

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):
- 25 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 7 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 10 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 42 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	36	97	133
7	50	102	152
8	47	113	160
9	28	79	107
10	42	61	103
11	36	57	93
12 or higher	21	57	78
Total Students	260	566	826

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 15 % Black or African American
 - 50 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 28 % White
 - 4 % 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: 2%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	832
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9%
78 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: 42%
Total number students who qualify: 351

8. Students receiving special education services: 0 %
1 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>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>38</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</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: 5
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	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	50
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
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 17:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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	91
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	80%
Enrolled in a community college	18%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
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.

GPFAA is a school of choice intentionally focused on creating a unique school experience for the artistically and academically talented student.

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

Students applying to the Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy (GPFAA) complete an online application outlining student interests, academic data, attendance information and discipline incident reports for the current school year. The campus staff reviews each application and sends audition information to students and guardians via email. Each of the seven fine arts strands offered at the campus holds auditions semi-annually. Each strand has specialized preparation and performance requirements. A panel of judges is assembled for each strand, composed of all campus directors from the fine arts strand and one teacher from an academic subject area. The panel reviews student application information and audition results. Students are offered invitations to attend GPFAA for the upcoming school year by the campus principal.

PART III – SUMMARY

The Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy (GPFAA) is a 6th-12th grade campus established to provide a rigorous academic environment that encourages artistic excellence and offers professional enrichment opportunities. GPFAA is located in Grand Prairie, Texas, a city in the southern region of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex. The school district serves approximately 29,339 diverse learners. The majority of students in the district (72%) are classified as economically disadvantaged and over half (54%) are considered at-risk for school failure. Students enrolled in Grand Prairie ISD have the unique option of selecting an educational path tailored to suit their own individual interests by enrolling in a program or school of choice.

The Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy, a GPISD School of Choice, was founded in 2013 to provide advanced academics and fine arts instruction for a diverse group of artistically talented students, traditionally underserved based on the limited financial resources of the family. To enter the school, students audition in one of seven fine arts strands: visual arts, jazz band, dance, mariachi, orchestra, theatre and vocal music. Auditions are tailored to the discipline. Once enrolled in the school, students have the opportunity to receive 90 to 180 minutes of fine arts instruction daily. Classes are taught by the GPFAA staff of professional educators as well as working artists with significant training and experience in their individual disciplines. Guest artists and lecturers regularly teach master classes and hold development workshops at the campus. Students also regularly attend lessons conducted by professionals in the field after school hours. Since the first year of operation, students have traveled across the United States to participate in competitions, publish work, and present performances. During the 2016-2017 school year, GPFAA officially went international by traveling to Italy and Scotland to perform. Over the past five years, GPFAA's students have been awarded numerous state championships, national awards, and international medals. GPFAA's talented students in a traditionally setting would have no access to high quality fine arts curriculum based on financial status.

Students enrolled in GPFAA not only take an accelerated and enriched fine arts program but also an advanced academic program. Students enroll in an English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science course each year as Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), or dual credit classes. As a result of high expectations, 100% of students graduate under the Multi-Disciplinary Studies endorsement with a Distinguished Level of Achievement for outstanding performance. The campus was recently awarded all seven academic distinctions by the Texas Education Agency.

GPFAA provides personalized support to ensure students at-risk of school failure meet goals in academic and artistic endeavors. Students and educators work collaboratively during fine arts and academic classes, and a daily seminar tutorial to support each learner in meeting advanced achievement goals. Parents play a major role in the education and success of GPFAA students. Families operate non-profit guilds that support artistic endeavors in each art strand and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) organizes and facilitates campus and community events. GPFAA educators work with the parent organizations to coordinate service-learning projects, such as city beautification projects at regional schools and community buildings.

GPFAA is a learning community vigorously pursuing and achieving student success. The GPFAA leadership model focuses on recognizing strengths among students, parents, teachers and administrators and building on them to succeed. The campus principal sets high achievement as an expectation for all students and builds effective teams to encourage and achieve success. Students, parents, and educators are trained in the traits of great leaders and expected to lead in their own area of influence. Members of each team are encouraged to think creatively, share ideas and opinions, and engage in the decision-making process. The leadership model focuses on recognizing strengths among students, parents, teachers and administrators to ensure each learner excels in academics and fine arts.

The key to GPFAA's success is the powerful team culture that values, supports and celebrates the talents of each amazing learner. The vision of the school is "Extraordinary by Design." At GPFAA everyone has distinct talents, and those unique abilities are appreciated and celebrated. GPFAA educators meet in teams each week to collaboratively build accelerated instructional sequences. As teachers work with peers to reach student achievement goals, unique abilities are developed, valued and supported. GPFAA students publish

products, perform, and compete as part of the school curriculum. It is common to see students rehearsing and performing in the hallways or classrooms, and onlookers encouraging and applauding their art. As students work in campus and professional teams to showcase their art, they learn to embrace the importance of being intentionally unique, express themselves well, resist peer pressure, and develop healthy relationships. As essential members of the campus team, families and community members oversee organizations and events that support GPFAA programming. As individuals lead campus-based initiatives, they develop communication, management and teamwork skills. The school culture that encourages respectful, trusting and caring students, parents, and teachers has been effective in achieving student success. GPFAA students graduate from high school as successful individuals with unique qualifications and credentials to make their mark in postsecondary education, artistic endeavors, and life.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy students are required to take at least one English language arts (ELA) course each year in Grades 6-12. Two college credit ELA courses are offered in high school. The goal of the English language arts (ELA) department is to introduce students to reading and research of quality works and engage them in active learning projects that build knowledge in a wide array of subject matter and proficiency in communicating knowledge effectively through writing and speaking. In middle school grades, students enroll in Pre-AP English courses. All GPFAA students are encouraged to take English 1 during 8th grade for high school credit. High school courses include Pre-AP English I and II, AP English Language and Composition, and AP English Literature and Composition. Students taking AP courses are expected to take the course exam to earn college credit. Curriculum in each ELA course is designed to develop increasingly complex writing skills to compose narrative, expository, procedural, and persuasive compositions that synthesize learning across grade levels and subject areas. All ELA courses are supplemented with logic, writing, rhetoric, analytics, reading, and semantics to ensure students are prepared for success both inside and outside of the classroom. Students attending the fine arts school of choice are always auditioning, performing, and competing. ELA educators utilize digital applications to provide student access to academic content and multimedia assignments, and differentiated instruction and academic support. The system of advanced curriculum, accelerated instruction, and interactive technology support has contributed to student success. Each year, 100% of GPFAA students meet or exceed state achievement levels on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

1b. Mathematics:

GPFAA students take one math course each year. Six college credit courses are offered in grades eleven and twelve. The goal of the accelerated curriculum is to develop the high-level critical thinking skills and credentials that empower students to pursue college degrees and find success in a variety of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) career fields. Each GPFAA middle school student enrolls in Pre-AP math classes. Sixth and seventh grade students take the Grand Prairie ISD Algebra I placement test. Students with a passing score on the placement test take Pre-AP Algebra I and Pre-AP Geometry classes for high school credit in middle school. In these math courses, students use fundamental computational and graphing skills with integers, fractions, and decimals to solve real world problems. Curriculum is explicit and sequenced, enabling students to solve increasingly abstract problems and to determine appropriateness of solutions. GPFAA high school students complete a minimum of four years of math. Entering freshmen are enrolled in either Algebra I, Pre-AP Geometry, or Pre-AP Algebra II, depending on credit earned from middle school. Prior to graduation, all high school students are required to take one year of college-level math by enrolling in Pre-AP Precalculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, or AP Statistics. Students also have the option of enrolling in online dual credit math classes offered by the University of Texas. The dual credit program allows students to take college credit courses with their current high school teacher. In high school curriculum, practical and theoretical mathematical processes are explored to critically understand increasingly difficult mathematical processes. Teachers utilize the active learning instructional model in all math courses to explore mathematical concepts and applications, use the tools strategically to construct viable arguments and solve problems, and critique the reasoning of others. Students utilize an online tutorial program with live teacher support and interactive activities to access intervention and enrichment instructional support. The accelerated course sequence enables all GPFAA students to earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement upon graduation.

1c. Science:

GPFAA students enroll in one Pre-AP science course each year of middle school. High school course options include Pre-AP Biology, Pre-AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, and AP Physics. Courses are selected based on the college degree program the student plans to enter. The science department at

GPFAA consists of six educators of varying backgrounds with one goal in mind: to instill the value of scientific inquiry and develop the skills necessary to build a conceptual understanding of the natural world. The science department builds lessons around problem-based instructional components which require students to think critically to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. Curriculum topics including matter and energy, earth and space, biomolecules, organisms, evolution and the periodic table are taught in science courses to address the TEKS and ensure students have the fundamental skills to excel in postsecondary science courses and STEM careers. Teachers utilize vertically-aligned instructional sequences that require students to explore curriculum content and inquiry through extensive lab experimentation and research. While this method requires additional effort, students develop logical observational, problem solving, and analytical reasoning abilities as they investigate specialized processes characteristic of biological, chemical and physical environments. The design of the school offers unique challenges due to its emphasis on the fine arts, the rigor set by an advanced academic curriculum, and the time students spend out of class participating in school functions. To meet these challenges and help students successfully complete classroom assignments, science educators use an internet-based application. The program allows teachers and students to import, create, edit and update class content and assignments online. The system of advanced curriculum, rigorous teaching style, and innovative technology support significantly improve student achievement as evidenced by each GPFAA graduate successfully qualifying to earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement by completing four science credits during high school.

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

GPFAA requires all students to complete eight social studies credits. Required courses include four college credit course options. Students take three in 6 - 8 grades and a minimum of five courses in 9 - 12 grades. All courses are vertically aligned within the department as well as aligned with the TEKS. In addition, each staff member has been trained and excels in the Pre-AP or AP curriculum. Students begin in high school with Pre-AP World History. As sophomores, students take AP Human Geography. During their junior year, students take AP United States History. Finally, in their senior year, students choose to take either Dual Credit United States Government or AP United States Government and either Dual Credit Macroeconomics or AP Macroeconomics. In addition, students may choose to take AP Psychology, as an elective, during their sophomore to senior years. Courses focus on the study of people, places and society from the historical, geographical, and social policy perspectives. Students engage as citizens in classroom activities, school organizations, and civic events to learn the importance of patriotism and citizenship as well as the function of free enterprise and political systems. At all levels, teachers emphasize the development of critical thinking and writing skills through historical writing projects designed to develop the student's ability to make connections across historical time periods, analyze primary sources, and produce argumentative composition supported by factual evidence. In addition, students participate in current events debates as well as voter-registration activities. The incorporation of technology has been intentionally designed to enhance the curriculum, giving students real-world applications for writing, presentations, and creativity. The vertical alignment of coursework as well as the expertise of staff has led to above average success on End-of-Course Exams as well as Advanced Placement tests.

1e. For secondary schools:

GPFAA has a 100% graduation rate. Students leave the campus with 15 - 30 college hours. This is accomplished by offering a rigorous seven-year graduation plan that includes Pre-AP, AP and dual credit courses each year. GPFAA students take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) to qualify in the National Merit scholarship program and meet college enrollment requirements. College counselors assist students in completing college and scholarship application requirements. The system of advanced coursework and college-going support ensures all students graduate, prepared and qualified to enroll in postsecondary programs.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy encourages artistic excellence through the integration of fine arts disciplines into the daily academic curriculum for grades 6 – 12. Through the accelerated curriculum, students develop Texas Essential Skills and Knowledge in seven fine art strands.

Students in the Visual Arts strand receive a well-rounded education in media and cultural studies. The rigorous curriculum emphasizes explorations into contemporary visual art and media design fields. GPFAA students have won hundreds of awards in multiple visual arts mediums at regional, state and national competitions.

The focus of the Jazz strand is to advance a love of music, explore interests in the jazz idiom, and develop performance abilities. Numerous GPFAA students are selected to the Texas Music Educators Association All-Region Jazz Ensemble each year and are annually recognized for outstanding performances in area and regional jazz festivals.

In the GPFAA Dance strand, students build kinesthetic, spatial awareness, and wellness knowledge as they develop performance skills in ballet, modern, contemporary and aerial silks dance. The curriculum includes master classes which enable students to work with multi-genre guest artists, view live performances, visit postgraduate campuses, audition for professional community performances, and participate in multiple genres of dance performances.

GPFAA is one of the only schools in the nation that recognizes and offers the beginner mariachi class to 6th graders and advanced mariachi at the middle and high school levels. Course curriculum focuses on analyzing, reading and writing music in the mariachi genre. The school's Mariachi Sol Azteca! performs and competes in events across the United States, and were National Champions in 2016.

The sequential, developmental Orchestra strand curriculum allows each student an opportunity to build musical skill and understanding through a wide variety of quality musical experiences. Musical performance is an expression of this growth. GPFAA orchestra members have been invited to perform in the All-State and All-Region Orchestra as well national orchestra festivals.

GPFAA Theatre strand students are exposed to a range of theatrical studies designed to explore performance and technical theatre tracks while equipping the student with the skills necessary to succeed in highly competitive college degree programs. GPFAA students have earned All-State rankings in state competition, won regional monologue competitions and have performed in national and international world premieres.

The Vocal Music strand develops the vocal abilities and skills of students who are pursuing music and choral art as a vocation and avocation. In class students are challenged to build self-discipline and teamwork, assert superior performance conduct, and explore inspirational connections to singing, as they are introduced to various genres and styles of choral literature. GPFAA Chorus solo and ensemble members have been successful in winning district, regional, and state awards at UIL competitions.

PE/Health/Nutrition: With an unyielding commitment to excellence, the physical education (PE) and health programs work in tandem to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and maintain each learner's health and fitness. Middle school students participate in two credits of PE and one credit of health to establish a daily commitment to physical activity and nutrition. High school students take one year of PE credit and one semester of Health to continue the pursuit of personal fitness goals.

Languages other than English:

GPFAA offers an accelerated Spanish curriculum. Spanish I is offered in 7th grade, Spanish II in 8th grade, and Pre-AP Spanish III and AP Spanish Level are offered in the first two years of high school. Courses are offered ninety minutes every other day. All courses are TEKS-based and designed to develop Spanish vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, dialogues, and sentence patterns through a study of Spanish culture and Hispanic literature, art, music, history, and geography. The college level course is structured as an introductory college literature course written in Spanish.

The technology applications TEKS are integrated into all GPFAA academic and elective courses in grades 6 - 12. Each course requires students to use technology tools to create, design and publish digital products using word processing, spreadsheet, database, and presentation applications. Instructors are trained to integrate digital citizenship laws and practices into classroom expectations while modeling integrity and respect when using technology resources. In each course, students collaborate with their instructor, peers, and various virtual communities to communicate, access course content, and complete secondary and postsecondary assignments.

GPFAA encourages each student to be the best version of him/herself through TEKS-based leadership curriculum. Sixth graders at GPFAA enroll in an advisory class. The primary purpose of the advisory is to guide students in stepping up and stepping out to be leaders. Character education curriculum is designed to provide students with tools to communicate appropriately, to present themselves in a professional manner, to work through conflict, and to participate successfully in school clubs and organizations, fine arts events, and employment or college interviews. Skills learned enable GPFAA stakeholders to take personal responsibility for student and school success.

3. Special Populations:

GPFAA serves a diverse group of individuals including students with disabilities, English language learners and migrant students. The school structure provides layers of prevention and intervention to ensure all students find success in school. As a result of the innovative GPFAA educational plan, there are no achievement gaps of 10 or more percentage points between test scores of the general student population and any subpopulation of learners.

The secondary grade configuration of the GPFAA campus provides students with continuous, vertically aligned coursework in a small school setting to prevent students from falling behind in coursework. The 6 - 12 grade configuration empowers teachers to develop a scope and sequence of essential concepts and skills aligned with stated and advanced academic standards across grade levels. The small school setting allows teachers to implement individualized lessons to develop identified concepts and skills across content areas. For example, GPFAA teachers improve student technical writing skills using a series of prompts, research techniques, and annotation methods that span subject areas and grade levels. Writing across the curriculum enables educators to advance the writing skills of each learner in every classroom. The secondary school configuration enables teachers to increase the complexity of writing assignments from 6 – 12 grade ensuring essential concepts and skills are introduced, reinforced, and assessed at appropriate times in the instructional sequence, eliminating gaps and unnecessary duplication of instruction. The small school structure enables teachers to meet across subject area and fine arts strands to ensure essential concepts and skills are identified and addressed for each learner.

The school day at GPFAA is structured to provide multiple opportunities for intervention when students are struggling with coursework. All GPFAA students are expected to perform at advanced levels. The learners attend classes for the traditional school day and attend professional classes in various fine arts strands outside of the school day. Students enrolling in the school make the choice and commitment to be responsible and accountable for using time wisely to maintain high grades in advanced coursework. During the school day GPFAA students use all available time including class, lunch, and travel time to collaborate with teachers and classmates and complete assignments. At the end of each day, GPFAA has established a school-wide tutorial called seminar. All students, including learners with special needs, come to the class to receive the appropriate academic support. Families are an important part of the intervention team. Parents learn about resources to support their children during family involvement nights. Presentations include accessing student assignments, classwork and assessment scores, seminar schedules, and staff contact information through the GPISD parent portal. These resources empower families to support students in completing assignments at home.

GPFAA administers Grand Prairie ISD quarter assessments to measure student mastery of grade level TEKS four times each year. The school administers State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests at the end of each grade level. The ability to administer common assessments in core subjects at each

NBRS 2019

grade level allows educators to make curriculum pacing and scope and sequence changes based on student progress to emphasize key standards in each grade and subject area. Texas Academic Performance Report data reveals the innovative structure of the school has been successful in positively impacting achievement for each and every student. In 2018, 98% of students in each subpopulation met state standards in English/language arts, math, social studies, and science at each tested grade level.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy is a safe and supportive environment that provides positive opportunities for students to succeed in school and life. Students accepted into the school attend a three-day summer camp to build healthy relationships with peers and educators, learn the expectations for high achievement at the school, and develop strategies for taking risks and working unconventionally to achieve personal and academic goals. The school mascot is the Phantom. From the first day at camp, students become part of the GPFAA “phamily” and know peers, parents, teachers, and administrators will work endlessly to help them achieve their dreams.

GPFAA academic curriculum is rigorous and highly competitive. Campus educators are trained to develop leaders who take responsibility for forming healthy relationships, effectively solving problems, and ultimately achieving academic and fine arts goals. The first step in the process is essential to the success of the day and begins when faculty members greet students, parents, and peers at the door with a handshake. This builds a warm campus atmosphere where people know they are valued. The second step lays the foundation for academic excellence. All GPFAA educators are trained in using social skills to develop healthy relationships. During class, stakeholders sign a social contract outlining emotional and social safety in the classroom. This component of the process builds a team that is quick to perceive and acknowledges the needs of each member to improve performance. The third strategy focuses on addressing needs through communication. This strategy involves having a dialogue to explore options for gaining assistance. The process requires the teacher to be a facilitator who empowers students and their families to share information and access school, home and community resources to solve problems. As a result of the positive school culture, educators are empowered to serve as school leaders, students are motivated to excel in academics and parents are encouraged to support student progress.

GPFAA students spend multiple hours each day practicing and performing in fine arts areas not traditionally valued by secondary school peers. To ensure all students feel proud of their unique talents and abilities, the campus participates in an empowerment program focusing on kindness and compassion. Educators integrate lessons into all classes to provide participants strategies for preventing bullying and to allay feelings of isolation. The program has been effective in creating a positive culture where all students feel valued and supported. It is common to see students working together and encouraging peers as they practice for performances, audition for professional opportunities, complete assignments to meet academic standards, or apply to postsecondary programs. Campus events are held to acknowledge individual and team awards. As a result of the program, campus educators handle few discipline incidents, students are proud to excel in their chosen art strand, and families have opportunities to celebrate student accomplishments.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

GPFAA has developed successful strategies for working with families and community members to promote student and school success. GPFAA students are constantly practicing, performing, and traveling to events and competitions. Communication with parents is key to student success. The campus utilizes an electronic program for families to ensure educators have regular, two-way communication about academic and fine arts learning and school activities. From the portal parents can access student academic information as well as event announcements, travel documents, and competition requirements. Campus information regarding curriculum and student assessments as well as student achievements, awards and recognitions are posted on the campus webpage. In addition, GPFAA parents have developed a social media page to keep parents informed about school information and events in real-time.

Two campus organizations led by parents and supported by the community are fundamental to school success and improvement. Guilds are non-profit organizations created by parents to support each of the seven fine arts strands. The primary mission of each guild is to raise funds and provide necessary resources for students to participate in special events. Guilds’ donations supplement district and campus funds.

Education partners collaborate with the campus to sponsor, organize, and run service projects such as community beautification projects, toy drives, and clean-up campaigns. Parent and community volunteers in the guilds also assist during campus art displays, concerts, theatre productions, and recitals. All families are encouraged to join a guild and be active participants. The GPFAA Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has a mission of empowering families, teachers, and the community to create goals that make every student's potential a reality. The organization is successful in bringing the community together each fall to participate in a Fall Festival. This successful event enables GPFAA students to participate in annual performances and competitions. The PTA is key in organizing and facilitating fine arts performances hosted by the school and district. The organization also works with campus administration to facilitate college events. During these events, university and community college representatives from across the United States discuss each postsecondary school's culture, academic entrance requirements, degree programs, and articulations for advanced and dual credit. These events are essential to developing the present talents and future opportunities for GPFAA students.

Parent participation in the school and their child's education is vital to GPFAA's student and school success. Each year in September, GPFAA holds a parent consultation to gather input from family members and posts the Parent Involvement Policy on the campus website. Parent information and academic sessions are offered annually to build capacity for parent participation for improving student achievement and school performance. The parent/community liaison at GPFAA links parents to the educational services of the campus to encourage parents to actively participate in creating and implementing educational programs. Parent representatives work with district educators and community members each year to identify school strengths and weaknesses, and to develop campus goals for improvement by participating as members of the Campus Improvement Committee.

3. Professional Development:

GPFAA professional development is based on campus needs as well as district initiatives. Teachers attend eleven days of professional development each year. Eight days of training is provided by the school district and three days at the campus level. In addition to district training, administrators attend leadership training sessions each month.

Teachers at GPFAA are exemplary educators who have proven success with diverse student groups. Professional development presented at the school is as exceptional as the audience. In a series of trainings presented by a best-selling author, school educators are currently learning to become transformational leaders. The training is focused on finding talents and passions and expanding them into a purposeful future. Students frequently compete, perform, and attend special events during the school day making it even more challenging to excel in advanced courses by traditional teaching methods. In a set of ongoing training sessions, teachers and students act as peer learners in learning to use innovative digital applications. The collaborative presentation tool allows teachers to present content, engage learners in interactive activities, and assess student mastery using mobile devices. The technology enables learners to access lessons appropriate to their specific level of learning, create assignment products, including documents and presentations, and submit completed work. In addition to district and campus training, all GPFAA teachers attend weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings with vertical content area teams. During meetings teachers examine student data from class work, quarterly common assessments, and STAAR benchmarks and exams. Based on data, teachers review and revise essential content to meet state curriculum standards as well as advanced college learning standards. In the meetings, educators share instructional practices and resources to effectively enrich and accelerate instruction for all GPFAA learners, including special needs students.

Administrators at GPFAA are innovative leaders who successfully opened the campus as a School of Choice. Sustaining and improving campus excellence is a priority for the administrative staff. To meet this need, GPISD professional development is focused on "unlocking leadership." The training outlines a model for grooming aspiring, high potential classroom leaders to take positions as teacher leaders, deans, assistant principals, and principals at the campus. Training focuses on three components of the leadership pipeline designed to establish clear roles and distributed leadership. The first component, leading by example, includes developing tenacity, integrity, competence, and emotional intelligence to recognize and meet

challenging circumstances through alignment of words and actions. The second component focuses on empowering people to build authentic relationships through effective communication to achieve a shared vision. The final component is geared to create success by establishing a clear vision, setting goals, and making decisions based on relevant data sources. Each aspect of training is designed to improve the positive environment at GPFAA in which persons from diverse backgrounds can succeed and lead.

4. School Leadership:

Every person has a talent, passion, and purpose. The GPFAA leadership model focuses on recognizing strengths among students, parents, teachers and administrators, and building on them to excel. The vision of the campus is “Extraordinary by Design” because it is essential that all GPFAA students, parents, and educators embrace the importance of being intentionally unique.

At the core of the GPFAA leadership philosophy are four key areas of emphasis: personal leadership, effective teaming, change management, and aligned systems and structures.

At GPFAA educators and students know the traits of great leaders and aspire to lead in their own area of influence. The leadership philosophy empowers teachers to recognize their own capabilities and to use those talents to develop innovative lessons and course offerings that inspire academic excellence. The practice inspires students to develop their own academic specialties and fine arts talents. The leadership focus has resulted in exemplary student academic achievement outcomes at the campus level as reflected on STAAR assessments, PSAT and SAT results, and school distinctions.

GPFAA educators and students understand the importance of building effective teams to achieve excellence. Campus leaders model collaboration and respect to provide current and aspiring leaders a clear model to follow in establishing trust, setting team goals, contributing unique talents to meet goals, and collaborating to creatively to solve problems. The philosophy has proven to be effective in building strong GPFAA fine arts teams that are consistently awarded state championships, national awards, and international medals.

GPFAA realizes changes to traditional school structures are important to meeting student and school success goals. All members of the school community are encouraged to think out-of-the-box, share ideas and opinions, and to be engaged in the decision-making process. In this way, each person is empowered to try new strategies to make a positive difference. To meet the goal of providing fine arts enrichment opportunities and developing artistic excellence, the campus has implemented the innovative practice by inviting over 500 guest artists to instruct in fine arts classrooms. GPFAA has also extended access to school facilities in the evening to allow students to attend fine arts classes taught by professionals in the field after school hours. School policies have been amended to encourage students to attend auditions, competitions, and performances during the school year. Leadership’s focus on change has been effective in promoting excellence in art education.

When students, parents, and educators understand and are excited about the direction their school is going, the students and school are more likely to be successful. GPFAA leaders monitor student and school success, make timely changes to improve learner outcomes, and communicate the change to students, parents, and educators to empower students to excel in school and graduate with credentials to pursue their passion and fulfill their purpose.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy is a “phamily.” As a family, GPFAA students, parents, teachers and administrators work together to meet challenges, celebrate victories, and support each other daily.

The exceptional teachers at GPFAA all have a solid understanding of content; however, their ability and desire to build strong personal relationships with students, parents, and administrators has led to unprecedented achievement. They understand that fostering relational capacity with each student leads to trust, and trust leads to success. Because teachers have created these connections, students are empowered to take chances, overcome obstacles, and ultimately exceed their own expectations. As core content and fine arts experts, GPFAA teacher teams are able to vertically align concepts and skills across grade levels. By personally knowing every student and their academic abilities, teachers can use the skill continuum to support each learner’s instructional needs at all levels.

Students form strong relationships with peers, educators and professionals while collaborating on academic requirements and their fine arts passion. Because of these bonds, they become invested in the group’s success as well as their own. As a part of the GPFAA family with a sense of mutual accountability, students learn to recognize and respect individual talents and to support each other in moving forward to reach personal and group goals.

Parents are an instrumental part of the GPFAA family, supporting their children and school in unique ways. Parents, many of whom are professional artists themselves, share their experiences with our students. Through the PTA and fine arts guilds, parents support student participation in performances, competitions and events. Parent volunteers work with teachers in each fine arts strand to develop and implement service-learning projects in the community. These projects include the visual arts team painting murals to beautify local schools and businesses, and the vocal music team singing for local charity events. In this way, the GPFAA family takes shared responsibility in meeting the needs of the community.

GPFAA administrators model the power of relationships by creating daily engagement opportunities with students, teachers, and parents. Intentionally growing a strong family environment is essential when asking teachers, parents, and students to put in the endless number of hours it takes to achieve at such a high level. All GPFAA students graduate from high school with a Multi-Disciplinary Studies endorsement and a Distinguished Level of Achievement for outstanding performance. From 2015-18, the campus earned all seven TEA Distinction Designations. The dynamic family environment also promotes success in the fine arts. Since opening in 2013, GPFAA's fine art strands have traveled across the nation and world to perform and compete and have been awarded state championships, national awards, and international medals. In 2017, GPFAA was designated a national showcase site and tour destination for their work in building relational capacity. In 2019, the school won a national award for excellence in fine arts education and integration. Together as a family of unique individuals, GPFAA is extraordinary by design.