

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 [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9966 I Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Hesperia State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92345-5482

County San Bernardino

Telephone (760) 948-4333 Fax (760) 948-9333

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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* Ms. Debra Tarver E-mail debbie.tarver@lepacademy.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy Tel. (760) 948-4333

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Ron Griffin
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	0	0	0
K	35	48	83
1	35	40	75
2	30	43	73
3	23	33	56
4	33	34	67
5	34	21	55
6	25	23	48
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	215	242	457

*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
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2.2 % Black or African American
 - 77 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 16.6 % White
 - 2 % 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: 8%

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	17
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	36
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	447
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 22 %
99 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 67 %
Total number students who qualify: 306

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %

21 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>15</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: 12

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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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	96%	94%	97%	98%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

Provide an innovative, classical educational program that enables all scholars to learn skills, acquire knowledge, apply wisdom and develop character within a rich, diverse and nurturing learning environment.

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

We conduct an annual lottery for the available openings each year. Remaining applicants are placed on a waiting list and when an opening becomes available, we contact the parents from the waiting list in sequential order until all spots are filled.

PART III - SUMMARY

LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy (LEPA) serves the Southern California High Desert community of Hesperia, as well as other surrounding cities. Doors first opened for the 2008-2009 school year with less than 12 teachers and approximately 120 scholars in an empty strip mall. What LEPA lacked in size and resources, was made up in grit and determination to succeed and provide the best education possible. Within 4 years, we outgrew the strip mall and moved to our current facility. We eagerly await the opening of our own campus in July 2020. Our student enrollment is 457 scholars in grades TK-6. Approximately 77% of our scholars are Hispanic, 16.6% are White, and another 2% each for African American, Asian, and those identifying as two or more races. Sixty-seven percent of our scholars are socio-economically disadvantaged and 22% are English Learners. We have maintained our Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accreditation since 2010 and we were recently honored as a 2020 California Distinguished School.

Our schedule is unique since we start our school year in July; a full month ahead of surrounding schools. The rationale is that during summer break, children lose large amounts of information. Our shortened summer break helps decrease this loss so teachers spend less time reviewing and can quickly begin teaching grade level standards. It also allows for our 4-day per week schedule. LEPA scholars attend school Monday through Thursday from July through December, from 7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. with an extra hour added on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for tutoring, enrichment classes, and homework help. Even with the shorter week, our extended day gives scholars plenty of academic time. This schedule is also a factor as to why LEPA does not have a problem with absenteeism since families can plan appointments on Fridays when we are out of school.

LEPA adheres to the classical model of education which follows long held, proven methods in education at its core. There are three “pillars” to the classical education, all of which are meant to converge to develop well-rounded, liberally educated scholars. First, scholars are taught in ways they naturally learn, taking advantage of capabilities that emerge during each stage of development. Second, the classical model is language-based. Language is the foundation for all acquisition of knowledge. While differentiation is necessary to reach all scholars, most learning occurs through language, written and oral. Finally, all content areas are interrelated; linked together in a fluid learning community. Since the model is language-driven, reading, speaking, and writing are woven into all subject areas. The classical model develops the ability in scholars to make informed choices and to express the reasoning behind those choices in a concise way. It teaches scholars how to learn, so that once out from under the protective arm of their educators, they are confident enough to seek out new information and make sense of it on their own. In addition to utilizing these long-held traditions of academics, we endeavor to equip our scholars with what they need to be successful in an ever-changing world.

Teachers have high academic expectations and LEPA strives to have scholars reach the highest possible academic success. Each school year begins with an interest inventory to enable us to meet individual needs and interests. We believe in a structured environment where each student can progress at his or her own pace with leadership from teaching staff which is designed to instill a love for learning and inquisitiveness. Our staff use the results of ongoing in-house and state standardized assessments to understand students’ needs and drive instruction which serves to both remediate and enrich each scholar. LEPA’s teachers work toward ensuring all scholars meet or exceed state and national standards in all core subjects. Teachers actively participate in reflection and differentiation so that scholars meet their true potential. While this looks different in each classroom, the ultimate goal is shared: no child should slip through the cracks.

LEPA scholars are also taught to be people of strong character. LEPA has implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Scholars demonstrate PRIDE, which means they are: proactive, respectful, have integrity, are diligent, and ensure safety. Scholars understand our school's expectations and perform to the best of their abilities. One of our core beliefs at LEPA is that we are teaching children as a whole, as our future leaders, and our teachers strive to go beyond math and literacy. The ultimate goal is to prepare scholars to leave the school with the ability to continue learning on their own. The staff seeks to foster excitement in children toward gaining new, meaningful information.

Parents are also included as key partners in education by taking part in conferences, attending performances, chaperoning fieldtrips, and many other opportunities on and off campus. Our close-knit relationship with parents and scholars and our high standards for education are what keep LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy thriving.

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 LEPA, we combine a classical education with current educational research. Our program is designed to uphold long-held traditions, while preparing our scholars as 21st century learners. For example, we use Benchmark Advance reading program to enhance our classical literature units of study. Our math curriculum also prepares scholars with Common Core aligned math content but we still dedicate time daily for scholars to practice and master basic math facts as this component is often overlooked. Common Core aligned curriculum for science and social studies have been added as well. These are combined with a more traditional hands-on approach to learning.

Staff are trained on the Common Core standards and receive updated professional development yearly. We have successfully integrated technology into our classrooms for teacher and student use. Teachers have a classroom computer to present content, provide experiences, and enhance the learning for scholars. Each classroom 1st – 6th grades, is equipped with Chromebooks on which scholars can complete lessons through i-Ready, IXL, and Envision Math among others. Teachers’ lesson plans indicate which standard(s) is being taught, objectives for the lesson, DOK (Depth of Knowledge), levels, academic vocabulary, and any differentiation that is needed. Teachers also provide real-world applications for content through classroom and home-based research and creative projects. Small-group and one-on-one sessions are used to meet the needs of all scholars. Scholars may also participate in pull-out sessions with our instructional aides or special education department.

It is our desire at LEPA to continue to provide a structured learning environment that grows and adapts to an ever-changing, global society. We have recently created an online learning base in response to the global pandemic. Through teacher-created websites, scholars continue to have access to their education outside the classroom through our distance learning plan. This is another example of our staff’s ability to quickly adapt and shift to new situations while maintaining the integrity of our scholars’ education.

1b. Reading/English language arts

A classical education is a language-based model and learning is achieved through words, both written and spoken. While reading, the brain is forced to translate a symbol (words on the page) into a concept. This means the mind is working hard. Also, reading is the foundation for all other subject areas and provides deeper understanding of content. Therefore, at LEPA, we view reading and language arts as the key component in our scholars’ education.

At the beginning of each school year, every scholar takes several assessments designed to be a starting point for the teacher to begin instruction. For reading, scholars take the Gates-MacGinitie assessment, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), i-Ready reading diagnostic, and a sight word assessment. Teachers use data from these assessments as a baseline for whole class instruction. This helps the teacher create learning groups and decide which scholars should participate in pull-out reading intervention instruction. Grade level teachers then collaborate and discuss strategies to be used to enhance instruction for all scholars.

Once the first round of assessments is complete, teachers use classical literature to teach the reading standards. Every classroom has a class set of classical literature books. This means that each scholar gets to have a book in their hands. We feel that reading a book in its entirety increases attention span, expands vocabulary, and provides for a deeper understanding of history with its culture, cultural context, beliefs, and values. The Common Core standards are taught using these books and teacher-created materials to support comprehension.

Teachers then use the Benchmark Advance reading program to support reading instruction. This program

was selected because it helps address the shifts that occurred in curriculum and instruction based on the Common Core Standards. Benchmark Advance includes many components including phonics, spelling, grammar, and a variety of reading standards based on grade level.

Instruction is differentiated for scholars using small group instruction, pull-out interventions and through the use of technology. All teachers at LEPA use the online program, i-Ready, to target areas of need for each scholar. The program is individualized, allowing each scholar to practice the concepts he or she needs to improve in so they can be successful. The classroom teacher can also add lessons that are appropriate for an individual scholar or entire class. Online instruction is monitored by the classroom teacher. The i-Ready program contains many resources teachers can use to aid small group instruction and for instructional assistants to use during pull-out sessions.

Teachers also provide a variety of hands-on projects to enhance reading fluency and comprehension. Some classes use monthly book projects where scholars choose to create story mobiles, story dioramas, or art-related projects about their favorite books.

Throughout the year, scholars are given formative assessments in order to track their progress and the effectiveness of teaching methods being used. Data from all assessments is organized into a spreadsheet and reviewed by administration and in grade-level collaboration. Teachers, administration, and support staff work together to analyze the data and create a continuing plan of instruction.

1c. Mathematics

In order to ensure our scholars develop critical thinking skills, have a deep level of understanding of the mechanisms of mathematics, and are equipped with a variety of strategies and approaches to solve problems, our mathematics curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The rigor, consistency, and cohesion of the instruction of mathematics, interventions, and assessments is a top priority. Teachers work in grade level, and in cross-grade level collaboration to develop scope and sequence maps for the entire school year using our curriculum. The use of vertical collaboration provides teachers with a deep understanding of what is required in each grade level. Teachers work together to brainstorm instructional strategies to target standards of particular difficulty. This collaboration and purposeful planning benefits scholars by supporting mastery of standards to be better prepared for subsequent grades.

Instructional approaches used by teachers are intended to provide an equitable mathematical education to all scholars. Scholars are given multiple methods and tools to solve varying types of problems. Scholars are encouraged to persevere, use critical and strategic reasoning, and are well-equipped with a variety of strategies so they are able to choose what meets their needs and learning style. One instructional method teachers use is the Universal Design for Learning approach. The goal is to create expert learners in our scholars by offering choices in how the math content is presented to them as well as the methods in which they demonstrate their mastery of the concepts. Instruction, assignments, and assessments are differentiated for scholars with the UDL approach with the use of assistive technology, self-reflection and assessment, auditory or visual representations, and promoting understanding across languages. The goal of teaching using UDL is to help scholars become more purposeful, resourceful, knowledgeable, strategic, and goal-directed.

LEPA operates under an assessment and data driven philosophy in mathematics. At the beginning of each school year, mathematical levels are assessed using an i-Ready math diagnostic and math facts assessment. Assessment results are analyzed and reflected on at class, grade, and campus-wide levels. This provides teachers with insight regarding how prepared scholars are for grade level standards. Teachers can identify and target trends in achievement gaps, as well as capitalize on strengths. In addition, our mathematics curriculum includes: end of topic assessments, performance assessments which provide real world scenarios to apply mathematical concepts within, and a critical thinking assessment with higher order thinking skills targeted. Grades 3-6 also complete Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). Assessments are repeated several times throughout the school year and data analysis, reflection, and planning are on-going. This data is used to guide reteach using whole-class, small group, or 1:1 instruction. Formative assessment is also used on a daily basis in the form of: exit tickets, thumbs up or down, independent practice or partner

practice using various math resources and lessons, etc. The goal with formative and summative assessments in mathematics is to ensure purposeful and meaningful teaching to ensure academic achievement for all scholars.

1d. Science

Science is an important part of the foundation of education throughout the elementary school years. LEPA's scholars are taught science through explicit instruction, technology-based support, and hands-on activities. Science is taught in accordance with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for California Public Schools.

Kindergarten through second grade teachers use Studies Weekly for teaching science. Studies Weekly provides teachers the ability to differentiate instruction with varying types of cognitive level questions and activities that help scholars grasp the concepts being taught. Studies Weekly also provides teachers the ability to use their online read along to help scholars with fluency and comprehension.

In grades 3-6, science is taught with the use of Bring Science Alive where lessons are outlined for scholars to receive explicit instruction, in conjunction with a brief video (for EL's), vocabulary breakdown, checkpoints, and assessments. Scholars are placed in collaborative groups where they answer short answer questions and interpret charts in their interactive student notebook.

Both programs utilized on campus incorporate science experiments into the units of study to allow for hands-on activities which help teachers assess scholar knowledge of content and the Scientific Method. Scholars complete science projects in all grade levels; where the top projects in each grade participate in the schoolwide Science Fair. Scholars are also formally assessed using the unit assessments at the end of each week which aid teachers with reinforcement and reteach when necessary. A solid foundation in the primary grades in science prepares scholars to do well on the California Science Test (CAST). Ongoing analysis of results from both formative and summative assessments are used to gauge efficacy of instruction, program implementation, and further education in science.

Along with our science curricula, enrichment activities are offered on campus including robotics and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). These activities cultivate an increased interest and affection towards science education.

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

Structured and engaging curriculum is most effective in learning social studies/ history. Curriculum must develop scholars' critical thinking skills, social justice, character development and overall improvement of social studies/history areas in order to help scholars meet grade level standards and make a positive impact in their community.

Grades K-2, utilizes Studies Weekly as their curriculum. Scholars can highlight, take notes and complete learning strategies on the publication provided. Teachers incorporate the publications into multiple assignments that encourage scholar growth in the study of their world. In addition, kindergarten classes also utilize Time For Kids to expand scholars' understanding of the world around them. Time For Kids is a trustworthy publication with news articles and insight into journalism through high interest topics. Social Studies Alive textbooks and workbooks are used by grades 3-6 to create an effective and engaging classroom.

Teachers help their scholars thrive and develop an appreciation for social studies/history through the use of technology. Every scholar has online access, allowing connection with the online curricula and delving deeper into history through thousands of primary source images and videos. Scholar access to community awareness is integrated with activities like community projects, visits from social justice activists and community helpers, and other real-world experiences that have positive and impactful implications. Field trips also provide additional insight into history topics being studied.

Assessments are integrated to gain insight into mastery of history content and further drive instruction. Since we aim in giving scholars real-world experiences in addition to learning history from our curricula, data from observational assessment and chapter tests allow teachers to adjust pacing and content delivery to ensure understanding. Teachers also assign projects that align with units of study. These projects allow scholars to demonstrate mastery using creativity, research, critical thinking, and develop presentation skills. Assessment data is shared during collaboration to ensure a well-rounded curricula with rich experiences is provided to all scholars.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Visual and performing arts are offered across grade levels TK-6th grade at LEPA. Music class is provided for all scholars on a weekly basis for a 45 minute period. Scholars are exposed to a variety of musical instruments such as: the recorder, piano, guitars, kazoos, and percussion instruments. In addition to weekly music class, scholars in grades 4-6 can choose to participate in piano or band class where they receive further instruction in learning to play an instrument in a small group setting. Scholars are also exposed to visual and performing arts according to interests on a weekly basis with our enrichment classes. Enrichment classes in the visual and performing arts genre include: dance, art, glee club, and theater.

Physical education at LEPA not only improves the health of our scholars, but also improves concentration, reduces disruptive behaviors, and improves motivation and engagement. Our 5th grade scholars participate in a yearly state required physical education assessment which evaluates their ability to: run a mile, complete sit-ups, push-ups, arm flexibility, and calculation of their body mass index (BMI). Prior to participating in this testing, scholars are conditioned physically to improve their strength and endurance. Physical education for grade levels that are not required to participate in testing varies according to age and abilities. Younger grades enjoy participating in physical activity using GoNoodle as a brain break and focus on developing movement concepts, body management, locomotor movements, manipulative skills, and rhythmic skills. Older grade levels prefer team sports such as football, basketball, and soccer in which they can hone their skills. All scholars are educated on the importance of healthy habits including physical activity and nutrition and the impact they have on academic performance.

Foreign language is incorporated in all grade levels at LEPA. Younger scholars learn Spanish, mid-level grades focus on Latin in the classroom, and upper grade scholars are taught French. In addition to classroom instruction of foreign language, enrichment opportunities are provided in the languages of Spanish, Mandarin, and American Sign Language. Acquiring foreign languages is extremely beneficial to our scholars. Not only does it boost brain power, improve memory, and improve performance in other academic areas, but it promotes a culturally responsive classroom environment.

The use of technology is growing each year at our school site. Each scholar has their own Chromebook to enhance the learning experience in our classrooms. Scholars are able to work independently or collaboratively using their Chromebooks. Specific ways teachers at LEPA incorporate scholar use of technology include: online components to all curriculum, typing essays using Google Docs, social studies or science assignments using Google Slides, completing i-Ready lessons in math and reading, coding using Code.org, doing research for assignments, using an online thesaurus to improve and expand word choice, and getting extra academic practice on websites such as IXL, Prodigy, Nitrotype, and many more. Technology allows immediate feedback on activities completed as well as allowing teachers to differentiate instruction among scholars discretely. By using technology in the classroom, scholars are better prepared for the highly technology driven global society.

Character building also plays an important role at our school site. Scholars are encouraged to demonstrate PRIDE which means they are: proactive, respectful, have integrity, are diligent, and ensure safety. Each month, a scholar from every class is recognized for demonstrating the schoolwide character trait. Scholars are also given a daily example of how to demonstrate the character trait of the month over morning

announcements. PRIDE tickets are distributed when a staff member recognizes a scholar in any grade level showing PRIDE on campus. In addition to PRIDE, we teach our Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) which is connected to the acronym for our school LEPA: Lifelong learners, Exceeding expectations, Pursuing knowledge, Achieving academic excellence. Each day before recess, scholars participate in a song with hand movements stating our ESLRs. ESLRs are posted in every classroom as they apply to scholars and teachers alike. Our goal at LEPA is to not only build positive character traits in our scholars, but prepare them for their future by instilling in them that they are lifelong learners.

All of these additional curriculum areas add to the well- rounded, liberally educated scholars that we are entrusted to educate at LEPA. The staff takes pride in seeing scholars grow both academically and socially.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

With a population of diverse learners, differentiating instruction, assessment, and utilizing interventions for our below grade level scholars is imperative. It is important to our teachers that scholars who struggle are given support to work at grade level. Therefore, achievement gaps are closed by creating lessons that have scaffolds embedded in them, assessments are adapted according to scholars' strengths and weaknesses, and interventions are purposefully chosen for struggling scholars.

First and foremost, teachers work to reach scholars working below grade level with instruction that is differentiated. A whole-class lesson is explicitly taught to all scholars using grade level curriculum. Within the lesson, teachers offer scaffolds, clarify academic vocabulary, model examples, break down assignments, and present guided or partner practice. Scholars are given follow-up activities that meet their academic capabilities. Individual assignments vary and scholars have choices in how they demonstrate mastery of a concept. For example, one scholar may type a five-paragraph essay, while another creates a PowerPoint presentation on the same subject matter.

The use of assessments also helps bridge the gap for our lower performing scholars. Scholars are given a math and reading i-Ready diagnostic assessment quarterly. The program differentiates lessons for each scholar based on their academic strengths and needs. As scholars progress through assigned lessons, the program continuously adapts to support scholars at their current level.

Finally, interventions play an important role in getting struggling scholars to work at grade level. Using i-Ready diagnostic assessment results, scholars who are struggling the most in math and reading receive targeted instruction with instructional aides for 45 minutes daily. Teachers and our residential substitute teachers also work 1:1 with scholars who show the need for further instruction after lessons are given. Each Tuesday from 2:45-3:45 p.m. scholars are provided with tutoring on homework assignments or in small groups as teachers notice trends in achievement gaps.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Our advanced scholars learn new knowledge, skills, and how to demonstrate their higher level of thinking in every lesson since it is a pertinent belief of ours that all scholars should be challenged to perform to the best of their abilities. Embedded in all curriculum throughout every grade level is the ability for advanced scholars to receive more complex instruction. Teachers also create lessons that have different depths of knowledge (DOK) levels, where every scholar's level is targeted. For instance, when working with a reading passage, advanced scholars will be directed to look for different author's point of view which leads to a more in-depth discussion. This strategy expands scholars' perspectives and ability to analyze. Advanced scholars also share their knowledge with classmates by working in pairs or small groups.

The Envision Math curriculum includes an online component. Teachers have the option of assigning adaptive lessons that keep scholars engaged and challenged by completing more complex problems. Also, our i-Ready program assigns lessons according to scholars' levels by giving "my path" lessons that target their abilities regardless of their grade level. With i-Ready, advanced scholars are able to get online

instruction through 8th grade in both reading and math. Our English Language Arts curriculum assesses scholars using written responses that allow scholars to showcase their higher level of critical thinking and advanced vocabulary. Furthermore, scholars are given the freedom to interact with their peers and share their wisdom or understanding of a concept. We offer enrichment classes weekly that give advanced scholars the platform to cultivate their intellectual abilities by learning a foreign language, participating in STEM projects, creating their own art work, or writing for our school newspaper. As a school we are dedicated to not only prepare our scholars for the next grade level, but to make sure they are life-long learners.

3c. Special education

Scholars are supported on our LEPA campus using the Response to Intervention (RtI) model of tiered intervention. LEPA focuses on providing school-wide services in addition to specialized services to assist all scholars including Scholar Support Teams (SST), 504 plans, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) services. We believe in including our scholars with disabilities to the fullest extent possible. They receive access to the curriculum and work towards their individual goal(s). It is crucial that goals are appropriate for our special education scholars so that they are able to progress at a rate that is ideal for their specific needs.

Additional supports that are provided to our students with disabilities include: Small group instruction, push-in support, pull-out support, individualized assistance, access to technology, and access to paraprofessionals, counselors, and a school psychologist that are on campus. LEPA employs five instructional aides and a team of special education staff members that collaborate with teachers to provide the most effective support for scholars. This support system provides equity for the individual scholar. Although we have many supports to assist scholars especially those with disabilities, the staff has a shared belief that all scholars can learn. Each staff member plays a role in supporting our scholars. The first support that scholars encounter happens with their classroom teacher. Teachers receive professional development on the RtI process at the start of each school year so that the expectations and processes are clear. They also receive information related to goals and supports for scholars that are placed in their classroom. Teachers have open and ongoing communication with the special education staff members so that effective strategies and supports can flow seamlessly from one teacher to the next.

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

LEPA implements a comprehensive structured immersion program, in every classroom for English Learner (EL) scholars. Teachers additionally provide sheltered instruction through the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model. The SIOP model consists of the following eight interrelated categories that benefit all scholars: lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. All scholars, whether identified as EL or not, are in a process of English Language Development (ELD) so the use of Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies including: Scaffolding instruction, kinesthetic activities, graphic organizers, pre-teaching vocabulary, and the use of manipulatives work well for all. ELD standards set forth by the California Department of Education are incorporated into lessons to directly promote further growth for ELs as well as their fluent peers.

Scholars of limited English proficiency receive the same academic content as their native English-speaking peers. All instruction is in English; however, the level of English used for instruction- both oral and written- is modified for EL scholars as necessary. EL scholars are expected to become proficient in the English language at a progressive pace and qualified staff monitor progression. We also believe exposure to the English language in “non-academic” ways, including conversation with teachers and peers, is one of the best methods for acquiring language skills.

It is our goal to make certain that all scholar populations are involved in our school community. LEPA translates written materials sent home to parents and we have an English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC) that is open to any parent that has a scholar attending LEPA irrelevant of their child being an EL scholar. ELAC gives parents the opportunity to participate by: learning more about the programs offered to their children, participate in the school’s needs assessment, and provide input on the most effective ways to

support full participation of ELs in all school activities. This parent involvement correlates with scholar success.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

A positive learning environment supports scholar's academic goals and emotional needs. In order for learning to occur, scholars must be engaged and invested in their learning. Teachers use multiple strategies to make content meaningful and relevant to facilitate learning. Collaboration as a grade level is also vital as it aids in creating lesson plans that vary instructional practices. In addition, teachers seek different ways for scholars to present their knowledge; whether through oral or written reports, collaborative learning, illustrations, or the use of technology.

At the beginning of each lesson, scholars are presented with a clear objective to set a focus for what will be learned. Formative assessment is used throughout the lesson by the teacher to ensure scholars are grasping the objective being taught. Teachers also minimize time spent lecturing and provide scholars with high level thinking, collaborative assignments, movement-based activities, and the use of technology to help hold the attention of scholars during the independent practice portion of a lesson. Visuals like brief video clips, charts, and even scholars' own illustrations are used as an aid in remembering content and keeping a high level of engagement.

Apart from daily lessons, scholars are assigned projects that give them options on a topic within the subject matter being studied. Teachers understand that choice is important for active participation in learning. Examples of various projects assigned are: Black History Month presentations, science fair projects, cultural background projects, and wax museum projects. These projects are then presented orally by the scholar to their peers using visuals and multimedia. These presentations empower scholars and fill them with a high level of accomplishment.

We have many opportunities to explore a variety of interests on campus to keep scholars engaged. We have a student council available for scholars in the 4th – 6th grades. Scholars also have the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities that include: dance, cheer, Lego robotics, glee club, gardening, and many others.

Scholars are also praised and rewarded for all of their hard work which keeps them striving to continuously improve. Rewards and praise vary according to grade level and examples include: sticker charts, earning a prize from a classroom treasure box, free technology time on an educational website, or a classroom celebration. We are a tight knit school that often refers to itself as a family so we try our best to keep every scholar of our family feeling engaged and motivated to continue achieving academic excellence.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At LEPA we recognize the importance of parent involvement in the daily life of our school. Many classes have volunteers who come in to assist the teacher in a variety of ways. Parents are encouraged to assist with our annual Harvest Festival and on field trips. We welcome parents on campus several times each year to participate in events such as Back-to-School Night, musical performances, theatre performances, the Science Fair, and the Spelling Bee and Battle of the Books competitions. Our parents are regularly informed of their child's progress, not just academically, but socially and physically as well. We hold 3 parent-teacher conferences each year so that parents and teachers have the opportunity to communicate face-to-face about the progress of their scholar(s). At the beginning of the year conference, we work with parents to review testing data and set goals for the school year. In December, we meet again with parents to review progress towards academic (or behavioral) goals and to set new goals. In March, parents have yet another opportunity to meet with the teacher. These conferences are used to celebrate the scholar's progress and address areas that are still in need of attention. In addition, teachers make themselves available throughout the year as there is a need. Staff is accessible on a daily basis through email, phone, and various apps such as Remind, Class Tag, etc.

We believe it is important for our scholars to demonstrate care and concern for others. Every year our

families contribute canned and boxed foods to Thanksgiving baskets which are given to families who are in need. Most recently, we have partnered with Children's Hospital Los Angeles to hold a book drive to help supply new books for their Literally Healing program. In this way, our scholars are learning to think of others both within our school community and beyond.

We encourage collaborative engagement with all stakeholders in our communities. The school's website, weekly classroom newsletters, and monthly school calendars are some of the examples of ongoing, frequent communication between school and home. Information can be accessed on our website by both parents and our surrounding community to inform them of the school's academic achievements and challenges. The school's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and School Accountability Report Card (SARC) are both accessible to the public. LEPA is also a WASC accredited school and the school's Self-Study Report and Action Plan are both accessible to any stakeholder at any time.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The school leadership and staff demonstrate shared decision-making, responsibility, and self-reflection on actions and accountability for implementing practices, programs, and services. LEPA's structure is designed to include all staff in being responsible for doing their part to promote and support scholar learning.

Administration maintains an open-door policy whereby teachers make suggestions and request materials to help them more effectively meet the needs of scholars. Administration completes weekly walk-throughs in classrooms and formal observations throughout the school year. There also exists a great deal of informal collaboration between teachers and administration.

Professional development is supported in a variety of ways. At the beginning of each school year, a series of trainings are provided, by both outside agencies and in-house staff. The CEO/Founder of LEPA provides access to these professional development opportunities by providing a place to hold the training, providing necessary materials, and paying any fees attached to the training. Teachers are encouraged to explore other trainings they find which may benefit the school, increase scholar access, and support scholar learning and success.

We believe academic achievement begins with qualified teachers. Teachers are selected based upon qualifications and experience, as well as, their aptitudes and personalities. This combination of criteria ensures that employees are a "good fit" for our rigorous school. New teachers receive additional training to acclimate them to our shared practices and school. Teachers are placed on grade level teams where they receive support through collaboration and peer mentoring to build capacity within each other.

Skilled teachers, with the support of administration, are encouraged to be innovative with regards to addressing the academic needs of scholars. The free-flowing exchange of ideas among highly-qualified staff has allowed LEPA to meet and often exceed state standards. Teachers make presentations at staff meetings of ideas they have found to be helpful and have regular collaborative meetings held in and across grade levels which facilitates the sharing of information and planning. All staff at LEPA have a school email which is an important tool for communication. Staff meetings are held weekly, and there is a whiteboard in the teacher's work room which can be used to post information. Staff receive a monthly calendar that notates all upcoming activities, birthdays, holidays and due dates. We believe open and ongoing communication is vital to success since we are all part of the LEPA family and working towards the shared goal of ensuring scholar success.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership structure of LEPA is largely a joint effort, with responsibilities doled out according to individual strengths. This philosophy of shared leadership effectively allows for the best outcomes rather than too many responsibilities being multi-tasked and none of them meeting their full potential. This ultimately allows for the highest possible student achievement and support for scholars, staff, and families.

We have our Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/Founder of our school who reports to the governing board to

ensure compliance with all policies and procedures. It is the CEO/Founder's role to attend to the legalities of our school, ensure the operations of the school are in accordance to the terms of our charter, and oversee fiscal operations. The CEO/Founder is responsible for annual budgeting and is held accountable for the continuous academic improvement within all scholar subgroups. Even with all of these responsibilities, our CEO/Founder is still very active and present on campus for our staff, scholars, and families.

From there, further administration duties are split between two site administrators. We have the role of Dean of Operations who deals with discipline and teacher responsibilities along with ensuring our school runs smoothly and safely. Staff members report to the Dean of Operations in regards to time off, turning in lesson plans, disciplinary issues, observation feedback, and consistent growth in individual positions. The other administrator is our Director of Curriculum and Assessment. This role is imperative for scholar achievement due to our data-driven outlook and philosophy. This administrator oversees materials and resources to make certain teachers and classrooms have what is needed; acts as the Local Educational Agency (LEA) testing coordinator for all state assessments and ensures staff adhere to the rules, regulations, and security during the testing period; coordinates testing schedules and oversees i-Ready math and reading assessments, interim assessments, and other ongoing assessments on campus; lastly, organizes and shares data schoolwide to drive instruction. Both site administrators communicate with staff and families on a daily and weekly basis, maintain a fair and patient demeanor during interactions, and attend various meetings to keep up-to-date with current information including trends and changes in education.

With the philosophy that leadership be shared according to the personality and professional strengths of our staff, we are able to focus on student achievement in a more purposeful manner and have a supportive team available for our various stakeholders at all times.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy (LEPA) has achieved great academic success. Upon further reflection, this success can be traced back to one core practice: having high academic expectations for all scholars on campus. The high expectations that we continue to uphold are at the root of and have driven all of our other successfully implemented best practices. Visitors to LEPA often notice that the school culture of high expectations is consistent and supported in every classroom.

LEPA believes learning best occurs where high expectations are set, maintained, and modeled. The staff at LEPA are always striving to do more and when excellence is the expectation rather than the exception, children rise to meet those expectations. Many times, children fail because the people around them do not have high enough expectations. When children believe they can succeed, it will come to fruition. Scholars from all walks of life are entitled to the best possible education, which will instill in them the confidence and vision to achieve whatever they set their minds to achieve.

LEPA has had great academic success throughout our time of operation. For the past several years, LEPA has achieved the highest-ranking state testing scores within our local school district. As an example, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results from spring 2019, reported that LEPA had 71% of scholars in grades 3-6 demonstrate proficiency on the English Language Arts (ELA) assessment. In mathematics, we also had 71% of scholars in grades 3-6 reach proficiency. Our scores surpassed the local district by over double the amount for scholars who reached proficiency. Our scholars continue to exhibit their academic excellence and mastery of content. Scholars work hard at learning every day and our staff continues to support the belief that they are capable and can reach all expectations set before them.

At LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy we are passionate about our scholars and want them to continue exceeding all expectations. When scholars are surrounded with teachers who believe in them and work tirelessly to uncover the greatness that is within each scholar, there is not a limit to what scholars can achieve. Our Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) which incorporate our school acronym 'LEPA' are: Lifelong learners, Exceeding expectations, Pursuing knowledge, and Achieving academic excellence, and this is exactly who we are and what we as a school are accomplishing!