

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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	10	10	20
K	28	25	53
1	22	30	52
2	23	21	44
3	31	23	54
4	25	23	48
5	18	35	53
6	33	29	62
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	190	196	386

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 78 % 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: <1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	386
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%
9 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: 70%
Total number students who qualify: 271

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

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>4</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
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.	1

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 18:1

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%	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.

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.

Hawkins Elementary School will be a model of a learner-centered school. We will meet the diverse needs of all children.

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

Hawkins Elementary School (HES) believes all children deserve a safe and loving place where each child is encouraged to grow to their full potential. An individual approach to teaching addresses the unique needs of each student and helps students to progress toward their goals. The HES staff strives to instill a sense of grit, teamwork, coaching, and perseverance through the implementation of a growth mindset philosophy.

The town of Hawkins received its post office in 1873—the same year the Texas and Pacific Railway built through on its way to Dallas. The area had been settled before the railroad’s arrival, as it was near the river crossing to Belzora—an early port and stagecoach crossing on the Smith County side of the Sabine River that shipped lumber, shingles, livestock, and cotton. In 1912, Jarvis Christian College was founded just outside the Hawkins city limits. In October 1940, former lightweight boxer Bobby Manziel made the first major oil discovery in Wood County, which was a wildcat well 3.5 miles north of town. Hawkins became an overnight boom-town. The Humble Oil and Refining Company (later Exxon Company, U.S.A.) became a principal driller in the Hawkins field. Each October, Hawkins celebrates its oil-based economy with an oil festival.

Having the foundation of an oil town, Hawkins’ largest industries are construction and transportation. The educational system is the hub of the community, as it is for many rural communities, with 87% of the population receiving a high school diploma and 17.7% acquiring a college degree. Community support for the school runs deep and is easily recognizable.

HES is one of two campuses in Hawkins ISD, which is a 2A district, serving the City of Hawkins, Lake Hawkins, and a portion of Holly Lake Ranch. HES is a Title I campus made up of pre-kindergarten through sixth grade; it serves 390 students. Striving for a learner-centered school, HES has implemented individualized learning plans and targeted intervention time, called What I Need (WIN) Time, which are best practice strategies that are the catalysts for closing the achievement gaps. Since the implementation of personalized learning strategies, the campus scores have increased by 19% at the meets level in all subjects, 31% at approaching and 14% at meets for African American students in all subjects, and 20% at approaches and 21% at meets in all subjects for the economic disadvantaged students. These increases allowed HES to receive distinction designations in Academic Achievement in Mathematics, Academic Achievement in Science, Top 25 Percent: Comparative Academic Growth, Top 25%: Comparative Closing the Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness under the state accountability.

At HES, improvement in academic performance is a continual, data-driven process coupled with high expectations from all staff. Regular classroom “leadership walks,” or classroom visits by administration, are conducted to monitor student success. Using the data collected from the leadership walks, a better understanding of student and teacher needs can be gained. The leadership team works closely with teachers to provide instructional resources and professional development throughout the year based on the data findings. Students are encouraged to do hard work through positive phone calls, brag tags, and special treats. When students meet their academic or personal goals, they “ring the bell.” Ringing the bell is a moment for everyone to cheer and celebrate their individual milestones. The staff expresses daily high expectations and works to build positive relationships with students. The principal and assistant principal form relationships with all students by creating student leadership groups. These groups uplift, educate, and motivate these individuals. The impact of the leadership groups has boosted student self-esteem, thus causing great strides in their academics and behavior expectations. The entire campus—students and teachers—are highly competitive. Everyone wants to achieve at high levels. HES doesn’t just strive to meet the standards set forth by TEA; they challenge all their students to deliver advanced performance on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). HES feels this competitive nature really puts the students over the top and sets us apart from other schools.

The HES cultural infusion includes different cultural activities throughout the year including partnering with Jarvis Christian College, recognized as a historically black college or university (HBCU) along with other programs from local cultural organizations. Local churches support students with tutoring, lunches, the food-backpack program, school supply drives, and mentorships. HES participates in community programs

and competitions at school, such as Veteran's Day programs, UIL, community pep rallies, Fun Field Days and various local and state reading programs. Finally, a comprehensive physical education program includes team building games, sports and motor labs. The HES motor lab time is a research-based program that helps with fine motor skills that impact reading and writing skills applied in the classroom. HES strives every day to educate the whole child so each student is successful both in and outside of the classroom.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The English language arts curriculum incorporates a variety of high-impact instructional approaches to develop strong literacy skills. One program or approach does not meet the needs of the students nor adequately teach the state-mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Teachers follow the HISD core curriculum and timeline aligned with the TEKS. In the lower grade levels, it is important to implement guided reading and small group instruction. Students are grouped into guided reading groups driven by assessment data. Students receive small group instruction daily, which encompasses word study, comprehension, and fluency. HES educators have a systematic approach to literacy instruction. Literacy is weaved through whole-class, small-group, and independent content. The staff encourages and engages students in reading, writing, thinking and talking about books every day. The upper grades instill a love of reading through novel studies. These novels are selected to stir the imagination, challenge every reader, and expand their knowledge. Based on a campus survey and teacher input, a writing initiative is in place to strengthen the writing process campus-wide. Reflective writing is a practice implemented across all grade levels and all subject areas. Students write reflections throughout the year. They do not summarize the events of the activities. Instead, students reflect on the events and describe what they learned through their experience and on their learning. These authentic, reflective writings encompass all content areas. Eight times a year, students will showcase their writings in a “Hawk walk.” Student work is displayed on the walls of the school and staff members participate in a gallery walk. Through writing across the curriculum, writing experiences reinforce the content knowledge but also give students the opportunity to reflect on their own knowledge and skills. This is an intentional and thoughtful plan of instruction; the goal is to get students to love to read and write.

1b. Mathematics:

HES math curriculum focuses on daily problem solving, math fluency, computation skills, and real-world applications. The TEKS are first and foremost in every classroom. The standards and objectives are posted and verbally discussed throughout the lesson. A math target board is located in all classrooms. These math target boards incorporate a daily spiral review, which regularly exposes students to the concepts all year long. The daily reviews are bite-sized pieces that are easily incorporated into the daily routine. Process standards are woven through the curriculum resources and activities to build reasoning and connections to everyday math. HES educators use hands-on activities to integrate multiple strategies for teaching math concepts and thinking skills to students. The HES math curriculum utilizes district-adopted materials which helps develop problem solvers and addresses real-world situations. This particular curricular approach was chosen so students would have a stronger foundation in analyzing and evaluating math problems using everyday situations. At HES, student discussion is encouraged during math. Classrooms are alive with discussions, which showcase a deeper understanding of what students really know and understand. Math interactive notebooks are used as a hands-on tool to engage students in the content and math process. The implementation of these math interactive notebooks allows students to systematically organize information which makes the connect more meaningful. STEM classes are on the rise at HES. STEM classes encourage HES students through a wonderful sense of curiosity and inquisitiveness. Beginning early in the year, math tutoring is encouraged both before school and after school. Transportation is provided to allow students access to these services. The staff of HES uses data to determine differentiated instruction and to enhance student learning. Assessment data is generated every two weeks to inform teachers on the level of support needed for every student.

1c. Science:

The science curriculum focuses on a deep understanding of the scientific process and of the concepts of science. Teachers feel one program does not adequately cover all the standards. Therefore, teachers have the flexibility to build a strong science curriculum by accessing various materials. This helps to ensure mastery

of a standard and concept. HES educators foster the use of inquiry and investigations. The campus has a fully equipped science lab and a multi-purpose room for hands-on experiments. The school has access to a walking nature trail and outdoor space to take learning outdoors. The nature trails and outdoor learning encourage the study of native plants, trees, weather, and wildlife of the community. Students attend field trips to parks, museums, and learning centers designed to enrich and extend the classroom experience. Successful fundraisers have allowed students the opportunity to travel outside the community to have opportunities they might not otherwise have. While in the classroom, students record their findings in interactive science journals and reflective writings. Community groups annually share a mobile learning lab. This is an innovative program that brings the dairy experience directly to the students. HES students learn more about math, science, nutrition, and agriculture, which is presented in an outdoor classroom format. All hands-on activities and experiments allow for a richer understanding of the science TEKS. Students are actively involved in the Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering (TAME) program. Through this program, students interested in STEM are provided with innovative, hands-on science activities and compete in community and state competitions. Teachers use assessments and benchmark assessments to address mastery of the TEKS and to monitor student progress.

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

The social studies curriculum used by teachers aligns and addresses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The social studies instructional resource is a district-adopted material that applies a balanced literacy approach. However, social studies is also integrated in the reading curriculum. The social studies materials foster critical thinking and develop students as responsible decision makers. The comprehensive curriculum resource engages students through unit studies of historical people and places and events that have shaped the world. Social studies students obtain a strong foundation in history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, culture, science, and technology. This standards-based curriculum has students engaged through technology, reading, writing, discussions, and problem-solving. As students progress through the curriculum, they will acquire the content knowledge and skills necessary to become critical thinkers and engaged citizens. One effective component of the resource is the online feature which provides videos to bring the content to life. Since the content is digital, students also have access to the content from home. HES encourages students to be active leaders on campus and in the community. Students are involved in creating “blessing boxes,” which are food pantries located in the community. A can food drive and construction of the blessing boxes were built to feed the families of the community. Students are active in serving leadership roles that empower them to make a difference and to give back to the community. Another example of engaging the students in real-life civic learning experiences is through the participation of canned food drives for the holidays, anti-bullying rallies, and an annual Christmas toy drive.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

HES has one Head Start classroom for early childhood learning. Children learn primarily through play, hands-on activities, songs, and games as they explore concepts in early literacy, early mathematics, science, and social development. The classroom teacher uses a combination of small group and whole group teaching to meet academic needs. The teacher meets regularly with the kindergarten department to ensure the Head Start students are developing the skills necessary to be successful with the kindergarten standards. Data has shown the impact of early learning has had an increase in student achievement and decreased classroom behaviors in the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At HES, the staff does the very best to form students into well-rounded individuals who are excited to walk through the doors and be lifelong learners. Although academics are at an utmost importance, HES certainly knows how students are excited about knowledge in all areas and extracurricular adventures.

Students rotate between music and physical education daily for thirty-minute rotations. The music and physical education programs follow TEKS guidelines. At HES, the staff works diligently to develop good health and nutrition. Physical education classes participate in Jump Rope for Heart and Fitnessgram. The Fitnessgram measures flexibility, strength, and endurance. This program is monitored throughout the year to check individual students' physical progress. The Jump Rope for Heart program raises money to help with heart research. Ready Body, Learning Minds is incorporated into the PK-2 classes to help develop the students' sensory and motor skills to their fullest. The simple activities strengthen the core body muscles to help a student sit in their desk or hold a pencil. This development of the whole child is another support to help the students remain focused on academics. The district partners with Be A Champion and with the Texas Department of Agriculture to provide nutritious snacks and meals to students participating in enrichment programs. Every student at HES has an evening meal prepared before leaving school each day. As a result of this program, students are performing better in school because they have the opportunity to consume healthy, fresh, and well-balanced meals throughout the day.

HES is a one-to-one technology campus. Beginning in third grade, students have MacBooks. Younger students have one-to-one iPads. Technology is a vital part of the curriculum to help build a foundation of understanding so when they move into secondary, those technology skills can be applied. HES students utilize Google Classroom for assignments and research projects and to create engaging presentations. Students use the latest software programs to enrich what is being taught in the classroom. Educational computer-based programs create specialized learning plans to reteach skills that are deficient or not yet mastered. Technology-based classroom tools are offering a way for HES teachers to differentiate learning. Technology is integrated through tools and resources into the content areas to enhance teaching and learning. Many classrooms incorporate blended learning which combines face-to-face classroom instruction with online learning.

Student academic competitions are encouraged by the staff at HES. University Interscholastic League (UIL) participation is a fun way for the students to enrich their educational experience. Many of the students compete in UIL as a social outlet, to build their confidence, and to showcase their competitive side in public speaking, chess skills, art appreciation, and number sense. HES students have an abundance of school spirit. This is shown through their prizes and medals but also through their enthusiasm to compete.

Engineering and robotics' clubs begin in sixth grade. Students are excited to learn how computer programming and robotic design can solve problems, big and small. Not only do these types of clubs help to establish science, technology, engineering, and math concepts, they also work to build students' team-building skills as they work to complete fun challenges. These collaborative skills are essential for student success, no matter what subject they choose to pursue in the future.

Fine arts play a role in helping HES students fully develop and explore their creative side. In sixth grade, every student is enrolled in the band program so they can explore band to learn about the program. The sixth-graders are included in the secondary band concerts each semester. This is an opportunity for students to explore a new program before they move to the junior high school. Music classes are offered to students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The fine arts curriculum is aligned with the TEKS. HES students participate in a musical each semester. Throughout the year, students are engaged on many different levels, including performing, creating, moving, and listening.

3. Special Populations:

The success of HES is a result of great classroom teachers and excellent instruction. The staff works as a team to personalize and differentiate instruction for students. Rigorous instruction in the classroom is critical to master state standards and campus expectations. Data-driven decisions are made on a student-by-student basis after benchmarking and content-based assessments have been administered. The success of student progress toward mastery is a well-designed response-to-intervention system called What I Need (WIN). Interventionists and classroom teachers utilize small group daily instruction by responding to the data. Teachers show students the finish line and provide tools and skills necessary to reach mastery. HES administrators consistently analyze standards-based assessment data with teachers during professional learning community data planning sessions by providing analytics for digging deeper in the content areas.

Classroom teachers and WIN staff work together to provide enrichment and specialized instruction to all students regardless of the data findings.

All students have the opportunity to advance in reading and math during WIN instruction which is provided five days a week for two thirty-minute periods. Students identified as dyslexic receive instruction in the classroom and through a pull-out program that provides intensive instruction by a trained specialist. Students identified in special programs, such as special education and Section 504, are closely monitored as well. Teachers follow their individual education plans (IEPs) or individual accommodation plans (IAPs) to meet student needs in and out of the classroom.

The district has a shared service arrangement through our county to serve students who are identified under special education. HES has one special education classroom on campus. The majority of students are provided content mastery and or inclusion supports, whereas a few students receive a more restrictive setting such as resource. Students being served in a life-skills setting receive services at the shared services building in a neighboring community.

The gifted and talented classes at HES begin in first grade. These students typically meet daily for thirty minutes. However, often, the students extend their time in the classroom in order to continue working on their service projects or project-based learning activities. Gifted and talented students are involved in real-world events, which are demonstrated through many elements of problem-solving, such as making inferences, collaborating, communicating and independent learning. Major projects created are the blessing boxes to feed the hungry, the I Am More Campaign that teaches students they are worthy and significant, and the Books and Blankets Program for the elderly and for families in need. HES believes incorporating these activities of building compassion for others and serving the community helps to develop the whole child.

HES scored well on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Several factors contribute to consistent reading and math gains. Closing the achievement gap has not happened overnight or by accident. To ensure data-driven instruction and no 10% variance between test scores of all students and the test scores of any subgroups, student data is tracked every two weeks. Data tools are not only tracking subgroups, but precisely monitoring individual students. HES has a clear picture of every student on campus. HES believes in Every Student, Every Day. Teachers have individual planning sessions with every student. Students monitor their own data beginning in third grade. Educators at HES empower students to own their learning.

HES has specific progress monitor tools and screeners in all grade levels. A universal screener is given at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to track reading and math progress. In order to act quickly, assessing begins no later than 3 weeks after school begins in August. The results of all data are always communicated with the parents through parent-teacher conferences and sent home in weekly folders throughout the year.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Hawkins Elementary School’s culture supports teacher growth and development by creating concrete and relevant learning opportunities, which encourage growth and competence in the quality of their instructional practices. This culture of excellence is also achieved by engaging students in and out of the classroom and building strong bonds with all stakeholders. This mindset is established at HES before the first day of school. To welcome students, HES hosts a back-to-school night to set a positive tone for the year. With an average of 95% parent attendance, teachers provide parents with a tour of the classroom, treats, and details on expectations and academic goals for the year.

Positive behavior supports (PBS) is a critical and important part of the campus. The campus incorporates CHAMPS, which is a system of expectations and stands for conversation, help, activity, movement, participation, and success. CHAMPS expectations are visible in all common areas of the school and classroom settings. As a motivational tool, students meeting expectations are recognized and rewarded with intrinsic and extrinsic incentives. HES believes in celebrating success, no matter how big or small. Students all wear necklaces with tags of honor to recognize their accomplishments.

The administrators at HES go above and beyond to consistently celebrate teachers, beginning with opening the school year with activities that promote team-building, togetherness, and relationships. Throughout the year, administrators send postcards to teachers with positive words of encouragement along with sharing positives on social media to uplift and build morale. Celebrations constitute the continuous support and effort for the teachers and staff, not to mention students as well. It also encourages and sustains a winning attitude with staff, which is an integral part of achieving success. One celebratory method for students who meet their goals is the “ringing of the bell.” In the office, the staff goes all out to celebrate students’ victories. A student tells the principal, then the office staff will celebrate while the student rings the bell. This mini celebration reinforces positive behavior and continued academic success, and it has made a significant impact for HES students.

For staff morale boosters, HES holds monthly birthday celebrations and holiday-themed parties to honor their hard work and dedication to the school. Teachers enjoy coffee bars, snacks and drinks from the Woot Woot Wagon—a mobile treat cart. They are awarded “Teacher of the Month” at the monthly school board meetings, and tokens of appreciation are consistently provided on a monthly basis. In addition, family volunteers assist in creating treats and meals for the staff during Teacher Appreciation Week. Historically, teacher turnover rates are low.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Throughout the school year, HES builds strong partnerships with community members, while initiating family involvement through various avenues beginning with the back-to-school event. This is not your typical social meet-and-greet. HES utilizes this opportunity to connect, partner, and engage parents.

The local rotary club partners with the school to donate school supplies for students. Through community partnership, HES launched a Therapy Dog Reading Program to practice and enhance the skill of reading for students. This particular activity encourages student success because the dog-friendly environment boosts the self-esteem of students by allowing them to read to dogs instead of feeling shy and reading in front of the class. In addition to the Therapy Dog Reader Program, HES partners with a local church to supply food and snacks for unfortunate families. For many students, this is the only source of food they will receive outside of the school. With parental permission, many students receive a weekly backpack full of food for their families. The backpack program goes a long way with the students, particularly for students with large families. HES also engages and builds rapport with parents and students by conducting a continuous, positive phone call home. In addition, members of the local church supply snacks and lunch for teachers and staff while meeting and mentoring students. The students of HES celebrate the elderly in the nursing home by creating Christmas Cards with Holiday cheer and hand delivering them to the nursing home.

Parents are considered an important part of the HES family. Parent input is valued and encouraged. HES hosts an annual STAAR parent night for community and parents to ask questions, to receive student progress updates, and to inform families of the importance of the test and to educate them on the accountability system. In addition to Parent Night, Hawkins Elementary hosts a District Wide Open House as an opportunity to connect and create additional dialogue with parents and community members. The community is informed of the scores through social media, newsletters, the campus and district website, and committee representatives. HES understands fully the need and impact it brings when the community and the school work together to be the best it can be.

3. Professional Development:

All staff at Hawkins Elementary School are engaged in a culture of self-discovery, improvement, and learning throughout the school year. The heart of professional development (PD) is centered on increased student outcomes with the goal of strengthening student academic performance through teacher growth and development. The PD at HES is personalized to the needs of the administrators and teachers. The administrators participate in various district, campus, and regional trainings designed to gauge their understanding of instructional practices and explore innovative methods to positively redirect student behavior. The PD of the administrators centers on instructional practices to develop the whole TEK by focusing on content, rigor, depth, and complexity. With teachers, administrators attend PD in order to tackle pressing issues such as educating heterogeneously mixed learning levels of students or effectively addressing students in poverty, which affect 69.67% of the student population. HES teachers conduct an analysis on profiles of pertinent academic information to identify strengths and learning deficiencies of each student. This paints an academic canvas of each child with strategic targets to address any academic gaps. Teachers strategically work together to develop pacing guides geared toward strengthening any potential academic gaps.

HES utilizes a personalized learning style approach to adequately refine any area of instruction within that teacher. This extends beyond any typical needs assessment and improvement plan. Teachers utilize self-reflection with surveys, data from walkthroughs, and observation to triangulate strengths and deficient skills. Throughout the year, teachers participate in weekly ongoing professional learning communities (PLC). The anatomy of a PLC consists of data-driven discussions, effective instructional practices, and teacher empowerment.

At HES, teachers conduct walkthroughs known as leadership walks, which encourage teachers to gauge various types of instruction across different content disciplines. During the leadership walks, administrators and teachers explore the lesson objective, student engagement, student level of thinking, and high-impact instructional strategies occurring within the classroom. At the conclusion of the brief observation, the teachers and administrators participate in dialogue. The teacher, then, self-reflects on ways to implement the observed high impact instructional strategies in their lessons.

The staff at the school systematically cultivates opportunities for teachers to deliberate and share insights on their pedagogical strategies through the Reflective Practice Model (RPM). This district initiative known as Hawk Walks systematically addresses the quality of instruction and writing through self-reflection and dialogue among teachers, administrators, and students. Through this PD activity, a teacher realizes, no matter the academic level, all students can do more if given the opportunity to produce authentic work.

4. School Leadership:

The district level leadership team sets the tone for the campus leadership team through its transformational type leadership approach of positively coaching individuals for change. The district level administrators lead the campus level, which lead the faculty and staff, who then provide leadership for the students. Yes, the students are held accountable for leadership. The strong leadership bond and skills of administrators and staff permeates to the students. Both district and campus level administrations are charged with creating and sustaining a culture of excellence for faculty, staff, and students. The superintendent and district level administrators model school leadership and conduct bi-monthly refreshers for the campus

level administration, which systematically builds capacity for faculty, staff, and students. Deemed the instructional leader, the principal focuses her leadership on serving the kids, serving the staff, and serving the community. The leadership significantly and positively impacts the culture, faculty, staff, students, and accountability.

Although Hawkins Elementary School's academic culture encompasses data and accountability, the faculty and staff at HES understand that behind every number is a student. Therefore, educating the whole child requires a team approach. The HES administrative team is positioned to address a wide spectrum of extrinsic factors affecting learners. The leadership team participates in restorative practices to positively redirect the behavior of students. With restorative practices, the faculty and staff mentor students by modeling, reinforcing, and recognizing good behavior, and by simply having a conversation and allowing students to express their opinions about topics.

HES invests time in the social and emotional well-being of students. The HES guidance counselor provides leadership expertise in this area, which encourages students to develop healthy perceptions of themselves. With a high number of impoverished students, the guidance counselor communicates tactics, which address the social and emotional part of the student.

In addition to the counselor, the principal intentionally seeks out ambitious teachers to empower and to charge them with change. The lead teachers utilize their expertise to serve and mentor other teachers. For example, one lead teacher took charge and initiated the modeling of instructional strategies outside the normal time of a PLC. The team at the time struggled to properly address a specific set of academic skills; therefore, the lead teacher felt empowered to lead by example. Effective leadership influences positive change for all stakeholders, thus reinforcing the district and campus leadership philosophy that everyone is a leader.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

HES is a family, first and foremost. HES is committed, passionate, and driven to strive for pure excellence. The staff not only hold students accountable, but the staff expects more of themselves today than yesterday. The teachers and administrators of the campus will not accept failure from any student. Because each child is so important, the main focus is a personalized learning approach for every student. HES staff chants and holds true the saying “You matter, every child, every day!” The entire campus will do everything to educate the whole child academically, physically, emotionally, and socially. Achievable academic goals are set-for each and every student because HES believes in them. Motivation is not just needed; it is a critical piece. Administrators believe in intentional praise and in consistently motivating students and staff. To be the best HES can be, administrators are lifelong learners who hold themselves to the same high standards as communicated to the staff and students.

As the chant says, “You matter, every child, every day!” this personalized learning component has been the center of success at Hawkins Elementary. From the delivery of instruction to the development of every teacher, HES takes a personalized approach to learning very seriously. Both the leadership walks and the Hawk Walks focus on how the teacher delivers the lesson and the task the students are performing. HES administration and staff can check for rigor of the lesson and comprehension of the TEK through authentic student tasks. To keep a personalized learning approach, content based assessments are administered every four weeks to check for mastery of the TEKS. This real-time monitoring is reviewed and a quick response is given to those students who need reteaching. Every student has a personal portfolio that compiles their learning profile. This personalized learning data allows HES staff to pinpoint with precision the needs of every student. Students review their data and go to “What I Need” (WIN) time for two 30-minute periods every day. This WIN time allows all students to be challenged on their level to ensure everyone’s needs are met without any stereotyping or embarrassment. All students feel confident because everyone gets a WIN!

HES believes in monitoring personalized learning for all staff. Through tracking data to identify high-impact instructional strategies, observational data and content-based assessments, HES administration can pinpoint professional learning needs for each teacher. HES staff values the role of modeling learning for students. If, as professionals, HES can model the role of the learner, the growth potential for the whole campus is unlimited.