

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Shelton Jones

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

Official School Name Nettie Marshall Academy Of Dual Language

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address Drawer 631521

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

<u>Nacogdoches</u>	<u>TX</u>	<u>75963-1521</u>
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Nacogdoches County

Telephone (936) 569-5062

Fax

Web site/URL http://nacisd-nmadl.ss5.sharpschool.com/

E-mail jrodriguez@nacisd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Alton Frailey

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail afrailey@nacisd.org

District Name Nacogdoches ISD Tel. (936) 569-5000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Pam Fitch

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 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	19	25	44
1	42	38	80
2	35	38	73
3	38	28	66
4	26	30	56
5	25	18	43
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	185	177	362

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 12 % Black or African American
 - 78 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 8 % White
 - 1 % 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: 9%

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	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	35
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	379
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 61 %
222 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: 89 %
Total number students who qualify: 323

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
26 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>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</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: 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	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
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.	7
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 18:1

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	97%	98%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 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.

As the provider of quality educational experiences, we will produce students who have the skills to be responsible citizens, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and effective communicators.

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

Nettie Marshall Academy of Dual Language is a magnet school in the Nacogdoches Independent School District. Enrollment is an option available to students who reside in the district’s attendance zone. Parents whose children do not live in the school’s attendance zone may also apply to enroll. Applications for each upcoming school year are available the prior February. Applications are considered in the order in which they are received. Students may be required to take a language assessment exam. There is no tuition charged, and transportation is available to students who live in the district.

PART III – SUMMARY

Originally known as West End Elementary School, the Nacogdoches Independent School District (NISD) changed the school's name to honor Nettie Marshall, a well-loved teacher in the county. Since its founding in 1954, both the district and the school have seen sweeping demographic changes. In the past 60 years, the City of Nacogdoches has more than tripled in population, from 12,327 then to over 37,000 today. The result has been that the population of the district and school have not mirrored that of the city or county for quite some time. In fact, two major demographics are relatively inverse in proportion to the county and the school, respectively.

In 2016, 19.3% of all residents in Nacogdoches County were Hispanic. For Nettie Marshall Academy of Dual Language, that population is 78.6%. Likewise, white residents make up 77.3% of the county but only 7.9% of the school. In addition to making an effort to create a rigorous and challenging educational environment to retain students in the school district, these percentages are one reason why NISD leaders opted in 2012 to create this magnet school option and to keep it as such, even when the district rezoned and streamlined or even discontinued some magnet programs in 2017. Nettie Marshall parents exerted a big influence over the district's decision, strongly advocating to continue the academic, social, and other programmatic factors that led the school to its current position of strength.

Nettie Marshall is rich in traditions of many kinds. Most notably, the tradition of high parent and community involvement is the keystone of student success over the past six years. Historic occasions are celebrated with annual events and performances befitting a Dual Language school. At the same time Cinco de Mayo is being celebrated, teachers are being honored during Teacher Appreciation Week. Parents love coming to the school and being part of honoring their students' teachers by preparing a luncheon and taking part in various acts that show their appreciation.

Academically, Nettie Marshall participates annually in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which has school-level and regional competitions. Nettie Marshall students also have a long-established tradition of taking part in the Daughters of the American Revolution, Junior American Citizens Contest, which instills the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and teaches students to appreciate American heritage and history. Historically, Nettie Marshall has a high percentage of awards in the Nacogdoches County area. It is not uncommon for Nettie Marshall to earn several 1st place winners at the national level each year.

Another exciting educational endeavor that Nettie takes part in each year is the Young Audiences Arts for Learning-Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools Contest. The winners attend an awards ceremony where each student reads their poem in front of hundreds of people and leaves the ceremony with a book compiled of all the winning poems. In addition, each poem is published in a Texas regional magazine, thus, each student becomes a published poet! The 1st-place poem for 12th grade receives college scholarship money, setting a good example for the younger students who attend.

Each year, every classroom adopts a college or university to encourage college and career readiness. Each week, students present key facts, perform cheers, and memorize mottos from their adopted institution of higher education. This allows students to increase their knowledge of post-secondary opportunities. Every student has a part, and all proudly wear their college t-shirts in celebration.

Nettie Marshall's raucous "work hard, play hard" culture has bound the learning community together as a family, and it has built a solid foundation for today's academic, emotional, social, and collaborative learning successes. At the heart of it all is the Dual Language Academic Model, which encompasses peer support, peer tutoring, and a culture of cooperation by pairing English-dominant and Spanish-dominant students so they can learn with and from each other. The rigor of this program, coupled with its structured teamwork, provides the environment in which kids excel. Teachers teach to the top 25% and provide scaffolded instruction to elevate other students to this level of performance.

The key strategy of school wide academic interventions is built into the daily schedule. Nettie Marshall named this intervention time PARK (Preparing Academic Readers with Knowledge), and this individualized

time is valued throughout the campus. Administrators and teachers do not disrupt this time unless it is absolutely necessary. Each classroom benefits from six adults who divide the class by reading level and provide intensive, targeted assistance to every child for 30 minutes each school day. Small groups and consistent PARK time means teachers really know their students' needs. Another key strategy is the weekly reading log, which parents monitor and sign. Much thought and effort is put into motivating students to read which has led to the fact that students love to read! It is not unusual to hear students calling out, "I read my book last night" when getting off the bus in the morning, which is reflective of literacy being a primary focus of Nettie Marshall.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Nettie Marshall's Core Curriculum is based on the Texas Education Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which are the Texas State academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education in 1997. The TEKS span all instructional grade levels and content areas, and specify key teaching methods and goals for English-speaking and English-language Learners (ELLs) up to grade 5. The TEKS include standards for core content areas as well as electives.

All teachers are well versed in the TEKS for their subject area(s), and all participate in weekly professional development (PLC time, whole-school workshops, district-level seminars, etc.) to hone their delivery of the academic content and improve students' mastery of the standards. Teachers have flexibility as to how to incorporate the TEKS into reading instruction, and they are supported by a variety of engaging activities and events.

Nettie Marshall's primary Spanish and English/Language Arts/Reading focus is that every child will end the school year on grade level and develop a love for reading. Teachers use a combination of research-based strategies to accomplish this goal, including guided reading groups based on reading level, literacy stations, writing across the curriculum, and think-aloud strategies using mentor texts. These strategies build students' reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing skills. This year teachers have also focused on building phonemic awareness and phonics skills in kindergarten through second grade through a structured phonics curriculum in both English and Spanish. A computer-based program tracks students' reading skill development and progress. Teachers, interventionists, and student interns all work together and use a leveled library of books in both Spanish and English to enhance and scaffold students' reading experience.

Starting in kindergarten, Math instruction allows students to explore math concepts in concrete ways through manipulatives, hands-on activities, math stations, and songs. Math instruction is delivered in the English language; therefore, language acquisition supports are imperative. As students develop foundational skills in number sense, patterns, and graphing, they also build their problem-solving skills. They begin the transition to the abstract by using math journals to draw pictures and create and solve their own story problems. Math journaling continues through 5th grade to support writing across the curriculum, use as a student made reference tool, aid in metacognition, and as a resource for parent conferences. By utilizing TEKS-based math stations in all classrooms, teachers meet the needs of all students by selecting small groups for targeted instruction. Anchor charts and peer tutoring with bilingual pairs play a big part in helping Spanish-dominant students make the transition to English. Students in grades 1-5 participate in the math fluency competition, Math Wars. This develops math fluency in a fun and competitive way, and teachers track progress with weekly assessments that are administered during the electives or "specials" rotation. Even the PE and Music teacher help students master the math TEKS. Teachers at all grade levels can assign lessons through a web-based program that targets specific skills and infuses technology into math instruction in an individualized and interactive way.

K-5 Science instruction is vertically aligned. Science is taught in the Spanish language in K-4, while grade 5 is used as a transition year to English-only instruction. Hands-on teaching methods build thinking skills from concrete to abstract application. Inquiry-based discovery learning helps students internalize content, while making connections to real-world scenarios. A local university hosts learning excursions for students in grades 1-5 that connect the local ecology to science TEKS. Excursions include lessons at the arboretum, planetarium, and local fisheries. Students identified as Gifted and Talented participate in a Robotic Student Seminar and learn about science through the use of simple and complex machines.

The Social Studies curriculum is taught in the Spanish language for grades K-4, with grade 5 being the transitional year into English. Weekly curriculum-based non-fiction newspapers introduce current events for Social Studies. Bilingual student pairing supports Spanish Language Learners and creates a cooperative learning system of support for language acquisition and content development. Leveled non-fiction readers aligned to the TEKS are integrated in a cross-curriculum format and enhance the multicultural climate. This

cross-curricular approach helps students develop content-based skills in reading, writing, and Social Studies, while applying skills to real world events. Social Studies themes are supported through annual cultural events and holidays, such as Fall Festival, Cinco de Mayo, President's Day, which come alive with parent involvement and support.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students are on a three-day rotation for “specials” classes: music, technology, and physical education. All lessons incorporate numerous TEKS and national standards for each grade level. Teachers of these enriching classes stay current on what is being taught in the core curriculum areas at each grade level and make a point to integrate that content in their instructional area so as to further enhance instruction with their interdisciplinary approach. On any given day, campus visitors might witness history lessons augmented by music of the time period, science-focused physical education activities highlighting the circulatory system, or computer applications designed to also build math or reading skills to name just a few examples.

Visual art is incorporated across the curriculum. Students showcase their artwork which also enhances the print-rich environment that supports English Language Learners. In music, students enthusiastically participate in musicals to celebrate holidays and special occasions. They begin reading and learning basic music notation and vocabulary in kindergarten, just as they are learning sight words and phonics. In keeping with the Dual Language school structure, music vocabulary and terms are noted both in English and in Spanish throughout the classroom. When students are learning about important historical figures in social studies, they are also exposed to music of that time period in music class. This helps bring these figures to life for all students. Students learning about rhyming words and syllables sing songs with rhyming words and learn that syllables act for words like beats do in music. Instruction on musical tempo and meter also tie in to math concepts and lessons.

Older students are able to take the values of various music notes and turn them into math problems, simultaneously helping them understand a key musical concept and reinforcing their math skills. Finally, students are allowed to create and explore within the music classroom. Each week, they have opportunities to express themselves artistically, grow and develop physically.

Technology is interactive at Nettie Marshall. Digital learning and mobile devices are being used in multiple ways. Students use a variety of applications on their tablets to help gain a deeper understanding of different forms of media, such as, creating digital stories. A classroom application is used to send digital learning assignments to their teacher, collaborate with other students, and access assignments at home. Students participate daily in research-based online curriculum programs across core subject areas and are learning technology skills through a structured computer elective. Several web based programs are also used weekly for formative assessments and review. Students at Nettie Marshall are digital learners and are gaining the skills needed to make them successful for their future.

Physical education also features annual recurring events. Students at all grade levels participate in Field Day each spring. Jump Rope for Heart is a campus favorite for all grades that also teaches important self-care habits and develops growing bodies. PE lessons expand on this by including specific lessons on healthy choices, exercise, and diet.

In summary, the faculty and staff of Nettie Marshall work hard to integrate all subjects because doing so gives every child an understanding of connections between and among disciplines, concepts, skills, and the creative application of each.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Nettie Marshall Academy for Dual Language has a highly structured instructional model that leads to the ultimate goal that all children are bilingual and biliterate by grade 5. Teachers differentiate instruction by student language and skill level, incorporate ESL teaching strategies, and hold after-school tutorials to

accelerate instruction and provide enrichment. Daily lesson plans include higher-level questioning strategies and focus on the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Students in K-1 are taught Reading in their first language (English or Spanish). In grade 2, Reading/Language Arts teachers partner and share students, with one teacher providing instruction in English and the other in Spanish. This approach, combined with the pairing of English- and Spanish-dominant students to help each other, provides an immersive environment in which all children are supported to develop their oral, writing, and speaking skills in both languages. Mathematics is taught in English instruction only because numbers are more universal and allows for the use of more manipulatives that support content sheltering and hands on learning. Writing across the curriculum means interactive journals feature prominently not just in Reading/Language Arts but also in Math, Science, and Social Studies. Students receive approximately half of their daily instruction in each of the two languages, giving them ample practice time to develop their bilingual fluency.

Texas state tests are written on the upper level of Bloom's Taxonomy; therefore, teachers must plan rigorous lessons and present instruction in ways to train the brain to think at higher levels of cognition. Planning rigorous and relevant lessons allows Nettie Marshall to teach to the top 25% of students and scaffold for the others when needed. With all of these supports in place, students are succeeding academically, and teachers continue to close their achievement gaps. The district's primary assessment is the state-mandated, criterion-referenced State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). At the elementary level, STAAR Reading and STAAR Math are administered to students in grades 3-5. Grade 4 students are also assessed in Writing, and grade 5 students are also assessed in Science.

Teachers of students in K-2 administer the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) and Tejas LEE. This one-on-one diagnostic instrument is a highly reliable early reading assessment of students' individual reading development. The TPRI/Tejas LEE benchmark is given three times each year and consists of a Screening Section, which quickly helps teachers identify students who may be at risk of reading difficulty, and an Inventory Section, which provides teachers with specific information about a student's strengths and weaknesses in all basic reading skills:

District-created Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBAs) monitor TEKS achievement for students in grades 2-5. Classroom teachers also give weekly instructional unit tests and monitor overall student performance every three weeks. In addition, all students' reading levels are assessed three times each year to monitor progress and provide or adjust targeted interventions during 30 minutes of daily PARK time.

Teachers assess student's progress in mathematics with an engaging blended learning math program that presents students with questions at the same level of rigor they can expect on the state-mandated assessment. This allows students to practice the basic algorithms of various types of problems and challenges them to read questions critically and set up problems correctly. It has been an effective tool for data-driven instruction, allowing teachers to target individual areas of academic weakness by assigning practice sets according to what they need, not just what comes next in the scope and sequence. The program is technologically engaging and offers an individualized, interactive element that simply cannot be replicated by teacher-led large-group instruction.

Finally, NISD has been working with a highly experienced team of Texas-based expert educators for the past three years to improve teacher quality and student achievement district wide. This organization uses evidence-based strategies, tools, and processes to help schools realize change in leadership capacity, instructional effectiveness, teacher content knowledge, educator skill sets, and data disaggregation.

Nettie Marshall has worked hard to close achievement gaps with rigorous instructional focus. Intervening with a student that is not at the expected level for his age and grade level is of the utmost importance to the entire faculty in their efforts to get each student where they need to be.

In addition to the daily "sacred" 30 minutes of individualized PARK intervention time described earlier, Nettie Marshall students participate in individualized, and/or self-paced computer-based interventions according to student need.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Nettie Marshall staff believe that, when children are connected, cared for, and communicated with, they feel safer and do better in school. On this firm foundation rests a growth mindset that includes and impacts everyone in the learning community. Students set academic, social, and emotional goals in regular student conferences and then work hard to achieve the next level of success. A “No Excuses University” philosophy promotes post-secondary planning and encourages all students to develop college and career readiness skills.

Staff also feel valued, and it shows in their day-to-day work as well as in the low turnover rate. Administrators, teachers, and other staff are supported by district leadership who see them as competent professionals. Longstanding collegial relationships give rise to trusting professional interactions and a continuous learning cycle between and among educators. Staff participate in key decisions, including hiring and campus planning. Lead educators mentor new teachers, staff celebrate each other’s birthdays and important life events.

Embracing students’ families deepens their collective commitment to and support of rigorous academic goals. Parents and community members show they care by volunteering at campus events and providing luncheons to appreciate everyone’s hard work.

A school wide Random Acts of Kindness initiative has had an impressive impact on student behavior and on school climate overall. Established by the School Counselor, this movement has raised awareness of how people can impact others by doing kind acts. It has also significantly diminished unwanted behaviors campus-wide.

A school wide classroom management system provides a consistent framework that builds relationships. All teachers stand at their doors and greet students with handshakes, welcoming smiles, and warm words of encouragement, setting the tone for the lessons ahead. In the presence of a misbehaving student, instead of giving in to anger or a need to control the situation, the teacher asks four questions for the student to answer: What are you doing? What are you supposed to be doing? Are you doing it? What are you going to do about it? This approach gently but firmly redirects the student and holds them accountable for their actions through self-correction.

Over time, a culture of achievement has arisen that is evident through continually improving academic results. In 2013-14, Nettie Marshall achieved the highest state rating but had earned no academic distinction designations. By 2014-15, the school was recognized for academic achievement in reading/language arts and by 2016-17 had earned four additional distinctions of achievement in math, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness. This is quantifiable proof that Nettie Marshall’s climate and culture supports—and increases—success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Because staff, students, and families feel connected and valued, the quantity and quality of their engagement with each other and with the work of education is evident and ever-improving. Nettie Marshall’s parents, families, and community members are active and visible on campus daily, often lunching with their children or helping prepare for the next historical or cultural celebration. They volunteer in classrooms and for school events, donate needed items to staff and students, support and celebrate staff, and enthusiastically acknowledge learning community successes. One standout example of this is Teacher Appreciation Week, during which parents eagerly prepare a celebratory luncheon and take part in various acts to show honor and appreciation for their child’s teachers.

An area church that has adopted Nettie Marshall arranges a luncheon for all staff members at the beginning of each school year and provides an enticing array of supplies for teachers. Throughout the school year,

church members continue to participate in school events and surprise teachers with special treats. Each year, Nettie Marshall's Fall Festival is marked by high community participation, donations from area residents and businesses, and the committed involvement of teachers, staff, students, parents, and families all spending quality time together. They eat dinner, play games, and have fun. Many parents plan for this night by taking off work in advance.

Evening parenting classes in English and Spanish help strengthen the home-school connection and emphasize parents' key role as their child's first teacher. Ongoing family involvement activities introduce parents to the importance of academic rigor and the impact of high expectations for learning. These activities have a direct impact on both individual student success and overall school improvement.

Students are a big part of family and community engagement as well. Each year, those interested in student council begin their campaigns by making posters and giving speeches that show how they wish to help the school and their peers. Once the student council positions are filled, students get to work on finding fun ways to improve their learning community. Student council members also give back by working with community-based organizations on such endeavors as raising money to help students who are in need of glasses and holding a banquet that celebrates all special education students for their achievements.

Nettie Marshall's engagement with an institution of higher education: Stephen F. Austin University's College of Education allows for enhancement of the reading program, as SFA interns and student teachers observe classes, assist classroom teachers, or work with students in small group settings. Nettie Marshall students also benefit from learning excursions to the SFA campus for stimulating, hands-on science opportunities that excite and engage their minds.

3. Professional Development:

Nettie Marshall's approach to professional development is that it is continual. There is always something for everyone to learn. All classroom teachers meet by grade level for one hour of Professional Learning Community (PLC) time every week that school is in session. This dedicated time means teachers can focus on what is working and not working for individual students with regard to their teaching practice and for their grade level or the school as a whole. Teachers use this time to review assessment data, discuss child- or content-specific issues, conduct joint planning sessions, review curriculum materials and their alignment to the state standards (TEKS), discuss and create new lessons or programs, and handle any other school and student business.

Other staff, school leaders, and internal or external consultants also make use of this dedicated time for staff learning and development. The Technology Specialist, for example, meets teachers during PLC time to train them on computer-based academic interventions, support and model the integration of technology into the core curriculum, and demonstrate best practices in technology use and care. The Technology Specialist also hosts periodic trainings to encourage teachers to use new equipment or apps in their instruction, which encourages an element of fun as well as professional challenge.

In addition to this dedicated PLC time, all Nettie Marshall teachers participate in over 40 hours of professional development each year in specific content and topics as directed by the Campus Improvement Plan. All teachers have attended the initial week-long training for the Dual Language program and have received additional training in ESL strategies to use in the classroom. Staff attending national, state, or regional trainings return to share their learning with colleagues. Nacogdoches ISD also contracts with the regional Educational Service Center for individualized teacher training as well as with a researched/phonics based educational center, which believes that "reading is a right, and success is the outcome". To this end, teachers are provided evidence-based training and support the knowledge and skills needed to teach all students to read.

Administrators and other campus leaders attend summer leadership conferences each year and professional development meetings each month. They have access to webinars on accountability and research-based instructional strategies and are supported by district and campus content specialists and external consultants. Regular book studies bring administrators together with other leaders from across the district

to read and discuss such works as *Get Better Faster* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo. This “cross-pollination” of ideas and strategies further enhances Nettie Marshall’s school-specific approaches to professional practice.

4. School Leadership:

Nettie Marshall’s school leaders trust the expertise of teachers and allow them to use their training and their professional judgment to make a difference every day. The leadership team is focused on teacher input with very limited micromanaging. Rather, the Principal, supported by the Curriculum and Instructional Coach and the school-based Counselor, is free to serve as instructional leader. He visits every teacher at least twice weekly, searching for evidence of success—good teaching strategies and consistent classroom management—providing support wherever it is needed.

Nettie Marshall’s collaborative leadership team relies on the demonstrated effectiveness of the district’s disciplinary management system, the school’s classroom management program, and the Dual Language instructional model. Within these structures lies the freedom for teachers to innovate and do whatever it takes to reach the district, school, and individual student goals. Just as the servant leadership approach supports the teachers, the teachers support each other, and the “peers helping peers” approach wraps around every member of the Nettie Marshall learning community to create a warm, loving, and nurturing environment.

The Curriculum and Instructional Coach’s role is one of support and service to teachers and teaching assistants on campus. She does not evaluate teachers but, instead, serves in a collegial and supportive way by modeling lessons and offering suggestions on improving instructional techniques and teaching methods. She compiles the data from district assessments and helps teachers analyze results, make instructional decisions, and group (or regroup) students for intervention based on their quantifiable progress. A key component of her role is to facilitate all PLC sessions across all grade levels and content areas. She also assists the Principal in training staff on professional development days, emphasizing a growth mindset at every opportunity.

The Counselor supports Nettie Marshall’s academic foundation by having a strong relationship with each campus teacher and working as a collaborative team to provide the social and emotional learning for each student. She plans, implements, and evaluates a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program based on student and learning community needs and coordinates a plethora of other key programs and initiatives that support and enhance academic learning. These include counseling individual students and small groups, coordinating campus standardized testing, and implementing Red Ribbon Week activities to educate the students at Nettie Marshall about the dangers of drugs. She also supports students by providing school supplies and backpacks so no child goes without what they need to be successful at school and works with the district’s Social Worker to coordinate home visits to provide resources and referrals to parents and families in need.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Everyone agrees: the ONE instructional practice that underlies academic success at Nettie Marshall is its Dual Language program. Training students' brains to think (and read and write and speak!) in two languages develops their cognitive skills at a higher level. Research by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as well as international research also substantiate this claim and has shown that bilingual children have stronger skills and greater capacity in language, memory, and attention.

Students who learn two languages have better language and listening skills; are better at reading and writing; are more creative; are better at multitasking skills; have a sharper memory; are better at solving problems; have a chance to make more friends; and find better jobs later in life.

There is even evidence to suggest that bilingualism provides health benefits, such as delaying the onset of dementia.

Nettie Marshall's leaders and teachers know—and see in action daily—that the structure of its Dual Language program builds students' social and emotional skills as well, including empathy and perspective-taking, in addition to their metalinguistic awareness. The practice of pairing an English-dominant and a Spanish-dominant student in the early grades builds teamwork, cooperation, confidence, and language skills while teaching students and teachers that it is okay to work outside one's individual comfort zone.

Nettie Marshall parents overwhelmingly support the Dual Language program on the campus because the school is teaching all students the skills they need to be successful in school and the world, while at the same time giving value to their language and culture. The school validates the parent's language by sending all communication in both languages, having translators available for all parent meetings, providing bilingual communication at special events and parent nights, and correctly labeling the school in both languages. Once parents become aware of the equality given to both languages and cultures, they are empowered as their child's first teacher and feel worthy of supporting classroom instruction in their native language.

In summary, Nettie Marshall's Dual Language program further reinforces and strengthens the culture of rigor and relatedness that pervades the campus. It creates inclusivity and embraces others. It engenders respect and supports achievement. It is a practice as well as a collective identity. It is the ONE instrumental practice responsible for closing gaps across all subjects, grades, and ages.

We are bilingual. We are bicultural. We are biliterate. We are Nettie Marshall.