

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 Dr. Tanaz Bruna

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

Official School Name Tulita Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1520 Prospect Avenue

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

Redondo Beach CA 90277-5113
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Los Angeles County

Telephone (310) 798-8628

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E-mail tbruna@rbusd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Steven Keller

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

District Name Redondo Beach Unified School District Tel. (310) 379-5449

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 Mr. Brad Waller

(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):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 12 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	27	46
K	36	29	65
1	39	30	69
2	38	35	73
3	34	34	68
4	37	38	75
5	38	39	77
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	241	232	473

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 11 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 21 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 53 % White
 - 10 % 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: 1%

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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	473
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3%
16 Total number ELL

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

Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, Russian, Spanish, Italian, French, Farsi, Arabic, Turkish, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Tagalog, Greek, Hindi, Romanian, and Bulgarian.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14%
Total number students who qualify: 68

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
56 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>3</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</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: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
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.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1

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	96%	96%	97%	96%	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 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.

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

Tulita Elementary School is a learning community of students, parents, teachers, support staff, and administrators designed by and for ALL of US. Action + Learning + Leadership x Unity of vision = Success for all students.

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

One of eight elementary schools in the Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD), Tulita Elementary is located blocks from the Pacific Ocean, nestled in a mostly single-family neighborhood. The Tulita staff provides students and families with a nurturing learning environment where children can discover their strengths, dreams, and passions, all while learning how to use them for the good of the greater community. Many staff members are active residents of the local community. A culture of excellence, high expectations, collaboration, perseverance, risk-taking, and reflection has grown out of these relationships, always keeping our vision at the forefront: to provide a secure environment that is physically, emotionally, and socially safe where all students are valued, flourish, and are given the opportunity to develop and reach their full potential.

Built in 1955, Tulita has grown from a small neighborhood school of a few hundred grades K-6 students and undergone modernization, but the tradition of community support and strong parental involvement has endured. The positive climate of the school is maintained daily through the joy of learning, caring for others, and respect for grit. Tulita is the center of pride for close to 500 students in transitional kindergarten through 5th grade, as well as for our staff, parents, and extended community members, many of whom attended the school themselves. Our school demographics reflect those of our surrounding community. Our student body is 52.5% White (not Hispanic), 20.5% Hispanic, 1.4% African American, 11.1% Asian, and 14.1% other nationalities. In addition to English, there are over ten other languages spoken by Tulita students. It is this distinctive combination of school community and rich history that makes Tulita a place for all to succeed.

The Tulita experience is rooted in our belief that students will thrive academically when their social, emotional, and physical needs are met. This translates into a focus on educating the whole child. Teachers deliver explicit instruction on the growth mindset philosophy, the productive struggle, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and students' goals are set around the ten "Tulita Expectations for Success." These expectations focus on characteristics, such as resiliency, creativity, valuing challenges, gratitude, empathy, critical thinking, mindfulness, and self-advocacy. With counselor support, teachers offer instruction in mindfulness, including lessons around brain development and physical responses to stress and anxiety. Tulita's focus on the whole child has resulted in the school being recognized nationally by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation from 2014 - 2018. We endeavor to create students who are critical thinkers, life-long learners, and decision makers who are prepared to be successful not only in school, but also in their adult lives and in a technologically competitive world.

What sets Tulita apart from other schools is its innovation, data-driven instruction and decision making, supported through ongoing collaboration and professional development. Under the guidance of the school's instructional leadership team, grade-level teams meet weekly to study and unpack standards, develop lessons based on students' needs, and analyze and reflect upon teaching to improve practice. Beyond the significant amount of regular and ongoing professional development for all teachers, individuals are additionally encouraged to seek and attend professional learning opportunities in their areas of interest. Through collaboration, teachers examine student work, differentiate instruction accordingly, while offering rigorous academics. Such innovation has allowed Tulita to lead the way across RBUSD with its implementation of Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) activities, such as Number Talks, in mathematics. The talent of the teaching staff at Tulita drives curricular decisions, resulting this past year in over 90% of our fifth-grade students meeting or exceeding English Language Arts state standards as measured by the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

The support team, consisting of the principal, school psychologist, speech and language pathologist, special education teachers, and counselor, have established systems and processes by which students needing intervention are identified. Through the work of implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), the support team regularly meets to identify students, analyze data, and provide both push-in and pull-out interventions that are tailored to meet individual student needs. Clear communication and collaboration amongst the support team and classroom teachers leads to individual student growth.

Tulita has a long-standing partnership with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the Redondo Beach

Educational Foundation (RBEF). These partnerships provide resources for learning materials and enrichment programs, such as music, art, science, field trips, physical education, and support our college and career ready culture. Parents and community members contribute by serving on various school committees, acting as classroom docents, and spending countless hours volunteering on campus. Tulita also hosts the Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program, where fathers or father-figures volunteer for a day, providing positive male role models on campus. Our former city mayor becomes “Zero the Hero” each year to support math instruction and to celebrate the 100th day of school. Through collaborative leadership, our stakeholders implement an action plan that actively engages all students in a high-quality educational program that is aligned to state curriculum standards.

We, the staff of Tulita, are dedicated to doing whatever it takes to ensure that each and every student achieves success, regardless of their background or educational experience. We believe that we don’t do easy, we make easy happen through hard work and learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Tulita uses a balanced literacy approach to implement the California state standards in English language arts (ELA). This model includes the fundamentals of a solid ELA program by blending reading, writing, speaking and listening, and phonemic awareness. Every lesson is purposeful and relevant. This rigorous approach develops independent, proficient readers and writers by actively engaging students in meaningful learning. Students collaborate to develop high-level thinking and communication skills across a variety of settings including whole class discussions, small group instruction, and independent practice. Teachers use practices, such as targeted direct instruction, guided reading, rich independent reading activities, teacher read-alouds to ensure shared reading experiences, and phonemic awareness and word work. By following a gradual release model, teachers are able to show what good readers and writers do, share in authentic experiences with their students as they practice skills, and then release them to implement the skill independently. Storybooks and novels are thoughtfully selected to enhance a student’s vocabulary with a focus on non-fiction literature to tie in other content areas. Assessments are designed with the Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) chart in order to increase the level of rigor of the assessment and allows students to experience content on a much deeper level.

The Fountas and Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment System is used to identify students’ reading abilities on an ongoing basis. Data drives instruction and allows for differentiation based on individual strengths and needs. Classroom libraries are equipped with books across reading levels and genres. The school library is a resource that classrooms visit weekly. One-to-one technology provides access to online reading resources. This approach has proven to not only meet the needs of our highest readers, but our special needs students and English Learner population.

Writing instruction, guided by the foundations of the Lucy Calkins Units of Study program, is used to provide continuity and the opportunity to teach standards and foundational skills important to writing creatively, descriptively, and with purpose. Students engage in meaningful cross-curricular projects. Use of graphic organizers and brainstorm modeling improves writing stamina. Mini-lessons based on mentor texts are used to model strategies and teach the craft of writers. Rubrics and exemplars help improve writing skills on an ongoing basis.

1b. Mathematics:

Tulita uses Eureka Math as our core curriculum to address the California state standards in mathematics. Eureka Math is a rigorous, comprehensive, conceptually-rich curriculum utilized in conjunction with supplemental resources to support standards-based instruction. Eureka promotes deep and creative thinking among students. Within a typical math lesson, students practice math fluency, develop concrete understanding of abstract concepts, engage in independent practice, and are assessed regularly. Teachers use exit tickets as a quick strategy when deciding what skills need to be reviewed and/or retaught.

In primary grades, Eureka challenges students to work and manipulate numbers, deepening a student’s foundational number sense. In the upper grades, Eureka uses real-world application problems to develop deeper understanding of math concepts and mathematical reasoning. With a strong focus on grit and perseverance in math lessons, students are taught that struggling productively leads to a deeper understanding of content in addition to building stamina and perseverance.

Exit tickets, mid and end of module assessments, and the TenMarks math assessment platform are used to analyze and improve student and school performance. Teachers collaborate after each summative assessment to review student performance, analyze the information, and plan future lessons. These assessments are also used to determine students who may need remediation for a particular skill or standard. Exit tickets are used as a quick assessment tool to help drive a teacher’s instruction within a daily lesson.

Teachers report to the principal data from summative assessments and frequent data talks help determine intervention focus and student goal building. By using TenMarks, a diagnostic math universal screening and progress monitoring tool, the school is able to calibrate and compare progress seen within the curriculum benchmarks and gauge effectiveness of math instruction.

Teachers have also received extensive training in Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) that supports their ability to deepen students' thinking around math concepts. CGI strategies allows math instruction to emphasize problem solving in the classroom rather than the repetition of algorithms. In Tulita classrooms, "number talks" are used weekly to encourage students to think deeper about numbers, share varied problem solving approaches and strategies, and deepen understanding of the eight mathematical practices. Resource specialists and paraprofessionals provide push-in and pull-out math instruction for students in need of additional support. By using this co-teaching model, Tulita ensures that students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and those needing intervention are receiving core instruction in their classroom, increasing access to the general education curriculum. The effects of using Eureka Math, with the lens of CGI, include increased student stamina, perseverance, number sense, and the use of higher-level academic vocabulary. Eureka helps build concepts as students matriculate through elementary school grades, increasing a conceptual understanding of numbers and mathematics.

1c. Science:

Tulita believes that all students must have access to high-quality, 21st century science learning experiences that encourage them to be life-long critical thinkers and scientifically and environmentally literate citizens. With this vision in mind, Tulita utilizes Amplify as our core science curriculum. Amplify integrates hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools to empower students to think, research, write and argue like real scientists and engineers. Teachers have embraced the call to action by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to converge science, English Language Arts, and mathematics.

Teachers engage students in units that are relevant, real-world problems. Units are designed to investigate scientific phenomena, engage in collaboration and discussion, and develop models or explanations to arrive at a solution. Through the use of highly adaptable investigations, teachers have the flexibility to design lessons in order to reach all learners. During science lessons, students take on the role of a scientist or engineer in order to investigate authentic problems. Lessons and units teach students that scientists and engineers must employ a variety of approaches when investigating and explaining the world around them.

By using the NGSS as an anchor, teachers engage students in the Amplify curriculum by using the "5E" lesson design, taking time to reflect on how students will engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate lesson content. Tulita believes that high quality science experiences help students achieve conceptual understanding of core science ideas by engaging in science and engineering practices, and the concepts that cut across the disciplines of science. This results in a distinct way of knowing about the world – actively questioning, observing, problem solving, and thinking critically.

Student progress towards mastery of NGSS and grade level standards are measured through the use of benchmark assessments within the Amplify curriculum, which report on the three dimensions and performance expectations of the NGSS. Benchmark assessments are administered three to four times a year. They are also used ahead of the high-stakes end of year fifth grade California Science Test to gauge student progression towards mastery. Teachers and the principal analyze assessment data in order to identify areas of intervention and enrichment. This data is also utilized in the creation of individual student growth targets within the curricular area of science.

The school offers enrichment opportunities for students in the area of science and engineering by providing programs like the First Lego League Robotics experience for interested fourth and fifth grade students. Each year fifth-grade students attend outdoor science camp, bringing science to life. Teachers expose students to coding opportunities through programs such as The Hour of Code. In addition, the PTA hosts an annual Family STEM Night and Science Fair, engaging the community in scientific learning.

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

Social studies curriculum instruction values the importance of project-based learning using standards-aligned supplemental activities, in addition to the Houghton-Mifflin textbook "Reflections." Integrating language arts, Tulita is committed to making social studies come alive for our students. Through non-fiction and historical novels, teachers connect social studies and language arts daily.

By using the California Social Studies Framework as a guide, teachers develop social studies lessons that offer students the opportunity to learn about the world and their place in it. Lessons help students think critically, make connections, and communicate clearly. Social studies concepts in grades kindergarten through fifth range from history, civics and government to geography and economics, helping students prepare for college, career, and civic life. These topic areas strengthen a student's understanding of the world, encourage their active participation in our democratic government, teach them about the past, and helps them improve the ability to make reasonable decisions based on evidence and historical outcomes. The most critical role of social studies is the hand it lends to students' increased development of literacy. Through literature about the period and of the period, teachers expose students to a diverse variety of texts that range from historical documents, works of art, essays, inaugural addresses, and biographies. Through literature, students are able to make connections that reach beyond the text and teachers understand that social studies instruction demands more than just having students memorize disconnected content. Our social studies curriculum also encourages students to learn about the world around them both locally and globally.

Social studies assessments measure the following components within each grade level: close reading strategies, procedural concepts, and historical thinking. Through the use of the Fountas and Pinnell's Reading Benchmark Assessment System, teachers assess students' ability to read historical and informational content. Through the use of rubrics as scoring tools, teachers evaluate a student's performance and knowledge on grade-specific content, reading response, and historical thinking/reasoning. In addition, close reading of historical documents is assessed through formal and informal performance tasks. Data analysis done by teachers and the principal to guide further instructional practice, intervention/remediation, or enrichment opportunities for individual students.

At Tulita, social studies content is brought to life through a variety of hands-on learning experiences. For example, third graders demonstrate knowledge through a "Wax Museum," in which they represent an important historical figure. Fourth and fifth graders participate in an on-campus field trip called, "Walk Through California/Walk Through the American Revolution." In these events, students re-enact battle scenes and rehearse character roles. Fourth grade students also participate in a parent-led Miner's Day, with a focus on the California Gold Rush. Events and programs such as these help students make deeper connections to our rich history.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

The Tulita Child Development Center (CDC) is a fee-based program dedicated to providing preschool-age children with a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment that promotes educational and social growth. The pre-school CDC program is known for providing a solid foundation for children to succeed now and in the future. Licensed by the California Department of Social Services, the CDC program provides a 1:8 adult to child ratio, a safe and enriching atmosphere for students, and developmentally appropriate activities that prepare children for Kindergarten.

The Houghton Mifflin Pre-K curriculum is a "hands-on, minds-on" program designed to provide the foundational skills to prepare children for school. The curriculum focuses on phonological awareness, listening comprehension, and alphabet development. In addition, Handwriting Without Tears is a hands-on curriculum for fine-motor and language development as well as printing success. The program was designed by an occupational therapist and helps children develop important readiness skills for kindergarten, such as recognizing and building letters, vocabulary growth, body awareness, socialization skills, and much more.

Pre-school teachers also received training in the Eureka Math curriculum in order to maintain consistency in goals and academic vocabulary.

The Tulita CDC understands that each student in pre-school has his/her unique learning style, personality, and needs. With an understanding that the first five years of a child's life are crucial, especially for physical, social, and emotional development, Tulita's CDC program works closely in collaboration with transitional kindergarten and kindergarten teachers to design a pre-school program that addresses the range of needs students have. Social-emotional development includes the child's experience, expression, and management of emotions and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Tulita's approach to nurturing the whole child through various initiatives has created a safe, nurturing environment allowing students to grow and develop individual talents. These initiatives include: healthy living, physical and emotional education, technology and digital citizenship, music and art, gifted education, and college-readiness initiatives. Students are exposed to rich learning experiences in the school day that broaden their perspectives, develop perseverance, and extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Coupled with the growth mindset philosophy, students' social-emotional growth is at the forefront of our mission. Promoting a healthy mind and body is an integral part of the school. As a Blue Zone city and an Alliance for a Healthier Generation school, students of all grades participate in physical education, nutrition and gardening lessons, daily morning exercises, running club, the walking school bus, and a play-before-lunch model. Students learn to mindfully engage in strategies to reduce stress, increase concentration and focus, and self-regulate behavior through the neuroscience-based "MindUp" program. These programs support learning by promoting a healthy lifestyle, resulting in students who are present, alert, and engaged.

Tulita is also a one-to-one technology school, supported by the district. Teachers promote self-directed and differentiated learning through several modalities of technology in the classroom. Teachers deliver innovative and interactive lessons to engage students in learning and make content comprehensible. Students in transitional kindergarten through first grade have access to iPads in the classroom, while students in second through fifth grades utilize a Google Chromebook. Teachers provide digital citizenship lessons and tools for students to be 21st century learners and develop skills needed in a rapidly changing world. These technology sources prepare students with skills for communication, collaboration, creation, research, and critical thinking. Subscriptions to online programs, such as Keyboarding Without Tears, Ten Marks, Raz-Kids, Google Classroom, and Reading Eggs, allow for streamlined data management to guide instruction and provide immediate feedback to students.

Visual and performing arts are also an integral part of a student's experience at Tulita. Weekly music and art in the classroom foster creativity and allow students to develop talents in the arts. Students in first through fourth grades participate in a vocal music program with a credentialed music teacher, while students in kindergarten have music embedded in the curriculum supported by the PTA. Over 75% of the fifth grade population participates in band instruction with credentialed music teachers. Students are taught to care for their instruments, read music, and learn diligence and hard work, while playing on a variety of self-chosen instruments. Hands-On Art, a monthly, docent-led program, allows students to study the life and medium of famous artists and create art pieces inspired by the study. Art is also integrated into classroom projects and weekly lessons. The PTA holds an annual Family Art Night event, taught by a Tulita teacher with a passion for art. This teacher was featured on the well-known TED Talks series, discussing the benefits of art in the classroom and how creativity takes courage. Tulita was also featured through the LA25 Foundation for the Arts, when an art piece put together by a third grade class raised more than \$22,000 for arts education in the South Bay in 2012.

Tulita's Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students are served using differentiated instruction and depth of knowledge techniques in the regular classroom. In addition, an after-school GATE class meets for six weeks bi-annually, to provide further optional enrichment opportunities for students identified as having exceptional abilities. Offering a range of fee-based after school programs, such as academic chess, theater, dance, art, foreign language, and sports-based play, Tulita provides students with differentiated learning

opportunities based on their individual needs, capabilities, and strengths.

Tulita's overall curricular programs foster and enhance students' multiple intelligences and strengths. They extend classroom learning and develop talents by exploring the many facets of a whole child approach to learning.

3. Special Populations:

Tulita Elementary has a systematic and successful approach to meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with special needs, English language learners, and gifted learners. Research-based intervention techniques and instructional differentiation are constant practices employed by teachers. Teachers believe and instill in students that equality and equity are not always the same thing and they understand that being flexible in providing modifications and accommodations to students, supports learning and leads to celebrating individual student growth. To meet the needs of high-achievers, Tulita teachers study and implement research-based strategies to continuously challenge students above grade-level. By giving students a menu of options on how to demonstrate mastery, students are able to synthesize and apply learning across various subject matter through project-based learning.

The use of a systematic Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework helps when identifying and providing evidence-based interventions for students' academic, social-emotional, and behavior needs. Matching student needs with interventions available within an MTSS framework is based on the problem-solving model. Within the first trimester of the year, each teacher meets with the support team during Cooperative Conferences.. Often times this leads to a Student Success Team (SST) meeting. The school's SST, including the student's parent, meets regularly to discuss student strengths and areas for growth. Students are benchmarked three times a year using the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Next universal screening tool in reading and comprehension which allows the school to provide reading intervention in the primary grades. Teacher data talks and progress monitoring are key practices used by Tulita.

Tulita also uses the Fountas and Pinnell reading benchmark system to identify struggling readers. Students in grades K through five, who need reading intervention, receive instruction using the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program, designed to provide daily, intensive, small-group instruction, which supplements classroom literacy teaching. LLI engages students with leveled books and a fast-paced lesson design that covers decoding strategies and comprehension skills. Designated students also receive reading intervention through a program called Read Naturally, which helps increase reading fluency and writing skills.

The LLI intervention system also benefits our English language learners (ELL). ELL receive appropriate intervention and support based on their English language development as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC). By using the California English Language Development Framework as a guide, teachers design instruction so that ELL are given opportunities to practice listening and speaking skills, writing, and reading within the English language. An ELL paraprofessional funded by the school's supplemental base grant provides both pull-out and push-in support for Tulita's ELL.

Tulita's learning center model allows for special education credentialed teachers to support students with IEP goals. Teachers understand that collaboration is key and strive to provide the least restrictive environment for students. Teachers are flexible in providing co-teaching support to students. Push-in support has been beneficial specifically in regard to math instruction as specialists can directly service special needs students in their general education classroom, ensuring that all students have access to the same curriculum.

Flexible seating, standing desks, and print-rich classrooms serve as a teaching tools for all students. The use of anchor charts, manipulatives, CGI strategies, mentor texts, and real-life applications make content accessible for all. Students are provided with accountable-talk opportunities through project-based activities, pair-share, and small group discussions to foster collaboration. They are taught to cite evidence to defend their thinking while sharing inferences and conclusions. The importance of teaching students about

perseverance and the productive struggle particularly challenges our neediest students to develop grit and holds them accountable for the same level of rigor as their peers.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Ensuring a positive and safe school climate is one of the key tenets at Tulita. In fact, one would say it is a destination school not only for students, but for staff as well. Tulita is committed to engaging and motivating students while providing a positive environment that fosters the needs of the whole child. The staff has established a culture of high expectations for positive behavior, academic growth, social-emotional awareness, perseverance, and school pride. The school implemented the growth mindset philosophy, teaching students the fundamental differences between fixed and growth mindset, and uses failures as a learning opportunity.

The school also implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), establishing common behavioral expectations, consistent instruction, and explicit positive reinforcement. The school motto is, “Be A PEACEbuilder,” where students are taught to practice respect, encourage responsibility, act safely, care for others, and use best effort. Positive behavior is recognized frequently through the school-currency of Tidalwave Tickets. Redemption menus include of non-food incentives, such as five minutes of shooting hoops with the teacher or being principal for the day. Strong character skills are also highlighted through monthly “Town Hall” assemblies, recognizing students who exemplify one of ten Tulita Expectations for Success rather than just stellar academic marks.

In conjunction with positive expectations, clear due process protocols are followed for behavior incidents, ensuring that all students are treated with respect and that discipline remains fair and consistent. Safe equipment and the playground design all support a positive environment. A Buddy Bench helps connect peers and encourages the growth of friendships. Tulita believes a beautiful and safe campus are also critical to the school’s climate. Several art murals around school help with campus beautification and display encouraging messages. Flexible seating classrooms and standing desks give students the opportunity to take charge of their own learning environment.

A strong partnership between the district and the Redondo Beach Police Department (RBPD) has resulted in trainings and clear safety protocols on the campus. The entire campus community participates in monthly safety drills including fire, earthquake, shelter in place, and active shooter. Students receive safety training once a year through age-appropriate presentations.

The counseling program provides the school community with support, direct services, and resources. The program focuses and promotes student engagement through new student orientations, social awareness, having empathy, mindfulness, and a college-going culture. Each year Tulita participates in the California Healthy Kids Survey measuring social-emotional indicators. In 2018, key results indicated that over 90% of 5th grade students feel safe and respected at school.

In addition, teachers and staff are valued and supported in a variety of ways. Collaboration among colleagues stays at the forefront. Staff is supported through frequent principal walk-throughs providing positive and constructive feedback. The staff maintains close friendships and camaraderie and an overall sense of happiness at work. They are encouraged to practice self-care by participating in wellness activities such as staff wellness challenges and walking lunches. The social committee encourages staff to attend monthly outings and celebrates milestones. The overall well-being of the staff impacts the classroom and student achievement is flourishing. It is no surprise that on a daily basis, visitors express compliments and observations of the positive culture of the Tulita community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Community involvement is a huge asset to Tulita and the school is well known for its family-centered focus. Tulita offers a variety of programs and volunteer opportunities that engage the community by utilizing their skills and talents to bolster student success. Tulita views parents and community members as valuable assets.

The halls and classrooms are teeming with parents on a daily basis. In addition to classroom volunteering, community members and parents take part in numerous docent-programs, such as Hands-On Art, nutrition and garden education, where the trained volunteers teach lessons. In the WATCH D.O.G.S. program, fathers or father-like figures volunteer one full day, helping in the classroom, playground, and lunchtime. They serve as positive male role models, demonstrating by their presence that education is important, as well as providing an extra set of eyes and ears to enhance school security and playground conflict.

The PTA hosts additional special events throughout the year that reach out to community members such as: the Western Night carnival, Multicultural Night, parent book clubs, science nights, art nights, an annual book fair, and parent education speakers. Most recently, the PTA hosted an evening discussion of empathy in kids with author and therapist, Katie Hurley. The PTA also helps facilitate enrichment learning opportunities, such as the Battle of the Books for students in grades three through five. The annual Jog-A-Thon helps fundraise over \$30,000 while also promoting physical activity. These funds are then given back to the school community by helping pay for field trips, assemblies, classroom materials, and teacher grants.

Tulita also draws on the collaborative support of community and local businesses. The RBEF helps strengthen the connection between school and community by providing supplemental funding for enrichment programs. Through direct donations from local community businesses, RBEF supplements state funding gaps for music and physical education and provides grants and financial support for our college-going initiatives. Tulita engages community leaders and business members through career days and visits from our mayor, police and fire fighters, local businesses and school board members.

Communication with parents and the community plays a critical role in promoting engagement. Weekly e-newsletters, classroom messages, school and teacher websites, social media, community signage and regular teacher conferences keep parents informed of current happenings and how to stay involved. Tulita PTA was recognized in 2019 by the regional PTA for having excellent communication with its community.

Students, parents, staff, and community members clearly benefit from the network of engaged families and community members. The sense of connectedness has fostered a strong relationship that messages to students the importance of their education. Tulita feels strongly that family and community involvement positively impacts the overall success of our students.

3. Professional Development:

Tulita staff are life-long learners and are part of a district where professional development is valued and prioritized. Teachers and administration are supported and encouraged to continue growing and learning best practices. Guided by the question, “What is best for students?”, professional development evolves around California standards, district needs, the latest research in pedagogy, and student-needs specific to our school site. Tulita’s professional development plan is focused on school-wide improvement and the needs of our students. Those goals are generated each year through the analysis of the various data points available including state achievement scores, district goals, and community surveys.

Our district’s innovative teacher evaluation system allows for staff to be an active member in reflecting on practice. Professional development is ongoing, and all staff are encouraged to identify their own needs for growth. These needs are then matched to district opportunities and trainings, off-site courses, university classes, or our Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Recent professional development topics have included: Cognitive Guided Instruction, Inclusion and Co-Teach classrooms, MindUp and brain-based research, differentiated instruction, meeting the needs of special education students, Eureka Math, and the shift to the Next Generation Science Standards. Topics to increase the impact of technology initiatives have included a multi-day Google Summit, online assessment platforms, 1:1 technology implementation, and Google classroom.

The district has made it a priority to establish time for weekly collaboration, allowing teachers to learn from one another, fostering a professional learning community. Under the leadership of the principal, teachers study grade-specific standards and collaborate on the implementation of new teaching strategies,

methods, and resources. Using current research, teachers plan instruction, analyze student work, and reflect on the effectiveness of a lesson, based on student output. Teachers analyze assessment questions posed to students in order to ensure academic rigor and foster critical thinking skills. When data indicates a gap in achievement, classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are trained on student interventions and the school implemented a systematic approach to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

Utilizing a variety of professional development structures, Tulita has developed a learning community wherein students have access to research-based instructional practices and curriculum delivered by skilled professionals who are life-long learners.

4. School Leadership:

Successful school leadership does not exist in isolation. Tulita's leadership philosophy is one of distributed leadership and empowerment to develop a vision of what is possible for our students. By believing in the power of relationship building, the principal creates an environment where teachers feel challenged to grow, are provided tools to learn, have room to take risks, are encouraged to push each other, and coaching to be successful. The principal is visible in all aspects of campus life. The result is a unique learning community built on the foundation of strong, supportive relationships, while keeping student achievement at the forefront. The leadership and decisions made by the principal have been a model for RBUSD. Decisions, such as the use of Eureka Math, with demonstrated success, moved the school district to change math curriculum.

The principal leads with the core belief that a leader's job is to develop the capacity and strengths of teachers and staff. Staff members don't grow through directives, but rather through collaboration, open communication, joint risk-taking and ongoing reflection. The Tulita Instructional Leadership Team brings together the principal and teacher representatives from each grade and special education staff. The group studies best instructional practices and makes decisions with school goals in mind. Staff also take the lead each year on various school site committees ranging from organizing volunteer appreciation events to the social committee.

All staff members' voices are heard, and each is expected to contribute to the overall success of the school. Instructional practices are strengthened through ongoing feedback, walk-through observations, the evaluation process, and reflective conversations. Each year, the teacher's union provides results of the site climate survey to the principal, helping the principal reflect on the leadership of the school and determine areas of growth. For the last five years, this survey has resulted in exemplary marks for both the work environment and principal.

Parents and community members play pivotal roles in providing leadership to Tulita. The School Site Council, comprised of parents and staff, provides input on the implementation of the single plan for student achievement, budgeting, and the school's safety plan. The Wellness Council, comprised of parents, staff members, and students, works to identify focus areas for school wellness and create action plans to bring about healthy changes. These two organizations are just a sample of the opportunities for parents to serve as leaders on campus.

Students are provided with leadership opportunities that promote mentoring, social responsibility, shared decision making, philanthropy and public speaking. The Student Council program for 4th and 5th grade students helps lead service projects such as fundraising for local non-profit organizations, animal rescue groups, and homeless shelters. They help their peers in identifying and utilizing anti-bullying techniques and serve as mentors on the playground.

The shared leadership of Tulita has succeeded in building a learning environment where perseverance, risk-taking, and innovation occurs. The risks have paid off as student achievement grows each year.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One influential practice at Tulita that has led to school success has been the systematic teaching of the growth mindset, which includes perseverance, grit, and productive struggle. By teaching students to persevere, students grapple with the issues at hand and are able to come up with a solution themselves, developing resilience in pursuing and attaining the learning goal set forth by the teacher. Productive struggle skills build lasting understanding and strengthen stamina. This leads to responsive teaching by the teachers. Teachers use strategic questioning skills to help students labor and struggle but continue to try to make sense of a problem. Teachers practice long wait times and encourage students to have reflective conversations in the classroom.

Through the introduction of the growth mindset philosophy, teachers do not praise students for simply getting an answer right to a specific question. Rather, teachers emphasize creative problem solving and give constructive feedback in the moment to help steer students to the right solution. They also encourage students to share their thinking with others in the classroom, allowing peers to expand their own thinking. This kind of effortful learning develops grit and creative problem solving, and results in an understanding of grade-level content on a deeper level. It allows students to apply that deeper learning to more complex problems.

In order to get students to understand that perseverance and grit are important in all areas of life, teachers use the MindUp social-emotional curriculum to teach how the human brain develops and how mindfulness improves overall wellness. Students are taught how to tackle difficult problems by strengthening their critical thinking skills. Teachers model productive struggle on a daily basis. A content area where students have ample opportunity to persevere is mathematics. Teachers believe in allowing students the opportunity to show thinking in many different modalities – understanding that in order to be effective, they must be flexible in expectations. While keeping a high level of rigor, teachers design opportunities for students to engage in challenging tasks, teach students to see peers as resources through classroom community building, and use practices such as “resubmits” in the classroom. Students are given a second chance at many of the assessments used in the classroom to identify errors and resubmit the assessment once they have corrected it. This allows for mastery learning and teaches students that failure does not mean that it is time to give up.

By teaching resilience and perseverance, students begin to strengthen the traits associated with the personal and social responsibilities that are needed to be college and career ready. This includes a focus on students striving for excellence, cultivating integrity, contributing to a larger community, being resilient, and understanding various perspectives. Executive functioning skills such as decision-making, taking initiative, and displaying commitment are taught through goal-setting and utilizing self-evaluation tools such as checklists, rubrics and models. By teaching students that perseverance is an important character trait, Tulita is creating a community of lifelong learners with goals for the future.