

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

---

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Landstuhl Elementary Middle School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address Unit 33106  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City APO, AE Germany State DD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 09180-0402

County \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (314) 545-1700 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL

https://www.dodea.edu/LandstuhlES/index.cfm E-mail Jason.James@DODEA.EDU

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.

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

Name of Superintendent\* Mr Steven Sanchez E-mail steven.sanchez@dodea.edu  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name DoDEA Europe East Tel. (314) 545-1728

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.

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

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson SMSGT David Boyd  
(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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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):
- 19 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 5 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 32 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	12	5	17
K	37	55	92
1	42	44	86
2	35	44	79
3	43	34	77
4	34	34	68
5	31	36	67
6	31	32	63
7	31	32	63
8	24	35	59
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	320	351	671

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 9.2 % Black or African American
  - 16.1 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 60.5 % White
  - 8.7 % 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: 22%

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

Our students are military connected and move on a rate of three to five years. This means our population turns over almost completely every three to five years.

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	86
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	55
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	141
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	643
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.22
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	22

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

French, German, Spanish, Romanian, Korean, Creole, Armenian, Japanese, Twi, Tagalog

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 6 %  
37 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %

Total number students who qualify: 159

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %

72 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>6</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>14</u> Developmental Delay    | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>36</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: 4

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	35
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	18
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 19:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	94%	94%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

Landstuhl Elementary/Middle school, in partnership with students, parents, and community will provide a quality education that values and promotes highest student achievement, cultural diversity, and respect for self and others to assure optimum success in a global society.

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

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

---

Landstuhl houses 671 students ranging from preschool to eighth grade. All students are from military-connected families. Many families work in some capacity with the Kaiserslautern, Germany footprint that includes the largest military hospital outside the United States. With a 40% minority population, students originate from a plethora of backgrounds, but all students are unified in the sense of a third culture; students that reside outside the United States. They experience a high mixture of American and other cultural expressions. Daily school attendance competes with military duty schedules and leave constraints and challenges for parenting/family units. Parents may not be able to structure vacation or off-location duty to avoid students missing school. However, these experiences outside the classroom lend themselves to Europe being academically enriching to academics within the school and are easily tied to our standards. Educators tailor work to incorporate students' experiences outside the classroom.

Parents in the military community are trained to be leaders. This translates into students that are immersed in leadership. Parents and students readily perform leadership roles within the school such as joining the School Advisory Board, SAB. This organization is a group of elected parents that advises school administrators on school-related issues. This gives families a chance to participate in school events, instruction, and student achievement. This engagement from students and families creates a natural two-way communication focused on how we do the best for our students' achievement and welfare. While LEMS has traditional student leadership opportunities similar to many schools, our school recognizes and values the unique perspective that each child brings. As such, a diverse student leadership cohort is formed from varying genders, ethnicities, performance levels, and specialized educational groups to join Principal Leadership Luncheons and Student Leadership Seminars. This allows students to have voice and choice in the school they attend. When students have this input in their school environment, they take ownership for the academics, because they know the staff, educators, and administration truly value them. Further, through student participation in these cohorts, leadership avenues at the district level, PTSA, and the military community have an opportunity to receive feedback on programming directly from the same students they service. In fact, direct programming for students is developed based on student interest and needs. This has resulted in the design and implementation of programs such as STEM-based electives, a robotics-innovation lab, and Lego engineering kits that are available for all grade levels.

Additionally, middle school students are trained in an elective course to work directly with teachers to integrate technology in instruction. These students work with the educational technologist to master the International Society for Technology in Education standards for implementation and to reach more technology users during the school day. This embedded application of skills gives students a chance to teach what they love to others. Though the class is designed for students to work only during the course, many students find ways to continue assisting during their lunch, homeroom, and in some cases before and after school. Assisting includes building technology products through Google for both educators and students. More importantly, older students seize opportunities to build relationships with younger students and set positive role-model examples for them. By working with elementary students in their classrooms, middle school students are taught a framework to mentor others while supporting specific students needing help academically, socially, or emotionally.

Clearly, building strong instructional programs, engaging student leadership, and connecting students to positive experiences is critically important. This focus on the socio-emotional well-being of any student population is of utmost importance, and possibly more so in one that is highly mobile. These students need to know that they have visible supports and a safe, nurturing environment that is inclusive. Training students to be helpful, responsible, and kind creates an inviting space where students eagerly join our academics. To address and to support this area of focus, our campus utilizes a Positive Behavioral Intervention Support system where students are given an opportunity to grow socially with guided support through our counseling team, educators, and staff members. In our middle school, this is done through weekly check-ins with the school counselor, small group counseling, and student leadership. In our elementary grades, these positive behavioral supports are capitalized through a morning meeting with all students in grades K-3 each and every day where students are taught how to engage with peers, to respond appropriately in difficult situations, and to develop empathy for others. Moreover, this is solidified through embedded in-class

counseling sessions, role-play, cognitive thinking, and problem-solving strategies implemented schoolwide.

Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School (LEMS) is a campus that embodies the spirit of shared leadership within its educators, parents, and students. It is a school that understands and respects the fact that school improvement is not just a top-down endeavor. Rather it is one that leverages each stake-holder to ensure a positive school experience.

## **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 Landstuhl Elementary/Middle School, educators take responsibility to ensure all students are prepared for the 21st Century. LEMS implements the DoDEA College and Career Readiness Standards and provides engaging learning opportunities for every child. Learning activities are individualized through differentiated instruction to support achievement of expectations. Instructional practices integrate content areas of science, math, language arts, and humanities to ensure that our students are problem solvers, innovators, critical thinkers and technologically literate. Curriculum is enhanced through interdisciplinary approaches to learning which highlight cross-curricular standards such as collaborative speaking and listening and explaining thinking in writing. Examples include student-led technology mentoring and instruction for both teachers and younger students, robotics, Lego Engineering, cross-curricular and real-world research projects, and community-based engineering competitions.

Educators are deliberate in planning and using instructional strategies that require student collaboration, mentoring, self-regulation, and developing critical thinking. Educators collaborate with grade-level teams as well as vertically across the school. Instruction is guided by a continuous cycle of standards-based teaching and learning whereby educators clarify learning targets and deliberately plan for effective assessment and instruction. Data from both summative and formative assessments and examination of professional practice are used to monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure LEMS is aligned with and meets the needs of all learners.

We work to create a school culture where students are actively involved in their education in a way that not only enhances their access to college, career, and beyond but builds relationships with educators, peers, and community members.

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

The ELA program at LEMS teaches College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRSL) with a strong focus on writing, critical thinking, reasoning and speaking, and listening skills. Close reading informational and literary text teaches students to carefully analyze, observe text features, and compare and contrast information. All educators have received professional development in Silver, Dewing and Perini's Core 6 research-based strategies to increase student engagement and achievement. Benchmark Advance was recently adopted as the core ELA curricular. It has an emphasis on both informational and literary text with strong cross-curricular connections. Reading strategies are integrated within our math, science, and social studies instruction. Students are reading, writing, listening, and speaking about their thinking in all content areas. Students utilize graphic organizers and pre-writing tools utilized in ELA to write lab reports in science and deconstruct concepts and vocabulary for meaning. Social studies instruction incorporates informational writing, speaking, and presentations that are aligned with Core 6 strategies. Narrative accounts, diary entries, and other primary source documents are regularly utilized during instruction. Social Studies and Language Arts teachers collaborate on multiple units that blend literature and writing tasks to historical and scientific topics. Students participate in both collaborative and individual projects covering a wide array of topics such as Native American homes, living museums, Colonial America, the Holocaust, and STEM extensions from units of study in math, science and social studies.

Text annotation strategies such as CUPS (Circle unknown words, Underline main idea and key details, Paraphrase, and Star-questions and reactions) are employed throughout the middle school, and are also used in all subject areas, including elective classes. Students respond to Webb's Depth of Knowledge higher-level questions (DOK) and are encouraged to respond to specific phrases and vocabulary, such as "Level up your response."

Aptitude Test), interim testing, RI (Reading Inventory), and classroom assessments provide a broad range of data for educators to adapt and mold instruction to meet student needs. Data drives the formation of flexible, guided reading groups for elementary students. Formative and summative data drives instruction and allows grade-level teams to co-plan and teach in order to differentiate reading instruction.

One of the premier attributes of our school is the unvarying mindset that the students are “our” students. Counselors are instrumental in providing support that transfers to the classroom. They implement strategies for improving listening and problem solving skills. Our educational technologist supports the educators and students by strengthening technology capacity within our content areas. Our information specialist, reading specialists, and ESOL specialist support literacy lessons across the grade levels. Our office and supply personnel interact with students in and out of the classrooms by noticing and praising positive behaviors. Even the cafeteria staff promotes problem solving when a student is not sure what to do in the cafeteria. We ALL take responsibility for educating OUR students. We view our educational responsibilities as a team.

### **1c. Mathematics**

Over the past five years the math curriculum at LEMS has made a monumental shift in standards, instruction and assessment. Educators were challenged to become experts in the standards and asked to become savvy consumers of curriculum provided by the district. This meant that they had to decide which resources were aligned with standards and which were less effective. Educators started by implementing the standards for mathematical practices (SMP) that encourage students to be problem solvers and critical thinkers. They drilled down deeper to concentrate on securely-held-knowledge (power standards) across the grade levels to narrow the focus of instruction. Educators use high yield practices such as Depth of Knowledge questioning, small group differentiated instruction (Carol Ann Tomlinson), immediate feedback to students, and increasing the number of rigorous problems in order to extend mathematical understanding. The curriculum is aligned to standards which prioritizes instruction and reduces the number of off-standard problems. Educators meet in collaborative teams to plan instruction and determine next steps using student data. DuFour’s Four questions serve as a guidepost: “What do we want students to know and be able to do? How do we know if students have learned? How do we respond when students don’t learn? How do we respond when students have learned?” Vertical teams engage around the same DuFour’s questions to help identify and address weaknesses in student achievement between grade levels and curriculum changes.

Frameworks of cognitive thinking were employed throughout the school. The new math standards, the science standards and even the counseling curriculum were focused on thinking and problem-solving skills. For example, administration implemented problem solving protocol. This protocol was utilized with discipline incidents, student behaviors on the playground, and in the cafeteria. Just as students were faced with solving problems in math and science, they were also required to carry these skills into a different contextual setting. Working collaboratively to solve problems within a social setting supported the MP standards throughout the school day.

Instruction Systems Support (ISS) personnel from the district worked in unison with educators as they determined their own professional development needs. This gave educators full partnership in the implementation process of the new standards and helped focus their attention on improving any perceived weaknesses. “Just-in-time” professional development led to the development of timely lessons to meet student needs. Educators and administrators collected data from multiple assessments to determine clarity of focus for student achievement. The preponderance of the data gathered pointed to a weakness in the modeling-and-reasoning domain. Data points included common grade level assessments such as exit tickets, open responses, Learning Walk Through, pre- mid- and post- tests unit tests, mathematical fluency checks, and observational data. The data from formal assessments include the system-wide testing, which now includes DoDEA-wide interim assessments. This allows for easy tracking of students’ ability to find success in the model and reasoning mathematics domain standards quarterly.

### **1d. Science**

Landstuhl Elementary/Middle School has adopted the FOSS (Full Option Science System) and the Next Generation Science Standards at the elementary and middle school levels. LEMS recognizes a three-NBRS 2020

dimensional approach encompassing a discipline of core ideas, cross-cutting science concepts, and the application of science and engineering practices. Educators connect with Core 6 ideas in literacy and mathematical standards of practice as they naturally occur in science. This science adoption has led to several refinements in educational practice, such as the use of science notebooks, live organisms, and online tools enrich the experience for students in the classroom. Through collaborative planning, co-teaching, and cooperative science workshops, we have established a comprehensive support system to improve vertical alignment of standards.

In addition, Landstuhl EMS educators encourage active learning and performance-based curricula while maintaining the DoDEA standards and rigor. Students have become familiar with the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) expectations and understand and apply verbiage such as “boost up” your DOK. Students are able to identify the DOK levels in textbooks, science articles, and other assigned projects. When prompted, they can also successfully increase a question, problem, or task to a higher standard. Students become challenged, engaged, and take ownership of their learning which develops a sense of pride and allows students to take personal ownership with learning. LEMS establishes a strong academic foundation but also encourages the students to build upon it through interactive and hands-on labs. Whether they are observing the behaviors of mealworms, building a model of the human eye, or constructing an argument for environmental conservation using evidence from a lab on erosion and weathering, LEMS students discover concepts through trial and error, collaboration, and teamwork. These practices contribute to the establishment of enduring understandings in science for our students.

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

Highly successful social studies and history lessons are designed by our educators who engage students in rigorous, interest-based activities such as Reenactments, temporary exhibits, and living museums. Students conduct research through primary sources allowing them to “live” and experience history. Examples include models of Native American homes, famous women and inventors, Civil War projects, and Pioneer Days. Many of these projects are shared and presented through student-led guided tours in the library affording them the opportunity to practice public speaking. It provides valuable historical content for their audience through the eyes of their peers.

In the primary grades, DoDEA-adopted materials from Scott Foresman are integrated with cross-curricular standards. For example, educators collaborate with the Information Specialist who teaches students to use online databases to research. Students identify important details and annotate text. The Educational Technologist provides real-time classroom support as students choose technology tools to share their learning. Projects are differentiated by their choice of tools and method of presentation.

The middle school history team collaboratively plans with the Information Specialist monthly to plan student projects and examine student work to identify areas for emphasis. Some examples of collaborative, rigorous, and engaging projects include Civil War Project-Based Learning, WWI pamphlets, and American Revolutionary War projects.

The Civil War Unit begins with students drafting a complex driving question which requires them to analyze research in order to answer it in its entirety. Students spend several weeks seeking reliable information through the use of databases and other trusted resources. Students create an end product of their choice, write an abstract and complete a Works Cited page with at least ten citations. A guided tour of projects offers the opportunity to practice public speaking and provides valuable information for the audience in terms of historical content and expectations for future projects.

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

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

DODEA, in conjunction with the military, provides special education and related services (Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy) to students aged 3 to 5 with disabilities. In order to qualify for the Preschool Services for Students with Disabilities (PSCD) program, parents must request a Child Find (CF) screening.

Often, a parent's main concern surrounds language development. The CF is an informal screener using the DIAL-4 which looks at the areas of gross and fine motor, language and cognition domains. Members of the team include the Occupational Therapist, Speech Assessor, and PSCD Teacher.

Identification of delays in any area(s), leads to more formal testing of the child in the area of concern. Parents register their child prior to an assessment meeting being held to plan for testing. There are five areas in which the child could be evaluated: language, social, adaptive, motor and cognitive. The team has 45 days to complete testing. Once all areas of concern are evaluated, an eligibility meeting determines the child's qualification for Special Education services. The team has 10 days to develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The specific needs of the child determines the number of days per week that the child will attend the two-and-a-half-hour program.

The PSCD teacher uses the Creative Curriculum standards which are broadly aligned to the K-3 content standards. Particular care is given to aligning students' IEP goals (aligned with CC) with kindergarten standards to provide a scaffold in developing the student's full potential. Mentorship with elementary classrooms enables students to meet their future teachers and older peers. Students attend assemblies, and specialists co-teach within the PSCD classroom, providing more opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with the school. As a result, approximately 75% of students transition from PSCD to Kindergarten with a 50% reduction in need of services.

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

LEMS provides a multitude of opportunities to enrich and support student learning. All K-5 students attend a 45-minute "Specials" class, which is on a four-day-rotation for Art, Physical Education, Music, and German Host Nation (HN). At the middle school level, students participate in a variety of electives on a semester or trimester basis depending upon the grade level. Students select electives such as journalism, technology applications, STEM, drama, German I and II, P.E., band, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), and 3D Art.

K-5 specialists use grade-level content standards to plan for instruction at each grade level. Projects and activities are typically structured by K-1, 2-3, and 4-5 grade-level groupings. Art focuses on the work of famous artists and the application of art elements to create and appreciate art. All students learn about artists' backgrounds, study famous pieces, and discuss the elements and principles of art in a variety of details and depth depending on the grade level. Physical Education (PE) teaches students to develop movement skills for life and a mindset for healthy living. Music enhances students' understanding of song lyrics to tell stories. Included in music is a basic understanding of musical elements and properties that allow for student engagement. The HN teachers highlight cultural events and traditions in the community that enrich the experiences of students and their families during their time in Germany.

We have established a mutually beneficial collaborative partnership with a local German high school. Student interns assist in classrooms, sharing their language and culture while practicing their English skills. This is especially beneficial for our German Partial Immersion Class which is a multi-age class of first and second graders that supports German language acquisition through mathematics.

Middle School students can also take advantage of German coursework. They use the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) exam to determine proficiency. Students that score adequately may use the course as credit for high school foreign language. Other middle school students interested in taking Spanish, use a digital platform and are able to join a virtual Spanish classroom.

Our specialists collaborate closely with educators and administrators to include a common approach to managing student behaviors by extending expectations from their home classroom into other school environments. In addition, the specialists support classroom academics by using Core 6 strategies. Specialists integrate storytelling into Art, Music, PE, and HN as a tool to understand the subject matter. Specialists intentionally use English Language Arts standards of oral language to convey thoughts, feelings, and emotions about a piece of art, music, or expression of physical fitness. The use of counting and analyzing data in PE and the implementation of Depth of Knowledge demonstrates the use of cross-

curricular connections to support student thinking.

Our computer lab has been transformed into LEMS Innovation Lab. Students typically work in teams to solve problems as they go through the Engineering Design Process coupled with the mathematical processing standards. Middle school students support elementary students with tasks that are intentionally designed to address DOK levels 3 and 4. The Technology Integration Coach collaborates with educators to find curricular connections, design, and co-teach lessons that support their lessons. The intentional inclusion of technology tools provides an opportunity for classroom-embedded professional development as the coach seeks to boost educator confidence in technology usage.

Careful attention is given to the social-emotional needs of our students. Counselors and the school psychologist work closely with educators to identify student needs while exploring strategies and interventions. Two Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLC) are embedded into the school as further support for military children's social-emotional needs. The MFLCs work inside and outside the classroom to support children in their practice of self-regulation, reinforcing the schoolwide message of kindness and friendship. Middle school students are engaged in leadership roles as ambassadors, welcoming and supporting new students who enter our school. This peer support program allows students who have experienced moves to provide the support and friendship that they know is necessary to successfully adapt to a new school. The military is known for its tight-knit communities overseas, which carries into our school. Our students are truly welcoming and accepting of the diversity that is characteristic of our student population.

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

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

Through testing, students are identified as a level one, two, or three. Students in level one follow the standard curriculum adopted by DoDEA. Students in level two require differentiated services that fit their needs. Level three students require extreme support to be academically successful. Students who perform below level one are addressed by the Student Support Team (SST). SST looks at the whole child to include social emotional, family support, special educators on staff and curriculum support in the classroom. If students are not making adequate progress, students are recommended to other support services: counseling, school psychologist, Family Life Counseling Program (MFLC), reading support, or special education committee.

All students are assessed in reading either individually (K-3) or online (4-8) to best determine student strengths and weaknesses. Those assessments are then analyzed to inform instruction and determine differentiated groups for optimal learning. Through collaboration between classroom educators, parents, and the reading specialists, students are provided opportunities for learning. In addition to classroom instruction, additional opportunities include small group instruction in pull-out settings, such as Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), Read 180, and Test-Taking Strategies groups.

Support is offered to struggling learners in the classroom through flexible guided reading groups and coaching support is provided by the reading specialists. The valuable instruction teaches children strategies to use across the curriculum leading to academic progress as well as behavioral improvement. For example, one student was identified in Kindergarten as a behavior problem with learning difficulties. He was identified as needing help in first grade and qualified for LLI. After 16 weeks of instruction, the child progressed out of the program on grade level, and he had become a proficient reader.

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

The new DODEA Advanced Academic Program & Services (AAPS) focuses on identifying and supporting all students showing advanced capabilities and potential. Student potential is recognized using current data, educator observations, and a collection of student work. The new program strives to be more inclusive, also recognizing the special academic needs of our under-represented populations such as: minority groups, ESOL students, and twice-exceptional special education students.

Educators at LEMS believe that all students, regardless of current academic level, should be given the opportunity for growth and academic success. Our school has taken a team approach to meeting our student's needs. We view the students as "ours" and it is this shared responsibility that ensures student success. Educators work collaboratively with the AAPS Resource Teacher (RT) to analyze current data every few weeks to best identify the needs of students performing above grade level expectations and that have mastered grade-level standards. The AAPS-RT works with teams to select rigorous, standards aligned, and scaffolded extension activities to challenge students in their identified areas of strength. The AAPS-RT encourages and models implementation of differentiated instructional strategies and higher level DoK reasoning to meet these students' needs. Teams are constantly tracking student progress to determine if current embedded strategies are working and modify when needed.

Grade level teams work together to plan, and implement: tiered lessons, individual learning contracts, compacted curriculum, PBL projects, and choice menus. These engaging options target student interest, readiness and learning profiles within their classrooms to support a differentiated curriculum based on student need. Educators have been empowered to focus on meeting the needs of their advanced students through meaningful school goals, relevant professional development opportunities, and supportive teacher leaders and administration. Our educators take pride in doing what is best for our students.

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

The Special Education (SPED) Team at LEMS supports Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities (PSCD), Learning Impaired – Mild/Moderate (LIMM), Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP), and Occupational Therapy (OT) in resource and inclusion classrooms. Educators collaborate with SPED counterparts to ensure student success by including SPED teachers in common planning. Assessment data is utilized for school-wide child find.

The SPED team utilizes the "One teach, One assist" co-teaching approach in many of the classrooms; however, "Station teaching" and "Teaming" co-teaching approaches are replacing traditional delivery methods. The SPED team employs the use of assistive technology as part of daily instruction. High tech tools include audio books, computers, text to speech, background music, noise-cancelling headphones, communication systems, and the interactive use of smartboards during lessons. Other assistive tools include white boards, wiggle seats, and pencil grips.

A collaborative relationship exists between special education and general education educators when it comes to planning and co-teaching. The classroom and SPED educators implement best-practices for team teaching within and outside the classroom to enhance achievement. Structured interventions and resources support at-risk students regarding academic and/or behavioral difficulties. These resources include Student Support Team (SST), Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS), monthly child find, Zones of Regulation, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), school counselors, school psychologist, and The Military and Family Life Counseling Program (MFLC). The SPED team works closely with all colleagues to build school schedules for program placement.

SPED educators advise and collaborate with the SST to reach students at level 2 before the students' needs special education. This collaboration between teams supports classroom teachers and re-mediate struggling students. Consistent collaboration with educators and professionals provides the opportunity for the team to refer for a "child find" sooner and with more reliable data.

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

LEMS carefully screens students at registration using the Home Language Survey for English Speakers for Other Languages (ESOL) services. The Registrar also asks pertinent questions to assess if another language is spoken in the home. The ESOL and classroom teachers perform records reviews and make referrals to identify potential students eligible for the ESOL program. A DoDEA approved language proficiency test World-Class Instructional Design & Assessment (WIDA) is used to screen, place, and exit students from the

ESOL program.

Once a student is identified, an ESOL Student Team convenes to make appropriate instructional recommendations. This team comprises at least one of the student's general educator(s), the ESOL teacher, an administrator, and other specialists. Where appropriate, it may also include that student and their parent(s).

ESOL services may include various delivery models. The ESOL and classroom educators collaborate to ensure that a student's work is a blended product of classroom learning and specific needs of the ESOL student. This work is reflected in these models: in-class assistance, pullout program, consultation, or a combination of different delivery models. This flexibility of models may be used to ensure communicative, cognitive, and academic progress, such as consultation, pullout, integrated setting, co-teaching, duet teaching, parallel teaching, and shadow teaching. Very young learners are not segregated from the general education classroom.

If an English language learner experiences difficulty in the ESOL and general education classroom, the ESOL and general education teachers implement a variety of strategies to resolve the student's difficulties. The student's progress, performance, and behavior is documented and examined by ESOL and general education teachers and requests assistance from the in-school problem-solving team (Student Support Team). The SST develops an intervention plan and time frame to possibly refer for Special Education screening. The ESOL student receives multiple services if necessary.

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

The LEMS population is unique, because LEMS families are highly mobile. The percentage of students moving into or out of our school ranges from 22% - 30% a year. This means we nearly replace our student body every 3 - 5 years. Our students require a special support system that recognizes the struggles that come with frequent transition. Other stresses of military connected families are frequent deployments, foreign living, and families isolated from extended families. Our educators and staff address the challenges in the classroom, in small group settings and individually for parents and students. We follow a three-level system to identify and support students while creating resilience in them.

Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC) are the first line of support for students at a level 1 need for social emotional support. MFLCs visit with new students in class, cafeteria, playground, in small groups and individually. MFLC are also in the position of supporting parents to help students in school. School counselors work with students to teach strategies for residents. They also develop relationships with students. All staff members are encouraged to develop relationships that allow students to express their concerns quickly. This allows our staff to work to remediate issues at the lowest level for students and families.

Level 2 students are supported through school counselors and are referred by educators, staff, Student Support Team (SST) members and/or Administration to help with students whose social-emotional health is interfering with academics. Level 3 students are assigned by the SST and administration for intensive support from a variety of services. If resolutions are not forthcoming, students may be referred to Special education or outside services. The most important focus is that every student in the school can go to an adult for help as soon as they have discovered an issue.

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

---

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

Landstuhl students are presented with many opportunities for growth of character and promotion of their social-emotional development. The LEMS Counselor for Elementary school students provides a daily "Morning Meeting" for our K-3 students which involves mini-lessons that focus on character building. The counselor extends these lessons into each K-5 classroom on a biweekly basis. LEMS promotes PBIS, a motto of "Be kind. Be kind. Be kind." and utilizes curriculum such as the Zones of Regulation to encourage appropriate behavior that is respectful to self and others. Character building, social emotional skill development, and promoting a sense of community are developed throughout the year in school wide focus weeks that are fun and exciting for our students. We have designated weeks for Red Ribbon Week, Random Acts of Kindness Week, Bully Prevention Week, Military Child Day, and Spirit Week.

To further encourage our positive sense of community and to provide opportunities for personal growth, LEMS has a mentoring program, which has middle school students assisting and mentoring students in kindergarten through 3rd grade on a weekly basis. In an effort to encourage and teach goal setting and career planning, the middle school students are using the Choices 360 curriculum. In addition, several students participate in the middle school's S2S/ Student Leadership Program which works to assist new students with their transition and supports those who are changing duty stations. The middle school students participated in an Anti-Bullying assembly led by the counselor. Each fall, all of our 7th grade students are presented with the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program. Our school has an active Student Support Team (SST) at the elementary and middle school levels. The teams often address specific student concerns about behavior, self-regulation and social skills.

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

In a military community where the population is highly mobile, whose children move schools every 2 - 3 years, and one that operates in a foreign country, it is critically important to have a school that is a hub of the community it serves. Landstuhl Elementary and Middle School (LEMS) utilizes a variety of strong partnerships to drive school engagement in such a way that benefits each child.

School Year 2019 - 2020 marked the 23rd consecutive year that LEMS has partnered with the Landstuhl Gymnasium (local German high school) through a practicum experience, which has allowed German high school aged students to intern at our school. These German students are embedded in classrooms, work 1:1 with students, enrich the overall understanding our students have in the community, and helps to build a stronger understanding of the American school system to our Host Nation community, which is especially valuable considering the great differences between our school system and that of Germany. This partnership allows students to have an active connection with their community.

Our school PTSA is active in school leadership and support which goes beyond just fund-raising. They coordinate classroom volunteers, align their financial supports to the school based goals, and are actively engaged by the school administration to assist in creating a positive school culture for each student. As such, our PTSA has performed so strongly that over the past 10 years they have twice received European PTSA Unity of the Year awards, are acknowledged at the European level for their parent partnerships each year, and are a model for community partnerships.

In addition, LEMS has benefited from a long history of partnerships with Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC). This has included opportunities for our students to engage with medical professionals, to have firsthand experiences on the inner workings of a large hospital. Furthermore, active partnerships exist between our school and Department of Defense dental service, eye clinics, the Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic, Behavioral Health, European Public Health Command, and with the overall command of the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center to name just a few.

Considering the uniqueness of an American school that operates in a foreign country many of the more

mainstream community/business partnerships can be rather problematic. Therefore, LEMS has worked diligently to leverage our greater community in such a way to support the overall programming of the building.

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

Landstuhl has a reputation throughout our district as being a school of dedicated educators who take time to support each other in and out of the classroom. This helps create a culture where individuals feel valued as professionals to contribute their expertise in many ways throughout the school. Shared leadership and collaboration builds the backbone of our school's approach to strategic planning and professional development. School-wide goals are developed to meet needs identified from data. A cross-section of team leaders provides guidance for school-level decision making and as-needed training to support grade-level initiatives.

Continuous Student Improvement team leaders plan and provide bi-annual school-wide Professional Development (PD) opportunities. Professional Development plans are made including the opinions of staff who are encouraged to voice suggestions and staff are given choices on which PD to attend. Most recently, staff identified areas of interest for professional development. Based on staff responses, in-house experts provided PD on a variety of topics in breakout sessions. Staff learned about topics ranging from use of Interactive Flat Panels, increasing DOK in lessons, guided reading support, to using curriculum resources to analyze math data. To support ongoing school-wide PD, the CSI team facilitated opportunities for grade level teams to use data protocols to differentiate instruction through formation of flexible groups and tiered instruction.

Other examples of embedded PD include development of a school-wide rubric to assess DOK and purpose of instructional activities; formation of a PLT to increase understanding and implementation of differentiation in classrooms offered for credit by the Advanced Learner teacher; technology tutorials, book clubs, and other staff driven initiatives.

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

Landstuhl School has a culture of shared leadership grounded in a philosophy of collaboration across all areas. The administration team empowers each staff member to take an active role in school goal planning in such a way to ensure joint ownership at all levels, and in such a way to expand school leadership to include grade level leaders, content "experts", student support members, and counselors. via the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). This team of school leaders utilizes the principles of Richard Dufour and Robert J. Marzano in aligning school actions to the 19 Principal Strategies that have application to collaborative teams (Leader's Learning). Through this process teacher leadership is empowered to build school goals that are actionable at each grade level, in each subject, through each discipline, and are done so in such a way to foster joint ownership of each staff member. In fact, over the past 4 years the school leadership has built a structure where each collaborative team has designed goals based on actionable data collected in real time, where instructional strategies are aligned to intended outcomes, set data points are measured throughout each school year, and are done so with the developmental needs of each student in mind. Moreover, school leadership empowers educational leaders to design, implement, and evaluate specific criteria to measure the effectiveness, validity, and value of instructional resources that are provided to students so as to maximize authentic differentiation, appropriate depth and complexity, and with a clear focus on standards aligned instruction. Additionally, school leadership and staff embrace system-wide assessments as a springboard to measure the effectiveness of instructional tools and strategies.

Furthermore, the principal provides authentic opportunities for students, educators, parents and others to engage in the process of providing a positive educational experience for each student. In fact, students are given a venue and a voice concerning class offerings, school improvement, culture, and environment of the school. Parents' conversations are valued and used as feedback to improve processes and programs to help all students to access and excel in the curriculum. Educators and their teams are allowed a risk free environment to challenge their own practices, and are encouraged to look for new opportunities to provide a positive, rigorous, and quality educational experience.

The ultimate goal of the Landstuhl leadership is to allow it's 11 plus teams, 15 teacher leaders, each student, parent, and community member the opportunity to be actively engaged in the learning of each student. Simply, the school leadership believes that to be a great school it must be one that embodies the spirit of One Team One Dream.

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

---

The overarching strength of Landstuhl Elementary Middle School is the ‘be kind to one another’ movement which is demonstrated by educators, staff, and students daily. Being kind creates an environment that breeds focused synergy on the work of caring for and educating students in our building. Educators, staff, and administrators are mindful that stressed adults can often create stressed students. Caring for staff, students, and their families reaps academic successes as well as socio-emotional benefits to learners. This mindset is embraced and extended in all aspects throughout the school.

“There is no safer place to take risks to try something new than LEMS” is often used to describe our school climate. Kindness extends into the collaborative work that educators accomplish with one another to improve the academic successes of each of their students. Staying within bounds of data-driven school goals, educators extend their professional leadership by incorporating new models for instruction. New initiatives are guided by educators who have developed and proven their expertise. Grade levels cross-pollinate interdependently, because educators genuinely appreciate and respect one another.

Involved parents are cultivated by happy engaged students. The overall ‘be kind’ environment is no less expressed by our award-winning PTSA. Their proactive approach provides support for educators in the classroom, making it possible to complete individual student assessments throughout the year. Parents volunteer their time to escort students to extra school events. They provide movie nights, BINGO night and a menagerie of fun, family focused, team building events. The spirit of the PTSA is to serve the students and faculty in the school. “Yes” is always their answer.

This kind environment permeates our population and encourages students to care for one another. These social-emotional connections give rise to collaborative academic learning. Competitiveness is lessened and teamwork is increased. This helps to create an alliance of students who encourage one another in mentorships within their peer relationships. Students who are experiencing relationship issues seek mediation with adults more readily. They use the “Be Kind” strategies to solve problems. This ownership for behavior translates into a greater focus from learners on academics throughout the school. We have observed that the “Be Kind” message at our school has drastically reduced behavior incidents leading to students that are mentally, emotionally, and socially invested in the learning environment, which positively transforms academic achievement at LEMS.