

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 Mrs. Kendra Kay Mosher

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

Official School Name Kathryn Griffis Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3639 FM 1565

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

Caddo Mills TX 75135-0160
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County HUNT COUNTY

Telephone (903) 527-3525

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Web site/URL

https://www.caddomillsisd.org/Dom
ain/313

E-mail kmosher@caddomillsisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Luke Allison

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

District Name Caddo Mills Independent School District Tel. (903) 527-6056

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Keith Hopkins

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 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	14	24
K	31	30	61
1	33	40	73
2	38	32	70
3	34	41	75
4	33	47	80
5	42	38	80
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	221	242	463

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 16 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 79 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 10%

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	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	46
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	462
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

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

Spanish, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 35%
Total number students who qualify: 161

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
33 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>22</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</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: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
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 19:1

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	96%	96%	97%	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

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.

Kathryn Griffis Elementary believes all students can learn. Our purpose is supporting development growth and high levels of academic performance of all students.

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

Kathryn Griffis Elementary School (KGE) has transformed the simple concept of “Go” into a dynamic mindset that drives the heart of this Title I, pre-K–5 elementary school located in Caddo Mills, Texas. Just forty-five miles northeast of the expansive city of Dallas, Caddo Mills ISD embraces the task of assimilating the rapidly growing urban sprawl with small-town values and traditions. A high population of commuters and limited local businesses challenge the school to maintain a close-knit environment that serves students and families alike.

“Go,” which literally means to travel to a place, is exemplified in the school’s motto and the daily commitment of every staff member to nurture the whole student to travel to the destination of maximum potential. At KGE, “Go” defines a growth mindset, the motivation to continually improve or move forward, and to contribute as a team for overall success.

Deriving its name from a former teacher who retired from the district after thirty-two years, KGE both illustrates and celebrates the deep roots found in the community. Many staff members are graduates of the district and others are planting roots to raise families here. Community members not only say they are “Proud to be a Fox,” but they demonstrate it by volunteering on campus and sporting school colors, green and white.

Since opening in 2008, the campus mission has been to develop all students despite challenges of an increasingly mobile population and a growing, more diverse community. Once surrounded by farmland, new housing developments now encompass KGE’s perimeter. KGE staff address the challenges of increased enrollment to provide a well-rounded, rich education to all students. Staff members take pride in offering an array of enrichment activities to nurture the whole child. Students participate in the Running Club, Chess Club, tutorials, robotics, or academic competition practice. Many groups, including the Student Council and student mentoring program, are student led to foster future leadership and ownership of the campus. Mentors are seen in hallways giving high-fives to their younger companions. The Student Council greets students weekly and organizes events such as a Random Act of Kindness Week.

KGE’s mission to teach all students is evidenced by numerous recognitions: University Interscholastic League (UIL) Academic Champions (2008–current), Exemplary Campus (2009–2011), Pre-K Center of Excellence (2012), Title 1 Distinguished School (2012, 2015), and a Texas Honor School (2012, 2018). The Texas Education Agency designated distinctions include Top 25 Percent Student Progress, Top 25 Percent Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness.

Teacher collaboration and strategic scheduling support development of all students. The master schedule was built to provide daily small-group instruction to extend or reteach content. Student data drives flexible grouping to ensure students receive support specific to their needs. Daily tutoring opportunities are provided to all students before school from instructional interventionists. Teachers and interventionists meet frequently to discuss student goals, monitor progress, and celebrate student growth.

Staff members are trained in all curriculum areas to provide rich and rigorous instruction. Teachers meet weekly to create engaging, hands-on lessons to promote problem-solving and critical thinking. Administrators lead data meetings to continually ensure curriculum is aligned and students are progressing. Frequent walk-throughs are implemented to look for high-level questioning, student-to-student communication, and integration of technology. Meaningful feedback and recognition of positives are given to teachers to continually encourage instructional growth. Professional development is provided to staff and is a direct reflection of the Campus Needs Assessment, data meetings, and staff evaluations.

Building character, leadership skills, and college/career readiness are integrated into the daily routine at KGE. Leadership skills are discussed daily, and students are recognized when exhibiting these skills. College alma maters are posted by doorways, staff and students wear college t-shirts, and staff members proudly play college fight songs on the intercom on designated college days during the year.

Parent communication and community partnerships are critical to KGE's success. A variety of communication platforms, paper and electronic, are utilized to ensure school and student information is readily available. Parents and volunteers can be seen opening car doors greeting students, organizing an annual Fun Run, and creating incentives to boost the reading program.

The year begins with grade-level parent meetings to communicate the school's mission and grade-level expectations. Make and Take nights teach parents how to utilize materials to support their child's educational development at home. Classes are provided on campus to families who are learning English. Educational games are sent home with these families to support language acquisition and family time. Teachers partner with the local food pantry to deliver books and food to qualifying families throughout the summer. Data shows an increase of students maintaining or improving their reading level through the program.

To further exemplify the "Go" philosophy, KGE's reading and math programs have served as models to area districts. The campus also partners with the local university to grow future educators through the student teacher program.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The staff at KGE works to provide students with engaging, hands-on learning experiences promoting student achievement. KGE believes aligned, consistent, and student-centered curriculum is key to a child's success. The staff collaborates and plans to assure the curriculum is rigorous and based on the state standards.

KGE believes a strong foundation in reading skills is essential. KGE's reading program is utilized to provide whole group instruction (K–5) small group-guided reading rotations (K–2). The whole group reading block in grades K–2 incorporates reading and language arts, often integrates social studies and science, and is based on the state learning standards: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Strategic scheduling allocates a 90-minute reading block for K-2. The guided reading curriculum was selected to address TEKS through multi-sensory, phonics-based and differentiated instruction for all students. Small-group reading activities include phonemic awareness and graphophonemic knowledge activities, and sight word practice. Leveled readers challenge students to apply the isolated reading skills into fiction and non-fiction text while also developing fluency, accuracy, and comprehension skills.

The reading curriculum pulls a variety of grade level resources for whole-group reading to provoke high-level questioning for comprehension and rich classroom discussion. Teacher-made games and assessments, educational software, and literature studies enhance the curriculum to ensure TEKS are addressed thoroughly. In grades 3–5, daily reading intervention is supported during hour-long Response to Intervention (RTI) groups.

Reading and language instruction connect meaningful writing opportunities that vertically align TEKS across all grades. Writing portfolios are used to track students' writing skills and progress from year to year.

K–2 teachers administer diagnostic reading assessments three times a year to provide targeted instruction and extension. Individual reading assessments are given quarterly to monitor reading levels, comprehension, and fluency. Grades 3–5 use frequent benchmarks to assess students' needs in order to provide enrichment and support.

KGE strives to include parents as partners in their children's learning. A Take-Home Book Program reinforces skills learned and increases fluency. Meetings are held to start the school year to convey and model strategies parents can use at home to support reading development.

1b. Mathematics:

Math at KGE revolves around a well-balanced curriculum aligned with TEKS. The rigorous curriculum and instructional techniques increase student achievement. Instruction targets grade-level TEKS while concentrating on computational thinking, mathematical fluency, and solid conceptual understanding. Students are given opportunities to justify, evaluate, analyze, and apply mathematical ideas. Teachers at KGE believe mathematical language and discourse in written and oral communication are important in preparing students to be successful problem solvers.

Primary lessons are taught with high levels of guided support before independent application is expected. Each lesson begins with a video introduction along with pre-teaching of vocabulary. The teacher models lessons while students are actively engaged in the process. Manipulatives are used for a hands-on approach. Math conversations using content-based vocabulary are a key component in instruction. Students collaborate with partners and the whole group to increase mathematical discourse and understanding.

Math instruction in grades 2–5 is divided into specific components: basic facts fluency, skills review,

problem-solving, and grade level concepts. Instruction begins with concrete and progresses to abstract lessons that are differentiated. Concrete lessons focus on a guided and hands-on approach that is manipulative-rich to build foundational math concepts and conceptual understanding. Abstract learning occurs when guided support is released to the responsibility of the student. Students are assessed weekly on each skill and every six-weeks to measure cumulative understanding.

KGE has one math interventionist that supports classroom teachers by pulling small math groups to reinforce skills for students requiring extra support. Interventions are given during whole group math instruction and a daily one-hour RTI block. The interventionist collaborates with homeroom teachers to create small groups by analyzing data collected from teachers and assessments to target students' instructional needs. At KGE, the balanced math curriculum and the RTI pull-out ensures students are receiving the level of rigor and interventions needed for academic success.

1c. Science:

The Science curriculum was chosen to cover the TEKS through class experiments and interactive, hands-on lessons in all grade levels. The curriculum integrates interactive notebooks, cooperative learning, and various technology resources to address TEKS and a variety of learning styles. KGE implements simple machine fairs, field trips, and Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) bins to challenge students with higher-level thinking while exposing them to meaningful experiences and a variety of career opportunities. Science lessons are often integrated with other disciplines to help students make important connections and to offer deep exposure to the content.

Grade-level TEKS are addressed through experiments, the engineering process, and working through the scientific method to prepare students with the essential skills needed to take knowledge beyond the classroom. For example, students hypothesize, construct balloon cars, and then evaluate effectiveness by measuring the distance traveled. Additionally, student-created race tracks are used to support the understanding of force and motion while applying scientific method strategies to exhibit real-world experiences.

Annual field trips tie science content taught in the classroom to real-life experiences and incorporate inquiry-based learning. Community members who work in STEM fields visit students throughout the year in various grade levels to share information on their career and to encourage student interest. High school students from the Health Science classes also visit students to teach lessons on health care and perform experiments.

Teachers in grades K–2 deliver unit assessments throughout the year to check for student mastery. In fourth and fifth grade, students are also given unit assessments as well as fall and spring benchmarks to monitor student growth. Data from all grade-level assessments are analyzed to reteach low-performing objectives and to adjust instruction to drive student growth. An online instructional program is utilized to further support each student at his or her level of learning.

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

The Social Studies curriculum chosen aligns K–5 instruction and covers TEKS through engaging newspaper-like articles. The program was chosen for its enhanced learning experiences through additional resources, videos, interactive maps, and character analysis to expand student understanding. The newspapers are created to specifically address TEKS with high-interest articles and age appropriate graphics. High-level questioning challenges students to apply and transfer concepts learned to everyday life in order to develop valuable citizenship traits.

Civic learning is cultivated throughout the year. KGE strives to develop students to be responsible citizens and give back to the community. Students are immersed in financial literacy lessons to encourage responsible spending and saving habits. A banker from the community visits the school annually to further connect the concept. Students also participate in a Community Helper Week where local firemen, police officers, and nurses visit the school to discuss their careers. Students also have the opportunity to vote in the

Electoral College voting system for leadership positions in KGE Student Council. Each year, when there is a national presidential election, students participate in a mock election.

Fourth graders create an annual student-led Texas Wax Museum to recognize a Texas Hero from grade-level objectives. Each student researches, reports, and then portrays his or her hero in costume for a speech to all who tour the museum. Students are excited to participate as stakeholders tour the museum.

KGE staff provide real-life experiences for history and social studies lessons. Dioramas are created to show businesses or services that sell goods. A Pioneer Day is organized to allow students an opportunity to encounter life as it was long ago. Students make butter, create log cabins, dress like pioneers, and make yarn-dolls to simulate pioneer life. Christmas Around the World is another way for students to be immersed in traditions and celebrations across the globe.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

KGE's pre-kindergarten program has been recognized as a Pre-Kindergarten Center of Excellence. The curriculum is vertically aligned to support academic readiness in math concepts, reading skills, science, social studies, language, handwriting, and social development. Students master expectations from State Pre-K Guidelines through hands-on activities and real-life experiences. Pre-kindergarten teachers continually enhance the pre-kindergarten curriculum and student foundation with high-level vocabulary and rigor. Students are formally assessed throughout the year. Data is utilized to drive instruction, and the programs' validity and educational foundation are monitored as students progress through grade levels. Data shows the pre-K foundation provides students the imperative skills needed to excel.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

KGE believes student development goes beyond core academics. While targeting the TEKS, opportunities to participate in other curriculum activities increase development in self-discipline, creativity, critical thinking skills, relationships, and teamwork. Staff provides these opportunities for students to enrich academic performance and boost self-confidence.

K-5 students attend music class daily and pre-K twice weekly. Music classes introduce instruments, rhythm, a steady beat, pitch and musical performance as required by the TEKS. Literacy elements are integrated to support reading development, and students experience history and traditions through cultural dances and songs.

Each grade level performs a musical for the school, parents, and community. The music teacher works to find special parts for each student to showcase talents. Students have served as stage director, prop crew, speakers, or soloists. Musicals often coincide with TEKS taught in the classroom, like the Family Folk Night for third-grade. Fourth graders are introduced to recorders while earning a new karate belt for each song mastered. Fourth- and fifth-grade students attend an annual symphony, then partner with the middle school band director to support the selection of instruments.

Classroom teachers implement art TEKS through activities aligned to curricula. The Parent and Teacher Organization (PTO) sponsors art days for pre-K-5 students to enhance skills and express creativity. Student artwork is saved and displayed in art-gallery style at the annual Pizza and Picasso Night. Families attend the community event to view art, enjoy pizza, and bid on classroom masterpieces created by their child's class. Masterpieces are valued as priceless keepsakes.

KGE's physical education (PE) department focuses on physical health, self-discipline, and teamwork as outlined in the TEKS. Students in pre-K-5 engage in PE daily with activities incorporating foundations of health and nutrition. Students can be seen participating in games modeling the function of a healthy human

heart or competing to correctly place a model of a human skeleton. PE staff collaborate with classroom teachers to support concepts in the classroom, like spelling words and math skills.

The PE department organizes a run club, record-breaker competitions, an annual Track and Field day, and raises money for heart awareness. Performances at community-wide events have been a favorite among students. Performances are often student led and include basketball skills, drumming and Tinikling (a Philippine folk dance using bamboo poles), and a synchronized hula-hoop routine to music. To culminate a successful school year, students compete in events at Track and Field Day. Events incorporate a variety of skills to ensure participation from all students. Families attend Track and Field Day making the event a community-wide favorite.

KGE's library promotes a culture of reading by building excitement about books and reading. Activities, such as book clubs, book talks, state literature award activities, summer reading games, and teacher book recommendations, promote a literature-rich environment and enjoyment for reading. Drawings are held for new books as excitement is built to be the first checking out the book. A masked reader event is created where community and staff members read popular books to the campus, and students guess who the reader might be.

The librarian collaborates with teachers on lessons and special projects. TEKS are used to curate the collection and create lessons in the library to support classroom objectives. The Griffis Library provides access and instruction for online resources and digital literacy including internet safety, online etiquette, cyberbullying, and creative credit.

Technology TEKS are taught and utilized to enhance instruction campus wide. K–2 students receive daily technology instruction, and grades 3–5 students receive instruction weekly. Students learn to create, edit and manipulate a variety of spreadsheets, presentations, documents, websites, and forms. Students are challenged with technology projects that are displayed to communicate a technology-rich environment. Integrity while using technology and the internet is an emphasized expectation.

A College and Career Week is organized annually on campus to promote college and career readiness for all students. Professionals and local community helpers speak to students to broaden exploration of future careers. Area college staff members attend, and colleges are promoted to students throughout the week. College fight songs are played and the campus is decorated in collegiate flair.

KGE accepts the challenge to grow well-rounded students by offering rich curriculum areas to enhance student skills and nurture talents.

3. Special Populations:

The mission of growing all students incorporates meeting a variety of student needs, educational levels, and learning styles. Staff members are committed to ensuring students receive accommodations, rich instruction, and interventions that best fit the challenges and talents of the child.

Teachers receive differentiated classroom instruction and accommodation training each year to support students. Students engage in differentiated instruction during whole-group instructional time and also receive pull-out classes through additional programs and the scheduled RTI time. Lessons are presented through a variety of ways to meet the needs of learners, including technology, songs, visual representations, student-to-student communication, hands-on activities, problem-based learning, small group, and kinesthetic learning.

All classroom teachers have obtained an English as a Second Language (ESL) certification to continually provide rich instruction to English language learners (ELL). A majority of staff members have earned the 30-hour Gifted and Talented (GT) training to provide enhanced, challenging instruction for GT students.

Lesson plans are shared with all teachers including special education, computer, ESL, and the librarian. Collaborative lesson plans ensure core curriculum is taught and allow specialized teachers to further tailor

instruction to directly meet all student needs.

ELLs are immersed in the English language, experiential learning, and vocabulary skills throughout the instructional day. Data collected from formal and informal assessments support the level of intervention an ELL student will receive. Additional pull-out services or inclusion during class time can be utilized to reinforce skills. KGE also encourages parent support through Parent-Night Take Home activities. ELL parents also volunteer on campus to build parent/teacher relationships and to be propitious models for young students. Data is used to monitor student progress and to set achievable goals.

Beginning in kindergarten, students are screened for dyslexia. Students showing dyslexia characteristics from the screener are placed in small-group instruction tailored specifically to target a strong phonemic foundation. Dyslexia students receive accommodations and are monitored underneath either Section 504 or Special Education. Dyslexia Parent Night is held annually to educate parents in supporting their children and reinforcing skills at home.

All kindergarten students are screened for the GT program. Students showing characteristics of GT are further assessed to determine qualification for the program. GT students are challenged daily during rigorous instruction. The GT class meets once weekly to provide students additional opportunities to display knowledge acquired through project-based learning. GT students research, create, and present findings through technology, art, movement, and various other learning styles. The class takes an annual field trip which ties learning to real-world experiences.

Students who qualify to receive Special Education services receive educational, emotional, and social support needed to be successful. Student data is used to drive instructional goals and placement. Students may attend class with their peers in the general education classroom, sometimes through inclusion, or receive small-group instruction to reinforce content as needed. Content Mastery provides additional support and a quiet learning environment to target content and social skills.

All students are monitored through frequent district assessments to ensure each student meets his or her goals. Teachers report both formal and informal progress to parents continually.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

A feeling of positivity sets the stage for learning and dominates the climate and culture at KGE. Students start each day being welcomed by staff members. The staff at KGE recognizes the importance of educating the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally and believes when students feel encouraged within a safe environment, they are better equipped to learn.

To foster emotional growth, students at KGE are taught daily about the importance of showing good character. The school counselor teaches a Character Word of the Month and shares a Daily Caring Message, explaining concrete ways to demonstrate the trait. Students are recognized for showing that trait at the end of the month. Character words, such as “Integrity” and “Responsibility,” are displayed in large letters on pillars throughout the hallways to serve as a constant reminder.

KGE fosters social and emotional growth through the Griffis Mentoring Program. Fourth- and fifth-grade students are paired with younger students and meet twice weekly to work on specific academic skills, play games, or just talk. Staff members report that students who participate in this program have shown improvements in social, emotional, and academic skills. For the 2018–2019 school year, 80 students served as mentors.

KGE is proud to provide tailored support to pre-adolescent girls in a lunch bunch called, Girl Talk Tuesdays. Fifth-grade girls meet with the school counselor and a fifth-grade female teacher. The topics of discussion include the importance of encouraging each other, the dangers of peer pressure and gossip, and having positive self-esteem. The average weekly attendance is 40 girls.

The climate and culture of KGE not only support the students but support the teachers as well. The teachers and staff have positive professional relationships and realize that they are a team with a common goal to grow all students. Team building activities are organized by administrators to continually boost morale. Staff members receive “Shout Outs” in the weekly newsletter, elect a staff member of the month, share notes of encouragement in “Tell Someone You Like Them Tuesday,” and share a weekly award for someone being noticed with the “Go” attitude.

The success of KGE is directly related to the positive climate and culture on the campus. The teachers and staff acknowledge the power that positivity has when working with students and that positivity extends into every classroom at KGE.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family and community partners are paramount to student success at KGE. Community members and parents interact through volunteer opportunities, parent nights, and committees. Staff members share the “Go” culture with parents and community to continually foster student success.

Cultivating relationships begins at Meet the Teacher Night, where families pour into KGE excited for the new year. A scavenger hunt is created, ensuring families meet new staff members to KGE. PTO provides hot dogs, popcorn, snow cones, and games to make the night a family event. This event opens doors for parents to be part of their child’s success.

Parent Night and Grandparent’s Day at the annual Book Fair draw families to the library. PTO sponsors annual membership drives, regular meetings, and events, such as Parents and Pastries. They also organize a Jingle Ball, where families enter with a new toy, then dance, snack, and enjoy the evening together. Toys are donated to local families in need.

Continuous parent communication is key for student success. KGE has found the implementation of various communication platforms best reaches the school’s diverse population. Teachers connect with each

parent within the first two weeks of school, and grade-level parent meetings and newsletters are created to inform parents on curriculum and communication avenues. Teachers meet with parents frequently throughout the year to discuss student growth, set goals, and teach parents how to utilize the grade portal. Weekly Fox Folders go home with the campus newsletter, student work, and teacher notes. Email, teacher messaging, and campus call-out systems support ongoing communication. Social media pages promote events and reminders, and campus and teacher webpages provide instant information and lesson plans. Annual surveys show parents feel comfortable and informed at KGE.

Partnerships with local churches and the food pantry ensure fundamental needs of students and families are met. Vision assistance, school supplies, summer books, food, coats, holiday meals, and gifts are provided to families. Each year, KGE partners with the food pantry to raise funds providing new clothing to students at Christmas. Staff members shop with families to encourage the parent-home connection. Students are excited to wear the new clothing to school.

To celebrate community partners and volunteers and their importance to KGE's success, a brunch is hosted by staff and Student Council to close the year. Students create "Thank You" cards and posters to decorate for the event. KGE strives to model community connections, communication, and appreciation to develop students who recognize the importance of giving back to the community.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development at KGE is aligned with the campus philosophy of growing all students. Activities are derived from the Campus Improvement Plan, meetings with interventionists and Professional Learning Community (PLC) leaders, and based on campus data to continually impact student success. The purpose of these TEKS-aligned activities is to equip teachers with strategies to enhance aligned instruction and assist administrators to serve as instructional leaders on campus.

Data is collected, reviewed, and analyzed throughout the year. Reading levels, district benchmarks, and state assessments are monitored closely to target specific challenges. Ongoing PLC meetings and data talks also pinpoint areas of instruction and curricula where professional development is needed to reinforce instructional strategies. Administrators, PLC leaders, and interventionists create plans and trainings during the summer to purposefully target these areas before students return. For example, a teacher Make and Take was designed to enhance graphophonemic knowledge in K–2 literacy rotations, and a math training was developed to support alignment, consistent manipulatives, and rigorous vocabulary in all grade levels starting with pre-K. Development for aligned writing strategies was held to increase student performance.

Administrators serve as instructional leaders and focus on being familiar with the strengths and challenges of both teachers and students. Administrators seek learning opportunities to continually improve in areas of data evaluation and instructional coaching. This intentionally supports effective feedback after teacher evaluations and walk-throughs and guides data meetings with teacher and grade levels.

Campus administrators support teachers in setting annual goals to strengthen instruction in each classroom. Professional development opportunities are collaboratively assigned to the staff member to support the teacher. Learning Walks, where staff members observe the specific teaching practice in action from a peer's classroom, are utilized to provide additional support. A campus culture of constant growth has been nurtured, and staff members often ask to observe peers throughout the year to adjust teaching practices to meet student needs.

Administrators recognize staff member strengths and innovative practices in the classroom. Staff members are encouraged to present professional development that ties to campus needs within the district or on the campus. Administrators believe that learning and collaborating with professionals on campus enhances the learning experience for both teachers and students.

Each year, administrators and the school counselor create professional development opportunities to review policies, state standards, and special populations. Staff members are also required to earn four days of

professional development each summer. These trainings can be teacher choice and also include required GT hours, technology, and STEM.

4. School Leadership:

Administrators at KGE exhibit the same “Go” mentality by leading stakeholders towards growth in all areas of life. KGE administrators believe in staff ownership of the campus and utilize committees for input as decisions are made.

Leadership is not only encouraged but modeled on a daily basis by the campus administrators, staff, students, and volunteers. The leadership team – principal, assistant principal, and school counselor – understands the value of growing its staff.

Administrators are seen modeling the expected teamwork and positive atmosphere. Each day begins and ends by greeting students as they enter KGE and bidding a farewell. Campus leaders are present during lunches to build rapport with students.

The principals believe in the importance of being strong instructional leaders to grow all teachers and students. Having crucial conversations and guiding teachers in adapting and improving instruction to increase student performance is imperative to the monumental success of KGE.

Administrators lead the development of the Campus Improvement Plan and District Improvement Plan, with teachers and community members collaborating and playing an active role. Campus leaders lead quarterly Campus Assistance Referral and Evaluation (CARE) Team meetings where they collaborate with teachers and interventionists to discuss struggling students, interventions, and student goals.

They also teach technology and instructional training classes to staff within the district professional development program as ongoing learners. The principal and assistant principal were recently chosen to share their presentation on using data to grow all students at a local conference.

Teachers are respected as experts and are an integral part of communication and decision making on the campus. Teacher opinion and voice are important pieces that guide curriculum decisions. Grade-level PLC leaders share important curriculum information regarding vertical alignment, curriculum, and district policies and procedures. Teachers lead training sessions in the district to share new knowledge that fellow teachers can implement in the school setting.

There are many leadership opportunities for students at KGE. KGE created a student council, made up of student representatives and class officers. The Student Council has raised money to support a community food pantry, the fire department, and the police department. They also present an annual scholarship to a graduating senior. Developing this program has given students an opportunity to learn about important leadership and service traits and exhibit those characteristics at KGE and in the community of Caddo Mills.

Leaders at KGE keep the thirst of learning alive by modeling for all educational constituents and by promoting leadership opportunities for staff members and students.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

KGE’s “Go” culture, “g-o” means “growth opportunities” for all students. The RTI program is a school-wide system putting the philosophy that ALL students can grow – no matter economic status, ethnicity, or learning style – into action. Staff collaboration, detailed schedules with flexible grouping, and student data monitoring are pieces of RTI that have produced student success.

RTI challenges students with intentional hands-on extension centers, literacy development, comprehension and fluency support, robotics, math skills, computer skills, dyslexia, and vocabulary support. Instruction also focuses on science, social studies, and writing skills by grade level teachers and interventionists. Skills and activities are data and research driven engaging both the analytical and creative sides of the brain.

A purposefully created master schedule allows opportunities for individualized instruction. In grades K–2, 90 minutes is devoted to small group literacy instruction, in addition to more flexible RTI time to complete the day; while grades 3–5 dedicate 60 minutes of tailored instruction daily to multiple content areas. Grade-level teachers and interventionists collaboratively review student data to create intricate schedules to address student needs. Schedules not only address the needs of struggling students but provide personalized instruction for all. For example, a student may require math RTI every day with an interventionist or attend a combination of math, reading, and science. Flexible grouping allows students to merge in and out of groups as goals are met or needs arise.

Frequent monitoring of student progress is done through formal and informal assessments by teachers, interventionists, and campus leaders. Grade-level spreadsheets are generated to track reading levels and benchmarks. These spreadsheets allow staff to quickly follow the progress of all students and make plans to provide additional support or growth opportunities.

CARE Team, or student support meetings, are scheduled throughout the year to monitor individual student progress to interventions being implemented. These meetings provide time for teachers to collaborate with interventionists to set specific academic or behavioral goals to intentionally target student growth. Parent involvement is important to the process. Feedback is provided to parents after CARE Team meetings and throughout the year.

The RTI Program has enabled KGE to establish a foundation for successful student learning through the use of early intervention, student monitoring, goal setting, and rigorous instruction. The philosophy that all students can learn, no matter their economic status, ethnicity, or learning style is evident from the school’s success. KGE’s motto “Go Griffis” translates to a purposeful mission in action, growing students.