

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Frederick Douglass Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1 Swain Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Seaford State DE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19973-2827

County Sussex County

Telephone (302) 629-4587 Fax (302) 628-4486

Web site/URL https://fdes.seafordbluejays.org/ E-mail Carol.Leveillee@seaford.k12.de.us

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Corey Miklus E-mail corey.miklus@seaford.k12.de.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Seaford School District Tel. (302) 629-4587

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. David Tull  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	82	71	153
4	92	67	159
5	100	71	171
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	274	209	483

\*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
  - 1 % Asian
  - 35 % Black or African American
  - 31 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 26 % White
  - 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: 10%

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.

<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	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	26
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	48
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	487
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

Spanish, Haitian Creole

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 27 %  
129 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 66 %

Total number students who qualify: 317

8. Students receiving special education services: 21 %

100 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>10</u> Autism                 | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>54</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>7</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>5</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 24:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	95%	95%	94%
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.

To ensure success for students, Frederick Douglass Elementary builds the foundation of the school community through high expectations, high quality teaching, and building meaningful relationships.

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

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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At FDES, students are welcomed every morning with a smile and warm greeting. The morning hustle and bustle is filled with the FDES family greeting one another with special handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, hugs, heartfelt conversations, and special FDES sayings like “Better together,” “Fred Strong,” and “Best Day Ever.” Our Principal spends every morning personally greeting each student that walks through the front doors. As you stroll through the halls you see teachers standing at their classroom doors, checking in with each and every student as they enter. Students fill our hallways as they pick up breakfast and share stories with one another. They are filled with excitement for the activities and learning that will occur throughout their day. At FDES, we take pride in building relationships among our students and staff. Building relationships is necessary to create an environment where students are ready to learn. Whether it is by making a connection with a common interest, providing praise or encouragement for a job well done, or offering a listening ear, as a school community we are committed to fostering positive and everlasting relationships with one another. It is not uncommon to see staff members attending community events involving students, adults pitching in to help co-workers with any tasks needing done, or student peers helping a friend.

FDES is located in Seaford, Delaware in Sussex County. Seaford has a population of about 7,500 people with the median age of 39 and a median household income of \$44,901. At FDES we have 487 students, 65% of which qualify for free and reduced priced meals. Of our student population, 27% (129 students) qualify for our English Language Learner program and 21% (100 students) qualify for special education services. FDES is a diverse school with students attending grades 3-5. Of the 487 students, 35% are African American, 31% are Hispanic, and 26% are white. Thirty-eight students have other ethnic/racial classifications. During the 2018-2019 school year, 22 students transferred to FDES after October 1, 2018, and 26 students transferred out of our building before June 2019. This accounts for a 10% mobility rate for that school year. Regardless of our school’s demographics, all staff members at FDES believe that our parents, guardians, and families send us their very best child every day.

While many positive and creative programs are utilized at FDES, our implementation of student clubs set us apart from other schools. Student clubs are weekly hour-long classes within the school day tailored to the non-academic interests of our students. Choosing from sewing, cooking, origami, world drumming, coding, movie critics, and more, students participate in four different clubs throughout the year, based on their individual interest. These clubs are unique in that they serve two purposes. First, and most importantly, they allow our students to learn and grow as they explore and gain prior knowledge in areas they may not have experienced outside of school. Secondly, the clubs allow teachers to participate in grade level professional development and planning on a weekly basis while their students attend the clubs taught by paraeducators, our school counselor, and even our nutrition services manager. A definite student favorite, these clubs add a unique character to our school.

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

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

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

FDES is driven by one main philosophy: “What’s best for kids?” This approach is how we make every decision, with student success in mind. From the way that our school utilizes staff, to the rigor and high expectations for all students, we keep this philosophy in the forefront of all practices and instructional approaches. Our classrooms present a variety of meaningful lessons which enhance opportunities for student engagement and promote learning through risk taking and using mistakes as a launch for improvement. Frequent formative assessment helps to drive the lessons being taught as well as determining what small groups are utilized. All of these factors come back to that main question about what is truly best for each one of our students.

Each school year, FDES chooses a theme that will carry throughout that year. These themes such as “S.O.A.R.” (Students and Staff Overcoming Achieving and Rising), “Be the One” and “Better Together,” become our school’s focus for the year. In the classroom, online, and face-to-face, students and staff embrace these themes and philosophies with various school-wide activities and events. This helps to bring us together for a unified focus on success as a school.

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

Our Reading-Language Arts curriculum is a structured approach to building meaningful literacy. The Common Core State Standards and the high-volume design of the Bookworms Reading & Writing curriculum interact to provide daily opportunities for addressing multiple standards as students are engaged in three 45-minute segments of shared reading, English Language Arts (ELA), and differentiated reading instruction. During shared reading, students read intact grade-level texts out loud with support of the teacher to foster fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. ELA features teachers reading above-grade level text while modeling inferential thinking and comprehension strategies. There is also grammar focused instruction and written responses that correspond with the read-alouds. Lastly, during differentiated instruction, teachers use data from DIBELS and Informal Decoding Inventories to group students and provide targeted instruction.

We have worked to embed the pedagogical shifts of the Common Core (balancing informational and literary text, knowledge in the disciplines, text complexity, text-based answers, writing from sources, and academic vocabulary) into our practices while specifically addressing the issue of text complexity.

To analyze and improve student performance, teachers utilize a variety of assessments. For grade-level components, word study tests, on-demand written responses to assess comprehension, and longer fully processed writing tasks to assess composition and mechanics are used. Our district also uses Common Assessments four times a year to assess progress on the Common Core State Standards.

#### **1c.** Mathematics

Our math curriculum is based solely on the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core concentrates on a clear set of math skills and concepts. Students will learn concepts in a more organized way both during the school year and across grades.

“Grade 3 instructional time focuses on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1); (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and of area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.

Grade 4 instructional time focuses on three critical areas: (1) developing understanding and fluency with

multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; (2) developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; (3) understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.

Grade 5 instructional time focuses on three critical areas: (1) developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing understanding of the multiplication of fractions and of division of fractions in limited cases (unit fractions divided by whole numbers and whole numbers divided by unit fractions); (2) extending division to 2-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and (3) developing understanding of volume.”

Grade level teams utilize weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for math instruction planning to help students become mathematical thinkers and problem solvers. Each math lesson begins with either a Number Talks lesson or a Number of the Day activity to build mental math capacity. Concepts are introduced and taught using different modalities of learning. To ensure concept understanding, exit tickets and journal responses are utilized regularly. Our district also uses Common Assessments four times a year to assess progress on the Common Core State Standards.

During math small groups, concepts are strategically revisited and reinforced over the course of the year to guide students toward achieving mastery and long-term retention. Freckle Education, a computer-based differentiation platform, is an integral part of this instruction that allows students to access content at their own level.

#### **1d. Science**

Science content, based on the Next Generation Science Standards, is taught through the use of science kits that include hands-on experiments to bring science “alive” for our students. In third grade, students use problem-solving skills to address real world issues, such as designing a water filter and learning about water sources, pollution, and water purification. Our fourth grade students are able to complete activities such as designing an open and closed circuit, which applies scientific principles such as testing hypotheses and understanding energy transfer mechanics. Once in fifth grade, students tackle tasks like working in a team to build an eco-column, which demonstrates how various ecosystems can coexist in a symbiotic relationship. In each grade, students are active participants in their own learning, while teachers incorporate non-fiction texts to build a foundation of scientific knowledge for all students. Each science kit provides an assessment that addresses the fundamentals taught within that kit.

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

Following the Delaware Standards for Social Studies, our curriculum focuses on four main areas of study: civics, history (local/state), economics, and geography. In grade 3, key focuses include studying the components and development of our national government, the study of our local city’s history, and reading and understanding maps. Fourth grade instruction addresses the main areas of study with topics such as Delaware state history and geography as well as economical supply and demand. The fifth grade students have the immersive opportunity to participate in Jr. Achievement (JA) BizTown, which gives students a firsthand experience with economics, goods and services, interest and skills, and running a business.

Students learn through non-fiction texts, hands-on projects, and a variety of field trips. Our instructional goal is to prepare our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to become competent decision makers, both in their personal lives and when making societal choices through their understanding of the world around them. Assessments in the area of social studies take the form of individual student feedback and pre/post-test data.

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

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

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

Every student at FDES is exposed to a wide variety of non-core content areas as part of their daily schedule. These classes, known in our school as “specials classes,” consist of art, physical education, music, media center (library), and computer lab. On a five-day rotating schedule, the students receive one of these classes per day for 45 minutes. Each of these non-core content areas use state and national standards to build their curriculum and tie it into everyday knowledge and skills that are essential to learning. Furthermore, the teachers and paraprofessionals who provide the instruction during these classes often work together to create thematic units that are presented in each of the five different content areas. Some examples of these thematic units include: the Olympics, video game content, and lessons that tie into the school-wide book study each year.

Many essential skills and learning opportunities are presented in the five “specials classes.” In music class, students learn how to perform on their own as well as with others, while also having the opportunity to think creatively as an individual and then using those ideas to collaborate with a group. Through instruction of art principles, students have options of applying these different principles to approach a project with a common goal while maintaining their individuality. The physical education curriculum encourages students to demonstrate positive and responsible social behavior that respects self and others. During weekly media lessons, students acquire real world skills with information literacy and digital citizenship. Our computer lab instruction gives students exposure to the skills needed to become proficient in the use of technology as applied to academic tasks, such as typing, research, and creating or editing on different virtual media platforms. As a whole, our other curriculum areas teach students how to be a more well-rounded citizen with a wide exposure to various ideas, culture, history, and social norms.

In addition, fifth grade students who elect to take part in musical instrument lessons receive two 45 minute sessions per week of instruction. Currently, FDES has 57 students who elect for musical instrument lessons. This represents 33% of fifth grade students, and many of these students continue to take musical instrument lessons upon entering sixth grade when transitioning to other buildings.

Finally, 125 students ranging from grades 3-5 take part in our Spanish language immersion program, which provides them with instruction of the Spanish language as well as math, science, and social studies instruction in Spanish for one half of their instructional schedule. Students who are part of this program have been receiving Spanish instruction since kindergarten, often producing bilingual or even trilingual students in some cases.

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

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

Wilson Reading Systems is a tier three reading intervention program for students who have not internalized the sound symbol system for reading and spelling. We have seven trained staff members providing individualized reading instruction to seventeen different groups. Through Wilson, our students who struggle with reading and spelling have shown progress. Many of our groups include our special education students and this program gives them strategies to be successful readers with tapping, syllabication of words, scooping to read phrases and multi-syllable words, and a process to proofread sentences for errors. The Bookworms Tiers are also utilized to provide differentiated reading and writing instruction. FDES utilizes small group Direct Instruction (D.I.) in the areas of fluency comprehension, vocabulary comprehension, or Wilson Reading Systems. Students are grouped based upon quarterly D.I., DIBELS, and STAR data.

Number Worlds is a math intervention for students performing in tier two or three designed to develop student math proficiency. We have five trained staff members. During the 2018-2019 school year, seven students received Number Worlds math instruction. Across the school year, the students demonstrated an average of 20% growth overall and collectively demonstrated an average of 98% accuracy. Currently, eight students are receiving Number Worlds math instruction demonstrating an average of 22.5% growth overall

and an average of 92.2% accuracy.

Station teaching is utilized across classrooms with diverse student needs to ensure students are learning skills in a variety of ways. Station teaching consists of three or four differentiated activities in a given subject area with a variety of teacher-led activities and small group or independent activities. During the teacher-led activities, the teacher or paraeducator is able to provide direct instruction in a small group. The station teaching model supports the students' increased comprehension of skills.

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

Students in the gifted and talented program, titled the Action Learning Program (ALP), balance student voice and choice so that learning is both engaging and designed to nurture quality thinking (three dimensions of quality-critical, creative, and collaborative). The concept of the ALP is to have students extend their learning by selecting authentic opportunities to make a real difference in the world. The gifted and talented teacher spends the first semester providing weekly instruction while guiding the students toward the choice of topic for their research project. During the second semester, the students work independently through Schoology with feedback and monitoring from the teacher. The goal is to create opportunities for learning that are applied in the creation of authentic products or performances. Making a difference is divided into two spheres, our ecological footprint and our social footprint. Students are encouraged to select an area of interest and focus their efforts to either help their community (and beyond) to shrink their environmental footprint or to grow their social footprint (the ways our daily actions help make the lives of others better). The selection of an issue provides a focus for the area in which students work to make a difference. The students are also invited to select how they would make a difference. ALP is designed to tap into a wide range of interests and talents while allowing for students' intellectual capacity to be nurtured as teachers provide ongoing support into powerful inquiry. The structure of the program ensures that students have a choice in what issue to explore and how to respond to the issue in a way that makes a difference, at the same time providing the structure to support a student's ability to thinking critically, creatively, and collaboratively in the pursuit of deep understanding and meaningful learning. At the culmination of this process, students are allowed the opportunity to present their work in front of peers and staff members during a district-wide special ALP showcase that includes presentations and question/answer sessions for each student.

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

FDES serves students with a variety of special education needs based on the vision of high expectations for all students. Special education students receive individualized and specialized instruction based on their needs in order to promote success across all academic areas. Each grade level has one or more special education teachers that provide push in services in the general education classroom. This model allows students to receive accommodations and modifications across subject areas, station and team teaching between the general education teacher and special education teacher, utilization of multiple classroom strategies, and collaboration amongst staff members to ensure implementation of each student's individualized education plan (IEP). At FDES we also provide a small group instructional classroom where students from all grade levels who require more intensive academic instruction are served. In this classroom instruction is tailored to the students' ability level and is designed to build foundational skills to promote generalization across multiple settings. Throughout the school year students create several hands-on projects to encourage learning of skills through auditory, visual, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. The small group setting also focuses on several functional skills such as: money, calendar, and pragmatic language. The use of para educational support staff enhances student support and generalization of skills across multiple settings. Our paraeducators facilitate station teaching, provide small group instruction, and ensure student generalization of skills in unstructured settings. FDES also provides related services such as occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, specialized services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and specialized services for students who are blind. Through these specialized services students are able to receive individualized related services in a variety of service delivery models specific to the student's area of need in order to facilitate carryover and generalization of skills. Student placement is based on cognitive abilities, academic achievement, observation and teacher/parent input.

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

The English Language Learner (ELL) program at FDES is designed to meet the needs of our diverse ELL population. Students whose home-language is something other than English take the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to determine their individual plan of support. Instruction is differentiated so it can be tailored to each student's strengths and areas of development. We utilize both push-in and pull-out methods of teaching, where the ELL teacher and paraeducator push into the general education classrooms during shared reading instruction or pull out small groups of students to work on the receptive skills of listening and reading, in addition to the productive skills of speaking and writing. This embedded support in and out of the classroom allows ELL students access to high quality instruction, including a focus on vocabulary development. This instruction and materials are scaffolded to provide our English Language Learners with the tools to navigate a rigorous academic curriculum.

For our students who are newcomers to the American Education System, an English language development pull-out class is offered twice a week to assist these students in acquiring everyday language as well as academic, content-specific vocabulary and grammar. These students are affectionately referred to as the Lighthouse Language Crew. With the combined, intentional efforts of our ELL team, FDES offers support to all of our English Language Learners with the goal of helping them achieve their learning goals, positioning them for success in future educational and career endeavors.

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

The Autism Program serves students in third through fifth grade with an educational classification of Autism. Each student receives specialized and direct instruction specific to students with Autism. Students attend community outings, operate a refreshment cart, and participate in activities in regular education classrooms. Students in the program present with unique communication needs that are supported through the use of Augmentative Alternative Communication such as visuals, picture exchange communication, or a speech generating device.

All students have access to a specially designed sensory room and sensory walk called "The Positive Path" which is utilized throughout their day.

The therapeutic classroom is designed for students who require evidence-based, structured, therapeutic support so that they can realize success, both in their learning and relationships. In the therapeutic classroom students receive school-based mental health intervention services, mental health consultation, and mental health treatment services. Through therapeutic supports, hands-on learning, and community outings these students are able to learn and grow in a way that best meets their social-emotional and academic needs.

The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) curriculum focuses on skills related to making and keeping friends and managing peer conflict and rejection. Through our social skills group, fifth grade students are able to learn valuable rules and steps to a variety of social scenarios in order to make and keep friends when they transition to middle school. During the 2018-2019 school year, eight students participated in the group. Upon completion of the sixteen-week program, each expressed feeling more confident in their ability to make friends in middle school. Currently, for the 2019-2020 school year, there are ten students participating in the PEERS group. At week eight of the program, students are demonstrating an increased ability to independently discover common interests and connections with other peers, as indicated by teacher input, observation, student feedback, and a pre/post assessment.

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

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

The primary contributing factor at FDES for engaging and motivating students while supporting them academically, socially, and emotionally is our Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program. The PBS program is multifaceted and tiered in its approach. At its base level, the PBS system tracks students' daily behavior with data collection and goal setting that is individualized to each student based on their recent performance from the previous quarter. This data is shared between professional staff, students, and parents or guardians when helping to determine student growth and necessary interventions. Furthermore, this data is used when recognizing students quarterly for their behavioral and academic growth at our PBS achievement assemblies. Students also have the opportunity to attend quarterly events where their individual achievements are celebrated.

To recognize students' daily adherence to school-wide expectations, any member of the school's staff as well as bus drivers can issue character slips, which are a form of on-the-spot positive recognition for exemplary behavior and academic achievement. When a student receives a character slip, they can take it to the office and deposit it into the bin for their grade level, and then they receive a sticker to wear for the rest of the day. Periodically, a raffle occurs and some of the character slips are drawn randomly, with the student whose name appears on the slip receiving various forms of prizes or opportunities to be part of a special event. Additionally, positive office referrals can be written for students who further surpass behavioral and academic expectations, resulting in a phone call home using the special M&M phone and their signature being added to the wall of fame. Both of these systems are utilized frequently by all staff for all students to help promote and reinforce positive choices and achievements.

To help teach students the school-wide expectations, homeroom teachers, the school counselor, and the administrative team utilize "Cool Tools" lessons and town meetings. The lessons are mini social and behavioral lessons tailored to our school and taught during the first few weeks of school. They can be revisited when behavioral data suggests that a refresher is necessary. During town meetings, the administrative team and school counselor provide more in-depth character lessons, while also addressing areas of whole-school achievement or reminders of expectations. YouTube lessons, including digital book studies recorded by our students and staff, are another way that we efficiently provide engagement opportunities for all students to access and respond to the social, emotional, and academic content being taught.

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

Family and community engagement has been a constant focus for FDES in recent years, so much so that a committee formed to try to help bolster support from stakeholders outside of the school setting. One successful way that our school has found to increase parent and community engagement is to make our students the focus of attention when it comes to events and opportunities for families and community members to attend. Whether events are district-level events or school-level events, the FDES team ensures that students are a part of the planning and process. We feature their academic work, visual and performing art work, and many opportunities for students to showcase their growth and abilities.

Events like "One Book, One Fred" bring the whole school building together for a shared purpose of reading the same book, which can then be reinforced at home. At the culmination of the event, families and community members are invited to join in the celebration of activities that are centered on the theme of the book selected for that year. We also utilize YouTube to engage students and families during periods of time when school is not in session. With initiatives like "Tucked in Tuesdays," "Mystery Reader," and "The Case of the Missing Bluejay," students and families can work together to access fun academic tasks that feature educators from our school either online or in person.

Our English Language Learners department hosts an annual "Culture Night," where we invite all students and families to come for a night of celebrating unique cultures and backgrounds, all while learning and

embracing our community values. We invite parents to visit the school often, even during school hours, for other events such as achievement assemblies, the annual school-wide barbecue, field-day, or just to stop by and each lunch with their child. Weekly communication is sent home every Tuesday, as well as quarterly newsletters from the principal and frequent website updates. Our school also has an active Facebook account, as well as a Twitter account run by the principal and two Instagram accounts run by the special content area teachers to help promote some of the work being done in the visual arts and physical education.

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

The professional culture consists of four main components at FDES. The first component is focused on informal and formal observations. Based on teachers' observed skills and strategies, professional development training and coaching is planned. This training occurs during faculty meetings, grade level PLCs, or in-class coaching. The second component is differentiated faculty meetings. During this monthly time, staff learning needs can be differentiated. For example, if a group of teachers need a refresher on Number of the Day, this training occurs while other teachers have other training and tasks to accomplish. The third component is creating a place where teachers and staff want to learn and work each day. This is accomplished in several ways. Appreciation days are planned for all key stakeholders throughout the year: nutrition, custodial, para-educators, secretaries, nurse, teachers, students, and bus drivers all have a special day or week of appreciation. In addition to this, periodic "just because" notes and small treats are left in mailboxes or the teachers' lounge. National appreciation days are celebrated during February and March each year. Staff receive postcards and Remind app words of encouragement several times a year. Excellent "rise to the top" teaching strategies are highlighted in the weekly Friday Focus. Hero awards are given out at faculty meetings to two staff members. Often, teachers and staff are highlighted on various social media platforms utilized by our school. During PLC and faculty meetings, staff get to know the other staff that they work with each day. Staff support one another in various ways throughout the year. The fourth component is lifelong learning opportunities for our staff. Teachers attend all in-school as well as district professional development. Teachers and staff are also selected to represent the school in conferences and workshops. In the last five years, staff has attended science workshops, inclusion conferences, Get Your Teach On, comprehensive studies at the University of Virginia, Bookworms training at University of Delaware, Stetson training, ELL training provided by the University of Delaware, and the Delaware Association of School Leaders conference, and various SMARTER related trainings. Every FDES staff member is placed in a "Good to Great" trio which pairs educators of varying degrees of experience to help promote best practices and professional growth. A district-wide initiative pairs mentors with novice educators, allowing observation with feedback and assistance in completing tasks and practices associated with that staff member's area of roles and responsibilities.

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

The leadership model utilized at FDES is one of ample opportunities and various subgroups. The School Leadership Team (SLT) is led by the principal and associate principal. The SLT is a group of 11 individuals, comprised of various stakeholders who represent each of the following areas: administration, grade-level teams, special education, special content areas, student services, and paraprofessionals. These peer leaders not only represent other staff from their designated subgroup, but also serve as leaders of other smaller subgroups and committees that plan and monitor various events and programs within our school. Decisions regarding staff and school policies are often reviewed by the SLT and adjusted when appropriate.

The leadership philosophy at FDES relies heavily on open communication and opportunities for frequent feedback from school staff, parents and guardians, and students. Mid-year and end-year "chalk talks" provide an open forum for all staff to give feedback on a variety of school-wide policies and programs. As well, annual surveys are distributed to students and parents to also provide feedback and suggestions. All of the results of these various surveys are compiled and reviewed by the SLT to assess and determine necessary changes or upgrades to current practices. The principal also provides periodic times for designated "principal talks" which allow face-to-face time for any staff member to address concerns or bring suggestions to help improve our school.

Students are also given opportunities for leadership through various school responsibilities such as student ambassadors and safety patrol. These students help ensure the safety of other students, while also providing feedback from a student perspective by representing each homeroom.

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

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Over the past five years, the FDES team has worked to create, maintain, and finetune a model of proactive behavioral response. The model encompasses the whole school with the central hub being an area consisting of six small office spaces in our school known as the “Reflection Suite.” The pivotal objective of the Reflection Suite is to provide every student with the proactive services required to help minimize unwanted behavioral responses, allowing for increased time in the academic setting with minimal distractions and optimal opportunity for success.

The Reflection Suite is maintained by the Student Behavioral Interventionist (SBI), the administrative team, and the school counselor. The different rooms are utilized to allow privacy and a comfortable space for students. Some of the services provided in the suite include, but are not limited to: (a) counseling sessions with the school counselor or outside professionals, (b) spaces where students can relax and take breaks during times of frustration, anger, or sadness, (c) quiet study areas, free of distractions, (d) the “Peace Bridge” for guided conflict resolution, and (e) a conference room to discuss student behavior and create proactive plans for individual success.

Every student visit is logged in an online form, which includes name, purpose of visit, date, and duration, which is coded to allow for quick and easy data sorting. Our mission has been to avoid in and out of school suspensions and other behavioral consequences by identifying what proactive services rather than reactive responses are needed. The data that is tracked and available allows for all stake-holders to have a snapshot of each student and how we have attempted to meet their unique needs.

The staff at FDES have received numerous forms of training and professional development regarding trauma-informed response to behavior. This goes along with the goal of being proactive and preventative. In addition, teachers and other staff working directly with students received in-house training from the administrative team and school counselor, providing them with suggestions of tiered interventions that can be done in the classroom (including a mandatory chill-out area designated for each learning space). When these interventions are not successful, the FDES staff is asked to then reach out to the administrative team and/or counselor to determine if services are needed in the Reflection Suite. Overall, this practice has seen an increase in structure and options for responding to student behavioral concerns and mental health needs.