

U.S. Department of Education
2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Suzanne Risse

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

Official School Name Monte Vista Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2620 Orange Avenue

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

La Crescenta CA 91214-2199
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Los Angeles County

Telephone (818) 248-2617

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Web site/URL https://www.gusd.net/montevista

E-mail srisse@gusd.net

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*Dr. Vivian Ekchian

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail vekchian@gusd.net

District Name Glendale Unified School District Tel. (818) 241-3111

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. Jennifer Freemon

(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. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 2 K-12 schools
- 31 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	66	38	104
1	49	56	105
2	67	49	116
3	50	66	116
4	60	70	130
5	59	52	111
6	66	63	129
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	417	394	811

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 53 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 34 % White
 - 7 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: 2%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	819
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 20%
159 Total number ELL

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

Korean, Armenian, Spanish, Mandarin, Tagalog, Arabic, Hindi, Pashto, Japanese, Portuguese, Gujarati, German

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14%
Total number students who qualify: 110

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
37 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>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>15</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	28
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	12

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 29:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	97%	98%
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 2018.

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. 2005

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

In a safe and supportive environment, with high academic expectations, we inspire students to meet the challenges of and be successful in a diverse society.

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

Nestled at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains is a beautiful, neighborhood school, Monte Vista Elementary. Monte Vista is a beacon in our community, long known for academic excellence, parent involvement, and enrichment opportunities. Monte Vista is recognized as a highly sought-after dual immersion school at the forefront of technology integration and academic rigor balanced by character building, cooperative learning, and teamwork. Visitors are greeted by the sound of joyful learning in English and Korean. As you walk down the main hall, you notice the clicking of the keyboards as students create lines of code, word documents, and research projects. Hallways are lined with student-centered artwork, seasonal activities, and “Paws-itively Awesome” writing that exemplifies a variety of genres across all grade levels. One might hear an encouraging chant or a high level of academic discourse. Music emanates from the auditorium as students in Monty’s Masters prepare for district Honors Orchestra. Notice parents working in classrooms, leading students in ceramics projects, reading with small groups, and facilitating the Meet the Masters art program. Physical Education teachers provide standards-based lessons focused on endurance and sportsmanship and yard assistants encourage collaboration with Fun Zone equipment, play structure, soccer, and handball. Observe buildings which exhibit unique expressions of creativity by parents, teachers, staff, and students including tile walls and painted murals. Students recognized as Principal Pals eat lunch with administrators in Monty Park, a community-created grassy area complete with benches and student garden. An extensive offering of after-school enrichment classes allows for students to further develop skills beyond the core curriculum with courses in science, robotics, chess, Armenian language, and acting.

Continuing a thriving legacy of community, generations of local families have attended Monte Vista and support the school by participating in traditional events such as the Family Picnic, Carnival and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Fair. Former students return to assist with events, help in classrooms, and complete Eagle and Gold Scout projects such as a freshly painted Kindness Wall. Monte Vista has an active and involved Parent Teacher Association (PTA) with a robust budget providing class sets of Chromebooks, on-site field trips and interactive assemblies. Volunteers contribute thousands of hours in the classrooms and as members of the School Site Council (SSC), a decision-making body which provides input on the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA).

Appreciate the beauty of our culturally diverse community where all are encouraged to respect and celebrate individual differences. Our student body includes speakers of Korean, Armenian, Spanish, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Arabic. Monte Vista’s established Korean Foreign Language Academy of Glendale (FLAG) program has an enrollment exceeding 320 students. The program is a 50/50 second language acquisition model, advancing schoolwide cultural experiences through art, literature, and music, such as Korean drumming. Presentations of traditions such as Chuseok (Korean Thanksgiving) and Sebae, a bowing ceremony to the elders, are shared with the student body.

We are diverse in other ways as well. All special needs students are in general education classrooms receiving specialized support. Students identified as Gifted and Talented (GATE) are invited to join in Robotics, Invention Convention, Math Club, and Math Field Day while receiving differentiated instruction in the classroom.

The Monte Vista teaching staff is highly qualified with 90% of our teachers having earned advanced degrees. Expectations for student achievement and citizenship are consistent and high-reaching. Through Professional Learning Communities (PLC), teachers collaborate, plan, assess, and analyze data to focus their instruction and assure student progress. Classroom and after-school programs provide intervention for students who have not gained proficiency. For those who require additional support, the Student Success Team (SST) convenes to devise strategies and solutions. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) system includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and recognizing appropriate student behaviors to create a positive school environment. As a result, the number of student infractions and suspensions are few. A National Blue Ribbon School (2005) and California Gold Ribbon School (2016), Monte Vista was recently awarded Crescenta Valley’s Finest Elementary School, the California Business for Education Excellence Award and, for the third time, California Distinguished School (2004, 2012, 2018). Receiving the National Blue Ribbon School award has compelled us to reflect on practices resulting in our success and continue to enhance our academic program with Korean FLAG, fine arts, and leading-edge technology. Teachers and staff partner with parents to constantly raise the bar. The awards have enhanced an already stellar reputation that has inspired numerous families to plant roots and petition for placement in the neighborhood resulting in an ever increasing, diverse population. With an understanding of our history and

an eye towards our future, we affirm our mission statement, “The Monte Vista School Community strives to ensure a safe and supportive environment, with high expectations, where students are prepared to meet the challenges of a social and academic environment and to be successful in a diverse society.”

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The California State Standards provide the foundation for instruction in Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) and selected curricular approaches target student needs. In primary grades, actively engaged reading, recounting diverse literature, and identifying central themes, along with phonics and the application of word analysis, form the foundational groundwork. Writing development completes the framework for ELA instruction in conjunction with scaffolding the fundamentals of English grammar usage. Social Studies and Science are integrated into ELA lessons through the use of novels, Scholastic News, and educational videos. In addition to direct, whole group, and small group instruction, grade levels rotate classrooms to increase exposure to learning styles, broaden peer interactivity and differentiate instruction. By upper grades, students are handily conveying ideas via a variety of genre by applying evidence-based claims and creating well-developed characters. Speaking opportunities abound in Reader's Theater and biography reports. Students in Korean FLAG experience learning in English and Korean, integrating all domains of Language Arts within core content areas.

In addition to teacher-created assessments, students are evaluated in reading three times a year through an online program, i-Ready. Data is analyzed to determine domain strengths and areas in need of active support. Homogenous groups are determined based on formative and summative data as well as anecdotal evidence. Data-driven, targeted instruction is planned and implemented by grade level teams. Students who are evaluated to be at a reading level two or more grade levels below receive approximately 40 minutes of direct intervention in a 5:1 setting twice a week during the school day. Accelerated Reader program provides incentives to read while enriching comprehension and recall.

Strategies used for English Learners (EL) in dual immersion as well as general classrooms include SDAIE, visuals, audiobooks, i-Ready lessons, and peer interactions. Special Education students are supported with accommodations and/or modifications, as stated in their Individualized Education Plan.

1b. Mathematics:

The California State Standards provide the foundation for instruction in Math which is Monte Vista's school focus for the 2018-2019 school year. Standards of Mathematical Practices are the driving force for kindergarten through sixth grade students as they navigate through the curriculum. Problem-based learning, enhanced by the use of manipulatives, provides opportunities for all students to deepen their understanding and articulate their reasoning. Reading, writing, and speaking strategies are integrated into math instruction to equip and empower students to validate their answers with evidence-based reasoning. District, curricular and teacher-made assessments guide teaching and intervention. Students in grades 4-6 participate in the math club where they practice working in teams to solve rigorous math problems through mathematical analysis and application. The teams go on to compete with other schools at the districtwide Math Field Day. PLCs, by grade level, have used data to identify essential standards in math to focus on throughout the year. Teachers collaborate to plan lessons, create assessments, share data, identify proficient/non-proficient students, and create reteaching/enrichment lesson plans. Some grade levels divide their students into groups based on academic needs and i-Ready data and provide intervention to focus on various math skills. Math efficacy is enhanced through our strong integration of technology. Students access online programs and use interactive programs within the curriculum to review concepts via reteach, skills practice, and partner games. Students complete challenge exercises and implement STEM activities using student-generated data to deepen conceptual understanding and bridge the gap between abstract and concrete. Engagement in adaptive online lessons and assessments provide feedback to teachers which aid in the creation of differentiated instruction. Specific standards can be pinpointed and assigned through our digital curriculum to bolster key foundational skills prior to moving on to next level concepts.

1c. Science:

Next Generation Science Standards provide focus and foundation for all grade levels. Through interactive experiences, students explore ways to connect concepts in the four domains: physical, life, earth-space, and engineering design. Docents and grade-level science kits allow students to investigate cause and effect, explore engineering practices, and defend disciplinary core ideas. Through this experiential, curricular approach, students develop a scientific, coherent view of the everyday world fostered by evaluating experiments, organizing and interpreting data, and investigating topics on Chromebooks. Mystery Science, a web-based program, engages students in science and engineering. Students are presented with a central “mystery” question and collaborate to decipher the mysteries using supplemental reading, video, and STEM activities.

Science concepts are integrated into various curricular areas. Primary grade students build dioramas and create interactive flip books while fifth and sixth grades use art and writing to construct Interactive Student Notebooks reinforcing complex concepts and providing opportunities for peer feedback. Hands-on experiments are conducted regularly, such as pig heart dissection and owl pellet investigation. Scholastic News and informational text integrate language arts as it exposes students to current events. Topics are revisited across grade levels with greater depth and complexity depending on student assessments. Field trips provide a fun, experiential transition from paper to reality. Off-campus trips include Glendale Community College Planetarium, Underwood Family Farm, Discovery Cube, California Science Center, and Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Sixth graders encounter nature during a week-long science camp in the San Bernardino National Forest.

Mobile learning events come to Monte Vista and professional development edifies teacher knowledge and imbues strategies for implementation. Annually, PTA sponsors a STEM Fair where students create projects for competition and show. Parents from JPL act as mentors and liaisons to our local science community. These real world scientists can be seen on campus inspiring students’ curiosity, career development and modeling experiments.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

The California State Standards provide the structure for instruction in Social Studies. These standards guide learning with emphasis on historical narrative, important individuals throughout history resulting in students understanding the rights and obligations of citizenship. Teachers utilize an array of resources to build foundational knowledge and create opportunities to apply learning. Anecdotal, formative and summative assessments, and project-based feedback aid in the development and implementation of differentiated activities to meet individual needs.

Primary students explore their community, learn national symbols, and create models of American heroes. Third graders explore early California to determine first inhabitants, reasons why they settled here, cause of population growth, and the natural resources supporting daily life. "President Lincoln" visits specific grade levels, shares biographical facts, and the Gettysburg Address. Fourth and fifth grade students experience history in a real-world setting via Walk through California and Walk through The American Revolution, an on-site assembly where students take on roles to re-enact historical events covering the Gold Rush and Boston Tea Party. Research, art, online collaborative writing, and project-based activities make ancient civilizations come alive for sixth grade. The study of government, both ancient and modern, informs students on the electoral process, branches of government and their role as future participants in our democracy.

Document-Based Question approach allows students to act as interpreters of historical material. For example, the events of Jamestown take on new meaning as students read primary and secondary sources, evaluate perspectives, assess biases, and formulate opinions. Current events are incorporated into reading and writing assignments across grade-level and curricular areas. Scholastic News, Discovery Streaming, and an extensive collection of non-fiction books provide additional reinforcement of current topics. Budding social scientists create and present biographies about historically underrepresented women and persons of color leading to the development of civic-minded citizens.

1e. For secondary schools:

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Fine arts is an integral part of our K-6 curriculum. Meet the Masters is a schoolwide program which focuses on classical artists, spiraling in complexity. Students learn art history through a docent-led presentation and create art pieces replicating the artist's technique. Additionally, the PTA supports weekly primary grade music instruction with an emphasis on reading music, singing, and musical theory. Specifically, K-2 students receive instruction in rhythm and songs through the use of solfege. Third grade students play the recorder taught by a Grammy Award-winning instructor, leading to a great number of our upper grade students participating in orchestra. There they learn to play various wind, string, brass, and percussion instruments. Monte Vista has the highest number of students in the district participating in orchestra and graduating to the district's Honors Orchestra and Monty's Masters. Our Musical Theater and the Talent Show attract better than one hundred students. Each year productions are "sold out" to packed audiences, honing live performance skills.

Monte Vista is part of a community with a high involvement in sports. Through direct instruction and play, students develop large motor skills, endurance, fitness, sportsmanship, safety, and respect, preparing them for a higher level of play. Our K-3 Physical Education teacher uses relays, drills, and cooperative games to emphasize these athletic standards. Grades 4-6 learn traditional team sports and their rules along with prep for the state physical fitness test. Our end-of-year highlight is a kickball game between staff and the sixth graders. Glendale Healthy Kids sponsors dental education for first grade students. Volunteer docents give four interactive presentations promoting dental healthcare. Healthy food choices, correct brushing technique and experiences at the dentist office are among the lessons.

Food Services offers student participation in schoolwide menu planning. Students taste a variety of food options, select entrees and learn the nutritional value of their choices.

Monte Vista's FLAG program offers a 50/50 dual language immersion model in the Korean Language. This highly coveted program, enrolled via lottery, supports Korean language acquisition through core subject areas. Daily instruction takes place in English and Korean. FLAG teachers utilize Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) to assist in language development and provide differentiation to close the achievement gap. Each language complements the other by emphasizing key skills and vocabulary in all content areas. Students engage in language-rich learning activities which boost confidence as the target language use increases. Book reports encourage independent reading while weekly speaking projects boost oral language development. Projects involving Korean national holidays and traditional foods immerse students in daily Korean life. Korean summer school is offered to bolster language skills. Our program exposes all students to cultural awareness and the beauty of diversity, enhancing the entire school population.

Monte Vista has distinguished itself as a school consistently striving to be at the forefront of educational technology. A strong PTA partnership has enabled us additional funding for Smartboards in every classroom and Chromebooks provided at a 1:1 ratio in upper and 2:1 in primary grades. Technical knowledge is integrated into the daily practice of all students, from coding to the creation of color brochures. Foundational technology skills provide a springboard for career-readiness with an emphasis on collaboration and innovation. Our upper grade robotics team is competitive, placing in the top three at district finals. Grade-level representatives, computer lab aide, and administrators meet monthly to discuss the acquisition of hardware and implementation of standards-based projects. Our media center includes a well-stocked library with the most current titles and selections in English as well as Korean. All students visit the library weekly. Monte Vista's media center supports student learning and is a jewel in our crown.

Monte Vista is conscious of the fact that college success, career readiness, and life skills mean supporting the whole child. Teachers, staff, and volunteers provide opportunities for student socio-emotional growth across the campus. Monthly character-building words are incorporated into lessons. Students who exemplify these descriptors are recognized during the monthly Spirit Assembly. On the playground, staff are trained in Playworks which maintains a safe, positive, social play time. Community circles bring safe, structured moments to share thoughts and ideas in the classroom, both academically and socially.

3. Special Populations:

In an effort to maximize achievement for our special student populations, Monte Vista has a comprehensive Response to Intervention program. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and i-Ready data provide specific information on the academic performance of students. Teachers employ Universal Design for Learning (UDL) focusing on differentiated and flexible instruction. Students who are below grade level or in subgroups in which there is an identified achievement gap (Hispanic, Socio-economically Disadvantaged, Special Education) receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention. Tier 2 intervention is provided in the classroom through small group, individual, targeted instruction. Parent volunteers, class buddies, and peer tutors are additional supports for closing the achievement gap. The administrative team, principal, assistant principal, and teacher specialist, provide “lunchtime reading” for identified students who are below grade level or in need of English Language support on a biweekly basis. Intervention with the district-purchased i-Ready program provides customized instruction for students at their instructional level. Tier 3 support is provided by an intervention teacher who uses the SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics and Sight Words) program to provide small group instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, and reading fluency. The Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI) program ensures that designated students receive specific support to meet their goals outlined in the Individual Educational Plan. Through explicit, small group instruction, the resource specialist uses Read Naturally to increase fluency and Sonday System, a researched-based multi-sensory program for beginning readers.

PLCs highlight teacher collaboration amongst and beyond grade levels, focusing on amplified instruction and support. Through PLCs, teachers identify common areas of need and regroup students in order to provide both remediation and enrichment. For example, the third grade team has identified geometry as a target area and divided students in all five classes into homogenous groups (high-low). Each teacher meets with a group weekly and scaffolds instruction based on their need.

The Gifted and Talented (GATE) program is comprised of students who meet eligibility requirements through CAASPP and Otis-Lennon School Ability Test. In addition to acceleration opportunities in class through i-Ready, extension activities and differentiated instruction, students participate in Math Field Day, Invention Convention, and Robotics. This year, a new program based on the high school decathlon, The Big Quiz, is being implemented.

Monte Vista utilizes the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) to evaluate the progress of English Learners annually. The goal is for 100% of ELs to achieve one level of growth each year. Teachers provide distinct support for all EL students through SDAIE methodology which includes intentional use of visuals, scaffolding, total physical response, and small or individual groupings to modify instruction in support of language development. Unique to Monte Vista, the Korean FLAG provides primary language instructional support for Korean EL students. These students gain literacy in their first language while gaining skills simultaneously in English. Monte Vista’s rate of reclassification to English proficiency exceeds district and state at 31.8%. Targeted efforts have positively impacted the achievement gap and student success.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Monte Vista, we value students having a deep sense of belonging and understand that it cultivates academic success. “We Care” signs are displayed on classroom doors reminding students that this is a safe place to learn and thrive. Students are encouraged to appreciate the beauty of our diverse community and understand the power of kindness. These are requisite skills for being a fully functional citizen and adult. PBIS is the basis for citizenship and school community development. Select staff participate in ongoing training and provide professional development for teachers and staff. All students participate in targeted instruction via grade level assemblies highlighting appropriate behavioral expectations. Every aspect of campus life is evaluated and staff has created rules and regulations designed to ensure harmony and balance. A PBIS schoolwide “kick-off” assembly has introduced students to our comprehensive incentive program. Monte Vista displays matrices, posters, and positive expectations throughout the campus. The “PAWS”, Practice Kindness, Act Responsibly, Work and Play Safely, and Show Respect is shared with all stakeholders.

Monthly citizenship character traits are incorporated into instruction and students exhibiting these traits are recognized as Student of the Month during monthly Spirit Assemblies. Students, along with teachers and parents, can be heard singing the Monte Vista school song and school chant at the end of each assembly with enthusiasm and pride.

Based on student surveys, Monte Vista developed schoolwide, grade level and classroom activities to increase students’ sense of care and trust. Activities include weekly “I wish my teacher knew” forms, community circles, and grade level team building. A district-provided intern supports identified at-risk students with social skills training and the school psychologist provides individual counseling.

Monte Vista values and supports its teachers. An open-door policy is essential in providing space for staff to share concerns, challenges, and ideas. The principal and assistant principal visit classes weekly and share feedback via notes or email. The Instructional Leadership Team includes representatives from each grade level. Utilizing agreed-upon norms that set the tone and focus for student-centered discussions, they give voice about school culture and climate. Monthly faculty meetings are teacher-centered with topics generated from administration and staff and always begin with time for celebrations. Teachers are recognized through Masonic Award, Teacher of the Year, and PTA Honorary Service Awards.

Monte Vista embodies an engaging, positive environment where all stakeholders feel valued, acknowledged, and supported.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Monte Vista has an involved and supportive parent community. Our PTA sponsors enrichment activities for students while also providing numerous family-centered functions. Popular events include author visits, the Fall Festival, Monty’s Holiday Shop, mother-son activities, father-daughter dances, Skate Nights, and ice cream socials. Additionally, there are parent educational presentations on topics such as assessment data, math, iSafe/Cyberbullying, and general social media safety. Our community is involved in our fundraising efforts and gladly supports Monte Vista. PTA funds a wonderful Caldecott and Newbery assembly as a reward for student achievement with specific reading and art goals.

Both SSC and PTA are opportunities for parents to take leadership in the school. SSC meets quarterly to review schoolwide data, collaboratively develop goals, and select tools for monitoring progress documented in the SPSA. Parents can serve in various capacities on the PTA as a board member, chairperson, committee head, or docent.

Monte Vista families are committed to supporting our students by volunteering regularly in and out of the classroom. Parents are welcome to work with students in small groups lending additional support to classroom activities.

Parents in FLAG Korean are invited to learn basic conversation and orthography through teacher workshops. Teachers provide support for students and parents for whom Korean is not their primary language through the use of Educreation, an online program. Parents attend meetings throughout the year focused on biliteracy, brain research, and FLAG pathways to middle and high school.

Parents stay informed of students' academic progress and needs through immediate feedback on assessments, parent-teacher conferences, and progress reports. SSTs convene to discuss challenges, modifications, and goals. These meetings include teachers, administration, speech therapists, and the school psychologist. On a schoolwide level, our weekly newsletter, Paw Prints, and the Monte Vista website keep parents abreast of current events and communicate information. Student and classroom information is relayed through online teacher pages on the website.

Upper grade students are encouraged to exercise leadership through involvement in Student Council. Officers are elected by upper grade students and are given the opportunity to develop skills by organizing and carrying out school activities, reading the morning announcements, and leading the flag salute at Spirit Assemblies. Student Council helps share student ideas, interests, and concerns with teachers and administration. In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community, the Student Council is the voice of the student body.

3. Professional Development:

Professional Development (PD) is highly regarded at our school, with teachers on the forefront of continuing their education and honing their skills. With the advent of Common Core State Standards, teachers take the lead in learning new academic language, protocols, and paradigms. Many PD opportunities are provided to staff throughout the school year geared to meeting student and teacher needs. In addition to academics and curriculum, teachers have been trained in a variety of topics and instructional techniques including Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies, Gender Spectrum, Focused Adaptable Structure Teaching, and managing challenging students.

FLAG Korean teachers receive PD tailored to support student learning in both languages. In addition to GLAD, teachers have attended training from experts in bilingualism/biliteracy and dual immersion. Through the Korean Education Foundation, teachers have attended two-week conferences in Seoul with immersion in language and culture. Collaboration, sharing of materials, and aligning curriculum takes place regularly on-site and cross-district.

The PBIS team has attended three trainings per year at the Los Angeles County Office of Education to acquire knowledge about the important elements of the program and to plan for site implementation. The team has organized and presented the information and fostered teacher input to create a behavior management system addressing the needs of Monte Vista. The staff and students have collectively adopted and enthusiastically embraced the schoolwide behavior expectations and reinforcements, resulting in a sense of belonging and ownership.

K-6 teachers attend three to four district trainings a year in the areas of math, ELA, science, technology, and Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVS). Teachers have received trainings on the use of the new math curriculum and all of its resources. One teacher per grade level has participated in district math collaboration meetings to define and ensure GVS. During these meetings, teachers have worked together with their grade level colleagues to identify essential math standards and to create common formative assessments, specific to each standard, to be used districtwide.

Site PD is provided at staff meetings once a month. Administration and teachers share their expertise in technology, safety, writing, and growth mindset strategies. Grade levels have used data to identify essential skills and have discussed common strategies and lesson plans to address them. Additionally, common formative assessments have been created to identify student proficiency. District personnel have provided trainings in areas such as data analysis, behavioral support strategies, community circles, and district-adopted math implementation.

4. School Leadership:

Effective leadership is at the heart of every successful endeavor; a school site is no different. With over eight hundred students and a staff exceeding sixty, Monte Vista's leadership executes our mission statement with integrity, authority, and compassion. The administrative team, consisting of principal, assistant principal, and teacher specialist, supports all interested parties and moving parts to ensure smooth operations and excellence. Each one values the importance of knowing individual students and recognizing classroom successes with personal notes. However, there is a strong understanding that decision-making does not reside in the hands of the principal and assistant principal. Shared leadership allows the team to

harness the talents of teachers, staff, parents, former/retired teachers, and school community members to develop a shared mission.

Shared leadership is embodied in the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). Representing the larger school community, every team member brings a unique skill set and expertise to spark a schoolwide culture of learning. The ILT meets regularly to tackle site management challenges as well as empower each teacher representative to lead grade levels in the work around school improvement. This leadership body meets to review schoolwide data, share templates for professional learning communities, and design collaboration tasks to meet student academic and behavioral needs.

Teachers take on leadership roles through work on a variety of committees. These teams work to ensure that school and district policies are identified and provide professional development at staff meetings. Leadership opportunities abound with Student Council, Math Field Day, Spelling Bee, Robotics, and Musical Theater where teachers provide enriching experiences for students.

The SSC is tasked with developing, reviewing, and evaluating the school plan. This team, comprised of both staff and parents, makes budget priorities which support school improvement efforts. Decisions include hiring intervention personnel to support struggling readers, and purchasing additional Chromebooks to expand technological opportunities which advance student success.

Finally, students, our ultimate stakeholders, engage in leadership opportunities through Student Council, Crescenta Commons Kids, and classroom buddies. Upper grade students read to younger students as well as work on content-centered projects. Student Council provides an important interface between students, teachers, and administration. They organize outreach to our local community through food drives, facilitate Random Acts of Kindness activities, and lead Spirit Assemblies.

Through shared leadership, all members take the work of the school personally and assume responsibility for student success.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that is most instrumental to Monte Vista's success is what we call our "Needs Response Mindset." Our PLCs and extended staff of Monte Vista are constantly responding to and anticipating the needs of individual students as well as those of the community at large. Teachers work individually and collectively to ensure student success by developing resources, implementing targeted instruction based on objective data, and identifying areas for intervention as well as advanced opportunities for higher order thinking. Our collective mantra is, "What do students need to know? How do teachers know when they have learned it? What do we do when students are not learning? How do we differentiate if they have learned it?" Answers to these questions dictate and guide instruction, optimizing student learning. Trends within the school population are investigated and the methods by which they are attended to are developed and put into action. Resources are targeted for use from the macro to the micro, borrowing from the extensive talent pool within our school and community. A reflection of our practice led to the development of several endeavors. The Panorama Student Survey results indicated a need to create and implement plans to address students' socio-emotional needs. The staff identified schoolwide, grade level, and individual activities to meet those needs. Additionally, an increase in the number of Korean students led to the creation of Korean FLAG. Furthermore, technology has flourished with the knowledge that equipping students with up-to-date tools will better prepare them for college and career. This "Needs Response Mindset" has been fueled by determination and grit with an unrelenting desire to meet the needs of the whole child.

Every aspect of our campus, from the custodians to the administrative support staff, is invested in and dedicated to the health, well-being, empowerment, and education of our students. On any given day, stories can be told of connections between teachers, staff, parents, and students all working together for the highest good. Some of these stories account for small growth for which we are grateful and excited. Yet, there are other stories which reflect surprising, profound, and significant growth. There is a deeply held belief that each one of us has the opportunity and, in fact, an obligation to connect with students and do everything within our power to ensure that they become capable students and citizens. What we do is purpose-driven.