



## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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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

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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):
  - 499 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 145 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 117 High schools
  - 8 K-12 schools

769 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	19	14	33
K	57	47	104
1	44	54	98
2	48	49	97
3	53	37	90
4	35	44	79
5	36	39	75
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	292	284	576

\*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
  - 36 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 21 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 26 % White
  - 12 % 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: 12%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	28
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	45
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	73
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	609
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 10 %  
59 Total number ELL

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

Arabic, Bulgarian, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Marathi, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %  
Total number students who qualify: 127

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
32 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>4</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 14
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	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
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.	17
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

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 24:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	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.

<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. 2012

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

Clover strives to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of every student to prepare him or her for success in a rapidly changing world.

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**

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Clover Avenue Elementary opened its doors in 1954. Surrounded by a vibrant, bustling urban environment, Clover is tucked away in a peaceful residential neighborhood that gives its inhabitants a small town, well-connected community experience. Our proximity to the UCLA campus and UCLA Family Housing provides our school with a student body rich in a diversity of cultures that share the common goal of creating an environment for high achievement in an education-oriented community. We are an international family where our children have the opportunity to learn, grow, and socialize with children from all over the world. Not only has this promoted true cultural understanding and appreciation, it has given our students real life practice in working within the global society of tomorrow's world today. The question we pose to our staff is, "Is this a school where you would send your own child?" The answer is overwhelmingly, "Yes, and we do!"

Our student population is tremendously diverse, mirroring the urban Los Angeles community represented by Hispanic, White, Black, Asian, Filipino, and other ethnic groups. Clover is truly an international school with students from around the world, six continents and over 30 languages represented. Twelve percent are English Learners, 15% are identified Gifted, 7% are Special Education Students, and 24% of students are eligible for free/reduced-priced meals. All of our students are respected, and we believe that all children can reach their highest potential with the support of our school, their parents, and the community.

Clover is consistently one of the top-performing schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). In 2018, 85% of our students were proficient or advanced in English Language Arts (ELA) and 83% of students in mathematics scored proficient or advanced on the Smarter Balance Assessment. On the California School Dashboard, which measures current year results and whether results improved from the prior year, Clover scored in the highest performance band in ELA (77.8 points above standard) and in mathematics (69 points above standard). Clover attributes its success to a number of student-centered curricular programs and strategies and its commitment to all educators being life-long learners. The instructional leadership team continually seeks out the best programs and methodologies that best fit the needs for its diverse learners. A recent example of this is the implementation of our Growth Mindset philosophy, where students are encouraged to embrace challenges, value the learning process, and believe in their ability to grow and improve.

The Clover experience is rooted in our belief that students will thrive academically when their social, emotional and physical needs are met. This translates into a multi-faceted focus on the whole child. The heart of our school has been our adoption of Creating a Culture of Kindness. Using a curriculum called the Kindness in the Classroom, teachers deliver explicit lessons to help students think about, develop, and practice positive social skills. In recognition of our work, Clover was the recipient of the 2018 Kind School Award from the Random Acts of Kindness Organization and the recipient of the 2013 Golden Psi Award for applying best practices from psychology to student learning and social-emotional development.

We encourage our students to play a leadership role in making our campus a vibrant, active, and mindful place. Students may take part in student council and have a role in our school's decision making. Our student council has led several community service projects which help others in need. Our student leaders consistently make a difference in the world.

Clover Avenue is fortunate to have incredible parent and community participation. Our dedicated volunteers enthusiastically help in the classroom and at all school events, such as Valet Drop Off Program, fundraising, after school Garden Club, Book Fairs, and School Beautification Projects. These programs and activities support student achievement and contribute to provide a well-rounded education to all students. In addition, our community partnerships include the LA Opera which provides a six-week residency with the 5th grade; the Dancing Classrooms organization that provides ballroom dancing classes; and the Annenberg Foundation which donated \$15,000 this school year to Clover in recognition of our outstanding educational program.

Receiving the Blue Ribbon School Award in 2012 allowed the community to embrace what is occurring at

Clover Avenue and has encouraged the team to continue to seek ways to better meet individual needs. The Blue Ribbon Award spurred us on to set even higher goals for ourselves. Five of our teachers have received the distinction of Nationally Board Certified Teachers and one of our teachers received the 2013 Milken Teacher of the Year Award. Since earning the award, we have been fortunate to receive monetary donations from parents, community members, and business associates to fund exceptional programs for our students in the arts and technology. The Blue Ribbon program provides not only recognition, but validation and motivation as well.

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

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

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Clover uses a balanced and integrated literacy approach in daily reading instruction to meet all grade level standards. Our literacy instruction is driven by ongoing formative assessment practices. Our teachers begin the school year identifying each student’s instructional and independent reading level based on The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy assessment. Grades K-2 have interim assessments throughout the year and Grades 3-6 are part of the Comprehensive Assessment Block that includes a portfolio of interim and diagnostic assessments to support and inform instruction. Teachers use the adopted language arts programs, Benchmark Advance, which provides a framework for instructing students in reading skills and strategies.

Our daily reading instruction focuses on foundational skills, deep comprehension, and fluency in reading both fiction and nonfiction texts. Teachers use a variety of instructional models such as whole group, individual, and small group instruction to teach foundational skills such as phonemic awareness and phonics, and comprehension skills which include identifying text features, author’s purpose, making inferences, and point of view.

Students are given daily opportunities to read independently and are provided with high quality print materials with guidance, instruction and accountability. Students are challenged to respond to texts in a variety of ways. Teachers incorporate the use of targeted mini-lessons, genre students, mentor texts, and core literature to both enrich and reteach. Students also engage in research-based critical thinking programs, such as Junior Great Books.

Each grade level has their own writing curriculum that is aligned with Common Core State Standards. The grade levels focus on three specific genres: narrative, persuasive, and expository texts. Students practice these complex skills and build upon them, growing more sophisticated each year. Our educators use a variety of programs that will best fit their students’ needs. Writer’s Workshop, Lucy Calkins, Write From the Beginning, Four-square writing, and Columbia Creative Writing Program are just some of the programs that our school implements in order to have successful writers.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

The teachers at Clover use a variety of methods and materials to support successful math instruction. In alignment with the Common Core State Standards, our focus is for students to deeply understand math concepts rather than just memorize algorithms. Cognitive Guided Instruction, CGI, is used to encourage students to explore and discover different ways to solve problems, to verbalize their thinking process, and to be able to share their thinking with others. Mistakes are expected and respected as a means of cultivating a growth mindset. In addition to CGI, teachers use the 21st Century math component of the district adopted program, My Math, to engage students in problem-solving activities. Differentiated instruction in math is supported by guided math activities, flexible grouping among classrooms, “Math Talks”, Number Strings, and Hands-on Equations. Formative assessments, such as Performance Tasks, are given throughout the year in order to provide feedback to both teachers and students, as well as aid in shaping and optimizing future math curriculum.

#### **1c. Science:**

Clover’s science curriculum uses Full Option Science System (FOSS), a hands-on, inquiry-based approach, which gives students the opportunity to explore concrete scientific concepts through experimentation. Clover’s science curriculum is designed to correlate the state standards in the areas of life science, physical science, earth science, and scientific research for all grade levels. In addition, teachers are obtaining a deeper understanding of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) through District and school site

professional development opportunities and are implementing the new standards in their instructional program.

Teachers incorporate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities that engage students on multiple levels. Students collaborate in teams to find a solution to an engineering problem. They create a plan, test it, revise, and test again. Classroom experiments provide students the opportunity to experience science first hand, enhancing their understanding and connection to scientific concepts.

Fifth grade students further their engineering skills in our robotics program. Using the VEX robotics program, our fifth grade students construct a robot, learn coding and gain the inspiration to become the problem solvers of tomorrow.

Throughout all the grade levels, teachers monitor student progress through formal and informal assessments. Students in grade five take the California Science Test.

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

As a result of teacher collaboration, social studies project-based learning opportunities are created at every grade level. Students complete projects which allow opportunities to demonstrate learning aligned to California History-Social Science Content Standards for civics, economics, geography, and history. Students are assessed through their presentations, writing from various points of view, document-based questions, and culminating projects. The study of history includes the use of hands-on activities, research, visual thinking strategies, and field trips to local historically relevant sites where students learn through first hand experiences. Historical fiction novels, simulations, primary sources, a family ancestry project, and a California History play are a few ways we keep history alive in such a way that the students can understand historical events and analyze various perspectives. Our integrative approach helps students make sense of their learning and create opportunities for practical application across content areas.

### **1e. For secondary schools:**

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

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

Clover is focused on the development of the whole child and recognizes the importance of supplementary curriculum in this endeavor. The arts, health, and technology are not simply programs; we offer but are critical threads woven into the fabric of the student experience at Clover Avenue.

Music education is offered to all grade levels during the school year. Our Orff –Schulwerk trained district vocal music teacher provides each class a weekly 30 minute block of instruction for 15 weeks. Skill instruction is organized through the activities of listening, singing, moving, playing, and reading and writing of music. Skill development and conceptual development are interactive in process. Not only do students learn to read music, but they learn how to accompany themselves on the xylophone, drums and other unpitched instruments. Winter and Spring Concerts showcase students performing songs from diverse cultures and different languages. All third grade students learn to play the recorder and fourth and fifth grade students receive one semester of chorus.

The LA Opera provides our fifth graders with a six week residency in which students participate in a professional opera experience with sets, lighting and a stage crew provided by LA Opera when they perform for the school alongside professional artists. Students gain self-discipline and cooperation while working as an ensemble. They learn music fundamentals, and basic vocal technique and a working understanding of how to read and follow a libretto.

Our district visual arts teacher offers classes to all grade levels during the school year. Each class receives 50 minutes of instruction over eight weeks. The curriculum, following the state framework, is linked to core subjects and is vertically articulated so students learn various art processes and techniques throughout their creative journey. Emphasis is on process over product and self-expression is encouraged. All students have opportunities to create ceramics projects each year. Each spring, students' artwork is exhibited for the community to admire.

Throughout the 10 week "Dancing Classrooms" residency, our fifth grade students build social awareness, confidence, and self-esteem through the practice of social dance. Students are introduced to a variety of social dances, such as the Merengue, Foxtrot, Rumba, Tango and Swing and participate in a culminating event showcasing what they have learned. The maturity necessary to dance together fosters respect and teamwork. Ballroom dance is the medium we use to nurture these qualities.

Each grade level meets once per week for one hour with the PE coaches. We offer all grade levels a comprehensive physical education program focusing on the California State Standards for Physical Education, engaging students in skill-based activities and game play, including volleyball, basketball, and soccer. We also have a Run Club, which is open to all students and their families, which meets three times per week for the 30 minutes before school begins. Established in 2016, our yearly Fun Run has increased awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles and serves as one of our largest fundraisers, raising nearly \$50,000 last year. The money raised from Fun Run helps pay for the P.E. program.

Students in all grade levels have library class once every other week for 30 minutes. The focus of the library curriculum is to develop lifetime library users, lifelong readers, and diligent researchers. Book selection is also a part of the bimonthly library class. Our district librarian opens the doors at lunch recess for those students who would like a quiet place to read. One of the library goals is to connect the library and books to the classroom. The librarian collaborates across the grade levels to ensure that sufficient library materials are available to students to support their curriculum needs.

Clover utilizes the transitional kindergarten through fifth grade technology curriculum and instruction provided by PlanetBravo. This comprehensive technology curriculum provides 45 minutes of weekly instruction to all students in the school computer lab. Each grade level has thematic lessons for the year, all tying into the national technology standards as well as California State Standards. A few examples of the themes are integration, creation, exploration and communication. Students in fifth grade approach technology as a tool for presenting information in creative ways. They produce and edit cyberbullying PSA videos, program their own graphical Python projects, and create 3D models that can be 3D printed.

### **3. Special Populations:**

At Clover, we believe that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities. As a School for Advanced Studies, we provide high-level, differentiated instruction that is challenging and enriching for our Gifted Students, but remains accessible to students at all levels, including Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and Students who are Socioeconomically Disadvantaged.

One way that we individualize learning is through technology. Our classrooms are equipped with Smart Board Interactive Displays, and teachers use a variety of online instructional tools and resources to meet a wide range of student needs. For example, students with writing challenges have access to Voice Typing on Google Docs and keyboarding on a laptop as an alternative to manual writing. To engage Gifted students in high-interest, challenging activities, we provide lessons and projects that incorporate computer coding, web design, or filming.

English Learners receive daily targeted instruction that includes research-based strategies, such as Constructive Conversations. Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) helps them access core content through vocalized reading, visual supports, realia, and graphic organizers. Students with disabilities are supported through collaborative teaching and planning. Special education service delivery is multi-tiered and individualized, and we educate students with disabilities in the general education setting to

the greatest degree possible. The Resource Specialist Teacher and specially trained paraprofessionals implement accommodations, scaffold lessons, and provide co-teaching in general education classrooms. Students who are Socioeconomically Disadvantaged benefit from our Restorative Justice practices. We teach students that Clover is a community much like a family. Peer-mediation, service opportunities, and cooperative activities increase student ownership and create a healthy learning environment where all students can reach their potential.

Our intervention strategies are guided by the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework. We use screening tools, such as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), to predict who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. We identify students who need interventions and provide targeted small groups, intensive small group remediation, and one-on-one attention, as needed, in each classroom. Our school has an active Student Success and Progress Team (SSPT) that creates measurable goals, action plans, and follow-up procedures for students at risk. We offer after-school intervention in Language Arts and Math, and we provide technology based remediation, such as RAZ Kids Reading and Khan Academy Math.

We believe that valid, reliable assessment should be closely linked to instruction. At the beginning of each year, data from the Smarter Balanced Assessment of California is analyzed for each subgroup. To provide ongoing progress monitoring, we use information and data from literacy assessments, such as DIBELS, curriculum based assessments, and grade-level district assessments. On a daily basis, teachers monitor comprehension using strategies such as open-ended questioning, individual white boards, exit tickets, and self-reflections.

We are working hard to close achievement gaps. At faculty meetings and in grade level planning sessions, we review and monitor achievement data for our subgroups and set goals. We work closely with parents, attend additional trainings, and purchase supplementary materials such as math manipulatives and phonological awareness toolkits. Primary teachers and instructional specialists recently attended a four day training, led by the 95% Group and experts in the Heggerty Method, and learned effective strategies to improve outcomes for English Learners and other at-risk student populations.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

As we proudly state on our website, “Clover Avenue Elementary School strives to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of each and every student to prepare him or her for success in a rapidly changing world.” Clover is known to be a safe, supportive learning community where each member of our diverse student population feels welcomed, heard, and valued.

In our school culture, character development is as essential as academic growth. Our Culture of Kindness Program promotes social responsibility and builds community ties. Each month, we focus on a new character trait such as gratitude, helpfulness, or respect. When students demonstrate these virtues, we reward them with “Clover Cash” and recognize them in weekly school-wide assemblies. This program has led to an increase in positive behaviors at school, as students have learned to show empathy, resolve conflicts, and consider the needs of others.

At each grade level, students are exposed to growth mindset instruction and activities. Teachers use a variety of strategies, including Class Dojo, to encourage students to be flexible learners. As students build their capacity to cope with difficulty and challenge themselves as learners, the learning environment becomes charged with positive perseverance.

We believe that leadership opportunities and acts of service foster personal growth and contribute to a positive school environment. Fourth and fifth grade students serve as “Play Leaders” during recess and lunch, where they lead games and model sportsmanship to younger students. Third grade students volunteer to be kindergarten helpers in the cafeteria at lunchtime. Parents and students volunteer for our Valet Drop-Off service each morning before school.

We address the needs of the whole child by providing events and activities that allow students to be creative, show their talents, and have fun. Students of all ages enjoy our Dr. Seuss Week traditions that promote reading and liven spirits with special themes, like Pajama Day and Crazy Socks Day. Families rave about our annual Science Nights, International Festivals, “Halloween Hurrah” Carnivals, and Multicultural Dance Events. Parent groups provide appreciation luncheons and affirm teachers with cheerful notes and delicious treats throughout the year.

Clover teachers are appreciated and highly valued. Teachers are grateful for our principal’s open-door policy, and frequently turn to her for encouragement and support. Teachers’ concerns, feedback and suggestions are always welcome because we believe that as a community we achieve more.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

At Clover we recognize that parents and community play an important role in their students’ education and in the overall academic success of the school. Together we offer an array of family functions, assemblies, and school programs. Our Booster Club funds nearly \$150,000 for the purchase of classroom supplies, technology, and programs, including PE, art, music, and field trips.

Fundraising efforts are diverse and include annual book fairs, Halloween Hurrah, and International Night where we celebrate our diversity through food and entertainment. Clover Restaurant Nights bring families together as they dine, raising money for our school while supporting local businesses.

Strong communication is a priority. Through the implementation of school and teacher websites, school wide email system, computerized telephone system, our Facebook page, and monthly newsletters we have effectively strengthened the home-school communication and cement the sense of community at our school. Parents are invited to attend our Awards Assemblies where we celebrate student academic achievement, effort achievement and attendance.

Our parents and community are involved in the decision making process through their active participation in School Site Council, English Advisory Committee, and Local District English Learner Advisory.

We connect parents and students with available community resources and services to strengthen school programs and learning. The school provides information to all stakeholders on community-based health, cultural, recreational and social support programs and services.

We encourage parental involvement by recruiting and organizing volunteers. Parents and community members are surveyed to identify their talents, time availability, and areas of interest. Some of these opportunities include room parents, field trip chaperones, special event coordinators, valet program and campus beautification projects.

Clover provides parents with on-going parent trainings or workshops on a variety of topics, such as homework help, how to support learning at home, and how to access the Parent Access Support System Portal which will allow parents to check attendance, monitor grades, update emergency contact information and get information on English Learner Progress.

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

High quality professional development is a vital part of school success at Clover. Guided by the question, “What is best for students?”, professional development evolves around Common Core standards, district norms, the latest research in best practices, and student-needs specific to our school site.

For the last several years, teachers have selected a topic and book to explore during Book Club. One Tuesday per month, the staff meets to review and discuss the chapters assigned. Each month, teachers volunteer to lead the discussion and pose questions to the staff to discuss. Topics selected include mindfulness and Growth Mindset Project Based Learning and Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI). Teachers implement what they have learned and then reflect and discuss at their next grade level meeting. This practice fosters a strong collegial culture and establishes a positive morale among all. These topics are then further explored in whole group professional development meetings. It is also common practice for teachers across grade levels to share instructional successes such as lesson ideas and student artifacts. This initiates conversations across grade levels about student learning progressions and skill expectations from year to year.

District content experts provide additional professional development to our teachers. Topics include training teachers on Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and engineering practices and English Language Development Constructive Conversation Starters.

In addition, Clover’s teachers have elected to go to extra training and professional development. The school’s teachers attend the Annual GATE Conference for gifted education, Early Language and Literacy Plan (ELLP) training, and Differentiation of Instruction using Technology. The commitment to professional growth is just another contributing factor to the success of Clover’s students. Clover’s teachers model the philosophy of being life-long learners and their passion for education is felt by the students, parents and school community.

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

Much of Clover’s success can be attributed to a model of shared leadership. An environment exists where teachers feel challenged to learn, are provided tools to grow, the room to take risks, and the encouragement to push each other to be successful. The result is a unique learning community built on a foundation of supportive relationships, while keeping student achievement in the forefront.

Our principal is committed to academic, social, and emotional growth of students. She leads with the core belief that a leader’s job is to develop the capacity and strengths of teachers and staff. The principal believes in leveraging individual strengths and fostering leadership capacities in others such as the adjunct roles and responsibilities that teachers engage in which range from organizing and implementing our

Student Success Progress Team, Student Council and Special Events Committee.

Each grade level has a Grade Level Chairperson (GLC) that serves as a liaison for the team. The GLCs collaborate weekly with their grade level team members to share best practices, brainstorm ideas, share successes, ask questions, discuss all students in the grade level and come up with support plans for students needing intervention. In addition, each grade level chooses a community outreach project and then is responsible for organizing and communicating the necessity of this project to the school community. One such project this year was led by our kindergarten team which collaborated with the Lange Foundation, a local animal shelter, to provide food and blankets for the rescued animals.

Student Council members are provided with leadership opportunities that promote mentoring, social responsibility, shared decision making, philanthropy, and public speaking. Student Council members lead community service projects such as collecting food for the families affected by the recent government shutdown. Fourth and 5th grade students are playleaders for 1st grade students on the playground. They serve as mentors by facilitating play and mediating disputes.

Parents take on a variety of leadership roles at school through the Booster Club which provides fundraising opportunities for the school. The School Site Council, comprised of parents and staff, provide input on the implementation of the Single Plan for Student Achievement, budgeting, creating the calendar of yearly activities, and the safety plan.

The shared leadership of Clover Elementary has succeeded in building a supportive learning environment where risk-taking and innovation can occur. The risks have paid off with student achievement continuing to grow each year.

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

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When someone asks us how Clover has achieved such high academic success over such a long period of time, we respond that we begin with supporting students' social-emotional needs. It is quite common for visitors to comment on our happy and positive environment and we reply that we are purposefully, systematically, and thoroughly helping students strategize how to make friends, manage their emotions, advocate for themselves, and understand how to prepare themselves in the best possible way to learn every day.

We focus a great deal of time and energy on the social emotional growth of our students because we know that every minute in this direction yields academic results that are tenfold what we would normally achieve without these efforts. Our main resource to meet this need is the Kindness in the Classroom Curriculum, which we use at all grade levels, so we can have consistent language and strategies to support our students' growth.

Kindness in the Classroom is a universal classroom-based curriculum that is research based, developmentally appropriate, aligned with academic subjects, and teaches important skills for success in school and life. In addition, there are home extension activities that create a common language between school and home.

Each grade level has four units of study that incorporate the kindness concepts of assertiveness, caring, compassion, fairness, gratitude, helpfulness, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility, self-care, and self-discipline.

Students have the opportunity to earn Clover Cash for demonstrating one of the kindness concepts in the classroom, cafeteria, or on the playground. Each Monday assembly three winners are selected by random draw and earn a prize.

We also participate yearly in The Great Kindness Challenge Week. This week challenges students to complete as many acts of kindness as they can. Parent volunteers create kindness stations at recess for students to create kindness artwork and play kindness games.

The results have been amazing. We have witnessed an increase in empathy and sympathy among students, trust among staff, peer acceptance, and self-awareness. We have also observed a decrease in discipline referrals, conflict in student-teacher relationships, and antisocial/aggressive behaviors.

Our goal is to imagine a world where you can succeed by being nice, where we all pay it forward, where people look out for each other, and where kindness is the philosophy of life!