



## **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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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>	24	41	65
<b>K</b>	20	27	47
<b>1</b>	19	25	44
<b>2</b>	18	28	46
<b>3</b>	14	28	42
<b>4</b>	24	22	46
<b>5</b>	19	26	45
<b>6</b>	26	19	45
<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>	164	216	380

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 3 % Black or African American
  - 52 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 41 % 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: 4%

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.

<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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	392
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 17 %  
65 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 71 %  
Total number students who qualify: 271

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %  
33 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>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>21</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</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: 41
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.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
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 21:1

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	97%	97%	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.

<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. 2009

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

Mumford Elementary School will provide an excellent academic education to all students in a safe, structured, friendly environment.

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**

---

Mumford Elementary School (MES), one of the two campuses at Mumford Independent School District, has a rich history of investing and providing a quality education to the youth of its community. The school is located in the very small town of Mumford, Texas, a rural unincorporated community in Robertson County. The town was founded in 1867, flourishing quickly that by the mid 1890's the town was populated with more than 500 residents, and several businesses. A devastating flood in 1899 caused so much damage that most of the businesses were destroyed. Recently the post office, general store, and cotton gin were closed leaving the school as the only business. There are currently about 100 citizens living in the farming community of Mumford.

Mumford School was established in 1917 by Lilian Welch Collier. It began as a two-teacher school with about 20 students. The status of Mumford Independent School District was achieved in 1925. In 1976 there were 90 students in grades kindergarten-eight and a faculty of five. In 1985 Mumford increased its size with the addition of a pre-kindergarten program, and in 1999, the commitment was made to add on a high school level, one grade level per year. While the school expanded, it simultaneously increased in popularity not only with students and families in the district, but also in neighboring communities. Mumford School is quite literally the equivalent of the movie *Field of Dreams*, which included the famous saying, "If you build it, they will come." The teachers and staff at Mumford have built and created an amazing school, focused on high expectations and academic rigor and families and students have come from all around! In 2000 Mumford School was separated into two campuses: a high school (7th grade and up) and elementary (pre-K through 6th). The district has grown to four building complexes, two gyms, two cafeterias, four computer labs, and a recently constructed state of the art baseball and softball complex. MES today consists of 380 students and 20 teachers. Its population is comprised of 71% of the students being economically disadvantaged and 17% being limited English-proficient. We have a diverse student ethnic composition of 52% Hispanic, 41% White, 3% African-American, 3% two or more races, and 1% Asian.

Since there are no businesses in Mumford, the school is challenged with a very low tax base. Aside from property taxes, the only taxes provided are from farming and minerals, the latter being lowered substantially over the last few years due to mineral values decreasing. Even with this limitation, MES has done a great job keeping costs low, for instance the school's expenditures per student for instruction is \$3717 compared to the state average of \$5,317. The school leadership believes in saving money, with this simple mindset: there is no need for frilly programs and fancy classes, but you do need solid teaching, consistent expectations, and a safe, structured, disciplined environment for a successful school and students. Many of same staff work both campuses, all the facilities and administrative personal are also shared, which is a cost saving strategy and provides for consistent leadership.

Sharing the same administration and staff is a very unique feature of MES as it provides the students a familial environment and a sense of consistency, security, and safety. When students feel safe and comfortable they are free to develop in all aspects: academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. The students know the administration, staff, and environment, when students move from elementary to high school the transition is smooth, not emotionally overwhelming or intimidating. This allows students to focus on excelling academically. There are several programs which we offer to our younger students to socialize with older students and physically grow: fall festivals, school wide pep rallies, Easter egg hunts, mini sports camps, mini cheer program, just to name a few. All students are provided breakfast as part of their daily schedule to be sure they have good nourishment for physical, mental, and academic stamina. Students present heritage projects to classmates each year celebrating their cultural backgrounds and traditions. Built into the daily schedule are tutorials and tiered intervention programs to help with academics. Mumford's motto "Academic Excellence" is instilled in everyone who works with the students. All these programs and philosophy work well, as evident by the high ratings that Mumford School has received from The Texas Education Agency (TEA) over the years, as well as a previous Blue Ribbon Award in 2009 from the U.S. Department of Education. The most recent TEA ratings rating in 2017 mirror previous year's performance and include a "Met Standard" rating and six Distinction Designations: Academic Achievement in ELA/Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies, and Top 25% Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps and Postsecondary Readiness. Receiving the Blue Ribbon Award in 2009, made

a positive impact on MES and the community. It allowed for notoriety on a larger scale and has drawn experienced teachers from larger school district to desire employment at MES. The 2009 Blue Ribbon award did not cause MES to change much. Instead, it re-affirmed our educational philosophy was working; it did set the bar high with the challenge of continuing to push for academic success and continued high standards.

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

---

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

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the guiding principles of MES's curriculum for each subject area. Teachers participate in horizontal and vertical-alignment meetings and share in dissecting and analyzing the TEKS to form a continuum of learning from year to year. Each teacher understands the expectations of what the students should know coming into the classroom and what they should master before they can advance to the next grade. The school operates in a block schedule format to give additional time to core content area. The goal is to help create well-rounded youth; meeting the challenge of educating them socially, academically, physically and artistically.

The English/Language Arts (ELA) curriculum includes subject areas of reading, grammar /writing, phonics, and spelling. Reading is at the center of Mumford's ELA curriculum. The lower grade levels focus on heavy phonics-based instructional programs. The curricula program was chosen because it builds each year from pre-kindergarten through 6th grade and stresses the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Reading classes utilize computer assessments provided by an online reading comprehension program. Writing and grammar are also an integral part of the curricula, using consistent grading rubrics from year to year. Each student has a writing portfolio that is kept as they progress through grade levels, not only is this a teaching tool, but when students graduate they are presented with their writing samples and papers, which is great fun for the kids. Teachers spend 170 minutes a day for ELA, assigning 70 minutes each day for reading and 30 minutes for independent reading. Encouraging students to have a love for reading is important for success and there are several activities and programs implemented to help build this interest. Book fairs are held twice a year with special book characters appearing to "visit" our students. Each six weeks those who meet a predetermined goal are rewarded with a party, also we have an "Accelerated Reading (AR) Carnival" at the end of the year.

The math curriculum was chosen because it encourages students to be problem solvers, independent thinkers, use logical and deductive reasoning, and to link classroom math to the real world. Math is a subject area that continuously builds beginning with the foundational skills of understanding of numerical fluency, number sense, and understanding numerical place value. This begins in pre-kindergarten with students using math in aspects such as patterns, shapes, and calendar activities and progresses through the sixth grade with students learning such things as: ratios to describe direct proportional relationships, geometry, measurement, probability, and working with decimals and fractions. Math is heavily emphasized as teachers spend 80 minutes a day on math objectives. Teachers and students are physically involved in lessons, using a "hands-on" learning approach by doing, creating, building, examining, exploring, and discovering math objectives. Students who are having difficulty are provided additional time during the school day and after school when the teachers can assist students with individual needs. The use of research-based programs and supplemental learning games and activities are used to promote the mastering of the math curriculum.

Science lessons from the curriculum allow students to learn how to investigate and observe. The lessons provide hands-on exploration of the students' surroundings. Our goal is that all students will be able to understand and apply the scientific method to different aspects of their lives, to be critical thinkers, to ask questions, and to seek the answers. Also, students are provided knowledge of physical, earth, and life sciences. Students utilize the science lab for hands-on experiments, and the curricula ensures vertical alignment that begins with a strong foundation in vocabulary and basic concepts that will continue to build from year to year.

The social studies curricula chosen focuses on understanding the importance of communities while incorporating history, cultures, citizenship, geography and economics. Foundational skills, in lower grades focus on the value of community and citizenship; students are able to examine how they are a part of a community within their classroom, their school, their town, etc. In fourth–sixth grade, students learn in depth about Texas History, American History, and World History. Being a good citizen and having civic responsibilities is an integral part of the social studies curricula and is experienced firsthand by students participating in community food drives, toy drives, and mock elections.

MES offers a full day pre-kindergarten three and four year old program, providing a rich learning environment to teach basic rules, routines and procedures of how to function in a school setting. The goal of pre-K is to teach the foundational skills so students are kindergarten ready and can be successful in school. About 70% of pre-K students become school ready and are beginning readers. Curriculum and pre-K guidelines cover the areas of social/emotional development, language/communication, emergent literacy in reading and writing, math, science, social studies, fine arts, physical development and health, and technology. Curricula is vertically aligned with standards taught in grades K-3 and upward. Teachers utilize the CLI Engage platform, a kindergarten readiness progress monitoring tool, to provide interventions and communications with parents, to help ensure student success.

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

MES values student participation and learning in many non-core curriculum subjects such as health/PE, fine arts, and technology. Students attend 50-minute classes of art, music, and PE/health classes on a rotating basis, with PE occurring 3 times, music once, and art once. Teachers integrate technology skills into their core classroom lessons.

Students in grades pre-K–6 attend physical education/health classes which focus on: healthy living, coordination, sportsmanship, physical fitness, and wellness. The curricula for PE addresses the following TEKS strands: movement, physical activity and health, and social development. The Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) provides teachers with activities for students to learn that exercise can be fun and creative through such items as hula hoops, jump ropes, and parachutes. Students learn through playing team and individual sports, daily stretches and exercises, running, skipping, and doing drills to improve individual coordination, large muscle movements and body awareness. Pre-assessments and post-assessments measure improvements made during the year in muscle strength, flexibility and endurance, and aerobic ability. Third–sixth grade students have opportunities to participate and compete in organized sports teams, and pre-K-fifth grades have relay races and obstacle courses during field day. PE/health classes are taught by our high school and junior high sports coaches, who are certified in K–12th grade PE. This ensures students are learning at an early age the basic skills needed for all types of sports, and provides a seamless vertical alignment. The nurse also helps in PE/health classes by providing lessons on dental health (to include visits by the tooth fairy and dental care supplies), personal health and hygiene, and healthy/unhealthy choices that can have a lifelong effect. Students in 2nd grade attend the program “Hard Hats for Little Heads” presented by Texas A&M Aggie Athletes and local doctors’ offices in which demonstrations are provided by the college sports teams on helmet safety per sport; at the end of the program all students receive bike helmets to take home.

Students participate in fine arts curriculum through music, drama, and art classes. Once again, teachers are fully certified for grades K–12 in art and band, and are also our high school teachers in band, drama, and art. This creates that seamless transition into high school skills and definitely assures vertical alignment. Music is taught to the students through fun, hands on, interactive lessons. The students are exposed to many modes of music appropriate for their age and grade level. Students learn through listening to music, singing songs, learning beats, rhythm, tempo, and about different instruments. Students in grades 2 and 3 begin to read music notes and play recorders. Students in grades 4–6 can join the beginning band class and will play a variety of instruments, as well as perform at concerts and competitions. Students in pre-K–2nd grade also have a program, “Music in the Classroom” where older students come into the classroom and perform for them in a small class setting. The elementary art classes teach students different types of Fine Arts: drawing, painting, and theater, all of which are aligned with the art TEKS. Students in grades 3–5 perform mini-theater plays for the students in pre-K–2nd grades and parents, allowing students the opportunity to carry over skills to a larger stage. Pre-K–2nd grade students also get an opportunity to demonstrate singing, acting, and dancing through various programs throughout the year such as the Christmas Program which is attended by over 800 people. To extend the awareness of fine arts, students also go on field trips throughout the year to musical performances, and theatrical performances.

Technology instruction is embedded in the core classroom environment and taught for 30 minutes twice a week in grades K–3. In grades 4–6 technology is further expanded in the core curriculum and addressed

through research projects and student created presentations. There are two computer labs that teachers can sign up to use. There are also 3–4 computers in each classroom, and the school provides portable laptop labs that teachers can check out. The curriculum and lessons are guided by the technology application TEKS which focus on research and information; critical thinking, digital citizenship; technology operations, and concerts, just to name a few. Keyboarding programs are used to learn data entry skills. Students are taught computer etiquette, responsible online search tools, and how to utilize resources to complete presentations, PowerPoints, Excel, and Word documents. Teachers also model technology use in the classrooms for students, and incorporate students in technology presentations.

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

MES is set up in teaching teams of two teachers per grade from kindergarten–3rd grade; one teacher in each grade level focuses on English Language Arts and the other is responsible for math, science, and social studies. At the 4th–6th grade levels, classes are designed in a block schedule with three teachers per grade level. One teacher is responsible for English-language arts, one for science/social studies and one for math. This system enables teachers to focus on their specific subject area, increases the expertise in that area, which in turn increases student academic progress. Scheduling is used as a tool for increasing success because it can be altered to meet the needs of both the students and teachers. Teachers have the freedom to make changes to their schedules, in order to meet the challenges in their classrooms.

Homework is an essential part of the learning process and is implemented nightly into the curriculum. There is a minimum of 20 grades taken per subject area and at least five test grades. This ensures that students are given plenty of opportunity to demonstrate skills in both guided practice, independent practice, and test situations. Recently, six weeks cumulative testing was implemented at 2nd grade for all six weeks and for 1st grade during the second semester. MES evaluates and analyzes the classroom test data in a variety of ways to identify weaknesses and strengths of students and/or teachers and to evaluate curriculum and scheduling design. Being flexible and adapting to the needs of our students increases opportunities for success. Once student data is reviewed, tiered intervention programs are provided to re-teach the students in their targeted areas of concern.

Teachers must individualize instruction to provide support to the students who are struggling and to provide higher-level thinking questioning to the students who are advanced. Using a multi-tiered instructional model allows for differentiated instruction, targeted small group instruction, extended learning activities, and teacher flexibility with adjusting curriculum for both high and low level students, all of which occurs in the classroom. After evaluating the outcomes of Tier I with progress monitoring and weekly checks, the students who are struggling will utilize additional interventions occurring outside of the classroom in a pullout program. In Response to Intervention (RTI), Tier II students that are still struggling will receive specific instruction and intervention in targeted weak areas, uses through a variety of research-based supplemental materials, and computer-based programs. These pullout interventions are provided by specialists, teachers, and trained teacher assistants in small group instruction, after school, during school, through in-school tutorials, and in an extended summer program. Students still struggling will be provided Tier III interventions, with 1:1 instruction using systematic, drill, practice, and repeat strategies. Students who are excelling can also benefit from differentiated instruction as well. Those labeled as gifted and talented are provided projects-based activities enriched with higher level thinking, complex questions, and problem-solving opportunities. These students are also allowed to peer teach other students in the classroom to increase their social awareness, leadership, and academic skills. Teachers review scores to self-evaluate and to make adaptations, if needed. The school uses the data to evaluate curriculum, staff development topics and schedule options. For instance: when writing scores were lower, more staff development, and writing portfolios were added.

MES not only uses progress monitoring, classroom curriculum tests, and grades for evaluating students, but also uses STAAR and other assessment instruments to assist in evaluating individual student's needs. In grades K-2, the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) is administered three times a year to monitor student progress in reading. Results from TPRI are used when determining remediation programs in the areas of phonemic awareness, word reading, and reading fluency. Grades 3-6 are benchmark-tested several times a year using grade-level released STAAR tests, and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Achievement (ITBS)

test is given at the end of the academic year. This information assists teachers in preparing objective-specific instruction and materials to meet the students' academic needs, and information on how to adjust tiered interventions. English Language Learners (ELLs) are given the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) test so that teachers can use results to help guide their instruction while in a full immersion regular classroom program. Using all of the assessment data in conjunction with our teachers working together; meeting weekly within grade levels to share ideas and teaching plans; and meeting to plan vertically for consistency in covering skills has proven to improve student scores and academic progress. All subgroups of student populations have maintained high standards to be sure there are no substantial achievement gaps from year to year.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

---

### 1. School Climate/Culture:

MES believes in having a warm, friendly, safe, and positive school culture for students, parents, and staff, which in turn creates an environment for academic growth. MES incorporates several different strategies to accomplish this. Students are greeted with a “good morning” from staff members at all entrances, and immediately it is understood that MES staff are present and glad to have the students on campus, ready to learn! The same is true at the end of the day when staff are again strategically positioned to make sure students get picked up by their parents safely, with a friendly “see you tomorrow.” Knowing students and students knowing the staff is an important key to having a positive school climate for the students, which provides a culture ripe for academic growth and success. This is accomplished by having our para-professionals serve as our only substitutes for teachers, having staff serve as bus drivers, and providing staff as bus monitor in the afternoons. Having “in house” substitutes for teachers allows students to focus on learning rather than anxiety of having substitutes that are unfamiliar with protocol, school guidelines, and procedures. Also having school staff serve as bus drivers and monitors on each route allows for students to be well supervised with consistent expectations. To support academic success, MES highlights students who have excelled in academics or attendance; every 6 weeks students are provided ice cream treats for making the honor roll and/or having perfect attendance. At the end of each semester there is a culminating event for those that have made the honor roll or had perfect attendance every six weeks. Every 6 weeks students meeting AR goals are treated to a party which are not only fun for students, but also provide learning opportunities.

School wide pep rallies encourage students to engage with older students, fun skits and contests where all students can participate and be cheered and supported fostering acceptance and belonging. Fall festivals and child drama plays are also provided for MES students by the high school students which allow opportunities for social growth and connections to positive role models. Students who are good role models in the classroom are rewarded by being chosen to lead announcements that conclude with students’ birthdays and a positive “thought of the day”.

MES staff feel supported, valued, and play a vital role in the success of the school. At the beginning of the year teachers receive “Welcome Back to School” goody packages and gift cards. Throughout the school year the staff is commended for their commitment with special meals, treats, verbal praise or a simple “thank you.” Administration is present when requested by teachers at conferences, and set the standard that teachers need to be respected and valued. There is an open-door policy with administration, and teachers’ opinions are welcomed and important. Teachers are allotted the freedom, flexibility and trust to control and decisions within their classrooms. To help develop teachers, they are provided mentoring from experienced staff and administration, opportunity for professional growth, and 1:1 meetings with administration to discuss teaching progress, issues, or concerns. Sunshine committees and birthday committees are used to celebrate special moments, to applaud accomplishments and provide support when going through difficulties. All of these activities build an environment for a successful school.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

MES understands that parent and community trust, communication, and support are very valuable assets for school and student success. The goal is to be as transparent as possible with parents, by using an honest, straightforward, and respectful approach. Having parents be an integral part of the school team, leads to students having more success and a value for education. Each Monday, a school bulletin is posted on our website and Facebook page for community members which includes student achievements, accomplishments and academic successes, and contains information on upcoming school events. Also, on Mondays each student takes home his/her “Monday Night Folder” which includes: communications from teachers, students’ weekly assignments, report cards at the 3 and 6 week- periods and all other important school information. These folders are to be signed by parents and returned to school, so teachers know parents have seen them. Facebook has also become an important way to communicate with parents. A “Parent Tip of the Day” is posted every day to Facebook, as a quick and easy way to provide vital tips on

parenting. Mumford invested in a parent support link on our website which includes resources for parents such as: videos on discipline, topic-related articles, and search tools about problems parents face. Monthly parent newsletters (in Spanish and English) with fun games, ideas to try at home, and articles on how to help children be successful at school are provided. There are emergency communication systems used to keep parents informed of any changes in schedules and emergencies. Parents also can access all their child's grades and receive alerts through the parent portal. Giving parents this access has increased student performance and reduced failing grades. MES has several faculty members who can translate for parents whenever needed, which help the Spanish-speaking population. District-scheduled parent-teacher conferences are required when students are not performing at level, and parents may request a conference at any time. Teachers discuss STAAR results (areas of strengths and weaknesses) with students on an individual basis. Intervention plans are coordinated and explained to address needed areas of improvement, students show better behavior and academic performance after these meetings. There is a "Meet the Teacher Night" at the beginning of the school year as well as an Open House about one month after school has begun. These functions provide classroom expectations and procedural information. Mumford ISD's website provides a link to TEA where the Texas Performance Reporting System (TPRS), and the Texas Consolidated School Rating Report (TCSR) can be viewed by the community. The TPRS is the most comprehensive state academic accountability report published by TEA, it contains student academic achievement for different subgroups and overall student performance. The TCSR contains ratings for three areas: State academic accountability ratings and distinction designations, State financial accountability ratings and Community and Student Engagement ratings. These reports inform the community of the students' academic achievements and also help to identify student challenges. All of these items build trust and support between MES and parents, which has made an impact as seen by continued growth and student success.

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

Professional development programs for MES vary depending upon grade level and subject matter and are scheduled based on specific instructional needs of the staff and students. Staff development programs are brought into the school to ensure that staff are continually learning and building high quality teaching skills to increase our student achievement. For instance, when it was identified that additional trainings could help meet the needs of special student populations and increase student success, trainings were provided in: gifted and talented, special education, English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), TELPAS, and Dyslexia. When it was noted that fine motor skills of our pre-K–2nd grade students were not as developed as expected, we brought in training for fine motor exercises and handwriting programs. There are 12-14 hours of district-wide trainings at the beginning of the year in: CPR, AED, mental health training, blood borne pathogens, and child abuse and safety standards. In addition, knowledge of subject and grade level TEKS is extremely important, so there is district led subject-specific vertical planning meetings for curriculum from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Staff receive an additional 8 - 10 hours in campus-based professional development prior to the start of school in horizontal grade-planning, districtwide policy, expectations, and special training for our first-year teachers on such things as campus policy, classroom management, and technology integration. Furthermore, there are a couple of days of staff development during each semester, and in the summer when teachers are provided opportunities for regional service center trainings on subject specific TEKS and curriculum. MES provides staff development for all teachers in the Texas Student Assessment Program. Pre-Kindergarten teachers have extensive training to meet the high-quality teacher criteria set by TEA, including 30 hours of training each year in Early Childhood Education, Pre-K guidelines and curriculum. Mumford Elementary, being a rural school, encourages the utilization of on-line classes and distance-learning labs for staff development such as: Eduhero, Texas School Ready and Gateway Learning, while also using the area region service center. Reimbursements are provided to teachers for travel and cost of training. MES values learning as a life-long process and understands that the most effective teaching is accomplished through continued growth and education.

Administrative staff also is involved with professional development trainings, including Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support Services (T-TESS), pest management, public finance, and mid-winter conferences. In addition to these opportunities, the school superintendent attends the service center's monthly superintendent meetings. The school nurse attends multiple professional development trainings for student

health screenings, and current medical issues of importance to school age children. The school counselor takes advantage of trainings through Texas On Course, College Board, and Texas Counseling Association. All of these trainings provide for more knowledge for staff to increase student performance and success.

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

The leadership philosophy is one that believes in a lateral decision-making model, in which teachers are invited to exchange and share thoughts and ideas. The leadership structure at MES is unique in that the number of administrative positions is smaller than most. The Superintendent is also the Principal for the elementary and the high school; at most schools, three people would fill these positions. In addition to the Superintendent, there are only three other administrative personnel, all of whom serve both campuses. Having only a few administrators enables the parents and teachers to have direct access by knowing whom to contact — there is a limited chain of command. The administration takes a “hands on” approach, when dealing with both students and teachers. Administrative staff make it a point to be visible in the school environment, they are actively present in the hallways, cafeterias, classrooms, and at after school activities. It is important to build rapport with students, supporting them in their extracurricular activities and taking the time to share in both their difficulties and accomplishments. Administration meets each six weeks with students at risk for failing and meets with teachers to discuss concerns regarding students’ performances, teaching materials, and other issues that need to be addressed. Administrative staff is available to participate in parent/teacher or student conferences to lend support and be an active part of student progress. These meetings bring a sense of teamwork to the school environment and have improved student performance. After campus benchmarks are complete, the teachers meet with the administration to discuss schedule changes that may need to be implemented and required tutorials that students need to attend. Keeping close contact with progress helps struggling students from slipping through the cracks. The administrative offices are located on the elementary campus for easy access to the students and for proximity to the classrooms to facilitate the monitoring of instructional time. Walk-throughs are done by the principal to ensure that student behavior is on task and that teaching is being effective. There are yearly evaluations completed with teachers to review areas which need improvement and to identify the teacher’s strengths. The value and importance that is placed on all staff by school administrators allows for mutual respect and staff to be comfortable to actively brainstorm and problem solve together. The administration works as a team at MES; they realize that being involved with the students’ education and being accessible to parents and teachers is imperative to student’s continued success.

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

---

MES has several strategies in place to help achieve high academic success. One that is identified as being the most instrumental is high expectations and accountability for all. This ties directly into our motto “Academic Excellence” and how to achieve that excellence is by ensuring that everyone involved with MES understands what is expected and are held accountable for the outcomes. While these may be seen as two separate strategies, they must be done hand in hand to be effective. First, high expectations must be set at the beginning of each school year, and be repeated periodically through the year. Clear guidelines and expectations are explained in detail, with an understanding of what the goals and outcomes should be, if these goals do not get met then there is accountability. No job is too big or too small, therefore high expectations are required for all entities in MES: teachers, custodians, cafeteria workers, paraprofessionals, administrators, students, and parents. The common philosophy for all engaged in MES is to work to their best ability, have a positive attitude, pride in their jobs and school, and be respectful of themselves and others. In addition, to those stated above, each role has more specific expectations. Teachers and paraprofessionals are expected to teach all students, both those struggling and those that are high achievers, and strive for 100% of students making progress and being successful. Custodians and cafeteria workers are expected to provide quality food, clean buildings, and repair items. Administration is expected to lead by example, have a presence throughout campus, be supportive and provide a source of stability and fairness for everyone. Students are expected to come to school prepared, ready to learn, follow the rules, and be teachable. Parents are expected to be supportive of the school, help students arrive on time with supplies, and make school a priority. These are just of a few of the expectations here at Mumford. The second part of this strategy is accountability for everyone at the school. The questions are asked: Is the job getting done, is business getting taken care of? If not, then there must be a discussion, an analysis, an understanding that something must be changed. A person must have a willingness to try and continue to work at something to get better. During this time, a plan of action is developed and small goals implemented, and most importantly a commitment to meet that expectation must be agreed upon. Every person’s role is vital, every person plays an important part in the success of the school, and it takes this approach of high expectations and accountability of all members of our team to achieve our common goals.