



## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	43	42	85
K	42	49	91
1	38	49	87
2	45	40	85
3	48	33	81
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	216	213	429

\*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
  - 1 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 60 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 37 % White
  - 2 % 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: 21%

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

DES has a high number of economically disadvantaged students and the community offers multiple government housing options. Families come to Dublin for free or reduced housing, but many are unable to stay due to lack of family support and employment opportunities.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	48
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	39
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	87
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	414
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.21
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 31%  
134 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 75%  
Total number students who qualify: 322

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %  
20 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>17</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>21</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	28
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 151:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

Preparing today's students for tomorrow's world!

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Dublin Elementary School (DES) is within the Dublin Independent School District (DISD) in Dublin, Texas. DES is located in central Texas and the majority of students served in this rural community originate from low socioeconomic and demographically diverse backgrounds. Over the last eight years, Dublin Elementary School has developed a culture of creating high expectations through a rigorous curriculum and highly engaging instruction. The faculty at DES collaborates with students, families, and community members to meet academic, social, and emotional needs of all students through various avenues.

Today, DES serves 429 students in prekindergarten through third grade. The demographic composition of the student population includes 58% Hispanic, 40% Caucasian, and 2% with two or more races. Within these groups, 19% are English Language Learners, 73% are Economically Disadvantaged, and 7% are Special Education. Because of the high low socioeconomic rate, DES is a Title I school district. Dublin Elementary also offers special programs such as Bilingual education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to serve all of the English Language Learners, Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD), and Life Skills classes to serve all special education students.

Prior to 2011, DES students were meeting the state accountability standards. However, in 2011 the campus received an Academically Unacceptable rating as test scores fell below the state's average. DES began the school improvement process and many changes occurred throughout the challenging journey to ensure success for all students. The district recognized the need for a viable, vertically aligned curriculum and the staff knew that expectations had to be higher for every student in order to guarantee the academic success that each child deserved.

After receiving an Academically Unacceptable rating in 2011, a culture shift occurred and ongoing data analysis has been implemented to guide each decision that DES encounters. Multiple forms of data are continually analyzed to determine curriculum and individualized instructional decisions. An intense Response to Intervention (RTI) program was created to serve students in kindergarten through third grade with the intention of closing all achievement gaps in reading and math, and all lessons are individualized for each child. Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) also greatly contributed to the overall growth of the campus. PLC meetings are utilized to discuss curriculum and instruction, share instructional strategies, analyze individual student data, and to determine solutions to address the needs exposed by the data. Professional development for all staff continually occurs through PLC meetings to promote content knowledge and to share effective instructional practices.

DES also recognizes that meeting social and emotional needs and building relationships are important for academic student success. A variety of character education and mentoring programs have been established to meet the needs of the diverse student population. The children and families are greeted each morning at the drop off line, as the administration, teachers, and school resource officer open the vehicle doors and welcome students to school. This promotes positive relationships with parents and ensures that students begin their school day with an encouraging word. The school counselor implements guidance lessons with each class throughout the year to promote character education and build positive relationships with students. Mentors have been created with the High School leadership classes, the extracurricular programs, as well as community volunteers to assist with academic successes and to support our students' social and emotional needs. In addition, students at DES are involved in multiple community service projects throughout the year to better understand the importance of giving back to the community and taking care of others.

Multiple family engagement opportunities are provided throughout the year to promote cultural awareness for all students and their families. Every year, a Cinco de Mayo celebration takes place, and families are encouraged to attend as they embrace one another and partake in a meal at the school. The students are educated on various multicultural traditions and customs celebrated across the globe.

DES believes that all students should engage in physical activity on a daily basis to help improve academic achievement and to promote lifelong healthy habits. All students in prekindergarten through third grade attend thirty minutes of physical education each day, as well as twenty-five minutes of recess time, to

encourage social and physical interaction with others.

Over the past eight years, the state assessment scores have risen 17% in reading and 23% in math, reaching a stellar passing rate of one hundred percent in math and ninety-seven percent in reading. DES earned academic distinctions in all possible areas of the state accountability system. The success that DES has experienced is greatly attributed to meeting the individual needs of all students. Over the years, a partnership with the school, students, families, and the community has been established to involve all stakeholders to positively impact the education and meet the instructional and emotional needs of all students, as well as creating an academically rigorous learning environment.

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

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

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

DES teachers consistently plan engaging, cross-curricular lessons to challenge each student to their fullest potential and to ensure that they are prepared for the next grade level. All lessons are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which are the state standards for what students should master in each subject and grade level. Teachers meet weekly during the PLC meetings to discuss lesson planning, instructional strategies, and checkpoint results to address the most recent data trends. Teachers attend vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment meetings prior to and throughout the school year to meet the needs of their students and eliminate any possible learning gaps. DES has implemented a very effective RTI program and students are identified at an early age to receive individualized instruction in a small group setting to eliminate achievement gaps. Students are provided opportunities before, during, and after school to receive additional teacher assistance with any academic or emotional needs.

The core belief at DES is to build a strong literacy foundation for every student beginning in prekindergarten and continuing through third grade and beyond. The staff believes that students must be provided opportunities to read during the school day and also at home to become fluent readers, reading on grade level. As the majority of the students attending DES are low socioeconomic and Hispanic, the staff recognizes that most of our students come to school with a limited vocabulary and lack foundational literacy skills. Daily vocabulary strategies are implemented to help build vocabulary for all students to improve each student's ability to read, write, and communicate more effectively. Guided reading is implemented across the campus to provide differentiated and individualized instruction to every child through small group instruction. Students are continually given praise and support as teachers provide personal feedback to each student through individual conferencing sessions to help them grow as a confident reader. DES utilizes the state adopted curriculum, which is aligned with the TEKS, however teachers make adjustments to meet individual needs and challenge every student.

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

The vertically aligned and rigorous math instruction provided at DES challenges students to their maximum potential. Hands on activities utilizing manipulatives are incorporated into each lesson to encourage students to effectively communicate with partners and to work as a team to solve mathematical equations. Teachers challenge each child with higher level questions within the lessons and do not accept lower level responses, to ensure that all students have a deeper understanding of the subject. Scaffolding and differentiated instruction continually occur to support students with all possible learning styles and to determine what students may need to be successful learners. Formal and informal data sources are continually analyzed and instructional practices are adjusted to address the data. Mathematical vocabulary has been vertically aligned to ensure that all teachers are utilizing the same vocabulary from prekindergarten to third grade. Students are provided real-world problem solving opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the presented concepts. It is a school wide belief and an everyday routine that all students should develop fact fluency to build a strong mathematical foundation. The lower grade levels focus on basic mathematical skills, and the upper grades work on teaching skills to help students embrace multistep problem solving and critical thinking equations.

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

Students at DES engage in meaningful science activities by working collaboratively to build critical thinking skills. The science curriculum allows students to participate in experiments and project based learning to gain a deeper understanding of every concept. Students are provided real world opportunities to master the vertically aligned state standards through exploration, collaboration, and investigative processes. The third grade team has developed a partnership with a local organization to educate our students on healthy eating habits and to taste food sources that they may not have had the opportunity to experience. At the end of the

unit, the children are given various types of vegetable plants to take home for planting and harvesting. DES has an annual solar system project, in which students use any medium to create their personal solar system and the final products are displayed in the library, where each class has the opportunity to tour the display. Students are engaged in ongoing cross-curricular activities to reinforce skills taught in other subjects.

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

The social studies curriculum provides meaningful, cross-curricular opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of their local government, famous people, and historical events that help shape our world. Writing about famous people or class presentations about historical events are continually integrated throughout the social studies curriculum. A partnership between the school and the local museums has been established, and students are provided multiple opportunities to attend the museums to gain further knowledge of the community. Community members also participate in classroom speaking events to elaborate on civic awareness and to encourage our students to become productive citizens in society. At DES, students are engaged in a variety of rich materials to gain a greater depth of understanding of the importance of patriotism and the democratic society. The voting process is discussed and students participate in mock political elections. Students learn about national patriotic holidays and cross curricular activities are implemented to celebrate such holidays. As required by the TEKS, the implemented curriculum builds a foundation of social studies skills and knowledge as students work independently and with others in a variety of settings.

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

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

DES understands that in order to overcome the lack of foundational skills found in low socioeconomic homes, it is a necessity to adequately prepare children in the community. The campus offers an open enrollment, full day prekindergarten program to children in the community, as well as a PPCD program. The curriculum implemented follows the state of Texas prekindergarten guidelines, which are aligned to the TEKS, to ensure that all students entering kindergarten are adequately prepared for success. The curriculum places an emphasis on meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students. Each prekindergarten classroom is equipped with a bilingual teacher's aide to facilitate effective communication for students entering school with little or no English language. Family engagement opportunities are provided throughout the year to discuss their child's progress and to share educational strategies. DES believes in the intense impact that early childhood education has on every child and values the importance of the necessary skills taught to prepare students for a lifetime of success.

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

DES believes in the importance of music, technology, library, and physical education to develop well rounded, productive citizens. Most DES students would never have the opportunity to participate in these programs if the school did not provide the resources. All students are provided physical and creative outlets on a daily basis. Each student attends thirty minutes of physical activity each day and alternate music and technology thirty minutes every other day.

All students at DES are provided a music program throughout the year to encourage creativity in the fine arts realm. As required by the TEKS, students learn basic music elements such as pitch, rhythm, melody, and the upper grade levels begin to read music and play instruments. Families are invited to attend student musical productions throughout the year to showcase students singing, dancing, and playing instruments. All students are provided an annual opportunity to attend plays hosted by the local university to offer experiences that they may not have otherwise encountered.

Beginning in prekindergarten, every student attends the computer lab, where they learn basic technology skills as they express their own creativity during assigned tasks. The computer lab is also used to implement

technology skills as the students are involved in cross-curricular activities to support the core content areas. Each classroom teacher integrates technology in their classroom instructional practices through multiple hands on learning opportunities. Students utilize the computer lab and classroom devices to conduct research on science projects, famous people, as well as local and global historical facts. Students often feel as if they are playing games and do not realize that learning has occurred. At DES, all students are educated about digital citizenship, as they learn to practice safe and responsible behavior while using digital tools.

Another way DES has demonstrated its commitment to building a strong literacy foundation for all students is by implementing the library, as it plays a vital role in the education process for every student and is utilized on a daily basis. The librarian has established a set schedule for prekindergarten and kindergarten to attend the library for their reading time. The librarian coordinates with the classroom teachers to read several books to the classes that support classroom instruction. The other grade levels have set library times to take their whole class in to return or check out new library books and to test on their current book. The librarian has established a rewards system for students successfully reading their desired books to promote and encourage a lifelong love for reading. The librarian and teachers know the importance of developing a strong foundation of literature and the impact it has on student achievement.

DES values the importance of physical education and has a deeper understanding of the habits all students need to develop to maintain a healthy lifestyle. As required by the TEKS, students are provided a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities on a daily basis to allow every child to engage in physical fitness activities. Throughout the year, students are challenged to the “Miler’s Club”, where they are encouraged to accumulate a certain amount of miles over time. Each year students participate in a comprehensive fitness assessment, to assess cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. At the end of each school year, students look forward to participating in the physical fitness field day celebration and families, as well as community members are encouraged to attend. Every child at DES attends a physical education class each day for thirty minutes.

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

The majority of students attending DES come from Spanish speaking homes and are limited English proficient (LEP), therefore all teaching staff are either bilingual certified or English as a second language certified, to appropriately meet the needs of our LEP populations. Most of the instructional assistants and the secretary are bilingual to ensure effective communication with the LEP students and their families, and all communication sent home is in English and Spanish. Our LEP students in kindergarten through third grade are administered the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) state assessment each year. The TELPAS data is used to determine the appropriate instructional practices to meet the needs of each LEP student in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

DES utilizes multiple forms of assessment data which is continually analyzed throughout the year to guide instruction and to make intervention determinations. Students in first through third grade take three week checkpoints in math and reading to assess the content that was taught during that time. Teachers and administrators analyze the checkpoint data to determine what classroom interventions are needed and what changes in instructional practices need to occur. An intervention period is built into the daily schedule and teachers utilize this class period, along with instructional time throughout the day to work with students performing above grade level. Individual student conferences are held to discuss goal setting and performance measures for each student. When students complete assignments, they are then challenged with more rigorous tasks. Often the high performing students are peer leaders in the classroom to facilitate learning for other students. At the end of each six weeks, a committee meets to discuss student checkpoint data and report card data to determine if any student should be placed into the small group, multi-tiered RTI program. When a child is admitted into the small group, multi-tiered RTI program, they are provided with individualized, daily instruction to help close any existing achievement gaps. Evidence based interventions to address phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension are implemented to assist students in reading. Students are also engaged in mathematical instruction to build foundational skills, such as learning math facts with automaticity and numerical literacy. Each child in RTI receives services in math and reading with individual progress monitoring occurring every other week to determine necessary changes. The goal of the RTI program is to close achievement gaps and to ensure that all students are adequately prepared for the

next grade.

Every student in prekindergarten through third grade is administered an online assessment at least three times a year in reading and math to determine if they are progressing at the appropriate rate. These assessments provide a diagnostic and prescriptive report so that teachers may implement differentiated instruction for each student. Celebrations occur throughout the year to showcase student achievement and to continually challenge each student.

Teachers and administrators meet in weekly PLC meetings to analyze checkpoint data, online testing data, report card data, attendance, and state assessment data. Home visits are made if student attendance interferes with the learning process and families are counseled about the importance of their child's education. This thorough process helps eliminate any student from falling through the cracks and also assists teachers in providing intense and individualized instruction for all students.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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

The staff at DES is dedicated to creating an environment of high expectations for all students, regardless of any socioeconomic status, language, or any other barrier they may face. Cultures are embraced and celebrated throughout the year, to foster relationship of understanding and value within the school and community. It is a priority for DES to develop relationships with all students and their families, creating a collaborative partnership, to ensure that all academic and emotional needs are met. Student academic and behavioral successes are celebrated throughout the year to instill confidence in every child. DES has developed a “Gold and Silver Star” program to celebrate academic successes at the end of every six weeks. Many teachers allow students to eat lunch with them in their classrooms to celebrate perfect attendance. As students meet their reading and math goals throughout the year, their accomplishments are celebrated and acknowledged to promote student confidence.

A number of students attending DES come from homes in poverty and the majority qualify for the free or reduced breakfast and lunch program. To address the nutritional deficiencies hampering students, DES has developed a partnership with a local organization to provide many students with food to take home each Friday afternoon, so they will have something to eat over the weekend, and students are also provided healthy after school snack alternatives. It is the belief at DES that in order for a child to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally all necessary needs must be met.

The administration along with local parent volunteers implements events throughout the year to express their acknowledgement and appreciation of the dedication that staff members have to students. The administration understands that the teacher in the classroom has the greatest opportunity to affect the life of a child. Staff members are provided meals and special tokens of appreciation throughout the year. Administrators continually share observable, effective teaching strategies with the team of teachers and highlight positive things occurring across the campus. Staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated during staff meetings and PLC meetings, to promote a positive environment. The positive climate at DES has been established through meaningful celebrations for all stakeholders.

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

DES has established a partnership with community members and families to effectively educate and meet the needs of every child. The school embraces family engagement opportunities, such as family reading nights where all families are invited to come to school and spend an evening reading authentic literature with their child. Families are invited to attend class parties throughout the year to celebrate and embrace holidays and cultures. Multiple music programs are implemented to showcase the talents of each student and provide opportunities for families to support their children. An end of the year physical education field day is held and all families are encouraged to attend. The prekindergarten team hosts multiple family engagement nights and parents are taught instructional strategies to better assist their child at home.

Community volunteers also play an important role in the educational process at DES. Throughout the year, various people from the community speak to students in their history classes about important jobs in the community and the history of the community. The math classes tour the local bank to discuss personal and financial literacy to develop a deeper understanding of the concept, with a hands-on approach. Community volunteers provide students with a one on one environment as they read with them and help build their confidence through a strong mentorship. Non-English speaking parents are also provided opportunities throughout the year to attend English as a second language classes to help them develop the English language and to better help their child be successful.

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

Professional development plays an integral role in the educational process at DES and has a major impact on student success. All professional development is data driven and individualized to meet the diverse

needs of each staff member and every student. Multiple forms of data sources, such as student checkpoint data and teacher observation data are utilized to determine professional development needs.

At the beginning of the year, all staff members participate in professional development activities to meet the state mandated guidelines and the campus academic needs. Various types of professional development activities target instructional strategies to address academic concerns for the LEP and special education students. Vertical and horizontal alignment and planning opportunities are provided to ensure an aligned curriculum and common vocabulary across the campus. All professional development activities are aligned to the TEKS and are intended to promote student achievement across all student populations, as well as developing the professional capacity for staff members.

Teachers are provided the opportunity to receive ongoing professional development as they attend weekly PLC meetings where teachers and administrators demonstrate effective teaching strategies to develop highly effective pedagogical practices. Administrators and staff members collaboratively determine staff development needs during the summer and throughout the school year to address specific weaknesses discovered through data analysis.

Campus administrators attend annual conferences to gain knowledge on the state's accountability system and the most highly effective instructional practices and then provide that information to their staff. The leadership team also attends weekly meetings with the district leadership team to ensure vertical alignment across the district and to obtain effective techniques from other administrators. The campus administration is also involved in multiple book studies throughout the year to broaden their instructional knowledge and equip them with the necessary skills to effectively lead a campus.

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

It is the philosophy at DES that all students, families, and staff members are highly valued individuals. Building relationships is the foundation of the organization and has a major impact on student success. At the beginning of each school year, the leadership team and the staff create a social contract to facilitate a positive environment in which all staff members feel valued. The campus leadership team implements an open door policy and practices servant leadership, while maintaining high expectations for all stakeholders. Communication is a leading component to build strong teams throughout the campus. The administrators are highly visible, as they open the car doors to greet students in the morning, visit classrooms each day, and are present during lunch and at dismissal to communicate with students and families. The leadership team is viewed as a resource to staff members, students, families, and community members and will take all necessary measures to ensure student achievement and student success beyond the classroom.

The campus leadership team works diligently to create a safe and secure environment for all students. The team participates in professional development activities to learn current, best safety practices and they conduct multiple safety drills throughout the year.

The leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principal, and the counselor and they all share a role in the success of DES. The team has been diligent in developing leaders across the campus to help implement a unified vision. A significant role of the leadership team is to be instructional leaders for the campus. The administrators spend much of their time analyzing student and staff data and they provide feedback to the staff to improve student achievement. The collaborative efforts of the leadership team, staff, students, and families at DES have highly contributed to the creating a culture of high expectations and closing achievement gaps among all students.

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

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After DES received an academically unacceptable rating in 2011, many changes had to be made to improve instructional practices. Over the last eight years several major changes have impacted the school culture and climate to create a sense of urgency and high expectations for all stakeholders. The most important integral system DES has implemented is highly effective weekly PLC meetings with each grade level team and the campus administration.

In 2018, DES had one hundred percent passing rate on the state assessment in mathematics and ninety-seven percent in reading. Every student population group surpassed the state's average on all tests. On the most recent state accountability, all possible academic distinction designations were earned and this success is greatly attributed to the productive PLC meetings that take place each week throughout the year.

Many things occur during these meetings that have a tremendous impact on student outcomes. Multiple forms of data are analyzed, such as academic checkpoints, benchmarks, and state assessments. Curriculum and instruction are continuously monitored and adjusted to address the needs reflected in the data. Diagnostic online assessments in reading and math are discussed to develop prescriptive and individualized small group instruction through the RTI process and small group tutorials before, during, and after school. Data is continually analyzed to address the needs of LEP, special education students, struggling students, and also gifted and talented students.

Teacher observation data trends are discussed and each teacher shares both their strengths and weaknesses with their team members. They discuss what they will do to improve each weakness to ensure that students receive the best instruction. Instructional practices and strategies are shared by staff members and administration to help develop a deeper knowledge of the curriculum and instruction.

Collaborative instructional planning occurs during PLC meetings to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment across the campus. This process also promotes cross-curricular instructional development to produce successful students. Effective communication continually occurs to address any concerns or needs of each student. Students' personal challenges are discussed and ideas are brainstormed to assist in addressing their needs, whether it is food, clothing, counseling, or academic concerns. Teachers can also share personal learning styles of each student, to ensure the best educational opportunities are provided and student achievement occurs.

It is the philosophy of DES that all students can learn and every child's education is a matter of life and death! Every child, Every minute, Every day!