

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. Linda Laura Lopez

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

Official School Name Elodia R. Chapa Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5670 N Doffing Road

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

<u>Mission</u>	<u>TX</u>	<u>78574-1258</u>
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Hidalgo County

Telephone (956) 323-2400

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Web site/URL https://chapa.lajoyaisd.com/

E-mail l.lopez@lajoyaisd.net

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Gisela Saenz
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail g.saenz2@lajoyaisd.net

District Name La Joya Independent School District Tel. (956) 323-2000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Claudia Ochoa
(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):
- 23 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 36 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	22	39	61
K	40	28	68
1	43	37	80
2	47	31	78
3	38	34	72
4	41	38	79
5	40	36	76
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	271	243	514

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 100 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 0 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 22%

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

The mobility rate at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary is at 22% due to the low-socio economic population. Many families are unable to find employment and consequently cannot pay housing and relocate. Also, the campus is in close proximity to the Mexico border and families tend to move back and forth quite frequently.

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	49
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	52
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	101
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	461
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.22
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	22

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 72%
369 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100%
Total number students who qualify: 514

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
63 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>16</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>46</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>7</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>13</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
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.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	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 20:1

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%	98%	98%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

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

At Elodia R. Chapa Elementary, the campus vision is to provide all students with educational opportunities that support excellence in academic achievement. The staff is dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing school environment where every child participates in experiences that promotes success in their social, emotional, and academic growth. The goal for Chapa Elementary is to provide students with a rich and diverse culture of learning so they can become worthy and contributing members of our society.

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

“Be kind and always treat others with love and respect” were the resounding words of Elodia R. Chapa, a former teacher and school principal in the La Joya School District. Elodia R. Chapa Elementary was established May 21, 1994 in honor of the legacy instilled by Mrs. Chapa. As an educator, Mrs. Elodia R. Chapa defied all challenges and was known to be amongst the first Hispanic female administrators in the small community of La Joya. Today, as you walk the hallways of Chapa Elementary, the learning culture as well as the school’s philosophy continues to support Mrs. Chapa’s belief that “Kids come First!”

Elodia R. Chapa Elementary, located approximately 12 miles from the Mexican border, serves a population of students prekindergarten (pre-K) to 5th grade. Fields, orchards, and colonias surround the school where common sights include substandard housing, unpaved roads, and small dwellings that often lack electricity, water, and proper drainage. A variable affecting the surrounding area is the instability of students’ home residence. Due to lack of work, many families are unable to pay the rent and quickly relocate resulting in a high mobility rate for the campus. Also noted is the high crime rate that students are exposed to. Regardless of the students’ daily living conditions, they come to school ready and eager to learn. To many students, Chapa is a place of refuge, where meals are guaranteed, shelter is provided, and each child is welcomed to a safe, nurturing learning environment.

The journey to attain Chapa’s current level of success began in 2013. That year, the school not only failed to meet the Federal standards on the System Safeguards report but also attained a state academic rating of “Improvement Required.” Further analysis identified English Learners (ELs) as the problematic subgroup struggling with cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity. The alarming performance gaps led the school to be identified as a Priority School on the ESEA Waiver Priority School List. A dire need for transformational change was evident. To begin the process, a newly assigned principal began working collaboratively with the Campus Leadership Team (CLT) to spearhead improvements leading to a milestone of academic growth. This past year, a distinct honor for Chapa was the acknowledgment of being an Educational Results Partnership (ERP) Honor Roll School. Since 2014, Chapa Elementary has continued with a rating of Met Standard, and in 2017-2018, the school attained Six Distinction Designations for its academic accomplishments. At the district level, Chapa has attained an “A” rating according to district recommended standards. The campus has received various accolades at the district University Interscholastic League (UIL) events.

A high-powered strategy implemented to ensure Chapa students rise to the highest level of academic achievement has centered on the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). This systematic approach has allowed teachers to work collaboratively as they analyze data and make instructional decisions to accommodate the needs of all learners. PLCs at Chapa Elementary are conducted weekly under the guidance of the school’s administrative team. The staff has genuinely embraced this process and its impact in the school’s success.

To address the needs of ELs, Chapa does implement a dual language program, which offers students the opportunity to attain a high degree of biliteracy and academic achievement in both Spanish and English. Fidelity to the program design has been crucial in closing the achievement gap. An instructional practice assisting the ELs has included cooperative learning whereby students work in partners as a system of support in mastering the learning objective. Implementation of extended-day learning, Saturday academies, and summer school have been pivotal in improving performance. At Chapa, the expectations are for teachers to challenge all students with rigorous instruction focused on mastery-level learning.

In addition to a strong focus on academics, teachers have incorporated various activities that address the social, emotional, physical, and cultural development of the whole child. This includes the “Good Life” celebrations, honor roll assemblies, morning recognition shout-outs, attendance celebrations, kinder graduations, and the Jewel of the Month acknowledgement. Hallway bulletin boards consistently highlight attendance class winners, cafeteria superstars, and top reader awards. Special accomplishments such as district Grand Champion Science Fair winner are visible throughout the school. Chapa traditions that have nurtured the cultural diversity of students include Día De Los Muertos, Dieciséis de Septiembre, Cinco de

Mayo, Special Olympics Day, Mother's Day, Martin Luther King activities, and Veteran's Day celebrations. Additionally, students participate in community events contributing to their physical wellness and citizenship skills. These include the District Field Day, Boys Leadership Initiative, Boys/Girls Club events, Chess Club, Howling Trails, and Día del Niño celebration.

Parents at Chapa are consistently acknowledged as vital stakeholders responsible for their child's academic success. Their attendance at events such as Literacy Night, Academic Night, Make & Take trainings, and GT-Project Based Learning are the norm.

The staff at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary works diligently at providing students a rich and diverse culture of learning experiences conducive to the attainment of academic success. They stand strong in supporting the school's philosophy, "United-One Vision, One Goal, One TEAM!"

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Teachers at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary address reading through the district’s scope and sequence, which is aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. The staff at Chapa utilizes a curricular approach in reading that is focused on addressing the diverse needs of all learners. Teachers have attended trainings such as the Texas Reading Academies and have worked diligently to do an in-depth analysis of the reading standards. By working collaboratively with the district’s reading specialist and campus consultants, teachers have acquired the skill of understanding the developmental nature of literacy learning. During PLCs, teachers deliberate on variations of instruction tiered to address the academic levels of all learners. At Chapa, a significant change occurred in prekindergarten through 2nd grade where classrooms came alive with purposeful print, interactive learning, and engaging read-alouds connected to writing. To ensure a strong foundation of reading skills, teachers also focused on designing lessons targeting explicit instruction on the Five Essential Components of Reading. This approach allowed literacy skills to be taught in a logical, sequential, and systemic manner. The staff targeted vocabulary skills utilizing activities such as interactive word walls, graphic organizers, foldables, and visuals as systems for language development. Higher-order critical thinking and comprehension skills were instructed through novel reading, questioning stems, scaffolded learning, and technology support programs. Assessments such as Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) and Tejas LEE along with informal exams were utilized to measure student growth. Teachers at Chapa Elementary have been consistent in identifying and monitoring students with reading deficiencies. Extended day learning provides the struggling learner as well as the high achiever the opportunities to increase their academic abilities. Additionally, students performing below grade-level are referred to Response to Intervention (RTI), 504, and other evaluations. Considering that reading and language development go hand-in-hand, teachers have never lost sight of the importance of integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing in their lesson designs. At Chapa Elementary, this has been essential as students ascend the continuum of reading and language proficiencies.

1b. Mathematics:

Through consistent application of engaging, hands-on, and highly effective instructional practices, students at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary have acquired a deep understanding of the math TEKS. The district math curriculum exposes students to the TEKS standards in a concrete, sequential manner where scaffolded learning has been essential to mastery of the learning objectives. The targeted areas of instruction noted in the district’s scope and sequence include number operations, geometry and measurement, algebraic reasoning, data analysis, and personal financial literacy. At Chapa Elementary, support from the district math specialist, along with hired consultants, have been vital in improving the quality of math instructional practices. Small group and individualized instruction are consistently implemented as powerful practices in assisting students with development of math foundational skills. A highly effective math strategy modeled and utilized in classrooms from 2nd to 5th grade includes a four-step problem-solving process. This process includes understanding the problem, planning the mathematical structures needed to solve problem, solving the problem, and evaluating and/or justifying the answer. Teachers strongly believe this strategy has been beneficial in eliminating errors that often occur during the process of solving a math problem. Guided lessons often include manipulatives such as base ten blocks, fraction pieces, and geometric figures to help reinforce the learning objective. In addition, technology support programs, learning centers, and quality instructional resource materials have been integrated in lessons to raise students’ level of mastery. At Chapa, the district’s Math Lesson Design Lab has provided consistent support for teachers’ delivery of best practices and/or with the implementation of the district’s math scope and sequence. Through PLCs, teachers reflect on student progress as they design lessons to target the academic needs of all learners. Equally important, it is through PLCs that teachers gather evidence to make decisions regarding academic interventions, extensions, and innovative practices to reinforce the learning of math state standards.

1c. Science:

The science program at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary utilizes the district's curriculum, which targets the physical, earth, and life science concepts currently aligned to the TEKS standards. Teachers focus on lessons that reinforce the scientific thought process using a hands-on, inquiry-based approach. Chapa students are provided with activities that promote opportunities to practice the scientific processes of observing, questioning, predicting, classifying and evaluating. Through participation at the community railway/engineering camp, stem camp, robotic camp, NASA night, and the school's project-based night event, students have been provided with real-life experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom setting. The utilization of interactive learning journals has also become a highly effective practice to reinforce mastery of science concepts. At Chapa, a strategic change called for refinement in the science lab instructional setting. Furniture and equipment were set to enhance exploration learning. Selective resources aligned to the TEKS were purchased, and science word walls were established. These changes made science instruction more conducive to mastery of the TEKS, and teachers' attitudes regarding relevant, hands-on learning experiences began to change. A science lab schedule for all grade levels was established as a system to cultivate a deeper and more profound interest in science content. Today, a visit to the science lab shows a student-centered approach that encourages collaboration and problem solving as practices, which support the scientific process. Teachers have utilized various technology support programs and entailed the use of field trips to places such as the district planetarium, the city birding center, and the community butterfly center to enhance students' learning. Chapa teachers have attended various trainings that address multi-sensory interactive word walls and hands-on investigation learning to deepen their knowledge in addressing the science TEKS. Clearly, the teachers at Chapa Elementary have excelled in changing their instructional approach, and the positive impact of these changes is evident in the increase of science academic scores.

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

At Elodia R. Chapa Elementary, the social studies curriculum establishes the foundation for all students to become responsible citizens through well-designed lessons aligned to the TEKS. Chapa teachers focus on a curricular approach, which supports hands-on learning, student-centered activities, and strategies that engage students in interactive discussions such as think-turn-talk learning. At Chapa's PLC weekly sessions, teachers strive to create lessons that extend beyond the memorizing of specific historical names and dates. If you listen in, you will hear teacher excitement and laughter as they deliver lessons on historical figures and fascinating events in a way that is fun, engaging, and truly meaningful to students' lives. Experiential re-enactment with drama plays on historical events is also a powerful instructional practice that keeps Chapa students excited about learning. Coupled with this, teachers utilize the district's curriculum to foster a learning approach, which helps students develop a deeper understanding of how to be responsible students engaged in real-life civic learning experiences. An example of this is noted in the annual student council mock elections, which lay a meaningful foundation for the voting and the election process. In previous years, Chapa was fortunate to have a State Representative provide the oath of office to campus student council officers. Social and civic responsibilities are also promoted through the school's annual local food drives, anti-bullying rallies, Veteran's Day program, and Career Day activities where community members share their work experiences with the students. Although the curriculum serves as a foundation for addressing the key social studies standards, a common practice more evident in the upper grades is the use of current events and social media as systems for addressing social studies skills. Newspaper articles, TV broadcasts on public events, and other social media have offered incredible opportunities that keep students active as participants in the learning discussions.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

During the past four years, the teachers have implemented the states' Prekindergarten Guidelines and district curriculum to ensure students are well prepared with the skills to effectively transition to the upper grades. Through use of visuals, chanting, read alouds, and engaging student-centered activities, teachers have addressed reading, math, science, and social studies TEKS. The early childhood program at Chapa

Elementary has also implemented instructional practices, which addresses the physical, social, linguistic, and cognitive development of all learners. Chapa teachers utilized various checkpoints throughout the year to measure student success and provided small group instruction to remediate any learning gaps. This curricular approach has served as a strong foundation to ensure students attain success in kinder through 5th grade as evident in all state assessments.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Chapa Elementary, all students attend a 45-minute music class once per week where all are exposed to the foundation of music education and theater arts. The curriculum adheres to state-mandated TEKS and provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their talents in ways other than academics. By attending music, students become active participants in singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, and the exploration of theater arts. Daily lessons incorporate music from different cultures where students are provided opportunities for making connections with performing arts from around the world. Participation in music has provided knowledge to students on different genres of music and a variety of dances. Chapa Elementary students with a gifted voice are selected to participate in the school choir and have performed at events such as the Veterans' Program, the Christmas Program Extravaganza, and the school's talent show. On occasion, these students have opportunity to incorporate the use of sign language as they perform. Through participation in school programs, district choir events, and UIL music memory competition, the Chapa Elementary choir generates consistent parent and community support.

The Physical Education (P.E.) program at Chapa Elementary implements a TEKS aligned curriculum that supports the requisite skills for living a healthy lifestyle while developing social, motor, and leadership skills. Students attend P.E. classes four times per week, which exposes all students to a variety of sports and activities. The Bien Estar (Good Health) initiative is aimed at improving students' health, physical fitness, and body coordination. By participating in various sports, students learn different skills that will help them throughout their lives. These skills include communication, comradery, teamwork, perseverance, hard work, coordination, and physical fitness. Throughout the year, Chapa students compete in various events such as the district's track meet, Punt-Pass-Kick competition, and volleyball and soccer tournaments. Students have the opportunity to attend the La Joya Natatorium to expose them to foundational swimming skills. Selected P.E. students also attend the Howling Trails Golf Course and the Boys and Girls Club of Palmview. While sports may take precedence, the P.E. staff works diligently at supporting the core academic curriculum. To support the integration of math into physical fitness, visits to the Chapa gym will show place value charts, word walls, and multiplication charts. It is common to hear students skip counting, counting by two's, and chanting multiplication facts while doing their warm-up exercises.

All teachers (prekindergarten-5th grade) at Chapa have consistently utilized the state mandated technology guidelines to promote active learning in a way that is fun, engaging, and relevant for all students. At Chapa, the utilization of various technological tools such as iPads, Chromebooks, laptops, and desktops have become an integral part of everyday instruction. Technology is embedded in various ways across all content areas with daily lessons focused on a more student-centered approach. The integration of these devices by the staff at Chapa has transformed the learning opportunities for students in a manner that supports creativity, problem solving, and higher order thinking. Technology tools have also provided students with the ability to research, prepare projects, and create presentations. Classroom visits show that teachers rely on technology/media to enhance learning by providing teachers and students immediate feedback of the learning objective. At Chapa, students in kindergarten through 5th grade attend computer labs daily for approximately twenty-five minutes to get additional support in the content area TEKS. To promote internet safety, teachers monitor students to ensure they are utilizing technology resources responsibly. The ultimate goal at Chapa Elementary is to maximize students' acquisition of technology skills so they can be 21st century ready.

The comprehensive counseling program at Chapa Elementary has been designed to help students face the ever-increasing challenges such as poverty, single parent homes, and domestic issues. The counselor consistently targets lessons on cultural heritage to ensure students feel valued as worthy members of the school and public community. The school counselor serves students in prekindergarten to 5th grade with a forty-five minute lesson once per week. The lessons focus on the four components of the Texas

Comprehensive Counseling Plan with activities that address topics such as Responsible Behavior, Decision Making/Goal Setting, Cultural Awareness, and Character Building. Through the diligent efforts of all staff members, Elodia R. Chapa Elementary is able to provide students with the guidance to make a difference in their lives. This support is reflected in the essence of a four-letter word, CARE.

3. Special Populations:

Stephen Covey's practice of "beginning with the end in mind" is a belief that has made a dynamic impact in closing the achievement gap. In early August, the Chapa Campus Leadership Team disaggregates data to establish clearly defined goals for the new school year. The team posts, reviews, refines, and communicates the goals to all stakeholders. The staff at Chapa strongly believes in a structured pathway of systems to address the diverse needs of all learners, and this has been truly essential in the attainment of school-wide success.

Understanding the alarming need to improve the performance of ELs, Chapa Elementary ensures that La Joya's dual language program is implemented with fidelity as defined in the model. Students' academic and linguistic needs are priority when creating lesson designs. Differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, and scaffolded learning are visible in daily classroom practices. To help students master the learning concepts, the staff utilizes visuals such as anchor charts, word walls, story maps, and graphic organizers. Administration and district personnel work collaboratively with the staff to ensure instructional practices address students' academic, linguistic, and cultural needs. Weekly PLCs include utilization of ELPS which is a crucial element targeting students' language development. During these sessions, teachers review data derived from weekly and six weeks assessments to measure progress and formulate instructional methods and interventions to close the achievement gap.

A highly effective intervention system that has enabled closing the achievement gap can be attributed to the Focus Friday Reading and Math initiative. Every Friday, students are engaged in instructional practices, which support mastery of TEKS identified in most need of improvement. During Focus Friday, students are grouped according to academic performance and learning styles. Data derived from these Friday activities are utilized as focal points for upcoming PLCs. Teachers analyze students' progress and refine interventions needing adjustments. The Chapa Elementary data room has visual representations tracking the performance of all students to ensure academic growth.

Extended learning time has been vital in closing the performance gap for Chapa's special population groups. After-school tutorial programs are held weekly beginning in October until the end of the school year. Students are identified according to performance levels with instruction geared toward mastery of concepts in content areas. Lessons are designed to engage students in hands-on learning experiences connected to real-life applications. Small groups and individualized instruction promote tailored lessons to better address students' academic needs. In addition to the after school programs, students attend Saturday academies which are scheduled monthly beginning second semester with instructional activities centered on themes such as Super Bowl for February. Student attendance is highly promoted through incentives such as games and prizes.

As the year evolves, the campus utilizes various informal assessments such as weekly tests, six-week exams, and benchmarks to track the progress of all students. During these checkpoints, teachers will often identify students who consistently fail to master standards. For some students, the Response to Intervention (RTI) program is initiated with a specific plan detailing interventions to assist students' academic needs. Other programs implemented at Chapa Elementary include 504 and Special Education.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Chapa Elementary, the dynamics of a positive school culture are reflected in the school's philosophy, "United-One Vision, One Goal, One Team!" The focal point in this belief rests in the key word "United" which fosters the true meaning of collaboration. Teamwork at Chapa is evident during PLCs and staff meetings where teachers consistently work together to develop activities that support the academic, social, and emotional well-being of all students.

To promote social and academic growth, a traditional practice that inspires students to do their best begins with the principal's morning message on "Value Codes, Social Skills, and Words of Wisdom." This positive message is reinforced by staff members as they greet students with a smile and words of genuine encouragement. This form of communication has been pivotal in establishing systems that support a nurturing environment. In addition, daily announcements regarding staff and student birthdays are also systems that help promote a positive school culture. Other examples recognizing students for special accomplishments include the Good Life Celebrations, honor roll activities, and award assemblies. Validation of students' accomplishments is further promoted through articles on the Noticiero newspaper and are often highlighted on the school's website.

Teachers at Chapa do have various opportunities to develop their leadership skills by serving as teacher-mentors, master teachers, grade-level lead teachers, UIL campus coordinators, and teacher trainers. These activities, in addition to district leadership academies, have been essential in promoting a school culture where teachers are provided with various opportunities to excel and feel valued in their capacity as educators.

To maximize the learning culture, attendance at Chapa has been a crucial factor that is closely monitored. Administration works diligently with teachers to ensure lessons are motivating, relevant, and engaging so students are excited to be in class. Tracking attendance and working closely with parents to get students in class daily has been essential in improving students' performance. To make success a reality, every staff member at Chapa Elementary works cohesively to take ownership of the school's accountability. The school culture promotes a high level of trust where teachers feel safe and consequently are fearless in voicing what is in the best interest of students' performance.

At Chapa, all personnel such as custodians, cafeteria workers, and office clerks have positively influenced the endeavor of moving the school forward. The administrative team acknowledges the commitment of staff members with activities such as staff luncheons, breakfasts, and surprise goodie bags. At Elodia R. Chapa Elementary, the extraordinary efforts and unwavering dedication of the entire staff have been the decisive factors attributing to the school's overall success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Elodia R. Chapa Elementary attributes its school's success to the continuous communication and relationships established between the students, staff, parents, and members of the community. As active partners, their involvement has been essential for supporting change and improvements. Parents are invited to give input regarding systems to enhance the learning culture at Chapa Elementary. Their feedback is acknowledged and has proven vital in the transformation of the school. Staff credits this approach to bridging the communication gap amongst all stakeholders and recognizes the profound impact parents and community members have on the school's accomplishments.

Each school year, Chapa Elementary begins by having staff members work collaboratively with parents in developing academic goals for the new school year. These goals are revisited various times throughout the year during campus meetings such as Curriculum Nights. The staff at Chapa Elementary implements annual structures like Meet the Teacher Night to begin establishing parent relationships essential for students' success. During this event, teachers focus conversations on reassuring parents that their child's

academic development is a guided process sensitive to the unique needs of every learner. Events like Academic Night and Report Card Night are also scheduled to keep parents abreast of their child's progress. In addition, Make and Take workshops, Literacy Nights, and STAAR Data Talks are events where teachers share strategies with parents, so they can become active participants in their child's learning. As required by state programs, parents are also active participants in the schools' LPAC program, 504's, ARDs, and the school's Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) process.

Chapa Elementary has committed to integrating cultural activities to attract parents as members of the school community. The school has hosted Loteria Nights where parents come and play loteria, a bingo game, while students read in the library. This event provides the school a way of showing parents appreciation for the hard work in supporting their child's learning. School activities such as the Christmas Extravaganza Program and the Veteran's Day Program are events where parents take pride in seeing their child perform. Other events that strengthen the bond between the school, parents, and community include Doughnuts for Dad, Muffins for Mom, Grandparents Day, and the Fall Festival. Additionally, the school does support several community service projects, which include the annual Canned Food Drive, Career Day, and Red Ribbon activities that bring in many local businesses. Furthermore, Chapa is a designated campus, which sponsors the Communities in School of Texas program. This program assists students and their families with various services to keep students focused in school and ultimately graduating.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary has been the most powerful tool utilized in the school's overall transformation. In 2013, the campus was struggling with its academic school ratings. A selected Campus Leadership Team (CLT) worked cohesively with school administrators to identify the factors contributing to the school's low performance. After reviewing staff development surveys and conducting a data analysis, the findings clearly pointed to a strong need for building teacher and administrator capacity. Today, as you walk the hallways at Chapa Elementary, you consistently see teachers utilizing quality research-based instructional practices to enhance students' opportunities to attain academic success. The entire staff at Chapa Elementary prides itself in their high level of knowledge as it pertains to best practices in instructional teaching and learning.

Trainings that have made an impact on the school's success started with building relationships. The CLT committee identified this as an essential training pivotal to the development of the school's culture. Key trainings implemented during the early stages of transformation included data analysis, hands-on interactive learning, rigor/relevance, and analysis of the TEKS standards. These trainings were carefully selected to meet the needs of the administrators, teachers, and students at Chapa Elementary. The intent was to expose all staff members to a variety of highly effective instructional practices, so they could in turn appropriately address the diverse needs of all learners. Professional development focused on the needs of ELs, GTs, and Sp. Ed. continues to be a vital practice in closing the performance gap.

The La Joya School District has also been instrumental in providing teachers and administrators quality staff development focused on the district's scope and sequence in all content areas. Additionally, district content area specialists have also worked cohesively with individual teachers and administrators to develop their expertise as it pertains to the TEKS. Furthermore, to ensure alignment of trainings to student needs, the district consistently offers trainings on the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) to address the cultural and linguistic needs of students. To meet the academic needs of subgroups, all staff members are required to attend trainings on 504, RTI, Sp. Ed. and G.T.

Both administrators and teachers at Chapa have continued to sharpen their knowledge of best practices by attending various school model conferences, state reading conferences, and the national conference on differentiated instruction. Administrators and selected teachers attending specialized conferences do utilize the trainer-of-trainers model to share the newly acquired knowledge with other staff members. The goal at Elodia R. Chapa Elementary is to create the best learning opportunities to ensure all students reach their full academic potential.

4. School Leadership:

The academic accomplishments at Chapa Elementary can be attributed to the commitment of staff members working together under the guidance of the school's leadership team. The leadership team at Chapa was comprised of the campus principal and two instructional supervisors. Remarkably, these individuals were clearly on the same page in terms of high expectations, work ethics, and the belief that students come first. This leadership team understood the dynamics of turnaround practices and knew that a successful school required attention to elements that extended beyond the scope of academics. Initially, the process of change for Elodia R. Chapa Elementary began with the leadership team modeling the importance of establishing and building relationships.

Although the leadership team is now limited to the principal and one supervisor, the team continues to meet daily to conduct "power talks." During this time, leaders reflect on any school-related issues requiring immediate attention. The leadership philosophy has consistently focused on supporting teachers to ensure quality instruction is evident in all classrooms. They continue to be a vital resource to teachers during PLCs to ensure that data-driven decisions are the basis for instructional planning. While the principal is directly responsible for campus evaluations, discipline, parent concerns, and overseeing personnel issues, the supervisor's main responsibilities focus on modeling and monitoring effective instructional practices. Other shared responsibilities include teacher observations, progress monitoring, staff development, and implementation of activities to reward both student and staff accomplishments.

The leadership team at Chapa Elementary was fortunate to have many years of instructional experience. Due to their level of competence, the leaders often took risks regarding classroom dynamics. To address students' needs, they encouraged teachers to implement new ideas that broke away from traditional practices. The leadership team conducted classroom walks and focused teacher feedback on conversations, which supported hands-on, engaging, rigorous, and relevant types of learning experiences. The goal for the Chapa leadership team was to challenge teachers in implementing highly effective instructional practices. The increased scores validated that the changes made were conducive to the school's vision of excellence.

The Chapa leadership team understands the importance of delegating and trusting staff members in their role to lead the campus. As a result, the work of the school's Campus Leadership Team (CLT) has been a vital component to the school's organization. At Chapa, it is a common practice for campus leaders to work collaboratively with the CLT in developing academic goals and executing new initiatives. The leadership philosophy supports the belief that empowering the teachers in this committee has been significant in the attainment of school-wide success.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Six years ago, Elodia R. Chapa Elementary embarked on a journey to ensure attainment of academic success. There were many successful practices implemented; however, the most highly credited to the school's transformation was the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Before PLCs became the norm, teachers at Chapa Elementary would conduct weekly grade level meetings without the structures required to ensure consistent growth. The problem, which surfaced, was that not all students were showing adequate progress. As a result, the Campus Leadership Team (CLT) implemented PLCs as a main practice to target improvement of both teacher and student performance. For it to be effective, the principal with the CLT's support held various trainings to promote relationships focused on the true cohesive nature of working as a team. Teachers at Chapa Elementary clearly understood their commitment to PLCs and worked diligently to insure its effectiveness.

At Chapa Elementary, a component in the PLCs requiring immediate attention was data analysis. To address this concern, data walls with visual representation of student progress were established. A campus data room was structured with specific checkpoints to monitor students' growth. The data walls were also utilized to gauge the school's progress in attainment of its quarterly/annual goals. Emphasis during PLC discussions was placed on tracking of growth for special population groups, grade levels, classrooms, and/or individual students. After all formative assessments, data walls were updated and utilized as a focal point for data-based instructional planning. A strong belief promoted through PLCs was that teacher planning revolved around data analysis, collaboration, and an emphasis on mastery of the TEKS. At the district level, Chapa Elementary was invited to share their work on data walls and its link to PLCs as a system for increasing students' performance.

Reflecting on the school's incremental growth, the process for implementing PLCs was initially a tremendous undertaking for the staff at Chapa Elementary. A strong emphasis on building teacher capacity was a non-negotiable. An action plan with selected trainings was developed and implemented. This included professional development in areas such as data analysis, differentiated instruction, inquiry-based approach, project-based learning, and instructional practices that honed in on higher-level critical thinking. The administrative team worked diligently to promote a culture of collaboration where teachers were consistently invited to share their knowledge and celebrate their instructional successes. Although PLCs at Chapa Elementary have taken many years to refine, the staff truly credits Professional Learning Communities as a significant practice that attributed to closing the achievement gaps resulting in the school's overall success.