

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 7889 Elm Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Rancho Cucamonga State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 91730-6839

County San Bernardino

Telephone (909) 980-4743 Fax (909) 980-1596

Web site/URL https://cces-csd-ca.schoolloop.com E-mail mdynes@csd.k12.ca.us

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mrs. Donna Libutti E-mail dlibutti@csd.k12.ca.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Central Elementary School District Tel. (909) 989-8541

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. Joan Weiss  
(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**

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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 2020 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 2014 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: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
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

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)  
 Suburban  
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	9	14	23
K	65	56	121
1	55	72	127
2	55	79	134
3	73	57	130
4	69	67	136
5	0	0	0
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
<b>Total Students</b>	326	345	671

\*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
  - 14.4 % Asian
  - 12.6 % Black or African American
  - 48.6 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 18.1 % White
  - 6.3 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 18%

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

Coyote Canyon is in the center of several multi-family residences which contributes to mobility. It serves a diverse community of new immigrants that live in these multi-family homes. The majority of students that leave are returning to original home country or parents relocate because of employment.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	69
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	51
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	120
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	667
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.18
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	18

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

Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Korean, Filipino, Portuguese, Mandarin, Khmer, Arabic, Burmese, Farsi, Hindi, Punjabi, Russian, Urdu, Pashto, Taiwanese, Bengali, Tamil, Kannada, and Uzbek.

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 19 %  
126 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 57 %

Total number students who qualify: 380

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %

73 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>48</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
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.	13
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.	7

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 26:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	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 2019.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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.

Every child valued, challenged, and successful...whatever it takes.

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**

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Nestled in the heart of the city of Rancho Cucamonga, in Southern California, stands Coyote Canyon Elementary. This campus is the largest elementary school in the Central Elementary School District with an enrollment of over 700. It is unique in that it only houses children from transitional kindergarten (TK) through grade four. The diverse student body is composed of 45.9% Hispanic, 22.7% White, 13% African American, 10% Asian, and 8.4% of other races. Fifty-eight percent are socioeconomically disadvantaged, 17.4% are English Learners, and students with disabilities is 8.4%. Over the last few years, there has also been an influx of middle eastern immigrants. This has brought opportunities for learning the cultural nuances of this growing population.

Coyote Canyon Elementary provides a warm, stimulating environment with an emphasis on both academic and social-emotional growth. Young scholars are actively involved in learning academics as well as positive values. The learning atmosphere involves a purposeful curriculum, stimulating instruction, and engaging activities that foster a love for learning and a sense of greater purpose. Students receive innovative and challenging lessons led by a dedicated team of professionals who consistently differentiate lessons based on individual needs. The highly-qualified staff is resolute in their desire to improve academic outcomes and as such, they implement an evidence-based cycle of inquiry and knowledge.

The mission of Coyote Canyon Elementary School is "Every child valued, challenged, and successful...whatever it takes." This statement reflects the core value that education must be rigorous, and staff must persevere to ensure high achievement and outcomes. They collaboratively seek to enhance programs and strategies by consistently examining teaching and learning.

What serves as a pivotal piece supporting this mantra is the staff's embracement of the pedagogy behind "Visible Learning." Founded on the research of John Hattie, this program promotes the correlation between student outcomes and the quality of instruction. In other words, pupil successes and failures are a direct reflection of the staff's teaching. As part of this guiding coalition, all teachers use daily learning intentions, explicit success criteria, and powerful feedback. The Coyote Canyon staff members are deliberate and determined in their quest for taking responsibility to ensure each child is academically successful. In order to regularly understand their impact on learning, structured professional discourse is implemented and follows the professional learning community (PLC) model. For 45 minutes each week, teachers work collaboratively to choose essential standards, review assessment data, determine which students need intervention or enrichment, and create lessons based on research-validated instructional strategies.

Although academic achievement is a top priority, the faculty believe it is equally important to develop the whole child. The staff accomplishes this by creating an outstanding social-emotional environment for students to develop and grow. The Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) program sets the tone by focusing on rewards and explicitly teaching schoolwide expectations. Two full-time counselors further support the social-emotional and intellectual growth of the children. Developing the whole child is also promoted through a variety of enrichment programs and clubs including Math League, Engineering Club, Leadership, after-school soccer and track, choir, before-school cross country, and an in-house daycare program, "Kid Central." These additional courses provide children with experiences to explore various interests, as well as interact with peers independently of their regular classroom or grade level.

Another strength of this positive atmosphere is a deliberate focus on individuals being valued and respected. One of the shared beliefs that leads to this caring environment is the practice of partnerships of authority. This distributed leadership model empowers staff, parents, and community members to take leadership positions and openly share their expertise, feedback, and ideas. As such, a synergy exists at Coyote Canyon. All stakeholders feel like partners and are engaged in paving the road for greater success for the organization, each team, and themselves. By the same token, parents are highly encouraged to be part of the educational process and become involved in their child's learning environment either by volunteering in the classroom, participating in a decision-making group, or attending school events. A Parent Community Involvement Coordinator serves as a liaison to facilitate close working relationships and coordinate these activities. The organization is successful because of these inclusive relationships and takes every

opportunity to show school pride. Awards assemblies, special events, and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) activities celebrate successes. Each Monday is College Day, where students and staff wear university attire and on Fridays, the campus celebrates Spirit Day.

It is the shared belief of the Coyote Canyon community that the love that is given to each other affects learning, builds character, and sets-up habits that will last a lifetime. Students at this educational institution receive a top-notch education from staff members who care deeply about the children they teach, the extended community, and each other.



## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

**1a.** Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

What is at the center of the dedicated and talented Coyote Canyon staff is their belief in John Hattie’s work - “Visible Learning.” This pedagogical model is premised on teachers evaluating their impact in the classroom and adjusting teaching methodologies in response to student outcomes. Certain tenets are innate to every teacher and Visible Learning classroom at Coyote Canyon that includes: (1) displaying clear learning objectives, (2) jointly constructing challenging success criteria, (3) using high-yield learning strategies, (4) knowing when students are not progressing and assisting them, and (5) providing relevant feedback. Collective teacher efficacy is an important part of this research-based approach. Teachers at the school are confident in their own ability to guide students to success - regardless of a learner’s home life, language, disability, or socioeconomic status. The professional learning communities (PLC) process is also a commitment and allows instructors an avenue to share best practices, brainstorm innovative ways to improve learning, overcome obstacles, and drive student achievement. Another overarching practice applied to all subjects is the daily incorporation of technology. Teachers understand their students are digital natives. As such, the staff effectively integrate technology into the curriculum. The use of technology starts at the earliest grades. Kindergarteners and first graders visit the computer lab weekly to learn necessary skills and become confident with application. Furthermore, these youngsters have iPad centers in their classrooms that serve to promote higher-order thinking skills and are a forum for discovery. Beginning in second grade, there is a 1:1 ratio of devices to students. The technology for 2nd-4th graders is used to deliver more personalized content and empower students to do more complex and creative work. Because of these schoolwide practices, the staff collaboratively assist one another in the educational process, they are open-minded, and resilient to failure; together they inspire growth in their students.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

The Coyote Canyon reading program was designed collectively using research-based features including (1) complex anchor texts and supplemental materials that challenge students, (2) lesson plans that target student needs, and (3) assessments and digital tools that track classroom progress. As a basis for the program, Coyote Canyon uses the district adopted English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) curriculum Journeys, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. What’s unique about this program is it forges both the California Common Core Standards with the California English Language Development Standards. This series was adopted due to its strengths in interrelating these two sets of standards as well as promoting literacy through critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and communication. The ELA/ELD core block at Coyote Canyon is typically 30-40% of the instructional day because the teachers understand the skills learned within this subject, universally influencing all other content areas. Thus, a premium is placed on the development and mastery of skills within this discipline. Coyote Canyon educators are well versed in a balanced literacy approach to instruction and provide guided reading, read alouds, shared reading, independent reading, and word study as part of the core ELA/ELD block. They also are committed to an equitable study of content-rich informational and literary text to foster reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Each day, the faculty works closely to ensure the curriculum and instructional strategies are carefully coordinated to provide a seamless progression from each grade level. This coordinated effort provides students with a coherent experience from one year to the next which is critical for students with special needs and English Language Learners. The core ELA/ELD program works in concert with the school’s Universal Access (UA) time which enables every student to participate in supplemental instruction. Unlike the core block, students change classes during UA to allow for intervention or enrichment four days/week for 45 minutes/day. Four certificated teachers and multiple paraprofessionals assist regular staff to allow for smaller group settings during UA. The most intensive intervention instruction is provided by the most experienced teachers with the lowest number of students. To form groups, all students are assessed at the beginning of the year. The Intervention Coordinator assists staff in analyzing three data sets: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR), and running records. Every eight weeks, students are reassessed. All

students receive targeted UA instruction, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented education (GATE) students. Literacy is further supplemented with the Accelerated Reader computer-based program. Working in conjunction with the STAR reading assessment, learners are issued a point goal each trimester that correlates with their zone of proximal development (ZPD) and read leveled books daily. This systematic and systemic reading program supports Coyote Canyon students in mastering today's rigorous standards and the demands of next-generation assessments, while meeting the differing needs of learners. Ultimately, it builds confidence and a love for this subject area.

### **1c. Mathematics**

The Coyote Canyon staff's goal for mathematics is to ensure students (1) understanding the content on a conceptual level, (2) grasp foundational concepts behind math procedures, and (3) engage in critical mathematical practices. The staff knows math instruction goes beyond just knowing how a particular process can be used to solve a problem, it also requires understanding why that process works. For this reason, Eureka Math, the most widely used math curriculum in the United States (according to a study by the RAND Corporation) was selected as the district adopted curriculum. This mathematics program provides coherent instruction centered on the careful progression of skills and concepts from concrete objects to pictorial representations. It is purposely designed to connect this subject area to real-world situations in a way that students at Coyote Canyon state, "makes math easy and fun" thus, building student confidence so they find joy in the subject. The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are embedded in every module in order to administer scaffolding strategies to support English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with special needs. In addition, the UDL methodologies provide enrichment for high achieving and gifted and talented education (GATE) students. At the heart of this course work is the quality of teaching that Coyote Canyon teachers apply. They establish techniques and strategies for solving problems and developing "habits of mind" in order to foster mastery of content as well as mathematical understanding. Daily, students learn to think and strategize - not just get answers so that conceptual understanding, procedural skill, fluency, and critical thinking is acquired. Assessment of student work is an integral part of Coyote Canyon's mathematics education. Teachers use problem-based assessment tools to benchmark student progress formatively on a daily basis and summatively at the conclusion of units of study. At Coyote Canyon Elementary, the teachers' analysis of student work serves to refine their instructional strategies by identifying areas of strength and improvement among grade-level groups as well as with individual students. These performance-based assessments are used by the grade level teams to refine their knowledge of students' mathematical thinking, but most importantly for creating small groups for reteaching essential concepts or skills. Furthermore, data is used to provide teachers with information for compacting or accelerating lessons for students already at mastery. Everyday "on-the-fly" assessments and "tickets out the door" assist the instructional staff to identify common problems and determine appropriate solutions. Interventions are implemented at all grade levels, ten minutes or more each day. These mini learning sessions are purposely designed to close achievement gaps and ensure mastery of essential standards. In short, there is a demonstrated commitment by the entire Coyote Canyon faculty to provide a first-class mathematics program for all students that supports lifelong learning and the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in the global economy of the twenty-first century.

### **1d. Science**

Science learning begins long before the students enter the doors of Coyote Canyon School. Children's innate curiosity about the world and how it works prompts them to independently develop rudimentary forms of scientific investigations. The teachers recognize and capitalize on this intrinsic interest and build upon these initial concepts and strategies children have acquired to provide an environment for those concepts and strategies to expand and deepen. The staff believes all students, regardless of whether they will eventually pursue college or science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) careers are exposed to a high-quality science education. Mystery Science serves as the basis for the science curriculum at the school and is grounded on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This content is formulated to help students learn how to think rather than teachers telling them what to think. Every lesson begins with a "mystery" that hooks students. At the conclusion of each lesson, a hands-on exploration is used to initiate collaboration rooted in inquiry and discovery. Teachers focus on this student-centered learning to enable students to promote independent thinking, problem-solving, communication, all while learning important scientific

concepts. Science instruction at the school is based upon four domains: (1) Physical Science, (2) Life Science, (3) Earth and Space Science, and (3) Engineering Design. Both the formative and summative assessment process for science at Coyote Canyon requires students to dive deeper and apply what they have learned rather than relying on recall allowing students to engage in the application of knowledge and skills. Teachers assess after each lesson and a performance task is issued at the conclusion of each unit. Check-point “mini-labs” are used for formative information throughout all units of instruction in order to drive instruction. No fifth grade state testing for Science is conducted as Coyote Canyon enrollment ends at fourth grade. The teachers understand exceptional elementary science education is essential for establishing a sound foundation of learning in later grades. As such, they instill a wonder of and enthusiasm for science that lasts a lifetime.

#### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Social Studies, History, and Civic Learning is taught using the Scott Foresman History-Social Science for California textbook and a variety of supplemental materials. This standards-based curriculum engages students by offering multiple learning methods about key concepts through reading, hands-on activities, and technology. The goal of Coyote Canyon’s history, civics and government, geography, and economics lessons is to develop inquiry-based critical thinking skills, as well as improve reading comprehension and expository writing abilities. Teachers understand this content area plays a vital role in the development of student literacy because of the shared emphasis on text, argumentation, and use of evidence. Collaboratively, staff members select diverse works that illuminate the past and can be used as both historical documents and as works of art. Poetry, novels, plays, essays, documents, myths, legends, tall tales, and biographies help to shed light on the experiences of people who lived in the recent and distant past. The focus of instruction develops students’ understanding of the physical world, encourages participation in a democratic system, teaches them about our past, and improves their ability to make decisions based upon facts. The staff sets up learning in a deliberate sequence to develop thematic and conceptual understandings based on different perspectives. Throughout lessons, students engage with the content through questions and topics of conceptual significance rather than memorizing discrete facts. As students explore this content, they learn from a variety of primary and secondary sources, grapple with a variety and often competing pieces of information, form interpretations based on evidence, learn about how to place information in its appropriate context, and connect it to issues of broader significance. Assessments for this content area address three areas: content, skills, and literacy. Formative and summative assessments included with the adopted curriculum provide teachers with needed information to adapt lessons and reteach when necessary. The textbook includes constructed-response, graphic-response, multiple choice, as well as evidenced-base test items. Teachers supplement this curriculum with performance-based projects, evidenced-based essays, historical investigations, and multi-media presentations to further comprehend each students’ level of learning.

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

#### **1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

Coyote Canyon implements a transitional kindergarten (TK) program. TK classes serve children turning five years old between September 2 and December 2 of the academic year. This program provides youngsters with the opportunity to learn and grow in an environment tailored to meet their academic and social-emotional needs in a developmentally appropriate setting. Taught by a credentialed teacher with early childhood expertise, TK instruction uses a unique, and specialized curriculum - Opening the World of Learning (OWL). OWL is a comprehensive, integrated, pre-K curriculum designed to develop language and early literacy skills in the context of rich content. Teachers at Coyote Canyon use OWL as a foundation for developing necessary skills for entry to kindergarten and beyond. The TK staff collaborate to develop lessons that include: (1) language and vocabulary development, (2) rich questioning, (3) a variety of subject areas, and (4) personalized instruction. Most importantly lessons are designed to excite children about learning by capturing their natural curiosity about the world in an activity-centered environment. The OWL curriculum is aligned to the California K-3 content standards and covers all domains of early learning: literacy, mathematics, social-studies, science, art, music, physical education, and social-emotional development. Teachers embed formative assessment throughout the thematic units of study to provide them

with immediate information for modifying instruction and building children's skills. The TK classroom environment includes many opportunities for social-emotional development, fine- and gross motor activities, and oral language practice for all kinds of learners, including those with special needs and English Language Learners (ELLs). TK instructors prioritize purposeful experiential activities using structured play and small-group instruction. For example, teachers use puzzles to: (1) develop spatial planning, (2) strengthen fine motor skills, and (3) develop problem-solving techniques. Coyote Canyon staff truly provides the youngest learners with developmentally appropriate instruction, enabling all students to begin the traditional kindergarten year ready to thrive!

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Coyote Canyon Elementary has a long-standing commitment to educating the whole child and purposely works to deliver a comprehensive education. To this end, core content is enriched through students' experiences in other curricular areas such as: music, the arts, physical education, technology, and the school's library media program.

Music education serves to develop music literacy, that is the reading and performing of music as well as understanding of historical contexts. Based upon the California Arts Standards, students discover expressive elements and are introduced to music terminology. With this knowledge, students reflect, critique, and connect to music. Taught by a fully credentialed music educator, first through fourth graders participate weekly. The Coyote Canyon program further develops skills including professionalism and working in an ensemble as each grade level produces an annual production. Music instruction supports other content areas because it accelerates brain development, particularly in the areas of the brain that are responsible for processing sound, language development, speech perception, and reading skills. Furthermore, music nurtures the creative side of kids and enhances group learning. Benefits are even stronger for low-income and ELLs. Studies show that these student groups are three times more likely to earn degrees when they are exposed to a rich music program.

The arts are also a necessary and required component of each and every student's education towards developing well-rounded learners. Together teachers together with an instructional aide who has an extensive background in art, design opportunities for students at every grade level to express themselves visually and artistically. They weave the arts into the core curricula as well as teach specific artistic skills and abilities. Like music education, The California Arts Standards guide instruction to practice the skills of creativity, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and cultural awareness through art.

In order to meet the instructional standards for physical education (PE), grade levels participate in 200 minutes of PE every ten days. Once a week, a credentialed teacher assisted by instructional aides, takes an entire grade level for 45 minutes. Students in grades K-4 engage in multiple fitness units designed to support teamwork, fairness, and a balanced lifestyle of healthy eating and exercise. While PE specialists are instructing, teachers meet for professional learning community (PLC) time. As such, this essential collaboration is built into the instructional day. Teacher teams collaborate to plan and deliver additional lessons to attain the mandated time requirements. The Physical Education Model Content Standards for California serve as the foundation for instruction. In addition to this instruction, an after-school intramural program promotes healthy competitions with other campuses. Physical Education is a vital component of the students' educational experience and contributes to their health and well-being, social development, and readiness to learn.

Technology is integrated through all content areas and grade levels in order to prepare students for the digital future. Smartboards have replaced chalkboards at Coyote Canyon and all learning environments have document cameras, and projection/sound equipment. Electronic devices for student use are also part of each learning environment. A computer lab and classroom iPad centers are available for the youngest learners (TK-1) at the school; with a one-to-one program beginning at second grade. Having one-to-one devices allows students to access a variety of instructional and supplemental programs throughout the day. The technology devices have proven to improve engagement, promote individual learning, and encourage collaboration. Staff also recognize students use technology beyond the instructional day. For this reason, a digital citizenship strand that begins in kindergarten teaches students how to safely and appropriately access

media online.

Another area which supports student acquisition knowledge in core curricula is the school's library media program. The library media program at Coyote Canyon is more than a resource, it is an extension of classroom instruction. The Library Media Specialist collaborates with teachers to integrate literature and information skills to further student achievement. All students visit the Library Media Center weekly to access books for the Accelerated Reader (AR) program or for pleasure reading and research. The digital components of this space provide access to online information and AR assessments. The Coyote Canyon staff recognizes and appreciates the important relationship between other curricular areas and the connections they have to core content areas and seeks to develop, express, and integrate meaning across all subjects.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

An analysis of the Smarter Balanced Assessment data indicates there are no achievement gaps (10 or more % points), between all students and the following subgroups: African American, Asian, Hispanic, White, and low-income students for both English Language Arts (ELA) and math. However, English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) still demonstrate discrepant outcomes when compared to all students for both these content areas. A key element to meet the needs for these subgroups and any student at Coyote Canyon performing below grade level is intervention. Students whose performance lags behind their peers for English Language Arts (ELA) receive specialized prevention or remediation during a special block of time called Universal Access (UA). This intervention ensures every student participates in supplemental instruction in addition to their core ELA block. During UA time, instruction is differentiated to enhance literacy skills four days/week for 45 minutes/day. Four certificated teachers and multiple paraprofessionals assist regular staff to allow for smaller group settings. The most intensive intervention instruction is provided by the most experienced teachers with the lowest number of students. Every eight weeks, student progress is monitored to determine intervention effectiveness and needed modifications. All students receive targeted instruction at this time, including ELLs, students with disabilities, and high achievers/gifted and talented education (GATE) students. Interventions for Mathematics are also instituted to support students performing below grade level. Each teacher provides intervention within their classroom. An Intervention Coordinator regularly monitors data and provides this information to classroom teachers which enables them to form appropriate groupings, adapt and modify instruction, and provide needed supports in order to close achievement gaps. General education teachers receive training and follow-up coaching from qualified educators in implementing interventions. These core concepts include: (1) application of research-based strategies and curricula; (2) measurement of a student's response to these interventions; and (3) use of the intervention data to inform instruction.

#### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

The philosophical belief of Coyote Canyon staff is that every student is unique, therefore their instruction should be unique as well. A "one-size-fits-all" approach cannot successfully meet the needs of students performing one or more years above grade level. High achievers or students identified for the gifted and talented education (GATE) program need to be challenged to stay engaged and interested in learning. For this reason, students performing above grade level are supported by teachers who differentiate the content, process, or product of instructional lessons. Typical differentiation at the school includes more elaborate, complex, and in-depth studies of major ideas, problems, and themes that integrate knowledge across various disciplines. Through these modified lessons, students performing above grade level (1) apply productive thinking skills (2) reconceptualize existing knowledge (3) generate new knowledge, and (3) participate in self-initiated and self-directed learning. Specifically, the English Language Arts (ELA) Universal Access time, allows for students to be homogeneously grouped. During this period, high achievers and students identified as GATE collaborate to conduct novel studies and use leveled readers to participate in various extension activities to the core ELA block. Curriculum compacting and or acceleration is implemented in the content area of Mathematics for students performing above grade level. Weekly Math assessments assist educators at Coyote Canyon with knowledge in order to design differentiated lessons for this unique group

and allows high achievers and GATE children to go beyond the grade level expectations. The staff inherently believes in customized learning for every student. They want to ensure that all students at Coyote Canyon, no matter what level they begin with, they have a year's worth of learning for a year's worth of time (or more!).

### **3c. Special education**

Coyote Canyon Elementary has a long history of inclusive practices in order to meet the needs of all students including students with disabilities. Special education at Coyote Canyon provides students with identified disabilities instruction designed to meet their unique learning needs, giving them the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. This starts with communication about present levels of performance. Accommodations and modifications are examined as well as an array of services in order to support special needs youngsters in successfully developing their fullest potential. General and special education teachers collaborate regularly to create and design tailored instruction. Most special education takes place in the general education classroom – consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA) goal of providing children with disabilities special education services in the least restrictive environment. However, Coyote Canyon staff understand that not all special education can be taught in general education classrooms; therefore, special education teachers and paraprofessionals sometimes provide additional supports. These supports serve as a continuum of services to meet the distinct needs of students with specific cognitive, social, and physical delays. These may include academic supports, speech and language services, adaptive physical education, occupational therapy, and assistive technologies. Because of this design, special education serves as a purposeful intervention designed to help individuals at Coyote Canyon Elementary achieve a higher level of personal self-sufficiency and success in school and in their community. As part of the instructional process, comprehensive evaluation, including frequent monitoring checks, are conducted by a multidisciplinary team to determine progress, adapt Individual Education Plans (IEPs), modify services, and celebrate successes. Parents of students with special needs are a critical member of the development team. Coyote Canyon staff understands their input is critical and as such, openly welcomes them in assisting with the formulation of plans of action to meet their child's specific learning needs.

### **3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered**

The overall goal of the English Language Learner (ELL) program at Coyote Canyon Elementary is to improve the English language and academic skills of ELLs. At Coyote Canyon, ELLs benefit from both integrated and designated English Language Development (ELD). All teachers at the site have been formally trained to integrate strategies to meet the particular needs of ELLs based on the California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards). These standards focus on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language as expressed in key themes of Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills. The CA ELD Standards support ELLs to use English purposefully, to interact meaningfully in school and beyond. They also support them to be knowledgeable about English and utilize language as a resource for communicating and learning. Coyote Canyon staff assess ELLs annually using the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California to determine their English progress. Applying this data ELLs are placed in a designated ELD class four days per week for 45 minutes each day, where they receive supplemental instruction from a credentialed teacher. During this designated time, students preview literary and informational texts and skills that they will utilize in their regular classroom as well as practice academic vocabulary and writing. Data and student work samples are used to afford ELLs equal access to supplemental interventions for reading or Math. A rigorous set of criteria is used to redesignate students as "Fluent English Proficient." Students meeting this criterion are monitored annually for four years to ensure they are performing at the same level as their English only peers. Interventions are implemented during this time if any ELL is faltering. However, Coyote Canyon test scores show that students who have been redesignated consistently outperform their English only counterparts indicating the success of the programs and activities.

### **3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered**

In addition to the students listed above, Coyote Canyon further supports other vulnerable students, including homeless and foster youth. The staff is responsive to ensuring these subgroups receive an equal education

that is provided to all children. In order to achieve this goal, the staff recognizes that it is necessary to remove barriers that could inhibit their educational outcomes. At times, this might include impediments to attendance, enrollment, access to technology, obtainment of immunizations, clothing, transportation, and/or school supplies. A liaison from the District supports the campus by connecting families with necessary means or services. For instance, when a student in foster care is enrolling, the liaison will contact the last school of attendance to obtain all academic and other records within two business days. Additionally, the staff may work with community-based or school resources to safeguard that foster or homeless students receive support services such as counseling, health services, supplemental instruction, housing, or other appropriate assistance. Furthermore, District staff work diligently with the principal, secretary, and attendance clerk to convey the requirements as well as communicate support services available for these two special populations. The goal of these collaborative efforts is to build capacity and increase multi-sector supports in order to close achievement gaps and promote educational success for homeless and foster youth.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

The mission of “Every child valued, challenged, and successful . . . Whatever it takes” requires the intentional empowerment to create a culture of engagement and pride. Therefore, an array of initiatives develops and nurture a positive culture. First, staff have collaborated to design a multi-tiered system for providing (1) behavior (2) social-emotional, and (3) academic supports. Each fall, assemblies focused on positive behavior are conducted to proactively teach agreed upon expectations. These assemblies model appropriate playground and behavioral expectations and highlight the school-wide incentive program. This program is built on the premise of praising expected behaviors and outcomes, rather than focusing on consequences. Students collect “Pride” tickets which are issued by staff across the campus. This token economy system is redeemed for prizes at the parent run “Student Store.” In an effort to meet students’ growing social and emotional needs, Coyote Canyon employs two full-time counselors. This has helped to create an atmosphere of empathy and respect. Coyote Canyon’s counselors provide mental health support through prevention and intervention activities including, whole group character lessons, small group counseling, individual counseling, and social groups at recess with board games and physical activities. The counselors work closely with a student’s teacher to develop individual “Focus Plans” with the goal of empowering students with the social skills and tools to thrive. Additionally, the Coyote Canyon staff believe building relationships and character is essential to student engagement. Throughout the year, students participate in a character education initiative. This program highlights three essential pillars, “Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and be Safe.” Character traits are spotlighted in many different settings: monthly calendars, morning announcements, classroom lessons, books read by the librarian, and peers recognizing one another. Students are selected for recognition based on exemplifying these traits at a schoolwide assembly each trimester where teachers, staff, parents, and students celebrate their achievements. A variety of enrichment programs and clubs are also offered to students to further promote positive engagement, including Math League, Engineering, Leadership, after-school soccer and track, choir and our district’s own in-house daycare program, “Kid Central.” These additional courses provide children with experiences to explore various topics and interests independently of their regular educational day. They allow students to navigate group environments and collaborate with peers outside of their regular classroom. This assists in building social skills, boosts self-confidence, and creates friendships they might not otherwise have the chance to make.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

The staff uses a collective synergy to create a superior learning environment that is caring, supportive, but most importantly inclusive. For this reason Coyote Canyon funds a Parent Community Involvement Coordinator that oversees opportunities to seek parent input and promote participation. Family members and the community take part in: the school’s volunteer group, family nights, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the English Language Advisory Council (ELAC), the School Site Council (SSC), special events, and parent education workshops. For instance, the PTO plans a multi-cultural event called, “The Flight.” This activity commences with students voting on a country that they wish to visit. The winning country is announced and the community at-large designs a spectacular day that starts from a simulation of an airplane, landing in the chosen country and then exploring the food, dress and culture of this region. This affair allows parents, community members, staff, and students to come together to celebrate each other. Another schoolwide event, the “Fall Bash,” also brings the extended community together - many returning students and parents attend this annual fair. Career Day is yet another activity that encourages the community to share their time, knowledge and abilities with students. Volunteers too are welcomed and celebrated! The staff knows caring members of the community bring new energies and resources and expand the walls of the classrooms by enriching the educational program and strengthening relationships. Parent advisory groups such as ELAC and SSC are collaborative meetings for (1) discussing programs and services, (2) developing the annual improvement plan, and (3) monitoring outcomes. Moreover, they assist with making decisions on parent engagement and safety. The staff have a long tradition of understanding the value of community input. Consequently, these advisory groups are more than a “rubber stamp” - members are encouraged to ask thoughtful and challenging questions. Engaging families and community members also calls for an



exceptional communication system to promote positive relationships and most importantly trust. Therefore, communication is a priority and not an afterthought. It is approached strategically and is an integral part of the day-to-day operations. A multitude of tools are used to reach stakeholders including, electronic newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, an online grading system, texts, a mass notification system (Blackboard Connect), and paper notifications. As such, parents are informed regularly through these mediums of students' academic achievements, programs, and opportunities. The staff strives to make all stakeholders feel as though they belong and are an integral part of the educational process.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

What is at the center of Coyote Canyon's dedicated and talented staff is their belief in John Hattie's work - "Visible Learning." There has been a cohesive and comprehensive focus towards learning and implementing the tenets of this educational research. For the past four years, the staff has committed to professional development in order to help all students in becoming assessment-capable learners. "Assessment Capable" means students understand what they are supposed to learn, monitor their own progress, set goals, and reflect on their own learning. Coyote Canyon has systematically focused on trainings to help students understand if they have met learning targets and in what areas they need extra help. The focal point of this approach is in assisting students to know where they are going, how they are going to get there, and where they are going next. This professional development has allowed students and staff to articulate their needs in the continuous learning process. As part of the implementation of Visible Learning, teachers participate in regular instructional rounds or walkthroughs, providing each other with meaningful feedback. These peer observations help the practitioners to develop a shared-understanding of high-quality instruction and serves to calibrate their understanding of an assessment capable learner. Teachers at Coyote Canyon not only inspire each other, they inspire other educators throughout the district to work collaboratively and provide and receive ideas. As such, educators from other sites often visit and observe. In addition to the schoolwide professional development, a professional culture is further created through a commitment to the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). This past year, all teachers received follow-up PLC training by a consultant, who was well versed in the tenets of Visible Learning. Weekly PLCs are devoted to sharing expertise and working collaboratively to improve collegian teaching skills. An outcome of these weekly discussions also serves to identify additional staff development needs for a grade level or content area. Individual professional growth is also highly supported by the administration. At the beginning of each year, teachers develop personal goals and objectives. Mutually agreed upon trainings and workshops are typically a part of these plans of action. As a result of schoolwide, grade level, and individual professional growth endeavors, there is an embedded culture of learning - one where staff members continuously seek, share, and apply new knowledge and skills to improve themselves and the educational organization.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Coyote Canyon Elementary practices distributed leadership. The principal believes in mobilizing leadership expertise at all levels in order to generate opportunities for change and build capacity for improvement. Partnerships of authority and shared decision-making are an integral part of this philosophy. The administration recognizes that not just a person in a formal leadership position has leadership capabilities, but also the quiet colleague who assists with research on instructional practices, the custodian who coordinates parent groups for campus beautification, the student who devises a plan for an anti-bullying activity, or the outgoing team member who facilitates a staff development activity. As such, the principal intentionally nurtures and capitalizes on shared leadership in order to build the capacity of individuals and the organization.

For instance, the Leadership Team is composed of various stakeholders. This team drives the school improvement process by analyzing data, and brainstorms potential annual goals and actions. These ideas are then vetted by parents on the School Site Council (SSC) and English Language Advisory Council (ELAC) for their thoughts and additional ideas. Once all stakeholders have provided feedback, a draft plan is developed and only approved when all members of the SSC reach consensus. Another example of the distributed leadership structure at Coyote Canyon is the School Access Team (SAT). This team meets bi-monthly and is responsible for coordinating the implementation of their systems of support for academics,

behavior, and social-emotional interventions. Finally, student leadership is yet another tier to this leadership model. Coyote Canyon has developed a leadership group with approximately 25-30 students and is open to any fourth grader (the highest grade level). They work closely with teacher leaders and the principal to have their voices heard and choices brought to life by facilitating schoolwide theme days, conducting peer tutoring sessions, and mentoring students at recess. After each holiday or break, the Leadership team literally rolls out a red carpet and lines the carpet cheering students back to school. These leaders serve as role models for their younger peers. Thus, the administration willingly taps into the knowledge and skill sets of everyone in order to develop an engaging and positive climate. As a result, Coyote Canyon has become a place where (1) adults collaborate and create a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, (2) students learn and are connected to the adults, and (3) inclusiveness is both a vision and practice to ensure everyone is engaged.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Four years ago, Coyote Canyon researched John Hattie's work, Visible Learning - comparing the effect sizes of aspects influencing learning outcomes. Hattie's research showed an RtI program yielded a 1.29 effect size. An effect size of this magnitude could yield three years of growth in one year. This meant staff could leverage a process that could ramp up student achievement. Thus, staff moved to create a schoolwide English Language Arts (ELA) intervention and titled the program - "Universal Access."

The Universal Access (UA) program is purposely designed not as a stand-alone RtI program but supported by schoolwide systems including: Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Learning Talks, and teacher-led classroom observations. The RtI portion ensures every student participates in supplemental ELA instruction in addition to their core ELA block. To form groups, all students are assessed at the beginning of the year and reassessed every eight weeks. All students receive this targeted instruction including English Language Learners (ELLs), Students with Disabilities, and Gifted and Talented Education students.

In order to share effective instructional practices, weekly PLC time is a commitment. For 45 minutes each week, grade level teams share their expertise to improve collegial skills. In addition, all teachers engage in trimester Learning Talks where teachers meet individually with their principal to monitor student growth. This allows them to celebrate successes and discuss further interventions for students lacking progress. Another part of the UA program is Coyote Canyon's Visible Learning Team. This team conducts classroom observations focusing on student learning during RtI. During these walkthroughs valuable and respected feedback is shared.

There is strong evidence that the practices put in place by the staff have garnered positive outcomes. Quantitative results from the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments (SBA) indicate school-wide gains for the past three years. In 2016, 54.0% of Coyote Canyon students "Met" or "Exceeded" the state standards for English Language Arts (ELA). Last year, results for this same measure were 71.7% which is a 17.7% gain. Another indicator showing positive results is the gap analysis between the White and Hispanic students. SBA results show the ELA gap closing for Hispanic students by 9 percentage points for this same time period. When examining these same results for ELLs the ELA achievement gap is also closing.

Thus, all of these components of the UA program: RtI, Learning Talks, PLCs, and Visible Learning walkthroughs come together to make Coyote's model practice a true success!