

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 Mrs. Kelley Begley-McCall

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

Official School Name Clear Creek Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5815 Monticello Road

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

Shawnee KS 66226-3032
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Johnson County

Telephone (913) 422-8700

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Web site/URL https://www.usd232.org/cce

E-mail kbegleymccall@usd232.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. Frank Harwood

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail fharwood@usd232.org

District Name Unified School District No. 232 (De Soto) Tel. (913) 667-6200

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. Danielle Heikes

(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 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	0	0	0
K	43	51	94
1	44	47	91
2	53	46	99
3	60	38	98
4	44	53	97
5	46	54	100
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	290	289	579

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 4 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 85 % White
 - 5 % 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: 8%

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	16
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	26
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	42
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	539
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
0 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5%
Total number students who qualify: 29

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
47 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>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>7</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>26</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 22:1

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%	97%	96%	0%	0%
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.

Our mission and vision is to maximize each student's potential, through inspiration and discovery, challenging them to become self-sufficient and positive contributors to society.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Clear Creek Elementary is located within the western area of the city of Shawnee, Kansas. The school opened in 1998 as a result of the rapidly growing suburb located within the metropolitan region of Kansas City. The Clear Creek constituents have an above average median household income at approximately \$120,000 annually. The community places a high value on quality education as evidenced by more than 62 percent of adults in the Clear Creek community having a bachelor's degree or higher. These data points are further revealed in the school's student demographics – 81 percent white, five percent African American, six percent Hispanic, and eight percent in other racial/ethnicity groups.

Data shows that early childhood education is important to the community, as incoming Kindergartners in the Clear Creek area are more prepared for school compared to similar-sized schools in nearby districts. While there are significantly more affluent families, approximately seven percent of students qualify as economically disadvantaged. Another important factor is the eight percent of our students who qualify with disabilities (exceptionalities).

Given the community circumstances and realities, Clear Creek Elementary benefits from high parent participation at Parent-Teacher Conferences and enjoys strong community support. The staff turnover rate within our building is the lowest in the district. We are an invested, committed, and loyal staff. This has fostered the ability to create and maintain many school traditions that our stakeholders look forward to. Each year at CCE, the Clear Creek families enjoy numerous activities that include the Father Daughter Dance, Fish Bowl Auction and a variety of Community Service days. Our Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program also boasts a long list of dads and male relatives being present at Clear Creek on a regular basis to serve as positive male role models.

Another tradition that has taken roots and grown, literally and figuratively, is the Clear Creek garden. This masterpiece is a conglomeration of stakeholders and community resources coming together to enhance and extend the learning opportunities made available to our students. While the donations of time and money from parents and local businesses have launched the garden, it is now a self-funding program and incorporated within the curriculum. Students have the ability to grow vegetables to share in the school's lunchroom for their science unit while also growing and selling gourds for workshops in their social studies unit.

The true nature of Clear Creek is reflected through its mission, “to unite school, family, and community by inspiring, challenging, and empowering each of us to grow as life-long learners and responsible citizens.” The word “each” is what speaks most about our mission. For each of our learners, we aim to connect with and support their needs. We focus on the individual academic, emotional, physical, and social needs for every one of our students. CCE embraces and promotes the cultural differences for each child that enters our building.

We then further this concept through our application of our building vision, “Learning to Soar ~ Soaring to Learn.” Starting with our incoming kindergarteners by using our mascot of the eagle, we mold and model all the ways each of these “eaglets” can Learn to Soar. As students progress through the grades, our focus changes to helping them Soar through their Learning to the highest heights possible, just like an Eagle.

We accomplish our mission and vision through the philosophy that All Kids Are Our Kids and that every child belongs to every adult. Our staff has utilized vertical families that are created when a student enters kindergarten and is maintained through their academic career at Clear Creek. This opportunity allows yet another meaningful relationship to form for our students. Our success centers on supporting every child that becomes an Eagle, no matter the circumstances. With our mission driving our goal to help inspire, challenge, and empower each of our students, they leave our building as willing and able life-long learners and responsible citizens. Once an Eagle, always an Eagle!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

At Clear Creek, Reading/English Language Arts instruction is designed on developmental appropriateness that follows a scope and sequence model created through a district provided curriculum. The Benchmark Advance curriculum was selected because of the quantity of materials provided including consumables, interactive website, leveled, small group readers, reader's theatre, etc. Each grade level studies the same general topics in ten units throughout the year which tie into science and social studies standards. This creates a natural cross-curricular approach, all the while being developmentally appropriate for students. In some grade levels, these materials are supplemented with the use of Big Books, Write Source, and Words Their Way curriculum. Other grade levels integrate their units with genre-based writing projects and vocabulary study based upon content.

Small groups are a staple at each grade level offering differentiated, flexible learning. Intermediate grades use a combination of small group readers and novel studies, while at the primary grades core skills are taught including site words and word patterns.

These ability-based groups are reorganized throughout the year based upon data collected through assessments and routine benchmark analysis. Most grade levels employ some form of a "Daily 5" structure to reinforce grammar, writing, spelling, and provide additional independent reading time while small group/teacher instruction is taking place.

Our Reading Specialist and aides pull out students for small groups and progress monitoring four to five times weekly for Multi-Tiered System of Supports instruction at all grade levels. These tiered groupings are re-evaluated during monthly team meetings based on classroom data.

Our district utilizes FastBridge Learning assessments three times annually for all students in grades K-5. These tests allow for progress monitoring and provide detailed insight regarding gaps in learning and areas of remediation. Data is used to determine areas of growth and weakness to guide instructional and intervention decisions.

1b. Mathematics:

Professional development for teachers incorporates vertical teaming to achieve maximum student growth in mathematics. Teachers collaborate to develop a common vocabulary, share problem solving strategies, and improve Guided Math methods in all classrooms to ensure a strong foundation in number sense. Teachers also create student choice via "real-world" project-based learning opportunities. While delivery methods differ among the grade levels, all teachers utilize the district provided enVision curriculum and additional teacher created resources to ensure skill mastery. Topics of study build on prior knowledge as students' progress through the grade levels. The primary grades utilize Number Talks to improve number sense while intermediate grades expand on a gaining a true understanding of place value prior to including operations with those numbers, fractions and decimals. Teachers utilize small group time to check for understanding and to challenge higher learners.

Assessments used to guide instruction are the enVision unit tests and performance tasks. The FastBridge Learning Assessments also used to measure growth and identify learning gaps. Flexible tiered groups are created to allow for remediation. Progress monitoring is accomplished using technology tools and the daily schedule includes time for structured interventions based upon these data points.

We believe relevance is the most important part of math instruction. Each grade level has cross-curricular learning opportunities to demonstrate mathematics in everyday life. Kindergarten's Apple Day celebration allows students to practice measurement and graphing. Students in third grade study economics by creating stores and use money to go shopping. Working from a budget, our fifth graders researched and built a scale

model of their dream playground. Administration used this PBL experience to guide their purchases. We believe that in showing students how they will use math, they will be more invested in their learning.

1c. Science:

Clear Creek Elementary believes students should experience science through hands-on learning at every grade level. All grade levels employ the district provided National Geographic curriculum which consists of an interactive website and textbooks. Additionally, our standards align with our district provided English-Language Arts materials, which provides opportunity for cross-curricular instruction. All Teachers use whole group instruction for topic introduction but include group and individual discovery through experiments and engineering design. We are also fortunate to have a vast video library containing DVDs for most units to enhance the classroom instruction.

Topics of study for each grade level evolve, creating a scope and sequence that spans all six grades. For example, the standard for Earth Science begins in kindergarten as students explore weather and seasons. In first grade that foundation is built upon when the sun and moon are taught. Second graders learn about erosion due to wind and water changes and third graders re-visit the idea of weather introduced in kindergarten in their unit about meteorology. Fourth graders build upon erosion and weathering as they learn about natural disasters and how they impact earth, while fifth graders employ higher-level thinking to understand the importance of water in societies.

Many grade levels have “ETC” (Enhancing Teacher Curriculum) days that are sponsored by our Parent Teacher Organization. ETCs are organized and managed by parent volunteers, often as the culminating activity of a unit of study. Kindergartners experience Farm Day ETC to learn more about Animals while second graders enjoy both a Matter ETC and a Pioneer ETC to further their learning.

Assessments in grades K-3 consists primarily of participation and performance tasks. Based upon developmental appropriateness, 4th and 5th grade students are assessed using both tasks and written assessments. This transition for assessment helps prepare students for middle school and beyond.

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

Clear Creek Social Studies instruction utilizes several standards-based curriculum resources to provide a rounded learning experience for all students. Teachers employ whole class delivery of information using a variety of sources including materials from the Kansas Historical Society, Social Studies Weekly newspapers, and Time for Kids trade books. The district provided ELA material, Benchmark Advance, aligns with social studies instruction providing cross-curricular study. All grade levels use technology to enhance learning with videos, interactive websites, and research for project-based learning.

Our students experience social studies through field trips, community members’ presentations, and guest speakers. Some learn the importance of rivers in commerce by visiting the Steamboat Arabia Museum and others travel to the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art to see the Native American gallery to better understand Native American culture. Our School Resource Officers visit and teach the importance of civics and good citizenship. Our kindergartners partner with the Shawnee Police Department for a community service project collecting stuffed animals for children in crisis. Fifth grade students meet with city developers to gain knowledge of community development to better understand how pioneers and settlers determined how best to create settlements. These engagements bring relevance to instruction and make learning meaningful for our students.

Our Parent Teacher Organization is instrumental by funding these learning opportunities, including ETC (Enhanced Teaching Curriculum) events. These special days consist of stations operated by parent volunteers and serve as an extension in learning. Second graders become pioneers traveling the Oregon Trail and our fourth graders travel across the USA making crafts and eating regional cuisine while learning about various cultures throughout the country.

Assessment for social studies are developmentally appropriate. Primary grades are tested through
NBRS 2019

participation and whole class reflection, while intermediate classes employ more traditional written assessments and performance tasks.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Clear Creek offers a rich curriculum for exploratory classes. Students attend 60-minute classes on a rotating schedule which include art, music, physical education, technology innovations, library/media center, and the school counselor.

Art

Projects encourage children to identify the art around us, the purposes for creating art, explore how art is impacted by history and culture, develop self-expression, employ techniques for using a variety of art materials, and strengthen visual perceptual abilities and motor skills. Students employ a “design thinking” problem solving model for developing their project plans and ideas. After their art is created, students reflect through discussion and writing. Artwork is published in an online art gallery and shared with the community through an art show that is collaboratively planned and prepared with students.

Counselor

All students receive time with the counselor each week for character development. Class instruction helps students develop a growth mindset, provides strategies to regulate their emotions, and teaches effective ways to cultivate healthy habits such as planning, goal setting, and successfully communicating with others. Students also benefit from counseling support outside the classroom. Students can visit the counseling office individually or in small groups to learn ways to cope with stress, improve social skills, or process other social/emotional concerns. Students, teachers, and families can work collaboratively with the counselor as an advocate to maximize student learning in all areas.

Library Media Center

Learning sessions are divided into a rotating experience for students. One week the children will enjoy 60 minutes of time with our Media Specialist participating in a lesson, read aloud and check-out of books. The following week students will spend 30 minutes hearing book talks and checking-out new titles. The heart of our Library Media Program at CCE is interacting with literature. Regardless of the genre or form in which the child accesses the words, finding a joy and passion for bringing reading into their lives is what drives their experience. Engaging in Book Fairs and celebrating diverse authors and text add real-world connections for our students.

Music

Clear Creek students attend 30-minute music classes twice weekly. Music is taught through the Orff Schulwerk approach which emphasizes active music making through speech, singing, playing instruments, and moving. Students experience and create through world music drumming, recorders, Orff instruments, and class guitars. Each grade level creates a public performance yearly and third grade students attend a Kansas City Symphony performance. Before-school choir is offered to fourth and fifth grade students with a participation rate of nearly 60 percent. Band is introduced to fifth grade students and 50 percent of our students take advantage of the opportunity.

Physical Education

Similar to music, Clear Creek students attend 30-minute Physical Education classes twice a week. Physical Education is taught using the SPARK curriculum which aligns with the national standards. Students learn the benefits of making healthy choices and the importance that daily physical exercise has on their overall

health. Through the teaching of various movements, exercises and games, students learn how to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. Physical Education gives students a chance to become effective leaders, while also learning the importance of sportsmanship and teamwork.

Technology Innovations

Technology Innovation class encourages students to develop positive social and ethical behaviors when using technology. Activities are designed to enhance creative thinking, problem solving and critical thinking. Another emphasis is to enhance productivity and facilitate learning across the curriculum. Students practice the Creative Problem Solving process when handling their project's responsibilities. All classes have access to iPads, laptops, desktop computers, 3D printers and various codable devices. Students are given the opportunity to join CCE's Coding Club or the Lego League Club that meet after school.

3. Special Populations:

We at Clear Creek strive to instill a love of learning in our students with exceptionalities by using their interests and strengths to differentiate content, process, and product. We use technology paired with a multi-sensory approach to engage students in difficult tasks. We also place a focus on creating an environment for students in which they feel safe to fail and try again, realizing that true growth occurs outside their comfort zone.

For students who are performing below grade level and who have not been identified as having a specific learning disability, the team collaborates to further assess areas of need to identify interventions which helps close the achievement gap. Learning opportunities are created to maximize the student's ability to learn a skill or content information. For example, a 5th grade reading intervention group was given the opportunity to self-select an area of interest in an upcoming social studies unit of study. Students conducted research and shared the information gathered in a small group setting. This allowed the students to take ownership of their own learning and learn at their own pace. When the unit of study was then taught in the classroom, the students were more engaged and active participants.

For students who excel in one or more subject areas, the team works together through collaboration to further assess ways to enrich and extend the content. Teachers find a balance between working on skills to grow students while focusing on topics of high interest.

Our team does not just work to address academic needs but also works to help support students and families dealing with social, emotional and behavioral needs. We tailor our positive behavior supports for each individual because what is effective for one is not always effective for another. For example, a student who struggles with a specific behavior in the classroom is not motivated by tangible rewards or words of affirmation. This student is solely motivated by uninterrupted conversation with others. By showing expected behavior, the student can earn a "Danny Dash" which consists of one-on-one time to talk to an adult in the building about a topic. The student has gained independence by grabbing his "Danny Dash" tub and following an attached visual schedule to initiate conversation, set a timer, offer snacks, return to class, etc. Not only does this behavior support reinforce the expected behavior, it also provides a consistent opportunity for the student to build and strengthen relationships with adults in our building. One of our greatest tools to reach students is to connect with them. We have consistently seen that a foundation of strong relationships and individually designed supports leads to an improvement in behavior in the classroom.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Clear Creek takes great pride in the school climate and culture. The warm, family environment maintained at our school is one where our learners, both students and staff, want to come to each day to feel supported and valued for all that they contribute. Our teachers are the experts in their grade level and/or content areas and the administration cherishes the knowledge, opinions, and finally the relationships they build with their students and families.

One of the best ways we build a family feel at Clear Creek is by gathering often as an entire building. These whole school family meetings gives us an opportunity to celebrate academic success as well as improvements. For the past two academic years, the district Elementary Teacher of the Year has come from CCE! Both of these individuals teach in an exploratory classroom; music and art respectively, which are great examples of how a talented teacher, regardless of content area, can reach a child that may not otherwise feel successful in the traditional classroom setting.

Teacher leadership and development is one of the most meaningful ways to empower educators as we work towards common goals. The Building Leadership Team at Clear Creek understands the importance of teacher empowerment and professional judgement. Individual and team voices are heard and highly regarded at CCE. Teacher buy-in and ownership in the processes and goals we have in place help ensure we maintain a unity in all we do.

Having a comprehensive SIT (Student Intervention Team) process in place at Clear Creek allows opportunities to zone in on the academic, social, and emotional growth and needs of our students while also ensuring our staff, students, and families feel valued and supported. By employing the “It Takes a Village” mentality, we strive to get all available resources and district experts in a room to support teachers with some of our most challenging students and situations. Our hope is that all teachers are comfortable expressing some level of openness with what they need to help them succeed as an educator. By supporting, motivating and taking care of our teachers, they can better provide for the unique needs of each learner. We are truly all in this together!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Clear Creek Elementary enjoys outstanding parental and community involvement that promotes student success and school improvement. First, our Parent Teacher Organization works tirelessly to raise funds to support student learning. Money raised throughout the year is applied to purchase technology in the form of iPads and a variety of coding devices that are utilized by all grade levels in STEAM activities. Our PTO fully furnished the Makers Space by supplying a Lego wall, green screen for video production, and organizational tubs and furniture to make the space function smoothly. Teachers and staff can make requests to the PTO to help with field trip costs and assisting in bringing in special curricula opportunities like Kaleidoscope. This program teaches students about foreign cultures and includes guest authors to encourage young readers and writers. Additionally, our Site Council, comprised of teachers, parents and community members, actively supports school improvement. It is a well-connected committee that assists in spreading accurate information to our stakeholders and serves a sounding board for new initiatives and programs.

At Clear Creek Elementary a myriad of methods is utilized to share news of student and staff achievement. In addition to weekly newsletters, emails, and as-needed phone calls from classroom teachers, CCE has social media accounts to keep families engaged. For example, we use social media for live staff read-alouds over long school breaks, as well as keeping our families informed about all the great things happening at school. We have large format monitors in the office and front entry of our building to publicize upcoming events. One of our staff’s favorite points of contact with parents are the “Good News Calls.” Teachers nominate students based upon achievement and good character. This special recognition includes a phone call to the student’s parents with the administrator sharing the good news with the family.

We open our doors multiple times throughout the year to our school community. Annual events include a Winter Wonderland Vendor Fair with breakfast and a holiday choir performance, a family movie and pajama night, and a Fish Bowl Auction -- all sponsored by our PTO. In the autumn, we host a family evening event with free BINGO, optional dinner and staff led read-alouds for students.

Clear Creek strives to stay connected to all stakeholders. Everyone is vested in the success of our school and students, while working cohesively with each other to encourage student success and school improvement.

3. Professional Development:

The State of Kansas embraced a vision focused on higher standards in academic and citizenship skills. This vision requires a student-focused approach that means all individuals involved in the development of children must work together to ensure that the whole child is prepared for their future. USD 232 selected the areas of Relationships and Relevance as district goals. As a building, Clear Creek took those goals a step further and chose to focus on the following:

Ensuring that students who have the potential to fall below grade level standards are given additional support; and Ensuring that all members of the Clear Creek community embrace the concept of positive interactions and their effect on child development.

The importance of data-driven decision making is a required focus when considering how best to support students and their individual needs. As a building, Clear Creek Elementary continually works towards improving their Professional Learning Community and Student Solution Team structures. Modifications have been made according to research and experience presented by several members of the staff. This openness to new ideas has led to a system that demonstrates a clear increase in the ability to provide success for students.

When considering the importance of understanding the social emotional needs of students and how any type of trauma background can impact growth, the Clear Creek staff works to increase knowledge at an impressive rate. Administration shared with staff the results of student surveys to provide everyone with a clear picture of the status quo, provided the Second Step social emotional curriculum as a Tier I tool, and invited every employee in the building, regardless of position, the opportunity to participate in a study of the book "Kids Deserve It." This community approach to the development of students is one of Clear Creeks greatest strengths.

The future of professional development at Clear Creek Elementary will continue to focus on the community environment. In refining approaches used for phonics and number sense instruction, achievement gaps will be filled with more students experiencing success earlier in their career. As the staff collectively works to ensure that we function according to the belief that "All Kids are Our Kids," our families will feel supported knowing that everyone at Clear Creek is working towards greatness for every child.

4. School Leadership:

At Clear Creek Elementary, we promote the Tom Peters' belief that "leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders." Our principal's role is to develop teacher leaders, focusing on the strengths, expertise and interests of our staff to help achieve goals and desired student outcomes. Because this belief is honored year after year, the principal, school improvement specialist, Building Improvement Team, and Site Council operate as one team with a common focus: to do what's best for kids.

While working alongside each other, our individual roles play a unique part. The principal is the lead learner, evaluator of teaching and learning, chief financial officer, facilities manager and overall final decision maker. The principal's primary role is to remove all roadblocks so learning can occur for each student.

The School Improvement Specialist (SIS) works with the principal to create an optimal learning

environment for all. With the support of the principal, the SIS ensures dynamic professional development is planned, manages resources for the building, and works directly with educators to improve instruction. Through analyzation of data, observations and coaching teachers, our SIS plays a vital role in meeting the needs of each individual student.

The Building Leadership Team is comprised of the principal, School Improvement Specialist, counselor, and teachers representing general education, specials, and special education classrooms. Using local, state and national assessment data, as well as other known concerns, the team determines building goals designed to assist student achievement in the areas of academics and social emotional growth. This team also participates in creating professional development plans to provide needed training and resources for teachers to meet those goals. Once the pieces are in place, the team meets monthly to re-evaluate what is going well and what needs to be adjusted. This group also serves as ambassadors in our building by leading the staff toward the necessary changes for continuous improvement.

The final piece to our leadership puzzle is our Site Council. This collaborative group is made up of parents, teachers, and community members. They bring unique insight to our leadership table that provides reflection on current practices and decisions being made at Clear Creek. The Site Council is instrumental in helping to disseminate correct information to our community regarding district proposals and school programs.

The leadership at Clear Creek is a dynamic part of our school's success. We share a common desire to do what is best for kids!

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that encompasses Clear Creek Elementary’s success is the belief that All Kids Are Our Kids! This concept is the backbone behind every decision that is made for every learner. The CCE staff whole-heartedly considers that every adult belongs to every student. From the classroom setting, to the morning car loop when students arrive each morning, to the lunchroom-- it is important that every child that enters through our doors knows they can trust and turn to any adult in their learning environment.

The social-emotional development and well-being of our student population is demonstrated through the “Whole Child” approach at Clear Creek and is evidenced in a variety of ways. For example, as our population changed with the new housing developments surrounding the school, we found that student hunger became a reality for some of our students. We quickly went to work figuring out a way to serve breakfast to a building that is not classified as a Title 1 school. By understanding our students’ basic needs, we can help them thrive as learners.

Additionally, our building administrators have built many strong connections to community resources to help support the whole child and their needs. It is our belief that they too have adopted the mentality that all our kids are also their kids! Many nearby churches have supported our families by providing Thanksgiving meals, clothing throughout the year, holiday trees and gifts, school supplies, and paying off lunch accounts while also maintaining student’s privacy and confidentiality. Our community has also showered the school with volunteers to help build relationships with students and spend one-on-one time reading and working on skills that they may never have the opportunity to work on at home.

While Clear Creek is fortunate to have the support of the community and a strong school base, they also recognize the importance of giving back to their community and beyond. Yearly charitable drives are excitedly held for a number of organizations that are relatable to our students such as Pennies for Patients, Hooked on Books and Johnson County Food Pantry. At a recent book fair event, students shopped for books with the money raised in One for Books and donated them to another school that only had 300 books for 500 students. Opportunities like this help our students understand and appreciate benefits of both receiving as well as giving.