formative assessments crafted in a collaborative effort by teachers and facilitators.

For students in kindergarten through second grade, phonemic awareness inventories and universal screeners such as the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), are administered three times per year, while developmental reading assessments are given at the end of every grading period. JES uses these tools in measuring growth in reading level, accuracy, fluency and comprehension. Additionally, teachers analyze the data from the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) to assess the progress and identify areas of crucial growth that are supported using English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) collaborates periodically throughout the year and identifies linguistic accommodations to support the second language needs of every ELL student.

When planning instruction, JES begins with the end in mind. The facilitators have both passion and curriculum expertise that is brought to the table when working with teachers. The assessments are analyzed in bi-monthly data team meetings to review progress, strengths and skills for improvement. As a result, a plan of action for the grading period is crafted to address TEKS that need to be re-taught, requirements for future CFAs, spiral review activities and research-based strategies that promote student engagement. Facilitators support the implementation of selected strategies by modeling in the classrooms, coaching teachers through the process and addressing questions and feedback.

Furthermore, weekly content grade-level planning between facilitators and teachers allows for discussion addressing unwrapped TEKS, content vocabulary, sentence stems, engaging cooperative strategies, resources, and visual supports, which helps create comprehensive quality lessons for Tier I instruction. Additionally, various structures are utilized to enhance Tier I support including small group differentiated instruction, independent skill-based practice, and the re-teaching of skills not yet mastered. These structures give teachers the time to work with students' multiple times and collect data. When students are not progressing as expected, even with Tier 1 instruction, they are referred to the problem-solving team for further interventions.

JES provides multiple interventions to meet diverse learning needs. Tier 2 small group intervention begins in the classroom. Teachers or facilitators engage with struggling students on targeted skills using a variety of

effective practices such as, but not limited to, phonics instruction, fluency, comprehension, interactive problem-solving, and technology-based programs. Students who do not make significant progress after Tier 2 are referred for more specific Tier 3 interventions.

One-to-one or daily small group Tier 3 interventions take place between facilitators and students who are still not meeting expected growth. One of the Tier 3 interventions used for reading and writing identifies first graders not performing at expected levels. They subsequently participate in a research-based, individualized, intensive instructional program designed to accelerate learning. Students who participate in this intensive reading intervention in first grade are monitored for the next four years to ensure continued growth and progress.

Students who have not been successful throughout the three-tiered intervention process are referred for additional testing. The student progress of those who qualify to receive special education and 504 services is closely monitored throughout the year at every grading period. At the annual meeting, parents, teachers, and administration review the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plans and use evaluations, teacher observations and data to adjust any modifications or accommodations as needed. Students receiving special education services use a reading and math-based program that targets specific learning goals correlated with each student's IEP.

Closing the achievement gap at JES has been a school wide responsibility. High expectations are the norm the moment the school doors open in the morning. The students' academic, social, and emotional weaknesses are identified early and intentional targeted instruction and mentoring begins as early as the third day of school. Extending the learning time, before school, after school, and in summer programs, has played a major part in the success of JES students. These deliberate and structured practices combined with the passion, energy and relentless efforts of the JES staff have produced favorable results including student engagement, ownership of learning, and ultimately one of the greatest achievements of all – closing the achievement gap.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

---

### 1. School Climate/Culture:

JES student success results from the staff embracing a family culture. Staff takes responsibility for helping students and going the extra mile to support them. K-5 grade teachers volunteer to tutor after school 45 minutes, twice per week. Support staff also volunteers to mentor students for 20 minutes daily. The nurse assists organizing and delivering over 150 meals for afterschool programs and the receptionist—being the first face visitors see in the building—genuinely connects with families to assist them with their needs. These are examples of daily actions that contribute to academic and emotional growth at JES.

Celebrating success is key at JES. Students are rewarded on a regular basis for their character, behavior, academics, growth, and attendance. The “Blue-Star” school-wide incentive program promotes character and respectful behavior. Staff members nominate students weekly. Names are drawn, announced and students are rewarded with brag tags. The counselor initiates a student body success assembly where student achievement and other recognitions are celebrated. JES staff uses this platform to give “Shout Outs” to peers and students recognizing extraordinary efforts and teamwork. Teachers and administrative staff also hold individual goal-setting conferences with students. This process assists students in setting attainable goals for future growth and success.

Professional growth is fostered through goal setting with administrators. The instructional staff reflects on their practice and identifies areas to develop. Action items are discussed collaboratively to ensure needed support and resources are available. As teachers develop and grow, they are recognized and validated for their efforts through walkthrough feedback and positive notes. Additionally, teachers are recognized and rewarded for their efforts at staff meetings, weekly announcements, and the end of the year staff assembly. JES’s school culture promotes and values teachers’ knowledge and creativity. Teachers often share expertise with their colleagues through professional development, lesson planning, and PLCs. JES believes in growing talent, which is why teachers feel comfortable collaborating with teammates and administrators, while taking risks for the greater good of all students.

One tradition which enhances JES’s climate is the implementation of a school-wide theme. From hallway bulletin boards to classroom windows, each year the staff brings a school-wide theme to life! This provides the campus with a common connection and whimsical entertainment students and families truly enjoy! This year’s theme “Let’s Get Emojinal about Learning,” gave the team an opportunity to emphasize an energetic, positive thinking, and fun approach to learning.

The JES staff takes pride in the dedication, enthusiasm, and passion to serve others. This “serving heart” attitude is a characteristic that makes JES a special place. The staff feels truly privileged to be part of an amazing team where the love for students conquers all!

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

JES parents and community volunteers play an integral part in promoting an educational partnership among the school system, community, and the home. Parents and community members provide encouragement and positive representations for young learners.

Many family events have become annual traditions. A “Meet the Teacher Night” is held before the start of each new school year. At this event, parents and students enter the building to discover the new theme for the school year. Families also meet new teachers and receive vital school information and forms ensuring a smooth first day. At the end of the first grading period, report cards are distributed at a parent-teacher conference where student strengths and weaknesses are discussed. In an effort to create a collaborative relationship, a mutual compact is discussed and signed by the teacher, parent, and student to work together for the welfare of the child. JES hosts many events that encourage parent participation. These offerings include visiting the child’s classroom throughout the year and partaking in educational activities. Family members also participate in Pastries with Parents, Grandparents’ Day, Literacy Night, Math Night, a

monthly musical program, and STAAR night to raise awareness of state testing expectations. Parents are also encouraged to be an active member on the Site Based Committee and the LPAC.

Local churches, businesses, and non-profit organizations are actively interested in the success of JES. These shareholders gain personal satisfaction by serving in high poverty communities. Throughout the year, these groups are committed to maintaining a close connection with the JES families. At the beginning of each school year, backpacks filled with school supplies are donated to JES students. Students are also given lunch bags filled with foods that include easy-to-prepare meals and snacks for the weekend. Healthy meals are provided after school to students who participate in after-school activities. During the holidays, more than 100 families pick up meals delivered to the campus for their loved ones to enjoy. Christmas presents and meals are donated to families that would be unable to provide for their children. After the floods and hurricane disasters, these organizations again provided JES families with many basic necessities.

An observation, made by Babe Ruth, "It is hard to beat the person who never gives up" rings true at JES. As a united team, all stakeholders, staff, parents, and community members, will continue to reach out and be the strong warriors the students need to help foster personal and academic success. These continuous collaborative efforts are evident in times of both challenges and triumphs.

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

Professional development (PD) results from a consideration of a number of sources including student data analysis, performance on state standards, campus needs, teacher walk-throughs, PLC discussions, and vertical team meetings. As staff members review data, plans are made to target professional development to enhance teacher and student learning.

Throughout the year, JES teams evaluate data from a variety of assessments, student work and teacher walk-throughs. The data is used to determine strengths and weakness of the students and staff. With these strengths and weaknesses at the forefront, the search to find, create, or plan appropriate PD begins. When research-based, best practices emerge that meet the prescribed weakness, the appropriate staff receives training. Using the Trainer of Trainer (TOT) model, additional support is provided throughout the year to guarantee the practice is properly implemented and is delivered effectively and with fidelity.

Every school year begins with the necessary PD that addresses the campus academic needs as evidenced on the mastery of TEKS, progress on Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). As an example of the philosophy, JES identified overall language and vocabulary development as a campus need. After much searching by JES administration, the research-based strategy "Picture Talks" was implemented to promote higher-order thinking and vocabulary development in students. All staff members were trained and facilitators received additional training. They modeled, observed and provided feedback regarding the implementation of this strategy for every teacher. At PLCs, teachers are given opportunities to self-reflect on their teaching approach, methods and effectiveness. This extra support has led to an increase in teacher capacity. Teachers have gained confidence about their skills and abilities for success which has improved their instructional practices. This process has led to improvements in students' vocabulary, oral language, and written expression as measured by campus, district, and state assessments at JES.

In addition to the in-house PD, the staff's continual education is supported through district, regional and national opportunities where presenters range from local to national experts in their respective fields. Teachers participate in multi-day training, such as The INTERACT Academy, an intensive five-day technology, and content-based learning experience. Other opportunities include summer PD, cohorts, book studies and online courses.

Campus administrators avail themselves of ample opportunities to advance their education through district sponsored PD offered during administrative monthly meetings, retreats, cohort gatherings, and conferences. Administrators introduce the new ideas learned to benefit the JES staff. For the current school year for example, the administrative team has invested in a growth mindset philosophy that has affected all JES

students and staff. This shift in mindset has encouraged growth in the belief of student's and staff's talents and possibilities.

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

The administrative team works tirelessly to develop tomorrow's leaders. JES's leadership philosophy is to inspire individuals to achieve extraordinary goals with a tremendous amount of teamwork by embracing change, building relationships, conquering challenges, and leading by example with fairness and integrity for the success and well-being of JES students. This team consists of the principal, assistant principal, counselor, nurse and content area facilitators. Each school year begins with a carefully designed action plan that focuses on team recommendations based on the team's analysis of current needs.

The principal and assistant principal set the tone as instructional leaders by supporting the curriculum and district initiatives. Campus expectations are an outgrowth of their understanding of strategies and methods to be implemented at each grade level. The counselor assists with student behavior, plans engaging student lessons for all classrooms throughout the year, and focuses on the emotional and social needs of all students in addition to managing the administration of all district and state assessments.

From the moment a child enrolls, he or she becomes part of the JES family. The school nurse begins her yearly screening early for height, weight, vision, hearing and vaccinations. Screening early in the year allows the nurse to quickly identify any student or family deficiencies that might hinder their learning and then provides resources to meet individual physical, emotional and social needs. Finally, JES administrative team reviews student history to learn specific academic needs and placement for student success.

The administrators spend much of their day in classrooms throughout the campus, assisting teachers with instruction, behavioral issues, reinforcing safety protocols, and helping students use their growth mindset. By being visible and having an open-door policy, administrators create a safe and collaborative campus climate. As role models for campus expectations, the JES administration team focuses on student achievement. School leadership ensures that initiatives, strategies, policies and programs are implemented with fidelity by being active participants in the disaggregation of data used to drive instruction. Professional relationships forged by JES administrative team with staff members, students, families and community members serve as an example of the expected behaviors.

Like all families, JES has disagreements. The administrative team begins every school year with the campus staff creating a social contract. Among the effective strategies is the 48-hour rule which fosters positive relationships and ongoing communication. All issues of misunderstanding have 48 hours to be resolved, and then it is back to business! We resume the pursuit of student achievement. Leadership is a shared responsibility when it comes to student success. The collaborative efforts, decisions and actions of the JES team, coupled with parent and community support have effectively closed the gaps in student achievement. At JES every child, every day has whatever it takes to reach their potential.

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

---

The main practice that contributes to the steady academic progress of JES students is the implementation of small group instruction in all grades across the curriculum. By utilizing assessment data in PLCs, teachers, facilitators and school leaders identify both strengths and weaknesses. These become the focal point for improved student learning. The faculty and staff believe the key to postsecondary readiness is a strong literacy foundation developed in the primary grades.

Small guided reading groups in kindergarten through second grade enable teachers to monitor students' foundational literacy skills. Teachers plan instruction based on what each student needs to develop reading proficiency. Professional development is planned for teachers throughout the year to provide the skills and strategies needed for ensuring student growth.

In third through fifth grade, teachers analyze campus and district assessment data to group students for critical thinking and skill-based differentiated instruction. Groups are created based on common instructional needs using appropriate strategies identified to address student weaknesses. In order to further narrow the focus, a specific unwrapped TEKS guides the instruction.

Teachers follow the Guided Math Model for small-group instruction in K-5. Once the gaps are identified at the PLCs, teachers use flexible grouping to reinforce foundational skills and to provide immediate feedback. This small group instruction grants students time to adjust their thinking and to breakdown multi-step word problems with teacher guidance. By using this structured setting, teachers can then scaffold concepts using concrete, visual and abstract models.

Beginning the first week of school, daily morning tutorials offer yet another small group instructional setting. Facilitators, homeroom teachers, and support staff guide students for 30 minutes through rigorous spiral reviews of reading and mathematics concepts. Fourth and fifth grade students with conceptual weaknesses are highly encouraged to attend these sessions.

After-school programs target instruction in small group settings for 90 minutes in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Students in third to fifth-grade are identified based on their performance according to performance on district's benchmarks. These students are grouped according to their needs while conceptual gaps are addressed through intentional and detailed lesson planning. Transportation is provided to increase student participation.

The intentionality of small group instruction has been a highly effective strategy that has closed the gap in successive stages. The staff works diligently to understand the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and they take a personal responsibility to student progress. The dedication, remarkable determination, and grit maintained by each team member throughout small group instruction is certainly noteworthy. This is what "Every child, Every day, Whatever it takes" looks like to the JES community.