

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 Mr. Eric Ashton

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

Official School Name Daves Creek Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3740 Melody Mizer Lane

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

Cumming City GA State 30041-6940 Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Forsyth

Telephone (770) 888-1222

Fax (770) 888-1223

Web site/URL

https://www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/daves
creek

E-mail eamaston@forsyth.k12.ga.us

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. Jeffrey Bearden

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail jbearden@forsyth.k12.ga.us

District Name Forsyth County Schools District Tel. (770) 887-2461

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Kristin Morrissey

(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):
- 21 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 10 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 10 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 41 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	74	97	171
1	99	81	180
2	104	90	194
3	108	88	196
4	120	111	231
5	106	108	214
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	611	575	1186

*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
 - 74 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 16 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 6%

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	49
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	70
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	1184
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5%
56 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2%
Total number students who qualify: 24

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
134 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>12</u> Autism | <u>38</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>30</u> Developmental Delay | <u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>133</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>6</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	52
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	22
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 23:1

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	97%	95%	94%	92%	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. 2013

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

Our school's mission is developing children's excellence and success. We believe all children can learn when provided with appropriate learning environments and we believe all stakeholders share responsibility for student success.

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

Daves Creek Elementary is located in Cumming, Georgia and named after the former Daves Creek School. According to 1907 records, the school had one teacher and 30-60 students. At the time, Forsyth County was predominantly an agricultural farming community. The school was only in session five to seven months per year to meet the needs of the community. Our school was also named for the Daves Creek historical community and the Daves Creek Mill, which exists today but is no longer active. Forsyth County was part of the territory historically controlled by the Cherokee Nation until their removal in the 1830s. An archaeological survey identified that an Indian village site is in the northern section of the Daves Creek community.

Daves Creek currently has 1194 students enrolled in grades kindergarten through fifth. Our population includes 576 female and 618 male students. Of those, approximately 74% are Asian, 16% are white, 3% are Black or African American, 3% Hispanic or Latino and 3% two or more races. 11% of our student population receives special education services, 2% free or reduced lunches and 4% receive English as a second language. Our students and parents speak over 22 different languages.

Our mission is to "develop children's excellence and success," and our vision is to provide a supportive learning environment with an engaging curriculum and relevant educational experiences. The district Learner Profile guides our work and our process for growing leaders for success. The learner profile focuses on the following five tenets: Pursue Continuous Learning, Exhibit Strong Personal Qualities, Utilize Creative and Critical Thinking, Engage and Contribute and Interact Effectively. Our goal is for all students to exemplify the tenets of the Learner Profile and become productive citizens when they graduate from Forsyth County Schools. Students learn essential life-long skills by working independently as well as cooperatively in all academic areas including fine arts, physical education, and technology. We believe that consistent high expectations and mutual respect foster self-discipline and lead to increased student performance. Administrators, teachers, students, and parents, along with the community, share responsibility for student needs and believe working together is vital to ensuring the success of our students.

Daves Creek has received awards and recognition for excellence in academics and other areas of achievement. In 2007 and 2008, the state of Georgia awarded our school the Gold Award for Highest Performance for Students Meeting and Exceeding Standards. Our success continued as we earned the Platinum Award for Highest Performance from the state of Georgia for 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Additionally Daves Creek received the Platinum Award for Greatest Gains in 2015, and the Gold Award for Greatest Gains in 2016, 2017 and 2018. We were recognized as a Georgia School of Excellence in 2019 for Student Achievement as a result of performing in the top 10 percent in Georgia. The year 2013 was exceptional when we were recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School. Following the recognition, we moved from being not only acknowledged for high success in our district and state, but notoriety across the nation and beyond. Due to this increased exposure, our enrollment increased and diversified as families moved into our district from around the world. Our school retains and attracts a high-quality staff with relatively small turnover. With the accomplishment of this distinguished award, we continued our goals for continuous improvement in instructional practices which led us to our journey seeking STEM certification. Daves Creek's students, parents, staff, and community have worked tirelessly over the past 5 years to build and promote a learning environment with cutting edge resources and best practice strategies that support this journey. In the spring of 2018, our Vex Robotics team competed against 400 teams and finished 2nd at the World Robotics competition. This year, all six of our Vex Robotics teams earned bids to the Georgia championships, and three teams have advanced to the World Championship. Two years in a row, 2017 and 2018, our Math Team was recognized for a perfect score to win first place in our district Pi Fight. Additionally, our faculty is the undisputed leader in community fundraising efforts with United Way. In 2012, United Way of Forsyth County distinguished Daves Creek as "Top Elementary School" for helping to improve the quality of life in our community.

The relationships we have developed with our community contribute to our success of the last 22 years. Our PTA, Local School Council, and our Partners in Education play a critical part in our efforts. The PTA and Daves Creek Staff offer an active calendar of events which promote a love of learning, relationship building

and foster a sense of community with events such as Movie on the Lawn, Spring Carnival, Science and Art Night. Also, our community business members sponsor multiple Daves Creek spirit night events at their establishments to bring our staff and students together to support our school.

Daves Creek's strong community relationships are the cornerstone to implementing change and providing new and innovative learning opportunities for all students. Our county has grown from rural pastures to a bustling suburban community with increasing numbers of new housing developments. The student population has continued to grow and evolve over the past five years. We have shifted from predominantly Caucasian to a majority Asian demographic. This shift has provided our staff the opportunity to embrace other cultures and build new relationships in the community as we continue to strive for excellence.

Today, Daves Creek Elementary continues its legacy as a top-performing school in one of the nation's fastest-growing school districts. In the state of Georgia, our overall performance is greater than 99% of the elementary schools, our students' academic growth is greater than 97% of the schools, and 90% of 3rd graders are reading at or above grade level. With the tradition of excellence established since our humble beginnings in 1996, we look to the future and embrace our position as a role model within our district and community. We proudly go forward, ever mindful of our ultimate mission, "developing children's excellence and success."

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

English/Language Arts instruction to students K-5 is based on curriculum that focuses on the components of literacy - reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language within a balanced literacy framework. Standards target key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and complexity of text in reading both literary and informational text. Print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency are integral to the curriculum as we strive to build strong readers beginning in kindergarten. Our writing curriculum develops students' recognition of text type and purpose, ability to produce and distribute writing, and proficiency in researching topics and presenting their knowledge. Speaking and listening curriculum targets comprehension and collaboration and students' presentation of knowledge and ideas. Language curriculum encompasses conventions of English, knowledge of language, and vocabulary acquisition and usage. Teachers assess individual reading levels throughout the year and design instruction to meet specific individual needs, whether it be remediation, challenge, or enrichment. Differentiation is found in small group guided instruction, independent activities, and center rotations. Daves Creek teachers select a reading text that supports both Social Studies and Science standards effectively integrating cross-curricular content. Students become active learners as they participate in book clubs, literature circles, and discussions with a focus on reading for a purpose. Students are taught to analyze text to comprehend material at a deeper level.

Several curriculum programs are used at Daves Creek Elementary School. In kindergarten, teachers are in year one of implementing a new reading program by the American Reading Company (ARC). In addition to ARC, primary teachers instruct with Kendore Phonics. Lucy Calkins Writing is in its second year of school-wide implementation K-5 integrating the writer's workshop approach to writing instruction. Teachers at Daves Creek integrate literacy across all content areas.

1b. Mathematics:

Math curriculum at Daves Creek follows Georgia Standards of Excellence. K-5 instruction targets number sense, computation, geometry, measurement, data and statistics, probability, algebraic thinking, patterns, and problem-solving. Teachers implement whole group instruction, modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and guided math groups. Small group guided instruction differentiates based on the needs of each student. Formative and summative assessments are used to establish flexible grouping. Teachers use hands-on activities and technology to foster collaboration among students. Students are provided multiple opportunities to "use what they know" through real-world application of skills and constructed response. Independent practice is student-centered and requires students to take ownership of their learning. Rigorous instruction focuses on building fluency and expression of mathematical ideas. Based on multiple criteria, students are placed in either advanced, on-level or support math classes in grades 3-5. In grades K-2, math instruction is differentiated within the classroom to meet the individual needs of each learner.

1c. Science:

Inquiry-based science instruction offers student learning experiences and encourages exploration. Lessons come alive in classrooms through student engagement and relevance to today's world. Students have access to a variety of instructional tools within our Science Lab such as augmented reality laptops, 3D printers, and web-based subscriptions to enhance instruction. Our Science Lab also supports classroom instruction with hands-on experiments and activities that align directly with our standards. K-5 science instruction is based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence within the domains of Earth and Space Science, Life Science, and Physical Science. Teachers also refer to the Next Generation Science Standards when planning instruction. Literacy standards are integrated to develop students' critical thinking and academic vocabulary by reading complex nonfiction text. Daves Creek staff participate in professional learning communities that support our school's pursuit of STEM certification (science, math, or STEM endorsements, researching and designing

activities and projects that are STEM-based and integrate them into content instruction). In an effort to obtain STEM certification, several staff members are pursuing math, science or STEM endorsements.

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

In grades K-5, Daves Creek teachers align instruction with the Georgia Standards of Excellence. The scope and sequence of instruction integrate the four strands of historical understanding, geographic understanding, government/civic understanding, and economic understanding. Beginning in kindergarten, instruction focuses on the Foundations of America, American Heritage in grade 1, and Georgia, My State in grade 2. Students then begin a three-year study of United States History integrating the same four strands. In grade 3, teachers cover American Indian Cultures Through Colonization, grade 4 covers the period from the American Revolution to U.S. Reconstruction, and in grade 5, Industrialization to the Digital Age.

Additionally, K-5 instruction focuses on map and globe skills and information processing skills. Social Studies standards are consistently integrated into ELA with the selection of aligned text in reading instruction. Instruction brings history to life! Teachers use a variety of strategies to engage students such as role-playing, reenactment, model creation, and interactive notebooks.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Art curriculum follows the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) in Visual Arts. K-5 students participate in art class weekly, and opportunities are given throughout the year to showcase artwork to the community. There are four central units of instruction throughout the year for all students. Units include "What is Art/Language of Art," "Two-Dimensional Art," "Three-Dimensional Art," and "Artists as Part of Our Community and Culture." Students complete projects within each unit of study incorporating a variety of mediums and techniques. Engaging art instruction allows students to take adventures and meet famous artists while traveling virtually all over the world, learning about the elements and principles of art, and exploring a variety of ways to create art. Students are exposed to art through technology, literature, and visual reproductions. Learners engage in hands-on activities and bring their personalities into every project. Students are taught to understand how art is connected to every facet of life and can be used to enhance learning in all subject areas.

Music instruction is aligned to the GSE and National Standards for Music. Students participate in music class weekly, and opportunities are provided to showcase their musical talents to our community. Lessons K-5 are designed to promote singing, performing on instruments, improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments, composing and arranging music, reading and notating music, listening to, analyzing, and describing music, evaluating music and performances, understanding relationships between music and the other arts, and understanding music in relation to history and culture. Chorus is offered as an extracurricular activity to all 4th and 5th-grade students. Students enjoy performing in two formal concerts during the year.

Our mission in Physical Education (PE) at Daves Creek Elementary is to help children develop a foundation for a healthy lifestyle that will continue throughout adulthood. Students participate in PE twice weekly as well as daily classroom recess. We encourage daily physical activity through fitness, sport, movement, dance and recreation skills. Our primary goal is to provide children with opportunities to reach their full potential physically, socially, and emotionally. Each spring students participate in a school-wide field day. Other annual events include Jump Rope for Heart, Fifth Grade Dance, and Fifth Grade Fun Day.

Students in grades K-5 attend a Passions and Interests class weekly. Instruction is based on grade level

standards, but the students dive deeper to extend their learning. Interest inventories are also collected to determine instructional pathways. Students explore their passions and interests and engage in real-world problem-solving tasks through technology integration and hands-on student-led projects. A safe environment is established for the students to focus on the process of learning over the end result. Mindfulness, Mindset, and stress-reducing tools are also incorporated into instruction. Students are encouraged to use a growth mindset to establish short and long-term goals and strive to achieve them in their daily life. Using the mindsets helps them to focus on their social emotional needs. STEM design principles are immersed into instruction as students create projects based on real-world problems.

The mission of the Daves Creek Elementary School Counseling Program is to support and enhance student development by providing opportunities for academic, social, emotional and career exploration. School counselors help develop skills in friendship, cooperation, goal setting, responsibility, feelings, conflict resolution, respect, problem-solving, organization, test taking, and study skills and more. Small group counseling focuses on mindfulness and movement, study skills, social skills, changing families, anger management/impulse control, grief and loss are provided as needed. Brief individual counseling sessions assist students in processing all types of feelings and issues. Consultation with guardians and teachers assists with social, emotional, or educational concerns.

The vision of the Daves Creek Elementary library media program is to develop successful, independent users of information and lifelong learners. The library media program supports the classroom curriculum, integrates information literacy skills, promotes literature appreciation, and serves the specific needs of students and teachers. Every child has the opportunity to visit the media center independently and with their classes throughout the week to check out books based on their interests and unit of study. The media center houses a Makerspace where students have the opportunity to apply STEM principles, explore, and create projects of interest.

Technology is an integral part of life at Daves Creek, whether it is managing student information, purchasing lunch, checking out books from the Media Center, working towards mastery of our standards or reporting student progress. One of the keys to supporting learning is the integration of our technology resources into daily instruction, i.e. instructional technology. Daves Creek has an Instructional Technology Specialist (ITS) whose role is to support all staff and students through training, collaboration and co-teaching. Our vision is to use classroom technology to engage students in asking questions and choosing tools to facilitate real-world problem-solving.

3. Special Populations:

Differentiated instruction meets the needs of all students through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). MTSS is a framework used to meet the needs of all learners by providing targeted support for each child including academic and social-emotional needs. All students receive tier one instruction. Instructional strategies are research-based, and all K-3 students participate in Universal Screening to identify areas of need. Students that need additional support are moved into tier two to receive layered interventions. The most intensive layer of support is tier three. At this level, students receive individualized targeted support to extend or remediate their areas of need. For students needing remediation, Daves Creek offers support in many ways. The Early Intervention Program (EIP) provides support for struggling learners in the areas of math and English Language Arts. Our EIP teacher implements small group instruction and intervention as well as co-teaching support to teachers at different grade levels. English Language Learners are supported through a pull-out, push-in, or collaborative model. Teachers use World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards in conjunction with GSE grade level standards to support students in language acquisition. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) may receive services through supportive instruction, inclusion, or resource segments. IEPs are written to address specific skills deficits in academic, language, articulation and behavioral areas. Students are continually progress monitored to assess growth and mastery of goals and objectives. Gifted classes at Daves Creek are extremely rigorous and encourage students to use their critical thinking skills. Students are taught metacognition strategies to “think about their thinking.” Students learn to think by finding strengths, sharing their feelings, researching and sharing accurate information, sharing original ideas and adapting ideas to fit situations, ensuring the safety of an idea or situation, planning, and organizing, and considering the most effective way to think.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Daves Creek Elementary creates and supports a positive school culture for all staff and students. Students are the number one priority. We strive to ensure that every child feels supported and valued at Daves Creek Elementary. We have a long-standing mentoring program that gives community members the opportunity to serve as role models for students. Mentors meet with their mentee once per week for 30 minutes to foster academic motivation, confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth through active listening, games and reading books.

School Culture is also cultivated through our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) platform, The Voyage. Through character education, students are able to change their understanding and perspectives of not only themselves but the community and world they live. Students are given opportunities to serve their community through service projects, such as Backpacks of Love, hurricane relief drive, singing at a local retirement home, and making blankets for children in the hospital. Student success is also celebrated and acknowledged through voyager tickets and Celebration on Voyager Island. Students who display specific Voyage traits earn voyager tickets throughout the year. One student per class who has exhibited the current Voyage trait is invited to Celebration on Voyager Island, our Voyager of the month celebration. Students are celebrated through hands-on activities and cupcake decorating sponsored by one of our partners in education. Through the magic of green screen and video production, voyagers of the month are transported to voyager beach for a group picture that is posted in the front lobby, on the school Facebook page and shown on the morning news.

The Daves Creek Care Committee and PTA partner to help our staff feel connected, supported and appreciated throughout the school year. The Care Committee celebrates special events such as weddings, births, staff recognition and holidays. Care Committee also supports teachers in times of loss or medical event. PTA celebrates the staff through luncheons, gifts, and teacher appreciation week.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our school success is the result of an active collaboration between internal and external stakeholders including students, teachers, parent, and community members. Student achievement is a direct result of parent involvement and support of instruction. Parent volunteers play another vital role through direct interactions with students in math and reading small groups, in the media center, or providing support in the classroom. We encourage the presence of parents and grandparents in the school to build a sense of community and belonging for our students. Our counseling department oversees adult mentors who are trained and volunteer their time with an assigned student. Their purpose is to foster a relationship, be a role model, and provide emotional support. These adults are parents, grandparents, and community members wanting to make a positive impact on students. In addition, a student advocacy specialist supports at-risk students at Daves Creek. Our counselors host several parent seminars to help support students and their families. Our Social Emotional Learning platform, The Voyage, supplies family take-home cards each week. Each task includes a conversation starter and an activity. This allows for a school to home connection. Another initiative introduced this year was "Family Connect Night." Once per month, in place of homework, families are encouraged to slow down and spend time reconnecting. When the bell rings and the buses pull away, our work is not finished. We actively seek to engage families and the community through our after-school programs. The growing list of after school clubs we offer at Daves Creek currently includes robotics, drama, chess, basketball, karate, cricket, Girls on the Run, art, chorus, math team, and Battle of the Books. Approximately 35 sessions run with multiple students enrolled in one or more of our after-school programs.

3. Professional Development:

Professional Development is a priority at Daves Creek. Staff members are continually striving to improve their craft and increase student achievement. Teachers new to the Daves Creek family begin their year with

a welcome letter from their mentor and administration, and all new teachers are paired with a grade level mentor for the year who is available to support them while they transition into a new school. New teachers participate in our New Educator Orientation (NEO) program, and they meet monthly to discuss the Daves Creek way, county initiatives, instructional strategies, and how to create a positive classroom environment. Our NEO program is a three-year program that helps provide support for teachers new to Daves Creek. The program is led by our Instructional Technology Specialist, a special areas teacher, and our instructional coach. The first year is an overview of strategies to assist teachers with acclimating to Daves Creek, the second year is focused on classroom management, and the third year is structured to focus on assessment practices.

This school year we began the process of obtaining National and State Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Certification. Our professional learning communities are based around STEM; teachers can obtain a math endorsement, science endorsement, or STEM endorsement. Teachers who already hold one of these endorsements or teachers who hold middle grades certification in math or science are members of a school-based STEM professional learning community (PLC). The PLC's meet an average of three times per month and focus on learning instructional strategies that incorporate STEM design principles. Additionally, teachers participate in weekly grade level meetings, monthly data team meetings, and Multi-Tiered System of Support meetings to analyze student data, design instruction, and implement intervention or enrichment opportunities if needed. The staff at Daves Creek attends monthly faculty meetings and Munch-N-Learn sessions which focus on county initiatives such as implementing transformational technology and balanced literacy. Our staff is consistently working towards growing as teachers and leaders.

4. School Leadership:

Daves Creek Elementary believes in leadership that supports the school's mission of developing children's excellence and success. Our district learner profile, academics, social emotional learning, and ultimately, what is best for students guides the direction of our school. Leadership focuses on creating a climate and culture that is warm, welcoming and embraces all that walk through the doors of the school. This is evident in daily interactions with all staff, students, families, and community members.

The core leadership team consists of the principal, two assistant principals, two quality-work facilitators/instructional coaches, two counselors, and the instructional technology specialist. This team meets weekly to discuss opportunities for growth, celebrate strengths, and set a path for the upcoming weeks. The team works to support all students and staff based on their needs by providing resources, instructional strategies, communication, motivation, and emotional support. Additionally, Daves Creek has a Leadership Team with representation from all grade levels and special areas. This team meets monthly and collaborates to create consistent communication across the school regarding policies and procedures, instructional strategies, social emotional learning, technology integration, and specific concerns.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that we believe is critical to our mission of developing children's excellence and success is establishing and nurturing relationships with all stakeholders. We believe this starts before our students enter our building at open house. Our administrative team hosts a meet and greet for families new to Daves Creek each July; the purpose is to share information about our school and allow parents to ask questions in a relaxed environment. Parent feedback indicates a decrease in stress about their child entering a new school and an increased affirmation that we are here to partner with them in their child's learning. Kindergarten teachers call the parents of their students a few days before school starts to welcome them to Daves Creek ensuring a smooth transition to a new year. Teachers in first through fifth grade send a welcome letter to their students about a week before school starts; the letter introduces the teacher, shares some exciting units the students will engage in during the school year, and includes a school supply list. We host an open house before school begins for all students as well as a curriculum night in early September to outline the curriculum for the year.

Additionally, parent conferences are scheduled in October and March to keep parents informed of their child's academic and social progress. Our teachers communicate with parents through weekly or daily folders as well as through our learning management system, Itslearning. Parents are able to stay up to date by simply logging in to this platform. The administrative team at Daves Creek recognizes the importance of the emotional well-being of the staff and organizes "surprise and delights" throughout the school year. A staff favorite "surprise and delight" is the football kickoff in August; the administrative team cooks hot dogs and hamburgers for the staff, and everyone proudly wears their favorite football team shirt or jersey. Other surprise and delights include a hot chocolate bar, Waffle House breakfast, and steak luncheon to name a few. Daves Creek teachers and administrators understand the importance of social emotional learning; we participate in the Voyager SEL program. Each month we focus on a specific character trait, and our teachers seek out ways to embed this trait into their curriculum. Our teachers create a video that highlights ways to show the character trait, and we broadcast it on the morning news; each month a new video is shown to our students. Teachers select one student from their class who has exemplified the trait to attend the Voyager Island Celebration. During this celebration, students participate in fun games that reinforce the character trait; the games are led by one of our business partners, the Karate Dojo. Children have their pictures taken and posted on school social media, receive a certificate, and get to decorate a yummy cupcake to enjoy.

Throughout the year, teachers use the Multi-Tiered System of Support as a framework for meeting the needs of each student. Teachers and administrators participate in Response to Intervention and Data Team meetings. Interventions and instructional strategies are discussed to support students by providing remediation, challenge, or enrichment. Continual progress monitoring tracks students' growth and progress in relation to normed goals. Parents and staff collaborate on the educational decision-making process during Student Support Team meetings. The team identifies interventions and research-based strategies to decrease learning gaps and improve specific behaviors.