U.S. Department of Education
2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

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

Official School Name Putegnat Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 730 E. 8th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Brownsville   TX   78520-5914
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County CAMERON

Telephone (956) 548-8930   Fax

Web site/URL http://putegnat.weebly.com/   E-mail   aivasquez@bisd.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. Rene Gutierrez
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)   E-mail rene.gutierrez@bisd.us

District Name Brownsville Independent School District   Tel.   (956) 548-8000
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Minerva Peña
(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   37 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   11 Middle/Junior high schools
                                            10 High schools
                                            0 K-12 schools

                                            58 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [X] 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	50	93
K	36	49	85
1	43	36	79
2	40	37	77
3	29	25	54
4	27	32	59
5	19	31	50
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	237	260	497

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate):   0 % Asian
                                           0 % Black or African American
                                           97 % Hispanic or Latino
                                           0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                           3 % White
                                           0 % 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: 12%

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 *to* the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	24
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	55
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	458
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 78 %
                                                        389 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: 100 %
        Total number students who qualify: 497

8. Students receiving special education services: <u>12</u> %

    <u>59</u> 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>0</u> Autism	<u>8</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>12</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>20</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: <u>4</u>

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
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   <u>21:1</u>

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	98%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
   Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
   Yes _   No X

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

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

Our mission is to provide a high-quality, comprehensive, and meaningful education for all students to enable them to realize their greatest potential and become productive citizens.

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

The Governor of Texas tweeted, "An elementary school in Brownsville is number one in the U.S. for preparing students in third grade reading", thus confirming Annie S. Putegnat Elementary's (ASP) mission effective. ASP's mission is to provide a high quality, comprehensive and meaningful education to enable all students to realize their greatest potential. ASP sits in the middle of downtown Brownsville approximately three miles from the Mexican Border of Matamoros, Mexico. ASP is a historical site. As Brownsville's first grammar school in 1889, it was rebuilt in 1942 and constitutes what is now ASP.

ASP students and parents are predominantly Hispanic, first and second generation English-speaking families. The campus student population is one hundred percent economically disadvantaged, 97 percent Hispanic, and e84 percent At-Risk. ASP families consist of extended family situations, grandparents as legal guardians, single-family households, traditional family with multiple families within the same home, and homeless youth. Within the last four years, ASP has transformed from mediocrity to superiority highlighting the strengths of the campus' diverse student population.

Many traditions have taken root at ASP that are a testament to its rising accomplishments. Embracing community involvement, the school works diligently to create partnerships between the community and campus by inviting families to attend Meet the Teacher Night, Honor Roll Ceremonies, Fine Arts Musical Presentations, Grandparent's Day, Open House, and Parent Assessment Meetings. Additionally, students enjoy Accelerated Reader (AR) contest awards, Panther Power Hour, Fabulous Friday, Panther Time, Movie Nights, Essay Contests, and annual field trips. Building on the "Communities in Schools" aspect, the campus holds "Trunk or Treat" where various community organizations decorate their trunks and distribute treats to the students. Four years ago, to promote daily attendance percentages, one the most affective traditions was initiated. Students enrolled at ASP receive a teddy bear as a reward for good attendance. Being that literacy is the focal point of any successful school, many of ASP's traditions take precedence in this concept. Students anxiously await to create the costumes of their favorite book character and participate in the Book Character Parade, which elicits the love of reading. "Read Across America" is another campus tradition used to motivate students to read, thus creating successful, lifetime readers. A noteworthy, newly established tradition is the famous book quote contest. Quotes from famous authors are read during the morning announcements and students call in with correct responses.

Significant milestones at ASP adorn the halls, are evident on bulletin boards, and displayed among the campus. Amongst these milestones, are 20 to 30 percent gains in state standardized assessments. These significant gains attest to the implementation of learning interventions and structured pedagogy interventions, computer-assisted learning and school-based management interventions at ASP. As aforementioned, the focus on literacy became the norm in all content areas. This integration of literacy was evident in science instruction, thus earning ASP's Science Fair Grand Champion trophy five years in row. Recent breakthroughs include, earning an Honor Roll status from the State's Education Agency, the principal's invitation to testify in the Texas House of Representative Public Education Committee Meeting of Effective Schools and a first time Blue Ribbon Nomination.

ASP is a successful Honor Roll campus for infinite reasons. School connectedness, academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally is ASP's goal. Connected students overcome challenges, achieve increased academic scores, and feel safe and secure. Connected stakeholders are able to identify student needs and potential. This serves as a beacon for a data-driven climate environment. At ASP it is clear that academic performance is highly prized and valued. This is in direct result of having one to one administration and teacher conferences to discuss student data and timelines. Stakeholders often meet with the leadership team to analyze student data and to offer support to further student academic progress. Aligning curriculum horizontally and vertically across grades and subjects has been essential for attaining a highly effective and conducive student-centered learning environment. The academic and behavioral needs of all students are heightened through a variety of programs. These programs specifically address each child's need: Migrant, Bilingual, Gift and Talented, Special Education, 504/Dyslexia, Response to Intervention (RTI) and At-Risk. Additionally, improved school climate and morale, which encompasses continued support for teachers, students, and parents has been proven effective. Thus, creating a friendly and

engaging ambiance where everyone is welcomed. Effective school leadership maintains programs and provides direction with a laser-like focus. The campus leaders celebrate the success of students and staff by empowering the staff to make decisions. The ASP campus leaders offer celebratory luncheons, co-planning meetings, and serve as facilitators when necessary. ASP holds annual fall and spring campus parent assessment meetings. These meetings inform parents about their child's campus, district and state level expectations. Parents are valuable members of various school committees and assist in daily school instructional tasks. These collective and extraordinary endeavors continue due to the familial environment of collegiality and teamwork. The campus, parents, community, and state await the continued accolades of success, as ASP will continue to be the best.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

"I feel happy when I read, and I get excited because I feel I am in the story with the characters" -3rd grade student

At ASP, a well-planned, literacy action plan and engaging curriculum that inspires students to be life-long readers and college ready is assimilated. The governor of Texas' tweet highlighted ASP's success for performing number one in the U.S. in preparing students in third-grade reading. At ASP all teachers share a vision of high autonomy and a high accountability 21st century research-based reading model, which begins in the primary grades focusing on early literacy skills such as phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. These skills pave the way for academic achievement where the majority of ASP students meet state standards.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) based reading instruction is the foundation where students apply their comprehension skills in all subjects. To enhance the reading curriculum, teachers incorporate deeper, student-centered critical thinking led discussions and interactive journaling to identify unknown vocabulary and locate embedded themes. Students are also motivated to become independent readers through the AR program, earning points via computerized quizzes. Teachers and the library media specialist celebrate student's AR accumulation point accomplishments and total books read with rewards every six weeks. Teachers implement computer-based supplemental reading programs that have aided in increasing the rate of reading comprehension and fluency. ASP's struggling readers participate in a tiered 30-minute small group intervention instruction model that consists of rotation centers, task cards, and scholarly boot camps that aid in the mastery of skills. In addition to these approaches, teachers use campus and district diagnostic assessments and data walls to identify student's strengths and weaknesses, determining student understanding of a skill or concept and create action plans.

As written communication enhances learning, writing is implemented across all content areas. Students' writing skills are enhanced through the writing process component adopted by the campus. ASP teachers incorporate one-to-one writing conferencing to assist students with editing and revising of compositions.

ASP's culture of literacy, school-wide literacy action plan and engaging curriculum manifested by exemplary teachers has produced inordinate statistics with lifelong readers and writers.

1b. Mathematics:

"I don't like it; I love it! I really like the challenge that every math problem gives me. It's exciting because it allows me to put my mind through tough scenarios that make my brain think hard." 5th-grade student

ASP recognizes that integrating number sense activities has been a dynamic component in producing scholars that engage in real-world word problem solving guided by logical thinking.

The success of the math program at ASP stemmed from the need for a reformed approach targeting basic math computational skills and problem solving. Teachers research and implement the use of digital math programs and daily spiral target walls contribute to the remarkable growth in all grade levels. School-wide weekly math competitions motivate students to master skills. Computer-based programs offer personalized interactive support to reinforce weekly concepts and increase the overall exposure of basic mathematical skills at a higher-order thinking level. Grade level teachers design unique lessons and develop methods utilizing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to build continuity for all levels of learning through district adopted frameworks aligned with math TEKS. ASP's core math instruction is driven by a highly effective Concrete Pictorial Abstract (CPA) method engaging various learning styles, targets diverse needs by incorporating the use of manipulatives, hands-on activities, integrative technology, and interactive math

notebooks to achieve independent problem solvers. Math talks, utilizing Think-Pair-Share (TPS), have enhanced and developed the thinking, self-questioning, and explanation skills needed to master the required skills and concepts. Students create guiding tools and anchor charts to support strategic thinking while challenging students to build and make connections based on prior knowledge.

The campus utilizes data accuracy tables to review students' progression. Authentic fact fluency assessments evaluate the mastery of basic computational skills. Teachers utilize formative assessments and student online data analysis to monitor progress and provide immediate feedback. A hybrid schedule of intensive tiered interventions provides additional reinforcement for individualized instruction. Extended day tutorials offer enrichment through engaging learning centers. The commitment of effort and time, along with a shared vision, supports the transition from concrete to abstract level of thinking and understanding guiding students to become real-world problem solvers.

1c. Science:

"Science labs have made it easier for me to get a better understanding of how science works." -5th grade student

ASP has undergone a long road to where it stands today. To quote the former superintendent, "…they are the Cinderella Story." A few years ago, ASP was one of the lowest performing schools in the district with science performing at the 54th percentile. Now fast forward to the present day there has been a transition towards a generation of scientific, literate investigators.

A science instructional coach is at the forefront of discovery, positioning the groundwork for student understanding while sparking curiosity through hands-on investigations utilizing research-based instruction and a wealth of reliable teaching tools. The implementation of a science lab specialist sparked the momentum in positively influencing the student achievement scores at state-level testing. The core of the science curriculum emphasizes on process standards embedded into content instruction correlated to meet TEKS standards. During regular instructional time, TEKS based instruction is vertically aligned. Lessons are paired with weekly hands-on science lab activities.

Based on research from similar populated schools (which performed at higher success rates), the science lab became the focus for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based activities supplemented with planetarium presentations, campus science fair projects, robotics, and live specimens targeted for each grade level. Science Master Camps are a contributor to real-world life applications that assist in acquiring the foundation strands of TEKS vertically aligned to target pre-kindergarten through fifth grade deficiencies through cooperative mini-lessons. In partnership with wildlife organizations, students have the opportunity to participate in inquiry-based webinars and integrated learning centers.

Teachers and district curriculum specialists monitor student progress through research-based methods while providing authentic formative assessments. Online data analysis allows planned and modified teaching practices to reassess tiered groupings aiming at remediation of science concepts and applications. Students self-assess using exit-tickets. This provides a snapshot of lesson mastery. Interactive journals provide students with a self-created reference tool allowing them the opportunity to reflect, model, and make connections. The goal is to foster independent learning and critical thinking through scientific inquiry.

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

"I like when we vote because it gives me a chance to make a difference." -4th grade student

Amidst the impoverished socio-economic area, the students at ASP take part and pride in their school community. Student voting is an integral part of citizenship and sense of community. ASP focuses on a well-designed social studies curriculum that helps implement civic education, produces globally competitive, and stem proficient citizens. The mission is to provide the opportunity for civic engagement, inquiry, and exploration through project-based learning.

Teaching and learning take on a constructivist approach providing students with purposeful and meaningful learning experiences of contemporary, social, and diverse global realities. Due to the absence of cultural experiences, teachers supplement the TEKS aligned curriculum through community outreach creating real-life connections building on the efficacy of citizenship skills. The state social studies standards taught in grade level themes centered on citizenship, culture, celebrations, government, history, economics and social developments. In order to address standards, teachers incorporate interdisciplinary reading and science components. Financial literacy skills' implementation is through integrative learning centers involving themed university days. Career days provide the campus with dynamic and tangible experiences facilitating the connection between their future academic pursuits and professional endeavors through community small businesses, city commissioners, and state representatives.

Classroom lessons integrate a multitude of cultural events suited to reinforce awareness and appreciation of the student's culture. Students learn through classroom debates, problem-solving scenarios, newspaper analysis, maintaining a school garden, exposure to city environmental factors, and reaching out to community members. Student involvement and participation is evident through various volunteer opportunities. These include collections for children in need, clothing and canned food drives, health fairs, and recycling program.

The overall school vision of citizenship improves society by teaching students to participate in community-based projects throughout their educational careers. The objective is to create students that make informed, reasoned decisions, follow principles that will not harm the respect or dignity of any individual, inculcate good character and citizenship, and establish a platform of meaningful personal connections to expand their viewpoints for future civic duties.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

ASP provides a high-quality pre-kindergarten program that prepares three and four year old children with a curriculum aligned school readiness program. The program follows a developmental approach in several skill domains ranging from social development, language, emergent reading and math, writing, and technology. Opening the World of Learning curriculum (OWL) and Center for Improving Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE) are programs utilized to assess student progress. The tools provide microscopic reports of student's skills at the individual, group, and class levels. ASP early childhood data walls reflect students' strengths, progress, and needs from these reports. Teachers introduce and reinforce skills through manipulatives, hands-on activities, and one to one instruction. Entering the early childhood classroom, children are engaged in literacy, math, social development, one-to-one instruction, and technology, which is the cornerstone of student preparedness.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The music educational program at ASP employs the use of a state adopted curriculum along with supplementary resources, which emphasize on vocal and theatrical presentations. These presentations highlight student talent throughout community, campus, and parental meetings. Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade students participate in a forty-five minute weekly music lesson aligned to Texas Education Agency (TEA) state-adopted TEKS. "Music in our Schools" is an important and celebrated yearly event that embodies cultural, artistic, and self-confidence in the students. This embodiment utilizes content areas such as math (Bar/Measure), reading and writing skills (poetry, plays, terminology) and history knowledge (famous composers). These skills intertwine various competitive fine arts musical events and presentations. At ASP musically engaged students are well rounded and have academically successful.

The enjoyment of physical movement and play through physical exercises encompasses the dynamic Physical Education (P.E.) program at ASP. P.E.'s core curriculum targets the TEKS standards through physical activity. Students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade attend physical education class for

forty-five minutes, daily. Through physical exercise and movement, the students are inspired to live healthy, active lives, as well as to entertain physical, good health, and nutrition. The campus' main goal is to retain and maintain high levels of physical activity throughout the students' lives. The P.E. teacher teaches locomotor and non-locomotor skills, rhythmic activities with various forms of dances, "lummi" sticks movement, folk dance, hip-hop, and ballroom dance. The program highlights the fundamental skills of physical fitness, cognitive concepts, personal and social characteristics through sportsmanship, rules, and safety.

To develop the body and mind the P.E. teacher assesses physical acuity in measurable methods by utilizing the state FitnessGram module with one hundred percent participation in all grade levels. This assessment ensures students maintain state-mandated physical fitness for a long healthy life. Lifetime leisure sports is another component that prepares students with skills for future participation in secondary and adulthood environments. Tennis, croquet, bowling, kickball, bicycling, and field sports activities are but a few of activities embodied by the program. Parents anxiously await P.E. Demonstration Night where students display skills that testify to the success of the campus' P.E. program.

The technological seed of success that the campus utilizes to supplement curriculum is "blended learning" at all levels in order to ensure we prepare students for the 21st century. Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade students attend computer labs for forty-five minutes weekly to expand TEKS on reading, math, and science through various software platforms. The campus is a pioneer for the first generation of Coding in the district, producing digital learners for the 21st century classroom. Engaging and animated lessons help students meet grade-level expectations and essential skills. This is completed by the utilization of smartboards, interactive whiteboards, tablets (in second grade for every student), learning centers equipped with tablets in pre-kindergarten through fourth grade, Computers on Wheels for third through fifth grade classrooms, and Smart TV(s) in every classroom to extend student learning and comprehension experiences. These technological resources permit teachers to gather data for student progress to make informed lessons to meet diverse student needs. Explicit instruction through various software platforms is custom made to fit each student's educational profile.

The school's counseling and guidance program supports all students in their academic, social, personal, and career development goals. It complements the academic learning in teaching the whole child. This component reduces dropout rates, improves academic performance, and increases participation in post-secondary education. In order to create and ensure mentally healthy or "ready-to-learn" students, students of all grade levels visit with a counselor weekly in classroom setting, group, or individually. To help create a positive, welcoming, and respectful environment, Wednesdays and Thursdays are "Unity Day/Wear Orange for Kindness" and "University Day/Wear University T-shirt". The counselor includes a "Panther Pride Pledge" into the Wednesday announcements, promoting an anti-bullying atmosphere. Thursdays are reminders of the importance of higher education, as the school motto is, "College for All." The yearly canned food drive, coat, blanket drive, and raising pennies for leukemia and lymphoma patients teaches awareness, empathy and charity towards others. School-wide events such as Unity Day, Drug-Free Week, The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Rally, and Career Day, Careers on Wheels are additional yearly planned events supporting the guidance curriculum and supplements the academic TEKS. Teachers submit counselor referrals electronically, whenever necessary, for immediate and prompt assistance. In order to maintain positive relationships with parents/guardians, the counselor holds parent conferences and crisis meetings when appropriate.

3. **Special Populations:**

ASP special student populations are highly integrated in diverse school and community activities building a strong perception of oneself despite academic challenges. Stakeholders aim for each child's individual goals rather than a one-size fits all. Comprehension, literacy, and math targets is delivered through a VAKT (visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile) approach and metacognitive strategies that are directly aligned with grade level TEKS.

ASP provides special population students with accommodations needed to flourish in the classroom setting. Teachers are proactive in identifying areas of need and provide student support through holistic action with

guidance from the diagnostician, counselor, special education teachers, speech pathologist, RTI teams, and nurse. The instructional methods and interventions for the special education population focus on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) embedded as a valuable tool utilized to enhanced lessons using metacognitive and multisensory approaches directly aligned with the TEKS. Online instruction also provides embedded supports such as digital text, text-to-speech, and guiding tools.

ASP makes closing achievement gaps a school-wide responsibility through family outreach, parent and teacher data meetings, and special population/regular classroom teacher co-planning. Staff and administrators take part in weekly data meetings to analyze test scores and set clear expectations for students through a color-coded data wall utilized to form hybrid schedules for tiered interventions, screen for learning deficiencies, and revamp student groupings to capitalize on their abilities and efforts. Data analysis reports bridge assessment and instruction, provide frequent progress checks of individual goals, and give immediate feedback identifying mastery and misconceptions, thus allowing teachers to create TEKS focus activities utilized during small groupings.

Teachers provide English Language Learner (ELL) supports through oral accommodations, graphic organizers, vocabulary journals with visual charts and sentence starters, peer tutoring, and speaking opportunities through flip grid responses. The migrant program at ASP offers a place, sensitive to culture, for migrant students to receive additional instructional support as well as basic needs. Furthermore, the school tailors an inquisitive atmosphere based on innovative project-based curriculum to suit the needs of gifted and talented students through enriched resources and enhanced learning opportunities such as dance and art events, coding and robotics clubs, interscholastic events, science fair competitions, and leadership opportunities.

Teachers maintain high levels of student achievement through continuous professional development, university mentoring programs, and volunteering for university research-based studies to support students' unique abilities and needs. Teachers develop different methods of teaching that integrate unique learning styles into flexible, inclusive classroom settings, and create new adaptive technologies to assist students in processing material and information with the same ease as a student without disabilities.

A variety of formal and informal assessments are used to tailor instruction and interventions for the diverse and individual needs of special student populations, and to diagnose, identify, and remediate learners who are functioning below level. State mandated, district, and assessments results drive instruction, remediation, and enrichment. Online testing systems utilize embedded supports to provide a better understanding of content assessment for ELL, 504 and special education populations, as evidenced through fifth grade 2018 data analysis.

ASP stands on its belief that all individuals have the right to achieve their potential, strengthen individual learning abilities, and achieve greater independence attained by a strong partnership with parents, faculty and staff.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The school's culture and climate foster the general tone of the school and the quality of relationships that exist among all stakeholders, thus supporting student's academic, social and emotional growth. At ASP, the principal ensures that all stakeholders feel valued, supported and efforts recognized, so that campus morale remains high. Anyone who visits ASP will testify to feeling a sense of solidarity, unification, and pride within the school community.

Upon entering the doors at ASP Elementary, all can feel the culture of connectedness, resulting in a school led by a team-building principal. An "open door" policy of accessibility is essential to identify the needs and development of teachers. Teamwork is apparent and a familial atmosphere amongst teachers and staff is valued. The leadership team is available to all stakeholders by maintaining high visibility throughout the campus and holding luncheons and weekly grade level meetings. Addressing issues and concerns as rapidly as possible is the leadership team's goal.

Treating staff members as professionals is another leadership goal at ASP. Motivated and appreciated personnel work harder; have stronger buy-in, thus creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm for their students. The administration has always sought to reward employees in a wide variety of ways to continue celebrating success and personal professional growth. The ASP leadership team often surprises teachers with tokens of appreciation: sweet bread, hot chocolate on a chilly morning, and famous cultural delicacies. Highly qualified teachers train their peers with best practices during specified co-planning days for vertical and horizontal alignment. The leadership team advocates self-reflection and self-assessment during these co-planning opportunities.

Effective schools make countless efforts to create a culture of inclusivity between parents and school. The 2018-2019 school year's theme, "Welcome to the Greatest School on Earth", embodies the school's climate and culture of success. To foster continued collegiality, ASP offers numerous opportunities for parents to engage in student's successes. Weekly parent meetings, assessment meetings, one to one meetings, open house nights, phone messages, and after-school activities reinforce the bond and emotional growth between the educational campus communities.

Students' academic, social and emotional growth and accomplishments are continuously celebrated and applauded in parades, honor roll/perfect attendance ceremonies, Panther Power Hour, luncheons, and shout outs in daily announcements. The campus leadership team rewards student accomplishments in all subject areas in a variety of ways. These include motivational activities such as Panther Hour, Fabulous Friday, Perfect Attendance Socials, Panther Awards Assemblies, Panther Parade of Champions and Top Reader Awards. In summation, at ASP providing a positive school climate and culture provides the pathway for success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Communication between school and community is an integral part of all successful schools. At ASP, this is evident in the strong partnership that the school fosters with parents, community and former alumni. ASP sits in the middle of downtown, Brownsville, TX, the oldest school in the city. It is regarded as the little neighborhood school that sprouted a town around it. This has established ASP's roots to grow deep and has made it the focal part of its community.

Parental involvement is a monumental part of ASP's success. Parents attend weekly parent center meetings. A fresh crop of passionate, helpful parent volunteers has come to be through its strong dedicated parent liaison. Parents helping and participating in the day-to-day activities are a common fixture on any given school day. Although it would be, wonderful, not every parent is able to spend their days at school. For these parents, ASP holds several meetings such as Parent Assessment Meetings, Student Success Initiative

(SSI) Meetings, STAAR Meetings, and Open House to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be involved in their children's progress. As not everything in life is business, ASP also hosts several events where parents and family are able to come and enjoy the day with children. Lunch with parents and grandparents, STAAR picnics, family nights at local restaurants, and school movie nights are just a few of these fun-filled events.

Community involvement is another strong pillar of ASP's success. Every year, ASP participates in several events that allow its students to interact with community members. Amongst these events are career days, Principal for a Day, and numerous author visits that are facilitated through the library. ASP also fosters a strong relationship with its former alumni. Every year it hosts an alumni recognition ceremony where a former student and now prominent community member is recognized. In addition, several ASP former alumni host an annual essay contest where fifth grade students have a chance to win laptops and tablets.

ASP recognizes the importance of nurturing a strong relationship amongst school, family, and community. This recognition is what cultivates the healthy bond that allows students to expand their horizons and make real connections between what they have learned and how it relates to in real life. This bond is what helps ASP to be the successful school that it is.

3. **Professional Development:**

Professional development is an integral component in all school and district entities. Campus leadership and faculty teams attend district/state conferences and trainings throughout the school year for improving overall student performance and refining best practices. Campus professional development is an equal and important component to address the campus' unique needs for the student population, primarily due to the student's second language acquisition. These two components have aided in the advancement of high achievement and academic gains. The Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) and Campus Needs Assessment (CNA) are tools utilized to identify specific goals in improving student achievement, and sharpening the expertise of all stakeholders. The campus professional development methodology is to focus on improving achievement scores by utilizing several components.

Teacher collaboration in sharing best practices during horizontal and vertical alignment meetings have proved effective. These collaborative meetings occur approximately every six weeks. The leadership team and teachers pinpoint goals, identify needs for improvement, share technological software, and supplemental tools and resources that assist with instruction. Additionally, the leadership team provides webinar trainings in math and reading during weekly grade level meetings for specific content, software and supplemental resources. Training of Trainers (TOT) is one key component in the campus professional development community. Teachers train other teachers in evidence- based teaching strategies that have proven effective in eliciting content comprehension and refining specific skills. In order to improve writing scores, the writing teacher would train lower and upper grade level teams to share best practices for editing, revising, and composition writing highlights.

The leadership team plays a dynamic role in ASP's professional development component. There are state-mandated trainings that must occur every year: Response to Intervention (RTI), Teacher Evaluation and Support System, Bullying Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Grading Procedures, and Curriculum Timelines. Leadership team inspired data walls align the wall in the "War Room" as a visual tool of student progress in academic and campus assessments and are color-coded to determine areas of progress and need. The leadership team refines skills in trainings and conferences specifically identified in improving academic and state achievement scores.

The leadership team confers continuously with grade level teams as a group, by content areas, and/or individually in a weekly or bi-weekly basis to empower teachers with the necessary means to develop professionally and identify key areas of improvement. ASP staff members are empowered to confer, brainstorm, and attend specific trainings for identified goals in order to produce a well-rounded, academic student and high-achieving campus.

4. School Leadership:

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way. -John C. Maxwell

The leadership philosophy at ASP is to create a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in which all students reach their maximum academic potential in a safe and collaborative environment. Upon the arrival of the current principal during the 2015-2016 year, ASP staff was welcomed and guided through a process in which they worked as a team to develop a set of shared goals based on current data. The principal shared her vision for the campus and asked them to join her on a journey that would lead them to success. As the ASP team reviewed current and previous data, it was strongly agreed that ASP students were as academically capable as any other student. The principal's vision, along with the leadership team, has led to a climate of excellence that has earned ASP continuous success for the past four years.

The principal has an "open-door" policy and truly believes her role is not only to lead but also to serve teachers and students in any capacity that supports the mission and vision of the school. She regularly visits classrooms providing support and feedback to teachers in a safe and positive environment. The leadership team at ASP places staff according to their expertise and training to empower them to operate in their areas of proficiency and grow as leaders.

Unified leadership teams lead the most successful organizations. Effective principals do not do it all alone, and they do not require that of themselves either. They promote distributive leadership as they work with their leadership team and teachers to achieve the vision of the school. The leadership team at ASP consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean of Instruction. The principal oversees and serves as a facilitator to the assistant principal and the dean of instruction. The assistant principal assists the principal in organizing and fostering a positive, safe environment that is conducive to best meeting the needs of all students, staff and parents. This includes responsibilities such as: leading, directing, counseling, and supervising a variety of personnel and programs; creating effective parent, teacher, child communications, supporting, encouraging, mentoring, and evaluating staff; fostering teamwork between teachers and among staff and parents; and managing budget items. Under the direction of the principal, the dean of instruction provides instructional leadership in the coordination and implementation of the school's curriculum/instructional programs, including technical assistance to administrators and staff as they implement the instructional program.

The leadership team promotes student success through its core academic systems, progress monitoring, and rewards for student achievement. The leadership team's focus is to disaggregate data school wide to determine instructional needs. The team meets daily, utilizes this data, and determines methods for sharing best practices among the staff as well as for selecting professional development opportunities that will address those instructional needs. When students are not meeting their goals, extra support targets students' needs directly. Teachers attend weekly grade level meetings to analyze data, share best practices, initiate plans and voice concerns. This collaboration gives teachers a strong sense of motivation and correspondence.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The "War Room" at ASP is where the heart of data chats originates. Data chats are focused conversations that support instructional decision-making. The school's community to break through from mediocrity to superiority fuels the need to achieve. During these weekly data chats, administration and teachers diagnose areas of growth, purpose, and explicit procedures. The leadership team and teachers obsess over the data daily, deploying academic support wherever the micro-data indicates. Teachers intervene immediately, adjust curriculum, and accelerate instruction. To facilitate data chats, a data wall serves as the hub of the "War Room". The campus' data wall is a visual representation of student progress. All stakeholders use it to identify areas of need and adjust instruction, accordingly. Each student has a "panther paw" that marks formative and summative assessments, color-coded to determine student's special population and demographics. Panther paws consistently move to a specific color depending on the color-coded chart ranging from needing improvement to exceed expectations on the level of academic progress. In turn, students have a clear understanding of academic performance goals by mapping individual student progress through individual student STAAR data charts. Special program teachers play a vital role in this process with co-planning data chats that identify student's academic deficiencies. This pro-active approach pinpoints student academic areas of weaknesses and detects below average learning objectives. Consequently, individual student success plans allow teachers to conference with students to discuss academic data and formulate a plan for "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, Timeline) goals.

At ASP, data drives instruction, ultimately a paramount to the rising academic achievement scores. Differentiated instruction, accommodations, and student grouping assignments regarding data allow teachers to collaborate and plan, accordingly. Student grouping assignments incorporate a hybrid schedule to foster small groups and pinpoint a student's area of need. Upon disaggregating data, ASP staff discovered that literacy is the common denominator in the area of need throughout all content areas. Hence, literacy centers with blended learning became essential for success in all areas. Small groups are engaged in literacy binding lessons in the lower grades to zero in on exact skills. Thereby, better matching instruction to the students' levels with primary, secondary language needs and who are not meeting grade-level expectations through accelerated instruction. Progress monitoring of data plans, individual STAAR data charts, intervention assessments, report cards, campus and state assessments, and fluency reports gather important data. The continuous monitoring of lessons, accommodations, and interventions is vital to determine if students are responding to remediation. Thus, proving that data has been the campus' main contributor to all the accolades the campus has achieved.