

***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 Ms. Gail Amelia Wright  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name West Main Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 531 West Main Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Lancaster State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 75146-3198

County Dallas County

Telephone (972) 218-1551 Fax (972) 218-1563

Web site/URL http://www.lancasterisd.org/Domain/17 E-mail gailwright@lancasterisd.org

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\* Dr. Elijah Granger E-mail elijahgranger@lancasterisd.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lancaster Independent School District Tel. (972) 218-1400

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 Ellen Clark  
(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**

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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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 10 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
<b>PreK</b>	46	38	84
<b>K</b>	48	43	91
<b>1</b>	44	48	92
<b>2</b>	51	42	93
<b>3</b>	66	59	125
<b>4</b>	56	49	105
<b>5</b>	70	58	128
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	381	337	718

\*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):
- 0.6 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0.7 % Asian
  - 69.8 % Black or African American
  - 23 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 3.5 % White
  - 2.1 % 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: 21%

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

West Main’s current mobility rate is 21% and has consistently remained above 15%. Contributing factors for this rate include; a generally high population of students in foster care being served within our district, students who are categorized as homeless or living with a family member within our district, and families that reside in rental properties.

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	90
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	63
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	153
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	728
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.21
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

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

Spanish, Vietnamese

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 89 %

Total number students who qualify: 640

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %

43 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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>2</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>9</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: 1

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.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 23:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

At West Main Elementary, we are "Racing to the Next Level" because "Exemplary is the Expectation." This motto is exhibited by how we engage our students on a daily basis. We realize the expectation begins with every adult in the building and translates to the student body by the actions we model for them. The staff at West Main Elementary understands that intentional instructional planning and delivery, directly impacts our students learning and their ability to achieve at advanced levels. We believe that ALL students can learn and at West Main, they ALL WILL.

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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Located in Lancaster, Texas, a suburb in the southern sector of Dallas County sits West Main Elementary (WME). West Main Elementary is one of the six elementary schools in Lancaster ISD. Before renovations in 2017, West Main Elementary was the longest standing school building in the district, and served approximately 260 students. The passing of the Vision 2020 Lancaster ISD Bond package, paved the way for the original building to be transformed. A new state-of-the-art facility with the capacity to serve approximately 750 students was built. This resulted in the establishment of what is now known as West Main Global Communications and Fine Arts Academy. Since its establishment, WME has embraced the district initiative to provide students with “More Than a Diploma” by offering a well-rounded educational experience. WME students are exposed to performing and visual arts, technology, and social-emotional learning experiences.

As a part of an open-enrollment district, West Main Elementary welcomes students from across the Dallas metroplex. WME serves approximately 716 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade, which provides an average of 1:24 student-teacher ratio. Students at WME are predominantly from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes a significant percentage of students in foster care or non-traditional household configurations. At West Main Elementary, staff members have adopted a *parents' patriae* philosophy as it relates to building relationships with students, therefore, creating a family-like environment. The adoption of this mentality has become known as “The West Main Way.”

At WME, “Exemplary is the Expectation”! Therefore, teachers regularly attend campus-based professional development sessions where research-based strategies are modeled to improve teacher capacity and student outcomes. The campus leadership team consists of administrators, math and reading instructional coaches, a counselor, and the fine arts assistant director. This team frequently meets to analyze data and formulate plans to ensure systems that are created to monitor student progress, are implemented with fidelity. Targeted students are provided with strategic interventions to address gaps in academic skills that may hinder their performance. Teachers understand the importance of parent-teacher partnerships and how becoming familiar with environmental and cultural influences shape student performance and behavior. As a result, teachers regularly have conferences with parents to gain insight into their students’ home life, in an effort to build better relationships with students. During these conferences with parents, teachers also discuss methodologies used in the classroom to facilitate continuity of instructional strategies. Each of these elements has contributed to West Main consistently achieving high levels of academic success as measured by state assessments. The school has earned Texas Education Agency campus distinctions in Top 25 percent in Comparative Academic Growth and Comparative Closing the Gaps, Academic Achievement in Reading, Academic Achievement in Math, and Postsecondary Readiness.

West Main Elementary maintains a target of continuous improvement by implementing many essential strategies to support students academically, physically, emotionally, and socially. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the standards for what students should know and be able to do. All teachers and students are held to a high standard of performance. While using the district’s resources for guidance, teachers meet weekly to ensure lessons are rigorous, and student activities are aligned to the state’s curriculum. The leadership team makes every moment count during the instructional day by providing teachers with a detailed schedule and framework that includes to-the-minute lesson examples for each subject area. For example, each instructional day begins with a writing activity and a campus-wide intervention block. This time is utilized to help close learning gaps for all students. Daily enrichment opportunities are also included to help students become more engaged in their learning. The campus-wide student growth rate has increased as a result of the designated intervention block.

The staff at WME strives to meet all the needs of their students. To ensure their physical needs are met; every morning, students report to their classroom where they are welcomed and have an opportunity to enjoy a self- served breakfast before beginning their instructional day. At lunchtime, students have the opportunity to select from several options of well-balanced meals that include fresh fruits and vegetables. Grab bags are prepared and dispersed to combat weekend hunger for the economically disadvantaged students who are in the most need. The school also helps students manage their physical and mental health

through campus health monitoring devices. Students can visit a healthcare professional without missing a school day to do so.

There are a number of activities accessible to students that aid in their social and emotional development. Opportunities include female and male mentoring programs, a step team club, a character development program, and weekly guidance lessons provided by the counselor. To ensure that all students at WME feel welcome and valued, the school hosts many multicultural celebrations throughout the school year. Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Cinco De Mayo, Thanksgiving, Women's History Month are just a few. The staff at WME believes that recognizing all cultures has created a sense of belonging, thus increasing attendance and overall academic performance.

Teachers and parents can communicate via an electronic behavior and communication system, during and beyond the school day. This form of immediate communication furthers the development of strong student-parent- teacher relationships. It contributes to student success, resulting in fewer suspensions, an increase in attendance due to student engagement, and a sense of belonging. Collectively, these lead to improved performance in class and a decrease in the display of inappropriate behavior. West Main prides itself on creating a family-like atmosphere where all stakeholders are invested in ensuring a quality education for the whole child.

## **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

West Main’s core curriculum consists of reading, writing, language arts, math, science, and social studies. Students receive instruction daily in all core areas. Because the staff at WME believes a balanced literacy approach to learning helps students achieve success across all disciplines, reading and writing are supported through other contents such as science and social studies.

Students in pre-kindergarten through second grade receive an hour and a half of English Language Arts (ELAR) instruction. While students in 3rd through 5th grade receive at least one hundred and ten minutes of education, this does not include a thirty-minute intervention block at the top of the day. Fourth-grade students receive one hundred and ten minutes of writing instruction. Students also acquire an hour and a half of math instruction in primary grades and no less than fifty-five minutes in third through fifth grade. Social studies and science have forty-five-minute blocks scheduled daily except in fifth grade. Fifth-grade students receive one hundred and fifty minutes of science instruction each day. Lesson plans and grade level planning meetings are monitored by a member of the leadership team to ensure all lessons and activities address the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the district’s scope and sequence.

While planning activities, teachers tier lessons so that all students have an opportunity to be successful. General education teachers work closely with special education teachers to ensure lessons are differentiated, and special education students receive the accommodations needed for them to achieve success. During professional learning community meetings (PLC’s), teachers discuss the previous week’s lesson and how it aligns with the state standard. Teachers also bring student artifacts from high, medium, and low students to ensure the lesson was taught to the depth and complexity of the TEK. Artifacts are analyzed by peers and members of the leadership team. Assessments are also analyzed to ensure tests address the TEKS.

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

West Main’s English Language Arts (ELAR) teachers take a direct instruction and learner-centered approach when presenting instructional content. There are five components to daily reading instruction: Foundational Skills, Building Knowledge and Language, Reading Workshop, Small Group Instruction, and Writing Workshop. Typically, ELAR teachers begin their day with Writing Workshop. During this period, students work on the writing process and how to organize their writing. Students who are unable to compose drafts of writing work on handwriting during this period. Teachers also introduce the grammar focus for the week. During this time, students have an opportunity to practice the skill during stations. Immediately following writing, a 30-minute intervention period begins. Students work on targeted skills during this time. Teachers pull students to the teacher desk to work on student deficits in smaller groups, while others use web-based intervention tools. Some teachers continue with stations for an additional 30 minutes. Teachers create activities that spiral in previously taught skills so that students continue to gain exposure. Teachers also use leveled readers during station time for guided reading and to increase fluency. The sixty-minute Reading Workshop period begins with Foundational/Spelling focus and moves on into the reading skill and story for the week. Third through Fifth-grade students focus on Foundational Skills two days a week, and the remaining three days are used as an Engage and Respond or Communication period. This period allows students to discuss questions that may arise from the story, make connections, and delve a little deeper into the theme.

Learning is assessed regularly in every ELAR classroom. Teachers create formative assessments using strategies such as retelling, questioning, summarization, exit tickets, and think-pair-share. Teachers use running records in kindergarten through third grade to monitor fluency. Students also receive summative assessments every week utilizing the campus curriculum and every six weeks with district CFA’s or Benchmarks. Teachers and students regularly analyze data. Teachers use the data to monitor and adjust

instruction while students set goals to chart their grades from assessments on student goal sheets. Teachers meet after every CFA and Benchmark to create or make adjustments to plans. This data is also used to plan for tutoring and state assessment practice. Instructional Coaches help teachers create planning mats to help them remain on track and guide them into meeting individual campus goals. While planning activities, teachers also tier lessons so that all students have an opportunity to be successful. General education teachers work closely with special education teachers to ensure lessons are differentiated, and special education students receive the accommodations needed for them to achieve success.

### **1c. Mathematics**

WME's math teachers use several instructional approaches. When presenting instructional content in math, the leadership teams feel direct instruction, learner-centered, drill and practice, and hands-on learning approaches will yield the best results. Every learning style is addressed when teachers use multiple instructional methods. The math curriculum at WME utilizes the TEKS as the essential focal point, which is vertically aligned from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. In the earlier grade levels, teachers focus on the development of a strong mathematical foundation, which will propel students through the upper-grade levels. In grades pre-kindergarten through second, curriculum focuses on number sense, basic operations, as well as, problem-solving. Students develop a deeper understanding of concepts through the use of manipulatives, engaging lessons, and STEM activities. These lessons allow students to build upon knowledge as they move from the basic concrete levels to the more complex abstract levels of the lesson cycle.

The daily math lesson cycle at all grade levels begins with a spiral review and a daily math problem. Additionally, the lower grade levels continue to build their mathematical foundation through daily math fluency activities, such as number-of-the-day, subitizing, and fact drills. Daily math problems provide students the opportunity to practice and enhance problem-solving strategies. Students solve problems by thinking/analyzing information, identifying what is being asked of them, generating a plan, executing the plan, refining their solution, and sharing/explaining their thinking. This method is the T.I.G.E.R.S. design process for problem-solving. Visuals are displayed in each classroom to serve as a reminder to students of the process. Daily math problems often include open-ended and standardized test formatted questions, which allows students to develop logical reasoning and make real-world connections.

Teachers at West Main Elementary, deliver whole-group instruction to introduce new concepts and skills. The introduction of the lesson is followed by activities that allow students to work collaboratively in learning groups, providing the opportunity for student engagement, hands-on activities, and exploration. Activities allow students to move from concrete to abstract representations of skills being taught. After the lesson, teachers utilize exit tickets, classwork assignments, and verbal questioning to assess the concepts being taught.

In addition to administering daily formative assessments, teachers also monitor student progress through weekly assessments, comprehensive e-learning programs, common formative assessments, and benchmark testing. The data gathered from these assessments are then utilized to drive daily instruction, as well as after-school tutorials. In addition to teacher knowledge of students, data is analyzed to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students. Teachers are able to develop intentionally targeted learning lessons for students, which promotes higher academic achievement and increased annual growth. Targeted lessons allow students to be exposed to a variety of methods for mastering concepts. Additionally, students are provided the opportunity to learn from mistakes. Through continuous guided and independent practice, students assume responsibility for mastery of targeted skills.

The WME staff strives to ensure that students are provided with every opportunity to reach their full potential. Teachers meet weekly with instructional coaches to plan, collaborate, and develop intentional lessons for students. The team incorporates additional research-based resources, such as computer-based learning, to provide intentional lessons, cross-curricular teaching, and opportunities for academic growth.

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

West Main Global Communications is one of 6 elementary school pipelines in a District-wide science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program. At WME, science is taught every day and at every grade level. The science curriculum aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge of Skills, and additional resources are used to build awareness of STEM academics and careers. WME teachers take a hands-on approach to learning science. To help students build foundational skills, the teacher intentionally plans lessons that will allow students to explore, make observations, and record or report those observations. Teachers also are intentional as it relates to questioning to ensure students build skills inferencing and making predictions. Scaffolded when necessary, Pre-Kindergarten through 5th-grade teachers deliver science instruction that encompasses a science inquiry approach. Whether indoors or outdoors lessons include observations, questioning, gathering information, forming a hypothesis, testing a hypothesis, making conclusions, reporting, and evaluating. During class, students use interactive concept walls to help with retaining abstract ideas. Note-taking using interactive science notebooks helps students with retaining concepts and homework. Learning is assessed daily, and data is used to monitor and adjust instruction.

Enrichment activities are strategically planned throughout the year. Several times a year, WME students are afforded an opportunity to work in groups on Problem Based Learning (PBL) projects to solve open-ended problems. Students present their projects to the class, and projects are displayed throughout the school. While science field trips and speakers are regularly scheduled to increase science exposure for every grade level, competitions such as the 4Cs competition (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity) are encouraged for 3rd through 5th-grade students. WME has several community partners such as the local zoo and area universities who are committed to exposing students to science and professionally developing teachers. During the second semester, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade have an opportunity to show what they have learned. They are required to represent the campus by participating in a district-wide STEM Expo to present their PBL projects to the community.

Learning is assessed daily in science. Depending on the grade level, learning is assessed through questioning, rubrics, presentations, curriculum assessments, District CFA's, and Benchmarks. Summative assessments for science occur every six weeks. This data is analyzed and used to monitor and adjust instruction. Depending on student performances, some skills are reviewed to ensure students have a good understanding of the TEK. Little time is available for review in science, so teachers are intentional when it comes to tiering lessons and differentiating instruction. Since science is assessed by the state in fifth grade, students attend science class and science lab to increase exposure. This has led to a significant increase in fifth-grade benchmark scores.

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

WME's Social Studies curriculum is also aligned to the TEKS. WME's teachers believe it is imperative that students learn about the world and how it works. Therefore, when teaching social studies, teachers take a blended learning approach to instruction that includes print and digital lessons. The digital lessons help students gain exposure so that they will have a reference point for lessons. All grade levels learn basic skills such as reading and interpreting tables, charts, and graphs. To help students learn to observe the world around them, pre-K through 2nd-grade students create community projects requiring them to duplicate their environment. Social studies text is also used to extend reading and increase expository text exposure. Therefore, it is taught daily at every grade level. Lessons include citizenship, culture, history, government, economics, and geography. Additional resources are used in third through fifth grades to increase geography exposure. Through learning centers and thematic units, lessons require students to be engaged through storytelling, inquiry processes, and opportunities to collaborate. In every lesson, students have an opportunity to actively read or listen to reading, build vocabulary, and reflect on the lesson with a writing, retelling, or summarization activity. The same strategies used in reading are used in social studies to aid comprehension. Special focus on social skills is provided for students in primary grades. Social skills such as listening, following directions, sharing, cooperating, using manners, making eye contact, and respecting personal space are a priority. WME teachers also celebrate diversity by highlighting family traditions, language, food, dress, and other cultural differences. Social studies lessons are extended through projects, field trips, social experiments, classroom speakers, and other real-world experiences. WME partners with

community representatives to highlight jobs and the importance of community helpers.

Visual Aids are a vital part of social studies instruction. Teachers use concept walls, interactive word walls, and graphic organizers to aid comprehension. Creative ways to assess student learning are used, such as peer to peer paraphrasing, questioning, projects, and game-like activities. Weekly tests are formatted, like reading tests, to provide continuity and familiarity when assessing learning. Social Studies assessments are analyzed to gauge a student's ability to comprehend expository text. This data is used to monitor and adjust instruction, identify strategies to aid comprehension, and determine how to support ELAR teachers.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

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

West Main offers a full day prekindergarten four program giving students a strong foundation in social and emotional development, as well as the core curriculum areas of reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. The Texas Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines provide the standards for what prekindergarten students should know. The Prekindergarten guidelines are aligned to the Kindergarten TEKS. However, students are met where they are, and higher-performing students are allowed and encouraged to progress beyond what the guidelines require. Students are also exposed to the visual and performing arts and get a chance to spend nine weeks in each of the following disciplines: dance, music, art, and piano.

Prekindergarten students have the opportunity to learn through technology and get to develop their gross and fine motor skills during physical education classes. Teachers use district resources that are centered on thematic units to teach the guidelines. Students work collaboratively in centers throughout the day, fostering the growth of their social and cognitive development. Comparing benchmark data gathered at the start of the year to end-of-year assessments shows that students grow in all core academic areas and they are ready for kindergarten by the time they leave the program. Students who go through the prekindergarten program tend to fare better in the primary grades than students who do not attend preschool.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

WME students experience academic support in several areas. WME has an all-inclusive approach to fine arts, which offers classes in the performing and visual arts to every student in the building. All pre-K through 2 graders, consisting of approximately 350 students, gain exposure to all fine arts disciplines by rotating through 50-minute classes. The subjects include piano, dance, music, and art, twice a week, on a 9-week rotation schedule. Pre-K through 2nd-grade students is exposed so that by the time they enter 3rd through 5th grade, they can select an area of interest based on previous exposure. Approximately 350 students attend the discipline of their choice, twice a week, for 50 minutes.

Students in 3rd – 5th grades also have an opportunity to attend WME's Fine Arts Academy. In its third year, the academy is an intense study in the performing and visual arts. While maintaining a strong emphasis in core academic areas, interested 3rd – 5th-grade students audition each year for the opportunity to receive additional instruction in one of the five fine arts disciplines (theater, music, art, piano, and dance). The academy classes are daily for 55 minutes at the beginning of each day. This program is geared toward students who display artistic potential and who can be cultivated into articulate individuals focused on their artistry.

WME employs academy teachers that qualify as both certified instructors and professional artists. Teachers follow the district's scope and sequence, present curriculum-based lessons, and bring their professional experiences into their pedagogy. Visual art lessons are integrated lessons where core subject TEKS are paired with visual art TEKS to create projects that demonstrate learning in math, science, writing, and social studies. Monthly PTA student performances show arts-integrated lessons covered in class.

All Arts Academy students attend exposure activities to connect with arts partners such as The Dallas Opera, Soul Repertory Theatre, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Dallas Children's Theater, Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas, Perot Museum, Spark Adventures in Creativity, and others. Workshops and masterclasses

are hosted by professional performers/artists to expose students to real-life applications of the art they are studying. Academy students perform in all level district collaborative concerts to promote vertical alignment within the Fine Arts Department. Dancers perform for the LISD Day of Dance, dance festivals, while art, music, and theater participate in contests to help gauge rigor of programming and competitive rating/ranking. Piano and choir students perform for senior living facilities to give back to the community during the holiday seasons. WME received education foundation grants for promoting technology lessons, specdrums and ozobots, in the music and visual arts classrooms. WME uses these resources to capture and respect students with multiple learning styles.

Facilities at WME include a piano lab outfitted with 25 student digital pianos and one instructor unit with a communication system to monitor and promote differentiated instruction. A dance studio with hardwood flooring, mirrors, ballet barres, and retractable walls to transform the classroom studio to a performance space. The art, music, piano, and theater rooms are outfitted with interactive projectors used daily for technology-integrated lessons. The music room has recorders, xylophones, ukuleles, buckets for drumming, African drums, and more pitched and unpitched instruments to support student's ability to sight-read and learn about singing, playing, writing, and moving. Music students have an opportunity to participate in the LISD Honor Choir to work with a 6th-grade repertory that promotes student literacy.

In addition to fine arts, WME students receive academic support in other curriculum areas as well. All 700 plus students receive physical education for 55 minutes per week. The physical education teacher aligns all activities to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Each class begins with an exercise warmup followed by activities that teach students how to compete, collaborate, and display good sportsmanship. The physical education teacher also supports general education teachers by having math and movement sessions, which requires students to practice math facts to physical exercise. While physical education supports math, all 750 plus pre-K through 5th-grade students receives literacy support through technology and library classes. Students also attend these classes once a week for 55 minutes. To support our STEM pipeline, Global Communications, approximately 100 kindergarten through 5th-grade gifted students receive Mandarin Chinese lessons once a week for 60 minutes. Students become familiar with the Chinese language through lectures, interactive exercises, and cultural tips.

To encourage good behavior, WME Motivators, a group of staff members who coordinate with the counselor, identifies positive behavior strategies that will help students manage their emotions and make responsible decisions. Strategies, such as displaying visual reminders throughout the building, assemblies, chat and chew sessions with teachers, and lunch buddies with the counselor are all ways to encourage students to display positive behavior and provide a platform to discuss issues that may cause students to inappropriately behave. Students receive Tiger Paws for being good citizens and are rewarded with items such as a free dress pass or snack for behaving the WME Way.

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

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

West Main Elementary has a motto, "Exemplary is the Expectation." To ensure our students achieve success, the staff uses a combination of instructional approaches. Most students receive direct instruction with some hands-on learning. However, some classes take a learner-centered and discovery-based approach to learning. As state testing approaches the staff changes to an individualized or drill and practice model. This approach allows the staff at WME to serve all learners, therefore representing the best of its kind.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers and administrators disaggregate summative assessments. They use previous years Common Formative Assessments (CFAs), which are administered by the district, and the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness. These results are used to identify the school's performance, check student learning, and gauge the learning process. After the data has been gathered, an analysis is made every six weeks, a student's fluency is tracked, and plans for at-risk students are created or modified. Teachers also differentiate instructional content and incorporate tiered activities with levels of support for students that have been identified as performing below grade level. Teachers address students' contrasted learning styles with district online programs through guided and repeated reading activities that

cater to their individual needs. Strategies such as peer tutoring, tiered and targeted lessons, hands-on activities, mandated study guides in 3rd through 5th grades, and collaborative learning groups prove to be successful tools at WME.

WME teachers participate in weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Teachers discuss best practices, monitor progress, and share resources that are tailored to meet student-specific needs. Teachers develop a plan of action for students with areas of weakness. These plans are used for customary intervention that is school-wide from 8:10-8:40 a.m. every morning and after-school tutorials. Student support is documented through the Response to Intervention (RTI) committee. The RtI committee meets every eight weeks to monitor progress and make recommendations. Members decide on continued support, further evaluation, or RTI exit. Teachers use progress monitoring data to adjust not only daily instruction but also reading intervention groups. Teachers also inform parents of their children's progress through social media communication applications, phone calls, written notes, and in-person conferences as needed. Reading intervention students are provided with study packets to help them review and practice learned material at home with parents.

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

WME students who are performing above grade level have many enrichment opportunities, including the Talented and Gifted pull out program. This is a pull-out program for students who demonstrate complex thinking skills or need an academic challenge. Students identified as gifted, in kindergarten through Fifth grade, attend Exploration Academy for half a day, once a week. To ensure high achievers are engaged, teachers use a discovery-based model in class. In Exploration Academy, students work on creative-thinking tasks, critical- thinking activities, problem- solving, and independent projects of their interest. These students also have a chance to learn Mandarin Chinese. Students in grades 3-5 who have a grade point average of 87.5 or higher are inducted into the National Elementary Honor Society. These students go through a selection process and serve as role models for their peers after induction. They also serve as mentors and tutors to students in grades pre-K through second grade.

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

WME teachers have high expectations for all of their students. Students who require additional support often qualify for the Special Education (SPED) program. Students in the SPED program have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 plans that outline supports tailored for the specific needs of each student. Students with IEPs have members from the SPED department provide support in their classrooms for a specific amount of time each week. They assist with note-taking or instruction given by the general education teacher. Special education students also have content mastery minutes built into their IEPs, which allow them to leave the general education classroom for additional assistance in the SPED classroom. SPED teachers often take a learner-centered approach when providing instruction for special education students. Individualized instruction, coupled with hands-on learning, proves to be a successful strategy for WME's special education population. WME SPED students use a lot of graphic organizers, predictions, retelling, and clarifying strategies to improve comprehension. To ensure WME teachers meet the needs of all special education students, general and special education teachers work together weekly to modify assignments. Students with 504 plans also receive accommodations specific to their needs. These accommodations may include preferential seating, extra time to complete assignments, oral administration of assessments, and shortened assignments.

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

West Main Elementary has a very small English Language Learner (ELL) population. If upon enrollment, a parent indicates there is a language other than English spoken at home, their application is flagged. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) reviews school records to identify students who have another language spoken in the home to help determine English proficiency. They may also test the student to determine language proficiency. If the student is determined to have limited English proficiency, the LPAC begins to monitor that student. Most students at WME have basic interpersonal communication skills and therefore require little help in that area. However, teachers use plenty of visuals and hands-on activities

during direct instruction to help improves ELL student's success rate. Every ELL student is assigned to an English as a Second Language (ESL) certified teacher who has special training to help the ELL student acquire the cognitive academic language skills they may lack. The ESL teacher understands that making connections to the student's first or home language can help facilitate the acquisition of English. ESL teachers use strategies such as labeling items in the classroom with both the home language and English, graphic organizers, pre-teaching vocabulary for certain assignments, and pointing out Spanish/ English cognates to help the ELL students be successful. Each year, the LPAC meets at the beginning of the year to ensure that teachers are aware of any ELLs they have in their classroom and to discuss any accommodations the student may need. These students' grades are monitored each grading period to ensure they are keeping up with their peers in class. The LPAC committee meets mid-year to discuss each ELL's progress and what needs they may have during state testing. Finally, the LPAC committee meets at the end of the year to discuss each ELL's progress and to determine if the student will remain in the ESL program. If adequate progress in language proficiency is not made, the student will remain in the program. If adequate progress is made, then the student will exit from the program. Even after a student is exited from the program, they continue to be monitored, and if they show signs of regression, they can be placed back in the ESL program.

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

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

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

West Main Elementary has a family-oriented staff consisting of teachers, paraprofessional, and administrators that work in unity to educate the whole child. The whole child approach to teaching supports and nurtures all areas of children's development and learning from social-emotional and cognitive skills to literacy, math, science, and fine arts. It encourages students learning and thinking by being responsive to children's understanding, interest, and abilities, thus allowing them to deepen their natural curiosity and eagerness to want to discover and learn more. Students in need of further instruction attend tutorial sessions after school Monday through Thursday as an extension to the school day. "Friday Night Live" a three-hour tutorial session, is offered as a fun opportunity for students and teachers to incorporate different learning styles in preparation for state-mandated tests in math, reading, science, and writing.

To help WME's school culture remain strong, students participate in social and emotional clubs that meet weekly whose goal is to provide guidance, support, and encouragement. Advice is delivered through the Sister to Sister and My Brother's Keeper program as well as the Tiger Step Team. Students that participate in these clubs develop collaboration and teamwork. Clubs and organizations such as the National Elementary Honor Society, Hispanic Heritage Bowl, Black History Bowl, and Honor Choir competitions offer the opportunity for the students to highlight their academic success, leadership skills, and talent. Student success for honor roll, attendance, behavior, and comprehensive exams are recognized and celebrated throughout the year with a Party with the Principal, Crush It Party, Class Popcorn Party, Tiger Paw give away, Fun Friday, as well as free dress passes. Students look forward to participating in campus recognition activities, so they set goals and monitor their progress throughout the year.

The staff at WME is not only concerned about student academic performance but each area of their life, including the physical, emotional, social, and economic needs of every student. Educators play the most crucial role in student learning, which is why WME administrators strive to retain motivated teachers that help students feel comfortable and confident in attending school each day. Weekly PLC meetings are held by grade level teams to plan school activities and initiatives. This helps support the social and emotional well-being of students. The staff at WME is fully committed to making an impact on growing the whole child. The success of the school is attributed to dedicated administrators and teachers who enthusiastically foster a positive environment that is conducive to learning.

WME's students love coming to school. Administrators work hard to ensure the school provides a safe and secure learning environment designed to nurture positive, academic, social, and emotional development. This sense of well-being attributes to WME's student's desire to strive for excellence. Excellence is evident in all areas of the school, including instruction, behavior, and academic performance.

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

Ensuring all stakeholders are informed in the school community is one of the top priorities at West Main Elementary. The school uses various forms of communication to keep families and the community apprised of school activities and performances. Parents and teachers are in constant contact regarding student progress and behavior via a web-based messaging system. The school also uses the school marquee, school and district websites, social media platforms, and a monthly newsletter to communicate with parents. Each grade level sends home a weekly newsletter to inform parents of the skills the students will be working on for the week, their homework assignments, due dates, and upcoming events. Teachers enter grades into an electronic grade book, and parents can access their student's grades through the parent portal at any time.

At the beginning of the school year, West Main hosts "Meet the Teacher Night" approximately one week before school starts. On this night, parents and students are afforded an opportunity to meet their teacher for the year. Teachers use "Meet the Teacher Night" as a way to set expectations and begin building relationships with parents and students. It is a great tool for setting the tone for the school year. During the school year, teachers have a scheduled conference period to speak with parents to discuss student's progress.

Twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, parent conferences are scheduled to help parents stay abreast of their child's progress.

To encourage parents to visit the campus, they are invited to the school for Parent-Teacher Association meetings each month. Students perform to showcase the talents they have developed during enrichment or Fine Arts classes. WME also has culturally-based themed activities. For celebrations such as Cinco de Mayo, parents bring in foods from the Hispanic culture. Other opportunities for community and parental involvement include Grandparent's Day and a Veteran's Day celebration. Additional activities such as Donuts with Dad, Muffins with Mom, and All-Pro Dads encourage parents to spend time with their child at school. One of WME's most successful events is the Father-Daughter Dance, hosted around Valentine's Day. This event always has a great turn-out.

Parental involvement is important at WME. The aforementioned strategies help build positive relationships with parents resulting in more parents supporting student learning, increased attendance, and improved social skills and behavior. Therefore, educating students becomes the focus, and teacher morale is improved.

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

WME designs its professional development around several key components: data compiled from performance in the classroom, student engagement, weekly grades, summative assessments, and comprehensive e-learning programs. However, the greatest component for creating a professional culture at WME is the working knowledge of students and staff. The educator's knowledge, in conjunction with extensive data, allows staff to provide customized learning environments.

To build capacity in the staff, WME professional development is an ongoing process, positively influencing student achievement. The school has weekly PLC meetings during planning periods where teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators share practices, analyze student achievement data, identify the challenges, and create a plan of action. Collaborative planning and learning in all content areas provide teachers the opportunity to utilize the abundance of knowledge and training that exists amongst the staff. During grade-level meetings, additional support is provided throughout the year to assure teachers get continuous reinforcement from instructional coaches and administrators as it relates to the implementation of instructional strategies, delivering effective instruction, analyzing data, and tiering lessons for all students.

WME has teachers who go above and beyond their standard practices. The teachers are always researching ways that will benefit the students, be it the latest techniques used to differentiate lessons or how to engage learning to ensure success for every student in the classroom. Teachers also participate in workshops offered by the regional education service center, which focus on tailoring instruction to the specific needs of students in the areas of literacy, mathematics, language acquisition, and development. Teacher input and ideas are always valued at WME. Teachers and staff that have demonstrated success in certain educational practices are highlighted and have an opportunity to provide campus and district-wide professional development throughout the year.

It takes a village to educate the students at WME, and the staff is always willing to rise to the challenge. To show appreciation, the beginning of the year team building event is planned to celebrate successes and growth areas from the previous year. Staff members also have an opportunity to set goals for the new school year. New staff members are introduced at this time. Several activities are also planned throughout the year, such as "Taco About an Awesome Staff" taco bar, "You're Awesome to the Core" apple bar, and "You Brighten My Day" ice cream sundae wagon to name a few. Teachers also receive a note highlighting when they are caught "Glowing" by doing something awesome in the classroom. The end of the year always concludes with another off-campus celebration. The teachers at WME appreciate the recognition and never hesitate to go the extra mile for the school or students.

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

WME's staff believes all children can learn, and they have a responsibility to discover the best way in which they learn and how to be successful at teaching the whole child. With a student population that is majority economically disadvantaged, the goal is to always challenge assumptions. The principal is responsible for creating a vision of success that includes teaching students academically, character traits, and social-emotional learning. The principal is also responsible for motivating the staff to perform beyond their expectation. This is done through team building, motivational messages, and activities during professional development and throughout the year. Although the principal communicates high expectations for students and staff, being empathetic and including the staff in decision making is important. Therefore, teachers have an opportunity to help create systems and processes at the beginning of the year.

The assistant principal is responsible for handling discipline and putting systems in place so that teachers do not become discouraged because of student behavior. The assistant principal also works very closely with teachers to help monitor academically struggling students. The assistant principal and teacher teams meet every six weeks to discuss student progress and strategies that will address student deficits.

Instructional coaches are also an intricate part of WME's success. To make certain teachers have the tools needed to support the vision, instructional coaches have weekly meetings called clusters where teachers learn research-based strategies. During these meetings, strategies and instructional practices are modeled so that teachers can experience real-life demonstrations. After the strategies are modeled, Instructional coaches and administrators conduct walkthroughs to witness strategy implementation. Focused feedback is always provided after each walkthrough. If a teacher is struggling with the implementation of instructional practices, a conference is scheduled, and a member of the leadership team will model lessons if needed.

The Assistant Fine Arts Director works closely with fine arts teachers to ensure they incorporate strategies and integrate lessons where possible. The leadership team meets regularly to triage teachers, discuss successes, areas of opportunities, and plans on how to move forward. That team consists of administrators, instructional coaches, the counselor, and the Fine Arts Director.

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

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The one practice the staff at WME can contribute to its success is consistency and continuity. The leadership team used data to create strategies for presenting instructional content and justifying and defending responses known as the WME Strategy. This system is used by all math and reading teachers. Although scaffolded for lower grade levels, having a system in place that everyone follows has been an integral part of WME's success in the past. Consistent strategies to teach math and reading every time has resulted in consistent results for WME.

In addition to the WME strategy, reading and math classrooms and lessons are structured the same. Anchor charts and concept walls are required in every classroom to provide students with a visual reminder of strategies and processes. All classroom desks are arranged to promote collaboration. In math class, every math teacher uses daily word problems and spiral reviews for additional math exposure activities. Although the activities may vary, every reading class begins with students working on foundational skills, followed by guided reading, general reading instruction, and intentional stations. Every reading and math teacher uses the same grade-appropriate material.

To ensure consistency, when a new staff member joins the team, they are trained using the same strategies. This also holds true when a staff member changes grade level because the same process is in place regardless of the grade level. When a student moves to the next grade level, they have developed a familiarity for WME strategies, thus making transitioning easier. Even when students have left the school and later returned, they have remembered the strategies, therefore, making it easier for them to get on board.

There is also consistency as it relates to teacher retention. WME also has a low teacher turnover rate resulting in a family-like atmosphere. Most teachers have taught the same grade level for multiple years, making them very comfortable with the school and the content. Because of the consistency at grade levels and job tenure, teachers really work hard to support each other. Continuity amongst the staff helps members know who excels in certain areas, so they know who to ask for assistance. WME has a great staff that is always willing to support and uplift each other resulting in consistent academic results and a positive atmosphere year after year.