

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 [X] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Phyllis Maestas

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

Official School Name Ladera Del Norte Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 308 E. 35th Street

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

Farmington NM 87401-9309
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County San Juan County

Telephone (505) 599-8605

Fax (855) 575-6581

Web site/URL http://www.district.fms.k12.nm.us

E-mail pmaestas@fms.k12.nm.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. Eugene Schmidt

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail eschmidt@fms.k12.nm.us

District Name Farmington Municipal Schools District Tel. (505) 324-9840

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. Kyle Rhodes

(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):
- 10 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 17 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	46	43	89
1	46	40	86
2	51	40	91
3	38	48	86
4	48	51	99
5	56	59	115
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	285	281	566

*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):
- 20 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 25 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 47 % White
 - 6 % 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: 22%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

The majority of families moved out of state due to economic decline.

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	37
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	89
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	126
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	577
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.22
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	22

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31%
Total number students who qualify: 177

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %
83 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>6</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>10</u> Developmental Delay | <u>23</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>45</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
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 0:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	99%
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.

Ladera staff is united in our commitment to provide a nurturing and supportive environment, where all students achieve 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

Ladera del Norte Elementary School is located in Farmington, NM, one of the largest and most diverse communities in the Four Corners region. Farmington has a vast and multicultural history beginning in about 3000 B.C., when it was the home site of Ancestral Puebloans. Then, the Spanish moved in, followed by Anglo settlers, who were mainly traders and farmers. Farmington was a small community until the 1950s when oil and gas was discovered in the region.

Ladera del Norte was constructed during the height of the oil and gas boom in Northwest New Mexico. In 1953, Farmington's population grew from 3,637 to 35,000 as El Paso Natural Gas moved in employees and their families to work in the extractive industry. Farmington completed three schools in the mid- to late 1950s to meet this growing population base. Ladera del Norte was the first school of its kind in the region. It was built as a "cottage school" at a cost of \$7.13 a square foot, because of the "rough and rocky site." Construction began in August 1958 with the school opening its doors on October 26, 1958. There have been several remodels as the population grew, but the school remains at its original location in north Farmington, where it serves more than 550 students, representing Anglo, African American, Asian, Native American and Hispanic cultures.

Hundreds of Farmington residents attended the school's opening in 1958. Ladera del Norte was a 9-room school with 195 students on day one. Within two weeks, there were 263 students enrolled at Ladera del Norte and there were 102 Parent Teacher Organization, or PTO, members. The tradition of a growing student population and a strong PTO continues at Ladera del Norte to this day. Parents want their children to attend Ladera del Norte, and they are ready and willing to volunteer and raise money for school needs and activities with events such as the annual Fall Festival.

The Ladera del Norte student population is one that enjoys continued academic successes. With the reputation of being one of the best schools in the community, it often is difficult for parents to find homes in the neighborhood surrounding Ladera del Norte. The neighborhood could be considered middle- and upper-class with a large number of single-family residences, as well as at least four mid- to low-income apartments complexes. The school also has students bussed in from the agricultural west side of Farmington.

The school has continued to push students to achieve their highest potential in all areas of academics by inspiring friendly competition and team building activities with such events as Spelling Bee, Science Fair, Art Shows, Reading Rockets and Destination Imagination, from which Ladera students have received invitations to attend global and international events. This contributes to the school's focus on a growth mindset in 21st Century learners.

Interestingly, Ladera del Norte has such a strong parent involvement, the school administration has encouraged some parent volunteers to enter the teaching profession. These parents, who had other careers, are now in the classroom sharing their knowledge and life experiences with elementary school students in a way that enriches the lives of both the new educators and their students.

Ladera del Norte is a mirror of the community it serves, providing an open and accepting environment to the many cultures living in Farmington. The school celebrates diversity with lessons in Native American, African American and Hispanic American cultures. Cultural diversity is celebrated at Ladera. Ladera Heritage Performers is offered to fourth-grade students wanting to study the traditional dances of New Mexico and Mexico. This exemplifies the school's dedication to bilingual and biculturalism. The program employs physical, rhythmic, balance, and coordination that must involve the cooperation of all involved to perform a beautifully choreographed and precise dance. The cultural awareness and exchange between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students, in part by both the performer and the audience, strengthens the community and school.

The library has developed a Native American, African American and Spanish reading collection available to students and teachers for classroom lessons, and there are numerous year-long activities celebrating our diverse populations.

Ladera del Norte's Special Education Program prides itself on student success and integration with the end goal being every student exited from the program, because they have met their full potential. These students are provided with in-class services as well as pull-out programs for gifted and resource services. The school also serves nine students in an elementary life-skills setting, where students achieve growing success.

The story of Ladera del Norte would not be complete without pointing out the school's welcoming atmosphere. The walls are covered in playful murals, painted by a volunteer. The murals not only celebrate the school's diverse culture, they also encourage positive attitudes toward one another and learning. There are murals used to identify classroom corridors, and they feature age-appropriate literary characters such as Harry Potter, the Cat in the Hat and super heroes.

Students at Ladera del Norte are encouraged to care for and celebrate their peers. The school has implemented Character Counts as well as the PAX Good Behavior Game, which is used by Johns Hopkins University to encourage good behaviors followed by rewards. Students are reminding to "Tootle," or celebrate successes, instead of tattling, and teachers nominate students to be recognized each month to be a Random Acts of Kindness Star.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Ladera follows the New Mexico Content Standards for our curricula. The New Mexico Content Standards are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Math. Ladera also follows the New Mexico State Standards for Science, and Social Studies. Ladera utilizes the school district's standards-based educational structure in order to facilitate our school's ability to measure what each student knows and is able to demonstrate proficiently. Lessons are planned with the end in mind following our school district quarterly pacing guides, covering all the NM standards.

The English Language Arts Common Core State Standards drive our instruction for reading. Our school schedule ensures a 2 1/2 hour block for English Language Arts instruction each day.

All K-5 teachers plan and calendar their teaching topics quarterly, including when they will give common formative assessments to check student progress. Daily lesson plans include the topic being taught, learning goals, and the daily learning target. All planning follows the Farmington Model of Instruction and includes how students will effectively interact with New Knowledge, including: Critical Input, Active Processing, and Assessment.

Teachers use the adopted reading curriculum as their primary resource when teaching. Reading instruction covers all components of reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to help develop 21st Century Literacy Skills.

Writing and Grammar are a critical part of the reading instruction. Our school uses the Step Up to Writing program, which utilizes proven writing strategies that provide variation and differentiation to meet students at their need level and move them forward. All students in grades 1-5 have access to their own laptop computers to engage in multiple online reading programs; in addition Kindergarten classes have laptops for small group lessons. Laptops for reading and/or writing often are used in a center-based setting for small group instruction, and also are available for whole group instruction when needed.

Many K-5 classrooms have flexible and non-traditional seating arrangements, such as beanbags, ball chairs and wobble chairs in their rooms for students. This provides students with an opportunity to engage and interact with one another when reading and writing text.

Informal classroom reading assessments, Schoolwide IStation progress monitoring, and 95 Percent Group are used as data points to measure student progress. Classroom teachers use various incentive programs for school-to-home reading practice.

1b. Mathematics:

Ladera implemented Great Minds' Eureka Math program. Our goal is for students to achieve a deep understanding of math processes and be prepared for advanced learning in math through a content-rich, cohesive math curriculum.

Teachers prepare daily lessons by the math modules they teach. Common Formative Assessments are given to determine student progress. Quarterly interims are given and data is analyzed to make instructional decisions. Action Plans are designed to check for mastery. When students have not achieved mastery, a plan is written to determine and implement the techniques that will be used to address these standards through corrective instruction.

Math fact fluency is practiced beginning in first grade. All grade levels implement whole group, small group and individual instruction in math. Teachers provide students with supplemental instruction, such as creating

flip-books for vocabulary and models and small group instruction to focus on number sense and math equations as well as to support the core. Classes work on mastery using activities such as games, timed challenges and independent practice.

Students utilize their laptops to practice and individualize their math skills with the online Moby Max Math program. Moby Max can be used to monitor progress on grade-level content, but also is assigned for independent practice based on student needs.

1c. Science:

Ladera follows the Next Generation Science Standards, or NGSS, 3-dimensional approach to exploring the world around us. Areas of study include scientific thinking and practice, physical and life science, earth and space science and science in society. Phenomena-based learning allows students to engage fully in the process of demystifying natural phenomena. Students design and participate in research projects that allow them to systematically investigate, model, demonstrate, and experiment to better understand how to make sense of their personal experiences. We want all students to see the beauty in the complexities of the smallest moments and gain the perspective that comes from visualizing the big picture. Students assimilate new knowledge through activities allowing them to communicate their understanding through writing, speaking, and a variety of technologies. Students present their findings to classmates and at the Science Fair.

Students in grade 3-5 utilize their school-issued laptops daily and have opportunities to access online information and activities for research and development of scientific experiments, such as the egg drop and asteroid impacts. Software is available for student projects, enabling them to create presentations using Keynote, data presentations in Numbers, and slow-motion analyzations using iMovie.

Students have multiple opportunities in engage in science-related learning experiences. During Science Days, students visit different classrooms to participate in experiments, hands-on activities, crafts, art projects, videos, reading and writing activities about each scientific topic. They study the lifecycle of a butterfly by hatching their own butterflies. Students even had the opportunity to build barometers with the assistance of a parent volunteer. This allows them to track the weather patterns and measure changes in barometric pressure.

Fifth-grade students take an annual trip to Simon Canyon, along the San Juan River, where they study the past and present ecosystems of New Mexico. This trip is done in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the Navajo Lake State Park Service. Students also explore future possibilities at San Juan College and learn astronomy at the SJC Planetarium. After school Science Technology Engineering Mathematics, or STEM, classes are made available free of charge to all students in the school.

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

Social Studies instruction is based on standards unique to New Mexico. Areas of study include New Mexico history, geography, economics, civics and government, which includes tribal governments within the state. Field trips to local historical sites are taken to enhance and extend interest in New Mexico history and local cultural diversity, which is also supported through English/language arts and historical myths and texts.

Fourth-grade students have an opportunity to relate New Mexico history to real-life experiences with a "Walk in Time" field trip to Aztec Ruins National Monument and the Pioneer Village Museum in Aztec. Students explore 900 years of human civilization along the Animas River in the Four Corners Area. Students begin their tour of the ancient archeological site at Aztec Ruins. Then, they walk along the Old Spanish Trail running parallel to the Animas River and into downtown Aztec, where they visit the Aztec Museum and Pioneer Village Museum which depicts life in the Old West.

Fifth-grade students research the settlement of America from the perspective of the numerous cultures that immigrated to the north and west. The study includes that of Native cultures and the ensuing conflicts, which gave rise to a new form of government that endures through constant evolution while clinging to a foundation of equality and opportunity for all. Students examine the balance of power created by our system

of government through a series of biographies from Founding Fathers' intentions and hopes to great innovators and social advocates, who continue to help America navigate the ever changing and challenging future.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Ladera del Norte Elementary School has a strong arts, health and technology curriculum. Every student in the school has their own laptop for daily usage in the classroom and testing. Students are encouraged to utilize their laptops for research, reading and other educational opportunities. Even kindergarten students use laptops on a daily basis, and all students receive instruction in a technology classroom to help develop career readiness skills in the growing field of technology.

The library builds upon technology skills by offering students a monthly STEM activity in the school's Makerspace Classroom, which is dedicated to promoting creative thinking skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. Set up in a centers-based format, students are free to move about the room and try their hands at robotics, coding, building, design, and artistic activities.

When students are not in the Makerspace, they have access to the library's nearly 20,000 book collection that includes a selection of fiction and non-fiction books. In an effort to meet the needs of a diverse student population, the library offers collections dedicated to Hispanic American, Native American and African American cultures. Each grade-level class meets weekly in the library for learning activities designed to meet the diverse literary needs of student. The library also hosts three book fairs annually and offers the largest collection from Scholastic in the region. With the funds raised from book sales, the librarian has created a welcoming environment with non-traditional seating. Funds also are used to fulfill classroom needs by providing teachers with classroom libraries and furnishings.

Ladera del Norte's Music program follows the National Core Arts Standards. Students are taught to not only perform music, but to create and analyze music. The instructor utilizes research-based Feierabend and Weikhart methods with the goal of promoting a lifelong love for music. The program promotes creativity and 21st Century skills by meeting the students' needs, varied skill levels, and relating their learning to their diverse backgrounds. Students are taught the foundations of vocal technique, music literacy, music appreciation, world music, folk dance and instrument techniques. Instruments used in the classroom include: barred instruments, recorders, ukulele, and world and classroom percussion. Students present their music knowledge in a variety of ways throughout the year. Kindergarten and first-grade students invite their parents to music, so they are able to experience a typical music class. Second-grade students present a family folk dance in which parents are encouraged to participate. In 3rd grade, students present a cultural celebration with music from around the world. Veterans are honored with a patriotic Veteran's Day program performed by the 4th graders, and 5th graders create their own concert incorporating movement, melodic improvisation and song verses crafted by the students.

The art program is curriculum-based and teaches students the concepts of creating art, art history and critiquing art. The school shares a certified art teacher with another elementary school, so students receive curriculum-based art instruction every other week. On alternating weeks, parent volunteers (many with art backgrounds) come into the classroom to teach an art curriculum purchased by the PTO. These same volunteers help put on an annual Spring Art Show. Students select one creation to showcase, and local artists are invited to judge the student's works. Prizes are awarded in each grade. Some of the students' artwork has been selected by the art teacher to showcase in a district-wide art show at the city-run Farmington Civic Center.

The physical education, PE, program inspires a fit lifestyle focusing on fitness activities and good health habits. The PE teacher follows the New Mexico Standards for instruction. There is a focus on healthy living and eating. Students in grades 3-5 conduct physical self-assessments twice a year and set their own fitness goals, while students in K-2 participate in the FoodPlay Program, which encourages a balanced diet. With regard to healthy foods, the PE teacher oversees the school's three hydro and aeroponic gardening systems, which are integrated into the classrooms. These tower gardens teach children how to care for plants from seed to table. When the product is ready to be harvested, students cut their own greens and participate in a salad party.

3. Special Populations:

Sixty-eight students at Ladera del Norte Elementary School receive special education services. The program has 4 certified special education teachers, 4 paraprofessionals and a speech/language pathologist.

The school has a self-contained classroom with eight students. One teacher and three paraprofessionals provide specialized instruction using the research-based program Unique. Students have access to occupational and physical therapy on a weekly basis and are provided with inclusion for special curricula, such as music, physical education, art and library

Special education teachers at Ladera offer educational support by co-teaching in the regular education classroom and in two fully dedicated resource rooms. One teacher's focus is students in grades K-2, while the other teacher's is students in grades 3-5. The special education staff utilizes a research-based Orton-Gillingham reading program, which is taught with fidelity and is proven to be successful, according to Ladera's standardized testing and progress monitoring. Instruction is tailored to meet students' needs. Response to Intervention is used to identify and provide researched-based interventions to students. All students begin the year with a baseline assessment to gather data in the core curricula. This begins with all students being instructed in the Tier 1 program for core curricula. Students in need of extra support are provided with Tier 2 interventions in small classroom groups. When a student is identified as needing specialized educational services, Tier 3 interventions provide more targeted instructions in the core curricula. Once in Tier 3, Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, goals are specifically written to address deficits in reading, math, and behavior. In addition, sub-groups receive Tier 2 interventions in the regular-education classroom, using 95 Percent Group, a research-based reading program.

Special education student's test scores continue to increase as a result of research-based interventions and through the teamwork between our special education teachers. In their Professional Learning Communities, they identify and review data to target specific deficits in reading skills. Students frequently move from one reading group to another based on this data. The teachers have high expectations for their students giving them high standards and providing them with the tools they need to reach their goals.

Ladera's gifted education program has 38 identified students and 11 high-potential students. These students are identified using the Frazier Talent Assessment Profile and the Cognitive Abilities Test. Each student has an IEP for services in their exceptionality, and they receive a minimum of 60 minutes per week in gifted instruction, in addition to supporting and enriching the core curriculum. The gifted curriculum includes project-based learning with units offering career-readiness skills in the stock market, game factory, DNA and heredity, inventions and economy. Students are able to relate historic migration to real-life current situations with a Westward Ho unit, and English Language Arts skills are emphasized in a novel study to focused on figurative language and writing.

English Language Learners are supported at Ladera with highly qualified, Teaching English to Students of Other Languages, or TESOL-endorsed, teachers, who support students through scaffolding lessons and front-loading vocabulary. English Language Learners, or ELL, students are provided with research-based instruction in Imagine Learning, which is a standards-aligned curriculum that builds core reading and academic language skills. Visual aids, providing written and oral directions, checklists, graphic organizers, rubrics, peer and/or teacher support are among the many strategies used in assisting ELLs. Furthermore,

field trips, guest speakers and manipulatives are used to enhance the learning of students with unique language needs.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

It is the mission of Ladera that all students feel welcomed at Ladera del Norte Elementary School. The school is diverse in student and teacher population. The teachers make up a good cross section of the community, with ethnic backgrounds such as Navajo, Hispanic, and Anglo. This is representative of the student population - Navajo, Hispanic, African American, Asian and Anglo. The school environment is a positive and happy one. Teachers use a growth mindset to encourage student achievement despite adversities.

From the moment students step foot into Ladera, they are greeted with smiles and welcomed with open hearts. Each classroom offers an environment of mutual respect between teacher and student. All staff are encouraged to motivate students by meeting their diverse needs through differentiating core classroom content as well as extracurricular activities. Students are provided with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation throughout the day.

Classroom teachers not only focus on academics, a portion of each day is dedicated to emotional and social development through the school's Second Step program. Developed by the Committee for Children, Second Step is rooted in social-emotional learning for students in grades K-5. The message is one of acceptance and tolerance with an anti-bullying approach. Ladera del Norte also offers a full-time guidance counselor and a social worker to provide extra support in the areas of social-emotional development as needed to advocate for students.

The teachers feel like every child in the school is their own with all teachers feeling, as if all of the students are everybody's children. Comments from staff include that the teachers feel very safe and valued, by working in an environment that is open and communicative, "more friendly - more family." Staff are ready and willing to help one another in times of illness and hardship. When a teacher was diagnosed with cancer, the staff donated sick leave to the teacher and the students made her 1,000 paper cranes for motivational support. The staff-supported Sunshine Club provides funds or meals for co-workers facing hardships.

With the encouragement of the school's administration, the staff follows a philosophy of teamwork, because when everyone works together everyone achieves. Staff is recognized for their hard work and is provided with positive feedback, and when the school celebrates its success the entire staff is praised for a job well done.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Ladera del Norte is a community school, where parents are welcomed and encouraged to be active in their student's learning. Parents are invited into the school as volunteers and for special events, such as open houses, family literacy nights, STEM nights and health wellness nights.

Our open houses familiarize students and their families with the school and its community of teachers and staff. During the event, parents are encouraged to sign up for volunteer opportunities with choices ranging from teaching art to providing reading support in the classroom and/or library. Ladera also has an active PTO.

Ladera's teachers and staff often partner with community leaders and entities to enhance student learning opportunities, which allow them to explore future areas of study and potential careers. Farmington's mayor and city councilors have been welcomed into the school to share civics lessons with students. Ladera has a long partnership with the Farmington Public Library, which not only uses the school for family literacy nights, it also provides storytellers and authors as performers and presenters for the entire student body. Ladera partners with San Juan College to bring in science professors in the fields of astronomy, geology, biology and other sciences. These same professors come into the classroom as guest educators and often volunteer as judges at the school's annual science fair.

Ladera students receive annual visits from local organization promoting a drug-free lifestyle with a focus on academic success. These programs include UMatr, or "You Matter," Teens, sponsored by Farmington's San Juan Safe Communities and Don't Meth With Us, an international program sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club.

Ladera staff members have been trained by San Juan Regional Medical Center in the Full-Engagement Training, or FET, which encourages a healthy lifestyle, focusing on eating right and exercising. This training encourages teachers to get students moving throughout the day by setting a timer and having them stand, stretch or move every 30-40 minutes. This is translated into three annual events dedicated to raising awareness and funds to fight cancer, multiple sclerosis, or MS, and heart disease. Ladera participates in the American Cancer Society's annual Relay for Life, with cancer survivors from the staff and school families receiving recognition by walking a victory lap around the playground. The students, parents and staff also participate in the annual Fun Run for MS, a marathon-style race through the community, which the school has hosted for 34 years, and the third-grade class participates in the annual Jump Rope for Heart through the American Heart Association.

3. Professional Development:

Professional Development is a district-wide commitment. Early release Mondays and four full days are built into our school-year calendar for Data Analysis.

Our school vision is for professional staff to strive to create a supportive environment where all students will experience academic, emotional and social success. Students will be engaged in challenging data-driven instruction, using critical thinking skills, and being prepared to become productive citizens in a diverse and ever-changing world. In order to attain our vision, we have various professional development practices in place.

Our school has designed an instructional snapshot model based on the teaching methods of Dr. Robert J. Marzano's The New Art and Science of Teaching Framework. There are 43 instructional elements of which our school is focusing on eight this year. As part of the professional development a survey was sent to teachers so they could determine their own need for deeper study. Professional development groups were broken down into three groups of study. These groups meet on our professional development days to study the Marzano Compendium of Instructional Strategies, with a goal to increase teacher effectiveness by focusing on professional growth. Within the groups, teachers study the various strategies and select an element on which to focus in their classroom. Administrators observe the elements being implemented and give feedback.

Our commitments this year have been based on a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. We are implementing practices from Marzano, Warick, Rains and Dufour's Leading a High Reliability School, which insures the school curriculum is focused enough to be adequately addressed in the time available to teachers. This promotes all students having an opportunity to learn critical content within the curriculum. It also establishes clear and measurable goals, which are focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement within the school.

Our second commitment to establish clear and measurable goals focused on critical needs regarding improving the achievement of individual students within the school.

We have three teacher leaders and both principals who attend monthly professional development sessions with other district teams to receive training based on leading a high-reliability school. Specific focus areas are then brought back to the school team and presented to the staff.

4. School Leadership:

The school believes in a shared and collaborative leadership philosophy. A shared leadership develops a deeper commitment to students and builds leadership sustainability in the building. The principal's belief is

if there is a shared responsibility and systems in place for the school, we all take ownership in students' learning. Communication and teamwork are key. All staff is committed to accepting all children as their own and doing everything possible to support all students. The more extensive the collaboration, the more student performance will improve.

An important part of our school success is the diverse perspectives and strengths within our team.

Our school leadership team is composed of at least one teacher from every grade level K-5, a teacher to represent the specials classes, special education department, school counselor and principals. The school leadership team is responsible for bringing new ideas and concerns to the table, in addition to analyzing school data, and setting instructional goals. The brainstorming which takes place at this level is a high-energy way to launch new school initiatives.

Leadership then trickles down to grade levels and/or other departments within the school. At this level, the teams collaborate in professional learning communities. Principals attend the professional learning communities and/or data analysis meetings to offer support and feedback. The school principals hold people accountable, engage the team and make sure there is commitment to student learning by all staff in the building.

Ladera has three Teacher Leader Instructors in the building. They attend professional development activities with the principals and then return to lead professional development with school staff. These teacher leaders also are involved in observations through which they provide non-evaluative feedback to peers.

Our school counselor not only addresses the social-emotional needs of students, she takes on a leadership role in supporting students with academic needs. She serves as our Student Assistant Team, or SAT, leader and meets with the teacher, parents, and principal when a child needs additional supports in the classroom. She documents the interventions put into place by classroom teachers and monitors their success.

Parents have been invited to be part of a Parent Advisory Committee, which gives parents a voice in the school's leadership process and an opportunity to share in our successes. This gives the principal an opportunity to communicate school goals, share celebrations and receive feedback from parents.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Ladera del Norte Elementary School our greatest leverage for school success is working as a team. When the new principal arrived six years ago, there were many transitions taking place at the state and district level. We were transitioning to new state testing. The district was implementing standards-based grading, proficiency scales and new interim testing. There were also 17 new staff members at Ladera. The principal had a vision to bring everyone together to face the new changes with continued student success. On day one the motto, TEAM, Together Everyone Achieves More, was adopted. A shift in thinking began to create a culture, in which every child entering the building became the entire staff's responsibility.

Working together as a team in various capacities has made Ladera successful. Professional development was given using Don Lowry's True Colors program, which supported our teambuilding process. Every staff member learned to appreciate and understand our diverse personalities, while recognizing one another's strengths and knowledge. This mentality allowed us to build trust in one another, and work as a team with willingness to support our main goal of supporting student success.

We pride ourselves in creating a nurturing environment for the students. There is a true dedication and love for each child in our building. Our students feel safe, physically and emotionally. They know their purpose for coming to school is for learning.

We strive to meet the individual needs of every student. Our teachers plan together as grade level teams in their professional learning communities. They plan meaningful lessons to meet learning outcomes, develop common formative assessments, track student learning, analyze data and make adjustments to instruction, to support all students.

We celebrate our students and one another. We also share with our students a growth mindset. The adults even tell the students there are things they don't know, "yet," and they are continuing to learn. We are on a journey of learning together, and we strive to make every day a successful learning day. Working together at Ladera, everyone achieves more.