

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 Ms. Elsa M. Flores

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

Official School Name Michael S. Ryan Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2401 Clark Boulevard

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

Laredo City TX State 78043-2416 Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County WEBB COUNTY

Telephone (956) 273-4400

Fax (956) 273-4495

Web site/URL http://ryanes.elisd.org/

E-mail eflores@laredoisd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Sylvia G. Rios

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

District Name Laredo Independent School District Tel. (956) 273-1400

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Hector J. Garcia

(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):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 29 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	72	74	146
K	52	61	113
1	69	44	113
2	45	64	109
3	55	65	120
4	60	55	115
5	64	60	124
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	417	423	840

*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
 - 99 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 0 % White
 - 1 % 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: 15%

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

The mobility rate at Ryan Elementary is at 15% because some students are doubled up with other family members or they reside in rental properties within the area. Thus, families move as they rent or purchase in other parts of the city.

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	63
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	75
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	138
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	902
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 58%
484 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: 86%
 Total number students who qualify: 721

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
51 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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>26</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>16</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</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: 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	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	44
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	22
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	11

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 22:1

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

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

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

M.S. Ryan is committed to developing and educating all its students by providing a relevant and challenging curriculum through innovative programs and effective use of resources in a safe and nurturing environment.

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

Michael S. Ryan Elementary (RES) is one of 20 elementary schools in the Laredo Independent School District (LISD) in Laredo, Texas. Established September 1953 in the affluent Heights neighborhood, the well-known school bears the name of a local architect, former member of the LISD Board of Trustees, and elected county official of that era. Built to meet the needs of a growing city tasked with educating the children of pilot trainees from around the country at the Laredo Air Force Base, the school has a rich history and tradition of academic excellence. Many of its former students have moved on to become highly successful and prominent members of the community including physicians, attorneys, businesspersons, and educators. Fast-forward 60 years; much has changed since Ryan Elementary opened its doors. The airbase closed; however, business has boomed. Located on the U.S.-Mexico border, Laredo is the nation's largest inland port of entry and the largest border crossing for goods traded between the U.S. and Mexico. With a population of more than 260,650 residents, residential development has spread all around Laredo to meet the needs of a growing city. The neighborhood has, therefore, changed, as have its demographics. RES data reports that 98.7% of the students are Hispanic, 1.3% other (.7% White, .2% American Indian, .2% two or more races, .1% Black/African American), 87% are economically disadvantaged, and 65% are considered at risk. RES is currently home to 840 students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, 107 staff members, and three administrators, making it one of the largest inner-city elementary schools in the land-locked LISD. After several remodeling projects and additions to the original structure, a modern school facility was rebuilt in 2006. Despite changes in the school's population and physical appearance, the expectations of high achievement and student success at Ryan Elementary remain the same.

RES encompasses a unique community that reflects its vibrant cultures. The school embraces the diversity of its students and their families and uses this diversity in opportunities for learning and sharing. School staff appreciates the value of parental involvement and, therefore, build partnerships that encourage ongoing communication. RES prides itself in engaging the community in a variety of activities held throughout the year and promoting good citizenship while ensuring that all students develop academically and culturally. Following the school's mission, the faculty and staff at RES are committed to developing and educating all students by providing a relevant and challenging curriculum through innovative programs and the effective use of resources in a safe and nurturing environment.

Instructional programs for all demographics including Bilingual/English learners (ELs), gifted and talented (GT), and special education (SE) are utilized to meet the individual needs of all students. RES offers "Trailblazer Classes" for the GT or high-performing students in first through fifth grade. In second through fifth grade, classes are departmentalized with teachers who are highly trained experts in core content areas such as English language arts/reading, math, science, and social studies. This allows teachers greater ability to differentiate their instruction for learners at all levels.

RES promotes the long-term development of its students by addressing their physical, emotional, and social needs with the help of school support staff. Counselors coordinate school presentations and assemblies throughout the year to cultivate social skills and help build character. School nurses assist in meeting the physical and developmental needs of all students through ongoing screenings and health services. To enhance their physical well-being, students attend daily physical education (PE) classes that incorporate exercise, sportsmanship, good eating habits, and healthy competition. Further promoting "Bobcat Pride" and school spirit, parent/community volunteers facilitate student participation in extra-curricular clubs and teams such as sports, choir, technology, chess, and the dance team.

Instructional planning is critical and highly valued for school staff, acknowledging that effective instruction requires careful preparation. This systemic approach to planning allows for intentional teaching that targets the rigor of the state curriculum while addressing each student's learning needs. In further developing each student's full potential, RES staff maximizes the instructional day by adhering to a structured schedule. Beginning with a free "Grab-n-Go" style breakfast that students enjoy in their classroom, instruction begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. Instructional intervention and enrichment opportunities are offered to students within the schedule, ending the day at 3:30 p.m.

Ryan Elementary strives for student success in all areas. The school staff remains committed to ensuring high performance for all demographics. Favorable outcomes in student performance are a direct result of the staff's focus on student academic achievement. For the last two years, the school has met the "Closing the Gap" index in the State of Texas Accountability System, specifically when comparing the scores of all students with those in subgroups. RES has also earned all six of the possible Academic Distinction Designations granted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Additionally, in the last four years the school has had a rate increase in average daily attendance (ADA) from 96.9% to 98.1%. With high expectations and great commitment, RES continues to educate all students for lifelong success.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The curriculum utilized at RES as the foundation to target academic success is the Learning Educational Alignment Document (LEAD), LISD’s scope and sequence. This document provides a framework for teachers that incorporates the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) for the English learner (EL). The LEAD is available to pre-k through fifth grade teachers. It is designed as a cohesive combination of instructional units in all core subjects. The LEAD assists teachers in taking the students from standards to core concepts to life skills. This curriculum guide and the teachers’ effective use have helped RES be successful in closing the achievement gap.

The English language arts/reading (ELAR) curricula at RES incorporate the TEKS, CCRS, and the ELPS. ELAR teachers use various instructional approaches along with assessment data to improve student performance. ELAR teachers from kindergarten through fifth grade incorporate a balanced literacy approach. Instruction occurs daily in a 90-minute block for whole and small group instruction, along with an additional daily 30-minute intervention/enrichment block. Teachers in the primary grades provide explicit instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension skills through guided reading. They include literacy centers that sustain foundational reading and language skills. Teachers also use the direct instruction approach and provide a daily read aloud of an authentic text. They use videos and documentaries as extensions. They also use literature to direct novel studies and to conduct book talks. They incorporate poetry readings, play productions, and research projects. In addition, ELAR teachers provide prescriptive, guided instruction during the intervention/enrichment block. All ELAR teachers evaluate and document student progress. At the beginning, middle, and end of the year pre-kindergarten students are administered the Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE) assessments, while kindergarten through second graders are assessed with the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI). ELAR instructional deans develop curriculum-based assessments (CBAs) to be administered every six weeks to first through fifth grade students. Administrators and teachers use information derived from these assessments to develop instruction, intervention plans, and to provide feedback to students and parents to improve student performance.

1b. Mathematics:

The math curriculum at RES is aligned to the TEKS, CCRS, and ELPS. LISD’s math LEAD facilitates instruction, lists best practices, and actively engages students in their learning within a daily 60-65 minute instructional block. It provides investigations and explorations with meaningful real-world problems. Pre-k through fifth grade math teachers plan lessons comprised with instructional activities that are learner centered and that emphasize inquiry. From primary grade students learning to identify numbers with the “number of the week” to third through fifth graders learning basic algebraic functions, students begin to make real-life connections. Math teachers deliver instruction with manipulatives and other tools making problems concrete. They incorporate cooperative learning groups using games to enhance learning and improve acquisition and retention. To promote reflective thinking and encourage purposeful math discussions among their students, teachers use strategies such as “Inside/Outside Circle” or “Stir the Class.” Aside from building community in the classroom, these strategies help teachers identify student understanding and areas needing clarity. RES math teachers provide whole-group instruction to introduce new concepts and skills with structured activities allowing students to explore, explain, extend, and evaluate their own progress. Math teachers at RES break down knowledge and skills into small steps and use cognitive modeling when teaching a skill. They recognize that to make connections and develop understanding, scaffolding math experiences contribute to student engagement. With guided and independent practice, students gradually assume the responsibility of demonstrating the target skill. To

identify patterns of difficulty or misunderstanding, math teachers administer progress-monitoring and summative assessments. Pre-kindergarten teachers conduct CIRCLE assessments three times a year to evaluate student performance in math literacy and foundation skills. Teachers in first through fifth grade administer summative CBAs every six weeks. Results from these assessments are used to monitor student learning and to identify strengths and weaknesses, thereby further improving student performance.

1c. Science:

The RES science curriculum, aligned to the TEKS standards, encompasses instruction in physical, earth, and life science from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Using LISD's science LEAD as their guide, teachers deliver science lessons to their students daily within a 65-minute block. Students use science as an inquiry in further developing their understanding of scientific concepts and processing skills. Teachers use multiple representations when introducing new vocabulary terms such as pictures, posters, anchor charts, models, and videos to implement a concept-building approach. This provides students the opportunity to arrive at the definition of terms using their own words and understanding for better retention. Through carefully planned observations and investigations in and outside the school, teachers are able to help students develop skills needed to foster a solid science foundation. Experimental investigations, both in science labs and through virtual labs, allow the application of processing skills and concept knowledge to practice the scientific method. Teachers emphasize the importance of science notebooks and journals for notetaking and the collection of data to derive conclusions. Through journaling, teachers have students respond to prompts and inquiry-based questions that require justification. From kindergarteners differentiating between living and nonliving organisms in their classroom science center to fifth graders comparing structures and functions of local species and their survival hands-on while visiting the Vergara Environmental Science Center at Laredo College, students are able to apply the knowledge and skills they have developed and acquired across the curriculum throughout their years at Ryan. RES science teachers have been able to integrate detailed, highly engaging, teacher-guided, and student-centered lessons that have maximized student learning and yielded high levels of student achievement. The curriculum uses summative assessments to monitor student learning and progress.

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

The social studies curriculum at RES is aligned to the TEKS, CCRS, and ELPS. Social studies teachers follow the LEAD 30 minutes daily. This curriculum incorporates a combination of resources that allow for teacher personalization. It includes model lessons, assessments, and other resources that enable students to understand, participate in, and make informed decisions about their world. It allows students to build a strong foundation in history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, culture, technology, society, and social studies skills. LISD's social studies curriculum from pre-kindergarten to fifth grade assists in preparing and developing mindful, active citizens who understand the importance of patriotism and can function in today's society. Teachers use clarification documents, providing specificities to each of the student expectations and better clarity of misconceptions. Through learning centers and thematic units, teachers in the primary grades introduce students to topics such as communities, community helpers, cultural celebrations, and citizenship. Pre-k and kindergarten students learn folkloric dances, dress in traditional Mexican attire, and play games like "Loteria" with their grandparents at the annual Mexican Independence-Grandparents' Day Celebration. In first through fifth grade, students learn about good citizenship through lessons in patriotism, the importance of community involvement, and the responsibility in giving of themselves through community service. Students participate in mock elections coordinated by the LISD Social Studies and Technology Departments to promote civic participation and patriotism. Teachers and the school's Digital Learning Specialist schedule long distance webinars coordinated with other schools within the community and throughout Texas. Along with LISD's social studies deans, teachers take full advantage of local historical societies and organizations who promote cultural heritage by planning group presentations and field site visits to historical landmarks. At the conclusion of the Texas Revolution unit, fourth-grade teachers plan an annual field trip to the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, allowing their students to experience the significance of Texas history. The curriculum at RES incorporates various methods to evaluate students' academic readiness and skill progress through formative and summative assessments.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

The full day three and four-year-old pre-kindergarten program provides the fundamentals for social and emotional development, language and communication, and emergent literacy. The curriculum follows the Texas Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines aligned to the kindergarten TEKS. Teachers deliver instruction through thematic learning centers and student-led activities. The curriculum has a strong home-school connection involving parents and families in the learning process, thus positively affecting school readiness. The program incorporates strategies for bilingual instruction, allowing the use of the student's home language, while serving as the foundation for second language acquisition. The impact of early education is evident through data, reflecting growth from the beginning to the end of year in the CIRCLE progress monitoring system, and student achievement in the ensuing grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

RES provides instruction in music, dance, and the fine arts, adhering to the TEKS. Teachers introduce art elements through activities in journaling for math, science, language arts, and the art and creativity-learning center. In addition, the school has a certified music teacher who provides 45-minute curriculum-based music classes once a week for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Students learn about music, rhyming, singing, and movement. He also teaches music components such as instrument facts, music beats, and sounds. Students are introduced to musical instruments such as the xylophone, ukulele, piano, and guitar. Students participate in the school choir, LISD's Honors Choir, and perform in school functions and community events throughout the year.

RES is dedicated to each student's physical development through a TEKS-based structured PE and health and nutrition program. The school has two certified PE coaches and five para-professional assistants. Students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade attend 45-minute PE instructional blocks four days per week. Coaches create activity plans that incorporate cardio, strength training, and endurance. A typical rotation includes stations such as jumping rope for endurance, stretching for flexibility, push-ups for strength training, and running for cardio. Coaches also train and practice with students for seasonal sports such as flag football, volleyball, basketball, track, cross country, and soccer throughout the school year. Students in second grade are offered swimming lessons at LISD's aquatic center. In addition, they participate in a personal safety education program that helps them replace fear with skills and knowledge, empower their critical thinking, and apply resistance. Students in third through fifth grade are required to complete a fitness gram twice a year to assess their physical progress and growth.

RES staff also focuses on nutrition instruction and awareness. While teachers present lessons on health and nutrition in the classroom coaches address the importance of having a healthy and well-balanced diet. The LISD Child Nutrition Program (CNP) staff provides healthy free breakfast and lunch meals to all students. Pre-kindergarten students and teachers partake in a family style lunch simulating a meal at home. While modeling proper table manners, teachers encourage their students to try new foods and discuss their nutritional value. The LISD Elementary Menu Advisory Committee, comprised of third and fourth graders, meets twice a year to taste test new menu items, vote on menu options, and provide feedback to the CNP.

RES staff believes that the effective use of technology supports student learning as much as it does the teaching. Teachers provide learning opportunities for students from pre-kindergarten to fifth grade to increase their technology proficiency. RES has three computer labs, iPad carts, and desktops in the classrooms and library. The school Digital Learning Specialist and two lab managers provide opportunities for students in first through fifth grade to use digital tools and resources such as learning.com to reinforce and promote TEKS based technology proficiency. In addition to daily access in their classrooms, kindergarten through fifth grade students attend a computer literacy lab once a week for 30 minutes where they use basic hardware and software computer applications and learn about internet safety and compliance.

Students have access to textbooks online and use technology for research or school projects. The librarian offers resources and support for all students at their weekly 45-minute visit to the library. After researching, students may opt to present their information using audio/video applications they have learned such as Flipgrid, Seesaw, iMovie, and PuppetEDU. They participate in coding and the Technology Club and use creative thinking to develop new ideas or products. Students explore virtual environments and programming languages to enhance their learning and compete at the LISD Tech Expo. All students also participate in Digital Day and the annual “Hour of Code,” a global movement of the one-hour introduction to computer science and programming. RES also has a full cast and crew that broadcast news and announcements through YouTube Live every morning.

To enhance character building, the school uses a social-emotional teaching program that cultivates strong classroom relationships with pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. Aligned to research-based practices, this Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SElect (Social and Emotional Learning) program, promotes problem solving and decision-making. It provides specialized teaching strategies incorporated into daily classroom activities to develop tolerant, compassionate, and caring adults. It includes units in citizenship, fairness, responsibility, and respect. This program enhances the student’s ability to succeed in school, careers, and life. It provides a foundation for a safe and positive learning environment while building healthy relationships and supportive classroom communities.

3. Special Populations:

RES staff believes in meeting the needs of all students to ensure academic achievement. Upon careful study of data from 2016 to 2018, it was determined that there was an achievement gap of more than 20% points between the test scores of all students and the scores of EL and SE students. With the use of evidence-based practices, teacher tailored instruction, and the monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions and assessments, RES has been able to close the achievement gap.

At RES formative and summative assessments are an integral part of data gathering and analysis. At the beginning of the school year, teachers and administrators disaggregate campus data from summative assessments such as the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), TPRI, and the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System. These results along with current data from benchmarks and CBAs are used to identify the school’s performance, to periodically gauge student learning, and evaluate the learning process. During weekly meetings of the professional learning communities (PLCs), RES teachers discuss best practices, monitor student progress, and share formative assessment resources aligned to the TEKS. Implemented at RES for improving instructional practices and student academic achievement is the development of yearly student learning objectives (SLOs). This process allows for setting goals for student learning and for the use of data to monitor student progress throughout the year. With this process, teachers reflect on their pedagogy, strengths and weaknesses, and the selection of strategies for goal attainment. Teachers differentiate instructional content and incorporate tiered activities with levels of support, challenge, or complexity. They vary the length of time for a task for struggling learners and encourage their advanced learners to carry out a topic in greater depth.

Student progress is regularly monitored. Teachers and administrators study course failure reports during PLCs and complete an “Efforts to Resolve Failing Grades” form to document student support. After formative assessments, teachers develop action plans for areas of weakness and strategies to address concerns. Plans are used for prescriptive intervention during the day and for after-school tutorials. For additional intervention, support is documented through the Response to Intervention (RtI) committee. The committee meets 6–8 weeks to monitor progress and make recommendations. Members decide on continued support, further evaluation, or RtI exit. Students who require additional support due to other disabilities may qualify for services through the SE program. Individualized educational plans (IEPs) or accommodation plans through Section 504 are developed for each student providing the support needed.

For ELs, the classroom teacher develops instructional accommodation plans at the beginning of the year based on the student’s language proficiency. These strategies are for instructional use and are reviewed and reevaluated at the middle and end of the year. In addition, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee

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(LPAC) meets every grading period to monitor those students participating in the Bilingual Program as well as those exited.

RES offers Trailblazer classes for GT and high performing students in first through fifth grade. Teachers use resources to differentiate instruction with a challenging curriculum using Kaplan's Depth and Complexity Icons to strengthen thinking skills and cognitive operations. Trailblazer classes follow performance standards that enhance LISD's GT program with guidelines aligned with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. Students present their research activities and projects at the school's GT Showcase held twice a year.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

RES encourages a positive school climate and culture promoting respect, collaboration, and communication among all stakeholders. Staff promotes the long-term development of its students by addressing their physical, emotional, and social needs. Various school assemblies held throughout the year cultivate social skills and build character. Counselors hold individual and group sessions to address academic, behavioral, and emotional issues, along with attendance concerns. Administrators ensure that the school provides a safe, secure, healthy learning environment designed to nurture positive, academic, social, and life skills development.

Students partake in activities that promote their academic growth and foster the development of their social and emotional well-being. RES offers a variety of school clubs that encourage participation of student participation. Sports teams, the dance team, and choir are popular extracurricular activities that develop collaboration and teamwork. Clubs and organizations such as the National Elementary Honor Society, Chess Club, Technology Team, and University Intercollegiate League competitions offer the opportunity for the students to highlight their talent, leadership skills, and academic success.

RES student achievement is celebrated at the “Bobcats of the Month” ceremony at PTO meetings. Teachers select the class “Student of the Month” for good citizenship, the “Bobcat Whiz Kid” for outstanding work in math and science, and the “Aspiring and Creative Reader-Writer” for students excelling in reading and language arts. Weekly popcorn parties are held for classes with perfect attendance. Award ceremonies are held at the end of the school year to reward students for their academic achievement, perfect attendance, and for participating in clubs and teams. In addition, students with perfect attendance and honor roll throughout the year are rewarded with an all-expense paid field trip to Sea World in San Antonio, Texas.

The success of the school is attributed to dedicated teachers committed to fostering a positive environment conducive to learning. Teacher turnover is minimal, as most teachers have taught at the campus from five to over thirty years. Communication and collaboration are key to creating a culture of respect and professionalism amongst staff. Weekly PLCs meetings are held with all grade level teams to communicate school initiatives and activities. Teachers are provided with adequate and timely support to help in their professional development. Through one-on-one sessions with administrators, teachers have the opportunity to voice personal concerns and professional needs.

The hard work and dedication of RES teachers is celebrated throughout the year. Beginning the year with a Back to School breakfast and continuing with a Thanksgiving luncheon, Christmas Posada, and Teacher Appreciation Week festivities, RES staff delight in their camaraderie and shared accomplishments. The strong sense of unity in the “Ryan Family” is reflective of the school’s mission to provide a school community where all stakeholders play an integral part in the school’s success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Communication within the school community is a top priority at RES. Parents are kept abreast of school and district initiatives, goals, and upcoming events through School Messenger, the school’s website, newsletters and calendars, social media, the school marquee, and monthly PTO meetings. Parents assist in monitoring student progress by accessing their child’s grades through the Parent Portal. Teachers schedule parent conferences to discuss student concerns and oftentimes include the administrator and counselor. Partnerships with different community agencies such as the Border Region Behavior Health Center’s, Child, Adolescent, and Parent Services (CAPS) program, Serving Children and Adults in Need (SCAN),

and People with Ideas of Love, Liberty, Acceptance and Respect (PILLAR) provide additional support for families when needed.

Parental involvement plays an integral part in constructing an educational facility that is reflective of collaboration and commitment to excellence. The RES Parental Involvement Program has shown a steady increase in the number of volunteers. The school's Parental Involvement Liaison plans and monitors different personal development sessions covering an array of topics including creative arts and crafts, preparing healthy meals, and literacy development at home.

Family involvement contributes to student success. Therefore, RES plans year-round events to encourage parent and community participation. The school year begins with "Meet the Teacher Night" where new relationships are formed and expectations are shared with students and parents, followed by "Grandparent's Day Open House" coupled with a Mexican Independence Day Celebration. Other annual events are the Veteran's Day Recognition Ceremony, Fall Harvest Jamaica (Festival), and Family Reading Night. Report Card Nights occur every six weeks as well.

Participation in nonprofit organization fundraisers such as the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital "Math-A-Thon," the American Cancer Society Walk "Relay for Life," the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation "Great Strides" campaign, and the Women's City Club's "Pennies for Tennis" donation drive further develops RES's goal in promoting the awareness of social issues and encourages community involvement.

Through longtime partnerships with parents and community organizations, RES has been able to provide educational presentations addressing the needs of all our students. Law enforcement agencies such as the Laredo Police Department, the Webb County Sheriff's Department, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection conduct awareness and prevention presentations on the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the importance of personal safety during Red Ribbon Week. The Webb County Children's Advocacy Center provides presentations on bullying and child abuse. Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) and Junior Achievement of Laredo provide activities related to health, educational, and personal achievement. Parent and community involvement is evident at RES. The school's success would not be possible without the dedication and support of our parents and local community organizations.

3. Professional Development:

RES staff is committed to continuous improvement with effective instructional practices that target the needs of the 21st century learner. The school is a community of learners composed of students, faculty, and administrators. At RES, professional development (PD) is an ongoing process positively influencing student achievement. PD is aligned to the "Fundamental 5: Formula for Quality Instruction," the LEAD, and the TEKS. RES takes advantage of professional development opportunities provided by the Curriculum and Instruction Department (C&I), the Region 1 Education Service Center, campus-based PLCs, online training, and continuing education courses offered at TAMIU.

RES has weekly PLC meetings during planning periods where teachers, administrators, and support staff share practices, analyze student achievement data, identify learning challenges, and create action plans. Teachers ensure that instruction focuses on the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels, from recalling facts and information to making connections and extensions for complex reasoning. Collaborative planning and learning in all core content areas provide teachers the opportunity to hone in on the wealth of experience and training that exists among faculty and staff. RES has a legacy of cultivating committed and caring instructors that are self-directed learners. With the partnership with TAMIU, many teachers have continued their postgraduate studies in the field of education. These teachers share this knowledge with novice educators through mentoring.

Ongoing professional development for RES administrators and Instructional Specialists is provided by the district. RES administrators attend a Leadership Summit to commence the year. Monthly trainings keep all school administrators abreast of district initiatives and instructional updates. Through turnaround trainings

from administrators and instructional specialist, teachers get continuous support on the implementation of new programs, delivery of instruction, data analysis, instructional strategies, differentiation for all subgroups, and best practices.

RES strives to implement a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure educators are supported when addressing the identified areas of need. Analysis of student data and educator needs allows for the planning of prescribed professional development. Year-round PD sessions are offered by C&I and hired consultants to provide RES teachers training on writing instruction, along with data analysis and state standards. PD is readily available, as teachers have access to online training websites provided by LISD and TEA. RES has a Digital Learning Specialist who provides weekly trainings and updates on new web-based programs and software. The combination of prescribed professional development and the district's efficacy in building capacity is at the core of the school's success.

Engaging in these modalities of PD keeps RES staff current on new instructional methods, technology integration, and student learning needs. Adopting practices of continuous improvement through high-quality PD has empowered RES staff in closing achievement gaps, specifically among the EL and SE students.

4. School Leadership:

RES's leadership philosophy consists of one clear goal—student success. The principal, with a collaborative leadership style, assumes her role with two tasks in mind: to ensure high-quality instruction with intense student learning and to provide a safe, secure, and healthy learning environment. By empowering teachers and staff, she has established a sense of community and pride. Her servitude and effective communication have helped create open lines of communication as she allows stakeholders such as assistant principals, the Instructional Specialist, Leadership Team members (Lead Teachers and Support Staff), and the Parental Involvement Liaison to take part in decision making, thereby promoting school improvement and student progress.

Ensuring that the focus of programs and resources remains on student achievement, RES assistant principals review district and campus policies regularly and ensure that staff follow them. Together with their principal, they provide teachers with clear expectations on school attendance, compliance, district initiatives, and campus goals. They hold parent conferences to address student academic concerns, truancy, and discipline issues. The administrators also monitor curriculum and instruction through classroom walkthroughs and evaluations and provide timely feedback to teachers and staff to adjust or improve the delivery of instruction. They track intervention programs and oversee the planning of staff development needs. Administrators supervise the school budget to ensure that resources are utilized and allocated where necessary while following program policies. Ultimately, the most important role of the school administrators is to ensure that the focus of all stakeholders remains on student achievement and success.

Working alongside her administrators, the RES Instructional Specialist serves a vital role on campus. Her duties include generating data reports for instruction and intervention as well as planning with teachers and providing instructional support in all academic areas. She updates teachers on district initiatives during weekly PLC meetings, grade level planning, or at meetings held after school.

The RES Leadership Team is composed of the school administrators, lead teachers, and support staff including the counselors, librarian, and Instructional Specialist. This team of school leaders holds courageous conversations as they continuously meet to analyze data and make an assessment on intervention and tutorial plans. In addition, this team makes decisions on school budgetary and staff development needs, along with scheduling of upcoming school events. Lead Teachers guide their grade level during planning sessions to set clear goals by using data to measure student learning and monitor progress. The success of RES is contingent on the systems of collaboration established by the school's administration. The team of educators and administrators understands the importance of effective communication and collaboration for student success.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The students at M. S. Ryan Elementary School have achieved academic success through the collaboration of administrators, staff, parents, and community. Through effective communication, collective teamwork, ownership, and pride, the school has been able to transmit the true value of learning while upholding its rich tradition of academic excellence.

Collaborative planning is crucial at RES. Administrators, teachers, and staff ensure that high-quality instruction is well planned and executed. Purposeful talk when addressing student data, strengths, weaknesses, and progress is vital when planning intervention, remediation, and enrichment for all students. Prescriptive intervention plans are developed, monitored, and continuously revisited. Administrators utilize professional learning community meetings to ensure that staff adhere to the instructional scope and sequence guidelines with fidelity. District support personnel are readily available to assist in training staff on program resources and updates.

RES staff also collaborates through collective teamwork with parents and community when planning student success and achievement. School staff appreciates and embraces relationships established with parents and families. Teacher communication with parents on student progress and performance is ongoing through various methods of communication. RES offers events throughout the year allowing for parent and family participation and engagement. The Parent Involvement Program encourages volunteerism, thereby providing opportunities for parents to work with their children, teachers, and school community. RES staff relies heavily on parent support in school fundraising activities, directly benefiting student incentives for academic achievement and attendance. RES students benefit greatly from the ongoing relationships with partners in the community. Whether it be monetary donations or services provided, investments made in RES students help ensure a promising future.

The collaboration of all stakeholders at RES is instrumental in creating a culture of ownership and school pride. School administrators and staff place a high level of importance in all that they plan and do for their students. They understand that in creating a nurturing and caring environment for student academic success, they must also fully participate as a team in school projects aligned with its goals and objectives. RES staff models school spirit and pride, instilling in students the urgency to succeed academically and in extracurricular activities. Students are responsible for their own learning and behavior and understand the high expectations placed on them. Because of the positive and engaging school climate, students have a willingness to learn and excel. Through effective collaboration, RES administrators, staff, parents, community, and students remain committed to ensure high performance, academic achievement, and school success.