

U.S. Department of Education
2020 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 Dr. Andrew Heughins
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Ethan B. Allen Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 16200 Bushard Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Fountain Valley State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92708-1505

County California (CA)

Telephone (714) 663-6228 Fax (714) 663-6201

Web site/URL https://allen.ggusd.us/ E-mail ahughins@ggusd.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* Dr. Gabriela Mafi E-mail gmafi@ggusd.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Garden Grove Unified Tel. (714) 663-6000

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 Walter Muneton
(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 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

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):
- 45 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 9 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 62 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	2	8	10
K	29	32	61
1	44	41	85
2	40	41	81
3	41	34	75
4	58	50	108
5	60	58	118
6	75	57	132
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	349	321	670

*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
 - 77.4 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 7.8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 3.9 % White
 - 10.6 % 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: 1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	9
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	670
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

Arabic, Cantonese, Filipino (Tagalog), Hindi, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin (Putonghua), Other non-English, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 14 %
95 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31 %

Total number students who qualify: 209

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %

49 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>7</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10

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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 27:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
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.

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. 2011

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

As Mountaineers we CLIMB! We have character and are life-long learners with integrity and motivation. We strive to be our best selves! We are proud to Climb as mountaineers!

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

Ethan Allen Elementary is one of 45 elementary schools in the Garden Grove Unified School District and serves grades K-6 from the cities of Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, Santa Ana, and Westminster, located in Orange County, California. The population at Ethan Allen is comprised of the following: 77.4% Asian American, 7.8% Hispanic, 0.3% Pacific Islander, 3.9%, White, and 10.6% two or more races. Ethan Allen is a Title I school with 670 students, including 11 gifted and talented education (GATE) classrooms and a special education program for full inclusion students.

The professional learning environment of Ethan Allen Elementary consists of a dedicated staff, outstanding students, and active parents. Our mission follows the Garden Grove School District's Strategic Plan which states that we prepare all students to be successful and responsible citizens who contribute and thrive in a diverse society. To that end, the Allen teachers are committed to providing rigorous and supportive academic experiences that motivate all learners to meet high expectations and achieve lifelong success.

At Ethan Allen, which is one of three GATE schools in the school district, we strive to create a rigorous academic program and employ strategies that meet the diverse needs of the various learners who attend our school. All teachers are trained to use GATE strategies which involve the differentiation of the curriculum to provide a challenge beyond the core content. They also provide instruction that leads students to study content more deeply and in a complex way. Furthermore, teachers lead problem-based investigations in order to foster creative, innovative, and inventive thinking.

Another key strategy employed at Ethan Allen is using a flexible learning environment. With flexible seating, students create their own learning space so they can better collaborate, communicate, and engage in critical thinking. This strategy reduces sedentary time periods for our active students and avoids the restrictiveness found in traditional seating. Ultimately, the students develop the skills necessary to conduct meaningful conversations, reflect on their learning, and better articulate their knowledge and understanding of academic content.

In addition to these key strategies, Ethan Allen has implemented an innovative program we refer to as a Student-Focused Learning Environment, emphasizing the district's goals of developing the student both academically and personally for life long success. Our school mascot is the Mountaineers, and our motto is CLIMB, which stands for character building, life-long learning, integrity, motivation, and being your best self. Under this innovative program, Ethan Allen sets itself apart through the use of CLIMB Time and our Individualized Homework Policy.

Climb Time is a 9-week elective program that runs in three sessions throughout the year. This program gives students the opportunity to choose from a variety of teacher-led extracurricular opportunities that meet students' individual learning styles and interests, as well as introduces them to new skills in areas such as visual and performing arts and computer sciences. These self-selected classes help students connect to other students and teachers, increase student engagement, and lead to subsequent learning in a variety of subject matters.

Our Individualized Homework policy is a school-wide program that allows the students to base their study skills on their own needs and interests. Rather than use the blanket "one size fits all" approach like daily practice pages and homework packets, our teachers assign relevant, meaningful, and purposeful assignments that focus on high-interest and engaging topics.

Receiving a National Blue Ribbon School Award means that a school must maintain its excellence in providing the highest quality education. As a recipient of this prestigious award in 2011, Ethan Allen has been evolving and adapting with the constant changes happening in education in order to meet the varying needs of its students. With the evolution of technology and the philosophy that we must prepare our students for lifelong personal and practical success in the real world, we have expanded our library of mobile learning devices, including Chromebooks and iPads, as well as our computer science programs through CLIMB Time. We have also created a STEM lab, a space where students work on inquiry-based

learning, connecting all four STEM subjects. There, the students observe and experience classes that include, but are not limited to, robotics, 3-D printing, green screen filming, and science lab experiments.

Since receiving the award in 2011, we have broadened our perspective on education by embracing our new common core state standards and 21st century learning skills. Not only have we increased our resources, we have also focused on professional development even more through instructional leadership team (ILT) meetings about student-focused learning environment. These teams have observed the practice of flexible seating, elective programs (like CLIMB time), and individualized homework policies throughout schools in Orange County and within our school district. These collaborative meetings and subsequent training's have been a major impetus to the innovative programs and strategies at Ethan Allen.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Ethan Allen, a whole-child approach is taken during our daily instruction. Students receive high quality instruction through the use of engagement strategies, differentiation, and the belief that all students can succeed. State standards are taught with board-adopted curriculum and research-based instructional approaches. Ethan Allen is focused on providing high quality instruction to all of its students through whole group, small group, individual, and project-based learning models.

With students in the GATE (gifted and talented education) program, general education, as well as SPED (special education), we believe in individualized instruction to meet the diverse needs of our learners. Formative and summative assessment data provides feedback to support ongoing instruction in each of the curricular areas as well as to determine where and when to provide intervention opportunities. Our effective instruction model is evident in each of the core subjects as teachers present, demonstrate and gradually release the cognitive thinking onto the students.

Infused during the guided practice phase of our effective instruction model are engagement strategies. Teachers consider all learning modalities when creating lessons and utilize multiple interactive structures to keep student engagement high. Some of these structures include think-pair-share, walk and talk, numbered heads and lines of communication. These structures not only keep students engaged but provide a means for students to discuss the content and to share their learning. The teachers at Ethan Allen are skilled at monitoring these student-to-student classroom interactions, and immediately providing feedback or clarification to keep their lessons moving forward.

In addition, Ethan Allen incorporates technology to enhance, as well as support, state standards by utilizing a variety of digital platforms for instructional and student use. Teachers regularly utilize technology to foster engagement as well as student productivity and creativity, thereby cultivating an authentic joy in the learning process.

1b. Reading/English language arts

To address English Language Arts (ELA) standards, the teachers at Ethan Allen utilize many instructional strategies. To begin, dedicating specific parts of their day towards the core areas of ELA, including reading comprehension, foundational skills, grammar and writing, provides a structure by which we can ensure all students' needs are met. Instructional minutes vary by grade level to support the varying developmental needs of our kindergarten through sixth grade students. Students receive whole group instruction daily with our effective instruction model and multiple engagement strategies.

Students also take part in small group reading instruction. Each day, students are given the opportunity to meet with their teacher in a small group setting to enrich and/or review necessary skills in reading. Students are guided and supported with their teacher facilitating in rich discussion surrounding text from the base program. With teachers as the facilitators, they engage students in the learning through their teacher modeling and questioning techniques to support the skill or strategy being emphasized. Whether in small groups or whole groups, the teachers consistently collect formative data on their students' abilities during English Language Arts. Formative assessments include student-based discussions and responses, quick writes regarding a prompt related to the weekly reading, as well as fluency and foundational skills.

Additionally, close reading is utilized during the week to support students in thinking critically around specific aspects of a piece of text. Strategies such as Socratic seminars and student discourse encourage students to hold discussions of deeper meaning by allowing students to take the lead in the discussion while the teacher monitors and continues to pose questions to encourage deeper thought processes. Students are encouraged to be authentic readers and writers; therefore, autonomy is promoted.

Through a district-wide initiative, students engage in WIN (What I Need) time during ELA. This time is dedicated to meeting students' individual needs. After collecting and analyzing the formative data from their weeks' lessons, teachers meet with small groups of students to deliver intervention and/or enrichment lessons in ELA during WIN time two days per week. Students not engaged in the small group lessons have autonomy in choosing their own reading material and responding in a journal, with another peer, or utilizing technology if that is what motivates the student.

In addition to autonomy during WIN Time, teachers encourage students to discover their passions within their writing. Teachers strive to approach writing lessons keeping in mind that they are teaching writers, not correcting student writing. With this mindset, students view themselves as authors and are therefore motivated to research and cultivate writing with a passion. Students at Ethan Allen show great success in writing when it is approached from this teaching perspective. Trimester benchmark assessments in ELA and writing provide summative data that the teachers analyze to ensure appropriate opportunities are provided in reviewing skills as needed, as well as encouraging students to excel further in the grade level standards.

1c. Mathematics

Mathematics is taught with the diverse needs of our students in mind. Daily instructional minutes are dedicated to developing mathematical fluency as well as working towards mastery in grade level standards. Each day, students practice strategies in mathematical fluency. Teachers work with students to develop mental math strategies as well as problem solving strategies for word problems and procedural problems during daily math fluency.

Academic discourse is a crucial strategy utilized across all grades as students share and discuss the variety of mathematical approaches taken to solve problems. This strategy of peer discussion allows students to be reflective of their learning as they share with one another, but also provides teachers with formative feedback regarding student understanding. With teachers as the facilitator, they highlight specific strategies students share so as to reinforce efficiency and multiple approaches to solve problems.

Outside of the daily mathematical fluency block, students participate in math lessons with a methodical approach from the teacher. Students are provided hands-on learning with the use of math manipulatives and tools to build conceptual understanding of math ideas. Utilizing a district-wide strategy called a Hinge, teachers embed formative assessment questions within their conceptual math lessons. These Hinge questions allow teachers to receive immediate feedback on how their students are gaining understanding of specific concepts and provides teachers with information on how much scaffolding is needed to support the students' needs. As teachers move into procedural lessons, teachers utilize the information from their Hinge questions to build the connection between conceptual knowledge and procedural skills.

In addition, based on formative data from math fluency and conceptual lessons, teachers provide small group math instruction to extend student learning as well as to scaffold and support students struggling to obtain a mathematical concept. Through a process called the task-question-evidence (T-Q-E), teachers create cognitively demanding tasks for students to engage in while in a small group with the teacher, so that the teacher can effectively meet individual student needs.

Teachers are also trained in asking students thoughtful questions related to the Mathematical Practice Standards. They encourage students to think and act like mathematicians so that skills and strategies may carry over multiple topics.

Teachers gain evidence of student learning through student work as well as oral and written responses. The teachers intentionally build their students' understanding of mathematical ideas from conceptual to procedural so that students may engage in relational knowledge lessons. Furthermore, students at Ethan Allen are challenged with real world problems to solve within groups, pairs, and as individuals. Students work to apply what they have learned conceptually and procedurally to these rigorous problems with the teacher acting as a coach through the solving process. This allows the cognitive load to be on the students so that the teacher may collect data on their understanding.

In addition to the ongoing formative feedback received during small and whole group discussions, teachers regularly give unit assessments and trimester benchmark assessments to collect summative data on student performance, which is utilized to influence their small groups, tasks, and pacing of lessons moving forward.

1d. Science

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) have allowed our teachers at Allen to begin to create a greater emphasis on STEM at our school. Students explore the science and engineering practices through hands-on exploration with the 5E Instructional Model (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate).

The 5E model is a process in which students first engage in a discussion of a phenomena within the world. Teachers build upon students' background knowledge and natural curiosity of the world through group discussions and questions. Next, students explore through interactive lessons which support problem solving and critical thinking as well as student collaboration. As students explore they begin to come up with explanations regarding what they discovered through the teacher lead explorations. As students explain, and through intentional teacher questioning, teachers formatively assess how students are interpreting the results of their explorations. Utilizing this formative data, teachers make decisions on how to provide instruction and context to allow for elaboration of student ideas. Lastly, students evaluate the work that has been done by one another. End of unit assessments act as summative data for teachers to analyze student performance and determine future lessons where student needs may be addressed. Creating lessons within the 5E design allows teachers to tap into their students' background knowledge and interest, but also provides multiple opportunities for students to ask questions and explore the content in an authentic way.

At Ethan Allen, we have created a space where teachers can bring their students outside of their classroom and into a lab to explore science. Teachers provide instruction to engage students with activities that allow them to explore the major areas of science for their grade. Utilizing the informational text from our ELA base curriculum, teachers make connections between stories and articles read during ELA and what is being explored in science. Integrating subjects, such as ELA and math with science, supports our students by providing more opportunities for our students to think about these science topics throughout the day.

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

Much like the other curricular areas, social studies lessons come to life with an interactive lesson design. Students explore the topics presented in their grade level through hands-on interaction and group discussions. Teachers follow the Effective Instruction model to engage students in an inquiry process where students ask questions and wonder about the social studies content. Utilizing our base program, students participate in games and other activities to develop an understanding of the standards they are being taught. Teachers also use the social studies program's digital slide shows to keep engagement high as students explore the lesson with their teacher. During this presentation phase, teachers are encouraging students to share their natural curiosity about the content and clarify ideas and vocabulary for students throughout the lesson.

Students interact with the content in a variety of ways, including peer groups, whole groups, and individual research. During units of study, students may be found keeping notes and journals to share their learning with one another or creating a project to display and present to their teacher and peers. Teachers regularly monitor student learning through formative means. Through the journals students keep, to thoughtful questions posed by the teacher, formative data is collected in an ongoing manner during social studies instruction. Teachers utilize this data to make informed instructional decisions to meet students' needs. End of chapter tests provide teachers with summative data. The results of these summative assessments are used to guide next steps in teacher instruction for upcoming units.

In addition to studying social studies standards, students at Ethan Allen have leadership opportunities through our student council. The teachers and students work collaboratively to create meaningful activities to engage all students in civic learning. From spreading kindness to one another by holding posters to

students and families at morning drop off, to creating digital Monday Morning Announcements, Ethan Allen has students and staff dedicated to learning about and sharing civic responsibilities.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Ethan Allen provides students with multiple opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities within our learning community. We have a strong commitment to Performing and Visual Arts, starting with a cohesive music program that every student participates in weekly, starting in kindergarten. Upper graders extend their musical knowledge through participation in our instrumental programs and our school chorus. We have an annual Lunar New Year festival in which students from each grade level participate by performing a dance or skit. In addition, our school participates in Disney Musicals in Schools, which gives 3rd through 6th graders the opportunity to learn performing arts and teamwork through acting, singing, dancing, stage management, lighting, and sound. In addition, kindergarten through 6th grade students support our program through visual art projects, and also get to see the musical theater performance each year as part of their school day. Our students expand their knowledge of Visual Arts through Art Masters classes and participation in our district art showcase.

As part of our goal to create a learning community at our school, we have several shared spaces where students can come together to learn beyond their classrooms. Our school has a library that all students have the opportunity to visit weekly. In addition, we are building a technology lab that currently houses a green screen area for filming and 3-D printers for our students to engage in 3-D design. We utilize our outdoor spaces for school-wide assemblies every week, our annual Lunar New Year festival, and our physical education programs. Beyond our regular PE classes, we have a weekly running club for our primary students, and sporting events such as softball, 5th and 6th grade flag football leagues, and March Madness basketball tournament. Having spaces that our students feel welcome in beyond their classroom helps them to feel connected and at home everywhere on campus.

Our school provides our students with many opportunities to develop leadership skills, character, and citizenship. Upper grade classrooms are paired up with primary classrooms, and these “buddy classes” allow our students to make connections, mentor younger students, and develop new skills together. Common activities for buddy classes include technology, coding, reading, and visual art. In addition, we have an active Student Council that includes elected fourth, fifth, and sixth grade officers as well as representatives from each first through sixth grade classes. These student leaders plan spirit days, record weekly Monday Morning Announcement videos, and run our Friday Flag Ceremonies.

One of the most effective ways that we bring extracurricular classes to our entire student body is through CLIMB Time. CLIMB Time embodies our desire to make our entire school a learning community and to meet our students’ social-emotional needs by providing them with unique opportunities to deepen their passions and explore new interests with students and teachers from across all grade levels.

We have three CLIMB Time sessions throughout the year, and each session lasts nine weeks. This gives students the chance to try three different classes each year. Classes cover a wide range of topics. Our arts offerings include performing arts, such as dance, theater, improv, music, and visual arts such as drawing, mixed media, and photography. We also have classes in technology including coding, 3-D design and printing, and computer skills. Our last group of classes encompass critical thinking, life skills, and teamwork, such as wood working, cooking science, Lego challenge, board game design, introduction to foreign languages, and sports.

CLIMB Time occurs once a week for our entire student body. Each teacher conducts a different extra-curricular class that welcomes classes from a variety of grade levels. Mixing students from different classes and grades supports our students social-emotional needs by allowing them to build relationships beyond their classroom. Older students have the opportunity to mentor younger students, and younger students get

to develop relationships with their older schoolmates. As students and teachers get to know each other in this environment, it helps build connections schoolwide, allowing teachers to help support the social-emotional needs of our students as they feel cared for by all of our staff.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Teachers meet the needs of our students who are performing below grade level in a variety of ways. Our base language arts program, Wonders, includes an intervention program called Wonderworks that has support lessons for all components of our language arts program. Teachers administer assessments and use the data to tailor their instruction to the individual needs of students, using tier 2 and tier 3 support as needed. Tier 2 includes extra supports such as small group instruction within a classroom, and tier 3 support may include pull out programs with our education specialist staff.

Teachers collaborate weekly and develop differentiated lessons to help support the needs of all students. Within daily lessons, time is built in to work with small groups to support students' learning. In math, for example, a small group time may be the opportunity to review skills that are needed to successfully solve math problems, and will focus on math conversations, allowing all students the opportunity to practice their math language and ability to explain their thinking. Language Arts small group instruction may include using differentiated books to practice phonics or comprehension at a scaffolded level to help students grow their academic abilities with the support they need to improve their skills.

In addition, our individualized homework policy ensures that students who are performing below grade level have access to homework opportunities that help them with their specific needs, while ensuring that the assignments are within students' capabilities so that they feel successful when completing them.

3b. Students performing above grade level

As one of the district's three GATE (gifted and talented education) schools, we have a high population of students performing above grade level. Our GATE teachers receive regular trainings in GATE strategies as well as supporting the social-emotional needs of our gifted population. Through regular collaboration, teachers plan and share differentiated lessons so that all students performing above grade level have access to high quality instruction.

Our school utilizes a number of strategies to engage students who are performing above grade level. We differentiate our base program using the depth, complexity, and content imperative icons, which allows students to access the material in more challenging ways, for example, by looking for patterns in math, ethical issues in history, or motivations in language arts. Students expand on our base program through lessons engaging "Think Like a Disciplinarian," where they look at different units of study through the perspectives of real-world scholars such as "Think like a Writer," "Think like a Biologist," or "Think like a Historian."

Finally, our individualized homework policy supports the needs of our above-grade-level performers by providing them with at home opportunities that are engaging, rather than rote assignments on topics these students have already mastered. A popular example of a homework project is a Passion Project, which is a high-level research project based on students' interests. Students choose a topic of interest and develop high level research questions. They present their findings to the class and others through oral and visual presentations. Giving all students, including our above-grade-level students, the tools to differentiate and have ownership over their learning empowers them to challenge themselves in all content areas.

3c. Special education

The basis for support for students identified for special education at Allen is the individualized educational plan (IEP). Each IEP is developed to create goals and supports for students with special needs or disabilities. Our school psychologist, education specialist, and the classroom teacher individually assess

each student. The special education team uses the data to develop a plan for intervention that may include the education specialist providing push-in or pull-out support to meet student needs in their areas of lower performance such as social, vocational, or emotional. This support may happen on a daily or weekly basis depending on each child's needs.

Our push-in support is a time when our education specialist and her team provides support within the general education classroom setting. The education specialist collaborates with the general education teacher to provide accommodations within the classroom and supports the teacher with strategies to use throughout the day. Accommodations are also developed as a team to be used during instruction in all settings and on assignments and assessments. Accommodations may include providing notes that may be used for instruction and on tests or providing additional time for assignments and assessments.

Pull-out intervention includes opportunities for students to work one-on-one or in small groups with the education specialist to practice skills and strategies needed to be successful within the general education classroom. The education specialist and general education teachers work together as a team to meet the individual needs of our special education students.

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

To support our English Language Learner (ELL) population, Allen students receive a designated daily thirty minutes of instruction in English Language Development (ELD). ELLs participate in instruction with their peers of similar language abilities. Through this differentiation, Allen students are given targeted instruction based on their needs. Teachers utilize our Wonders program to deliver engaging and interactive lessons to support students in developing English skills in reading, listening, speaking and writing. Teachers encourage all students to participate and remain engaged in the lessons with a variety of strategies such as choral response, write and pass, and four corners. During ELD time, students engage with text from within our ELA program to support their academic and language success. Our designated ELD instruction provides students with an additional opportunity in their day to practice how English works.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Creating 21st Century Student-Focused Learning Environments using flexible seating, giving students choice and power in their education during CLIMB time, and empowering them to make decisions about meaningful study habits for homework provides our students multiple opportunities to take ownership of their learning on a daily basis. Students are able to learn and grow in environments that suit their individual needs and learning styles. They leave our school with the communication skills that are necessary to increase their understanding in all subject areas through rigorous discourse and the ability to defend their thinking with accurate evidence. As our students recite weekly, “As Mountaineers we CLIMB! We have character and are life-long learners with integrity and motivation. We strive to be our best selves! We are proud to Climb as mountaineers!” Ethan Allen scholars leave our school prepared to take on any challenge they may encounter.

Implementing a student-focused learning environment among our students has improved the quality of student discussions, the responsibility students have taken towards ownership of their learning, and their ability to express their knowledge and understanding. During language arts instruction we observe rigorous discussion, as it has become an expected part of students’ routines. Students work collaboratively to actively engage about what they are reading. Students show greater understanding of challenging texts across the curriculum they encounter by posing their own questions to their classmates, listening and responding to each other’s thinking, and frequently incorporating evidence of their ideas without being prompted. Math discussions have become richer as well, as students regularly look for a variety of ways to approach problems and expand on each other’s ideas to ensure understanding of mathematical concepts.

Skills learned through our student-focused learning environment have become increasingly ingrained into students’ personal learning repertoires. Students have learned to take ownership of their own learning by increasing their discussions independently and by prompting each other to provide evidence, think more deeply, and clarify ideas when needed. They do so respectfully and understand that students may learn differently. Their empathy is evident when they listen without judgment of the other learners. As a result, the students have more pride in their ideas and have learned to be risk-takers. Scholars now naturally take ownership of their learning in other areas, including science and social studies to explore these subjects on deeper levels. In addition, their written responses have grown in sophistication, as learners begin to automatically support their ideas in writing with evidence and clear explanations.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Ethan Allen feels strongly that an important part of our role in the community is to connect with our parents as much as possible. To that end, we are constantly looking to share ways that they can support their students’ learning and improve student achievement. We offer a variety of parent training sessions, including GATE parent meetings, which provide special support and strategies for parents of GATE students and a GATE bridge program that helps transition new GATE students and parents into the GATE program. This program ensures that parents gain valuable insight into the program to familiarize them with the curriculum and models of instruction.

Ethan Allen also utilizes a communication tool called ParentSquare, which is a platform where administrators and teachers can give parents information about school events, communicate about their child, share photos of class happenings, and make classroom-related requests. Parents can comment and communicate their questions, concerns, and other pertinent information that they would like the teacher to know. The most important feature of this app is that messages and posts can be translated into their home language so that all of our parents have access to the information we are sending out.

Another important part of Ethan Allen is that we have an Open Campus policy which allows parents to come on campus before school and after school. They can also visit during their child’s lunch hour so they can spend quality family time together. We believe that making this opportunity available to parents fosters

a warm, welcoming environment that benefits both our students and parents.

The Ethan Allen Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is an integral part of our school because it helps provide a closer relationship between school and home. Our PTO supports different programs and fundraises for school supplies, playground equipment, field trips, family nights, etc. We have all worked with establishments like Wendy's, Chipotle, and other local businesses in order to support various student activities.

As a school community, endorsing an environment centralized around academics and scholarly behavior is of high priority. Yet, we do not fail to acknowledge that our students are children and that they need opportunities to celebrate their childhood. At Allen, we offer a number of educational activities that help our students grow socially and emotionally, and we invite parents to join in these celebrations. Our goal is to aid our students in maintaining a healthy balance between academics, social relationships, and emotional support. These activities include our annual Lunar New Year Festival to celebrate the Asian New Year, sporting events, a talent show, and the Disney in School Musical Theater program. All of these activities bring together the students, the staff, and the parents so that we create a strong and united community all for the benefit of each child.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The state standards and district goals are the underlying foundations for all professional development. A systemic professional development plan is in place on site and is based on district-mandated training's combined with on-site professional development initiated through informal and formal staff surveys and leadership team representatives. These workshops are available on a monthly basis.

As one of the district-designated GATE schools, Ethan Allen teachers participate in both mandatory and optional GATE training's. These training's include monthly meetings, weekend conferences, summer institutes, and specialized one day training's. First year GATE teachers participate in Rookie Rap, a forum in which they can share and discuss their needs with one another and with the district GATE coordinator. Second year GATE teachers participate in Collegial Support, where they participate in a release day and observe a GATE lesson in a veteran teacher's classroom and develop their own differentiated lesson plans.

Finally, our staff participates in weekly collaborations on Wednesdays. The topics of these meetings are mutually determined between the teacher and the principal. Collaborations are flexible, based on teacher's needs. The meetings can consist of grade level teams, vertical teams, or whole staff. These meetings give teachers the opportunity to follow up on district trainings and implement school-wide and grade level programs.

4. School Leadership:

Ethan Allen utilizes a collaborative decision-making model with the goal of creating the best environment possible for students. Leadership at Ethan Allen begins with the school site council, composed of parents, teachers, administrators and classified staff and provides the opportunity for input from all stakeholders in our school community. The school site council has the primary responsibility for developing the single plan for student achievement (SPSA), a document that establishes and monitors specific goals for the school and approves the categorical budgets.

The SPSA becomes the guide utilized to focus the efforts of all stakeholders. The plan provides for interventions for at-risk students and professional development for teachers and staff. In addition, we have allocated resources to ensure that parents are an integral part of meeting our school goals by providing parent training programs.

Besides the school site council, Ethan Allen also has a leadership team, comprised of a teacher from each grade level. The grade-level representatives' duties include attending monthly leadership team meetings and district-sponsored leadership academies, creating and maintaining weekly collaboration agendas, and leading weekly collaboration meetings. The principal works with the leadership team to support the sharing

of best practices, identifies student intervention needs, and allocates school resources to successfully meet school-wide goals.

In addition to the leadership team, there are many other opportunities for teachers to demonstrate leadership skills as a model for students. Our campus has tech teachers who are trained at the district level to teach the staff various technology programs and skills such as Google Suite, coding, and digital citizenship. There are also student council advisors who help students run events, fundraisers, spirit activities, as well as develop their speaking and technology skills through green screen filming. Many teachers have also volunteered to take leadership roles in the Ethan Allen theater department as directors, producers, and managers. We have a group of teachers who run our large Lunar New Year Festival, working with parents and the community to bring this cultural celebration to Ethan Allen. Throughout all these activities, the principal and staff work together to model and teach good leadership skills to the students.

All the stakeholders at Ethan Allen are a community of leaders who share the same strong vision of excellence in student achievement. It's through the range of leadership opportunities provided at Ethan Allen that we all come together and move the vision forward.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that has been most instrumental in our success has been the adoption of flexible seating. Through the use of flexible seating, we generate spaces that facilitate movement which in turn create the best learning opportunities for our students. These spaces allow students to work in the closer proximity needed for effective collaboration, which has led to the building of stronger relationships, as well as the creation of ideal conditions for the 4C's of 21st century learning: collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication

Movement and the creation of space is what differentiates a flexible seating classroom from a traditional classroom. Movement is the use of the tools (furniture) to meet the needs of the learners. This is much easier if tables, chairs, and other items are on wheels and easily moved. Additionally, the use of a variety of tables and work areas greatly facilitates the movement of the furniture to best meet the needs of the learning. When all the furniture looks the same, the impulse to line them up in rows or geometric shapes and leave them there seems to be overwhelming. A choice of workspace encourages students and teachers to create the ideal space for the specific task.

Creating proximity is essential to building the 4C's within a classroom. If you observe students interact on the playground or when sharing their technology; the proximity is not only close, but often immediately adjacent to those with whom they are interacting. Collaboration in a traditional classroom often resembles a family around a dinner table. Collaboration in a flexible classroom looks like a team in a huddle.

Any organization that works with large numbers of people, either as employees or customers, depends on the development of positive relationships with those people. Yet schools which have both employees and customers (students) places the teacher in a position that inhibits the development of relationships. For years, schools have been trying to get teachers out of the front of the room, away from the chalkboard/white board, and now LCD projectors. However the fundamental problem remained that even if the teacher left the front of the room, the 30+ desks, kidney tables and other work spaces, inhibited the teacher from reaching the majority of the students to interact with them in a way that allowed for the building of relationships. Class size is not as much a limiting factor as much as the teacher's ability to physically reach the students. Flexible seating encourages a variety of groupings that allows the teacher to reach students for meaningful interaction. Here at Ethan Allen, these interactions lead to the development of trust between student and teacher that allows for creativity and innovation to flourish in the classroom.