

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 220 17th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Nederland State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77627-5029

County Jefferson County

Telephone (409) 722-4324 Fax (409) 724-4286

Web site/URL https://www.nederland.k12.tx.us/LH/ E-mail tlatiolais@nederlandisd.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.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Stuart Kieschnick E-mail skieschnick@nederlandisd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Nederland Independent School District Tel. (409) 724-2391

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 Micah Mosley
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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	3	9	12
K	41	29	70
1	56	47	103
2	46	33	79
3	42	38	80
4	46	37	83
5	0	0	0
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
Total Students	234	193	427

*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
 - 4 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 28 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 60 % White
 - 5 % 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: 17%

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

The mobility rate is high for a variety of reasons. Langham's attendance zone shares borders with three neighboring school districts. There are apartment complexes that feed into different school districts, so that changing apartments within the same complex can result in transferring school districts. Additionally, the Langham community and surrounding areas have experienced multiple flooding events in the past two years that have caused extensive damages to homes and required families to move both in and out of the Langham attendance zone. Lastly, the local economy is driven by chemical refineries. Families who rely on contract work within these refineries experience some uncertainty with employment and often move to seek work.

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	32
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	41
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	73
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	438
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.17
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

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

Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 7 %
31 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 52 %

Total number students who qualify: 224

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %

58 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>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>28</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	97%	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.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Langham strives to provide a positive and diverse educational experience where each child develops academic and social skills that will help develop lifelong learners and confident, productive citizens.

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

Langham Elementary is dedicated to fulfilling the philosophy of Nederland Independent School District, "Committed to Excellence, Every Student, Every Day." The staff works tirelessly to ensure that all students are challenged while being supported with whatever tools they need to succeed.

Nederland ISD is a suburban school district located in Nederland, Texas. Nestled in the southeast corner of Texas, Nederland is less than 30 miles from the Louisiana border and 20 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. Nederland was founded in 1897 by Dutch settlers, the name meaning "Lowlands". Nederland is situated in the heart of what is known as the "Golden Triangle," the area between Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange named for the influx of money and industry resulting from the Spindletop oil gusher discovered in 1901 in Beaumont. The area has continued to rely on local industry that is based off of numerous chemical refineries. Other major industries in the area include health care and education.

Langham is the site of the first school building established in the city of Nederland, a structure that predates even the formation of Nederland Independent School District 100 years ago. That original structure was ultimately replaced in 1937 with the core of the campus that is Langham Elementary today. Upon entering the doors of Langham Elementary, there is an undeniable sense of history and pride. Physically, the original hardwood floors throughout the building have been wonderfully preserved and evoke a sense of nostalgia. There is a unique combination of traditional, small town values coupled with next generation learning and increased technology that help make Langham the successful campus that it is today.

Presently, Langham houses preK through 4th grade and serves just under 450 students. A Title I campus, over half of Langham students qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. Within the past three years, the community has endured multiple flooding events from hurricanes and storms, as well as a major explosion at a refinery, that have damaged or destroyed homes of staff and students. The community has faced many adversities, but continue to be undaunted in the pursuit of the best educational experience for the students. The Langham school community is resilient, hardworking, and put a premium on the value of education. The overarching philosophy of Langham staff, students, and families can be summed up in a saying that has been used as a motto on campus: "Good, Better, Best. Never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best." Students are taught that excellence is always the goal. What you do, you should strive to do well, and the best way to accomplish that goal is to make the habit of always doing your best.

The staff at Langham takes a great deal of pride in academic success, but also in serving the needs of all students. Langham received an "A" rating by the state of Texas in the most recent accountability ratings. This continued a long history of high campus ratings and distinctions that have been bestowed upon Langham. Distinctions in academic readiness in language arts and math, post-secondary readiness, closing achievement gaps, and academic growth have been regularly awarded to the school. These accomplishments are achieved through attitudes of teamwork and cooperation across campus. Langham's staff is willing to do whatever it takes to make their better best. Teachers help with tutoring of students in their class, their grade level, or other grade levels within the school. Everyone does their best to support everyone else in the school community. Physical Education teachers incorporate math facts and spelling words into their exercises, parents support teachers, the administration works to support the entire school community, and the community supports the school. Teachers meet weekly, if not daily, within their grade levels to plan and adjust instruction, evaluate data, and see that all students' needs are met. The entire village pitches in to help raise the children. Expectations are high, but support is always there to help those expectations be achieved. The Langham community believes strongly in the development of the whole child. Classroom lessons conducted by the counselor reinforce the character education program utilized on campus. Physical Education is part of the daily schedule for every student. Students rotate through music, library, and the computer lab each week. Opportunities for participation in intramural athletics, fine arts programs, and academic support are provided for the students. Student successes and achievements are recognized and celebrated regularly in a variety of ways.

Langham relies heavily on the convictions that all children can learn, all children can grow, and all children are valued. These beliefs are held by first-year teachers, as well as those with over 20 years of experience. Langham Elementary takes pride in sustained excellence and always trying to move from good, to better, to best.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Langham focuses on utilizing a continuous and comprehensive curriculum to ensure the successful education of all children. Classes from preK to 3rd grade are self-contained, while 4th grade rotates through reading, math, and writing classes. The Langham staff utilizes and integrates the state-determined Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in their planning and delivery of lessons. Vertical alignment and scaffolding are consistently a focus of instructional practices. Students are supported in achieving their educational goals through inclusion practices, small group instruction, before and after-school tutorial programs, and other individualized instructional practices. The overarching belief is that academic success is rooted in the ability to read, because it is tied to all other academic areas, so increased emphasis is placed on literacy.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The ability to read and comprehend texts is paramount in the success of students. English language arts and reading are a primary focus for Langham and included components of reading, writing, spelling and grammar. Foundational reading skills are taught through the utilization of a focus on sight word recognition, phonemic awareness, guided reading, and vocabulary development. A campus reading interventionist works intensively with students who may be performing below expectations or exhibiting specific struggles. Fluency and comprehension are stressed with students, as well as trying to foster a love of reading. Langham participates in the Accelerated Reader program and students are encouraged to choose texts that not only appeal to their interests, but are written at an appropriate instructional level that challenges them to grow. Reading levels are regularly assessed, feedback is provided frequently, and student growth in this area is celebrated.

Writing is addressed at all grade levels in a manner that is age appropriate. Langham believes that allowing for a variety of different types of writing helps to develop confident and successful writers. Regular schoolwide prompts are provided by the principal through video messages. These prompts often tie into the character trait being focused on for the month or other relevant current events, and are general enough that they can be adapted for each grade level. Student writing responses to previous prompts are highlighted in the delivery of the next prompt to emphasize the importance that campus leadership feels for writing and to celebrate quality and originality of student responses.

1c. Mathematics

A focus on strong problem-solving and numeracy skills is at the forefront of the math curriculum. Math TEKS spiral from grade level to grade level. Student deficiencies in areas from a previous grade level are addressed through tutorials, individual or small group remediation, and differentiated lessons. A variety of instructional strategies, including manipulatives, graphic organizers, and basic operations are utilized in developing foundational math skills. As students progress, instruction increasingly focuses on understanding of mathematical relationships and operations. It is important that students not only know how to perform the tasks, but understanding why the particular approach is appropriate for a given set of circumstances. Recognizing which process to use is equally important as being able to perform a specific mathematical operation. Students are asked to not only provide an answer to the question, but to explain how they arrived at the answer they got. This explanation by the student helps reinforce their own learning and understanding, as well as helps their peers to hear another voice besides the teacher who can explain the process.

Teachers strive to provide real-world mathematical situations in order to help students understand the answer to the age old question, "Why do I need to know this?" The ultimate goal of the math program is to help students understand what the problem is they are facing, what information are they trying to figure out,

how they can calculate the missing information, and finally be able to perform the operations necessary to determine the answer.

1d. Science

Teachers at Langham do their best to help science "come alive" for their students. Instruction utilizes a variety of different methods to reach students, ranging from the use of experiments, hands-on lessons, and incorporating technology. Science lessons go hand-in-hand with reading and math instruction and are often approached in a cross-curricular manner. Students are given a foundational understanding of the scientific method, investigation, and reasoning. Lessons that focus on requisite skills set forth by the TEKS are utilized at all levels. Life cycles, environments, weather, and matter are just some of the areas addressed through classroom instruction. Langham provides the base of scientific knowledge and understanding that will allow for increased emphasis and understanding of scientific skills at the secondary level.

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

The social studies curriculum at Langham focuses on a variety of topics ranging from global, to national, to state, to local history and events. Kindergarten students are able to take a walking tour of downtown Nederland, which includes visits to the post office, fire department, police station, and the historic Nederland windmill . This tour is a part of a project-based learning unit that helps these students understand the city's past history and present operations.

Citizenship and "doing the right thing" are focuses of the Langham campus as a whole. Students who behave as responsible and respectful citizens are celebrated through positive referrals to the office, calls home, and various rewards. Each month, a different character trait is emphasized. Daily announcements include questions, quotes, and anecdotes about the monthly character trait. The campus counselor goes into classrooms twice a month to deliver lessons that pertain to the character trait and discuss conflict resolution skills utilizing Kelso strategies.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

PreK classes operate in a half-day set up. Langham utilizes the Open the World of Learning (OWL) system to provide foundational skills in math and literacy for those students who qualify for the program. The preK teacher works in tandem with the kindergarten teachers to align instruction between grade levels and utilize consistent strategies and vocabulary. Story cards and story boards help with student comprehension. Manipulatives are utilized to help understand basic numeracy concepts. TEKS are aligned through the program to integrate with those at the kindergarten level. The Langham program helps provide these students with basic skills to prepare them for kindergarten and following grade levels. Students who are able to participate in the Langham preK program also become more comfortable with being on campus and ease their transition into the traditional full school day.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The importance of physical activity is appreciated at Langham. In addition to a recess time, all kindergarten through 4th grade students attend physical education each day as one half of their 60 minute "specials" period. During PE, students are encouraged to push themselves to increase their physical fitness. Each day includes a warm-up where coaches incorporate spelling words or math facts to reinforce student learning from the classroom. Students participate in timed runs that gradually increase in length as the year progresses to improve endurance in preparation for the annual Nederland Fun Run. Participants compete in a timed mile run and Langham students have historically performed extremely well, winning many medals in both the boys and girls divisions. Students who are unable to participate in the Fun Run are timed in the mile on campus. Students cheer one another along as they compete against one another and, more importantly, themselves in finishing with their best time possible. Team sports units and a variety of physical exercises and activities are taught throughout the year.

The other half of the "specials" period consists of two days of music class, two days of computer, and one day visiting the library. Music education focuses on music history, vocal performance, rhythm, and basic musical instrumentation. Each grade level has a music program where they perform for the school and also a separate public performance. Fourth grade students learn to play recorders as part of their music education. Students are also afforded the opportunity to join the Langham Singers, an extracurricular program where students stay after dismissal to rehearse once a week. The Langham Singers perform holiday songs for local businesses and organizations. Kindergarten students perform a selection of songs at an annual Rotary Club dinner event. Students participate in the annual Parent Teacher Association (PTA) "Reflections" program. This program allows students to respond to the theme of the year through various mediums: essays, drawings, paintings, and performing arts. Students can create video projects or compose musical pieces. Many different categories are available for students to submit their entries and they are encouraged to submit multiple entries.

During library time, students will read stories with the librarian, complete accompanying activities, and check out library books. Students are exposed to a wide variety of age appropriate texts in hopes of finding literature that piques their interest and fosters a love for reading. In computer class, students learn the technology skills laid forth by the TEKS. Students learn web safety, word processing skills, and utilize instructional programs that adjust to their individual learning needs and performance levels.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Teachers differentiate their instruction to reach all students at their current level. Small groups and learning centers are utilized within the class to help facilitate peer-to-peer learning. Students are regularly assessed and data is constantly evaluated to monitor the progress of each student. Title I funds are utilized to pay additional personnel to help with push-in help, as well as small group pullout sessions to help reinforce instruction. Tutorial times are offered before and after school by teachers to try to close gaps for determined students in a more individualized setting. Students who struggle with reading and dyslexic traits are serviced by a reading interventionist. Students have the ability to visit the Learning Lab, a place where qualified personnel can help reinforce concepts individually, students can make up work that has been missed, or get any extra help that is deemed appropriate.

The Response to Intervention team has regularly scheduled meetings to assess the success of students, determine a plan for intervention, and evaluate the effectiveness of that plan. Intervention plans are individualized for each student. Multiple methods are utilized, including several online computer interventions and face-to-face instruction. There is a great deal of planning and evaluation that goes into the interventions and progress monitoring of the students.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Langham offers a gifted and talented program in line with the district guidelines. Students who are performing above grade level are given the opportunity for academic enrichment projects, advanced rigor in curriculum, and various leadership opportunities. These students are often the leaders in the classroom and can work with struggling students to reinforce their own understanding while helping bring up the struggling students. Langham utilizes a variety of computer programs that adjust to the student's individual levels. Students performing above grade level will have their accounts ramp up the instructional level based upon individual performance.

3c. Special education

Langham has several special education programs to serve the needs of students. PPCD students are enrolled alongside preK students to help provide models and peer support. Langham houses a life skills program that serves students with more extensive and specialized educational needs. Life skills students are integrated into general education environments whenever possible to make sure they are included as part of the school

community. It is important for all of the students at Langham to see these students as classmates and not just a group that operates within their own isolated bubble. Special education students are supported through instruction in a resource setting when appropriate for the student. The goal of the Langham special education program is to keep students in the general education classroom as much as possible. These students are supported through an inclusion model, where dedicated personnel are in the room to assist students and reinforce the instruction being provided by the classroom teacher. Accommodations and modifications are provided for all special education students as have been determined through the student's Individual Education Program.

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

Langham has an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher that serves Langham students and an additional Nederland elementary campus. The teacher primarily pushes into classrooms to support the students, but will pull students during appropriate times to cover concepts that need more intensive instruction. Langham has had a successful track record of students working through the ESL program and performing well academically in class and on standardized tests. The ESL teacher also works with classroom teachers to provide support in the form of resources, strategies, and sentence stems to utilize with ELL students.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Stepping into Langham, visitors are immediately welcomed by front office personnel make all who enter feel at ease. Entering the halls, the sound and smell of the hardwood floors, dating back to 1937, strike the senses. Classroom structures remain unchanged, while increased technology has been added. There is a sense of traveling back in time, but 21st century pieces are evident. The Langham staff teaches traditional values of respect, hard work, and determination through the use of modern techniques and approaches. Students are seen with smiles on their faces, hugs are frequent, and staff members make sure to praise students and let them know they are loved. Successes are celebrated and shortcomings are seen as an opportunity to learn and improve.

Portraits of past principals hang near the entrance to the school, as well as numerous accolades and awards earned by the campus. Many families, staff members, and students that came through Langham have set the bar for excellence. The Langham community understands that there is a standard that has been set, and work to ensure that the standard is not only met, but exceeded. There is a sense of pride in upholding, and adding to, the storied history of the campus. PTA members want to provide the best opportunities for teachers and students, while continuing the traditions that have been established.

Grandparents who visit the campus are eager to show you the classrooms they sat in when they were students. There is a very strong sense of "Langham Pride" that is palpable in every aspect of the school.

Student discipline incidents are low, due largely to the fact that student engagement is high. Students take pride in their work and relish the opportunity to share their success with family, as well as staff members. Students regularly are sent to the office to sign the "Wall of Fame," signifying their academic accomplishment. Calls are made home to brag on student achievements, both academic and behavioral. Staff members issue spirit sticks that students attach to backpacks indicating "My principal is proud of me," recognizing perfect attendance, and a variety of other milestones. Students are also celebrated each grading period for being the "Class Hero," an award that goes with the school superhero theme and honors students for working hard and being good students, regardless of grades or performance level.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Langham Elementary recognizes the importance of strong relationships with families and community members, including local businesses. Langham hosts several family engagement activities throughout the year. Students return to campus before school resumes to get their teacher assignment. They are welcomed with music, smiles, and ice cream. Teachers are on hand to introduce themselves to the students and their families. Students run to hug their former teachers that they left a few months ago. Local businesses are invited to hand out book bags, coupons, or other items that they have donated to the school. The PTA has t-shirts and other Langham paraphernalia for the students. School supplies and books are on hand and available, free of charge, for families to take what they need. High school organizations, such as drill team, cheerleaders, and athletic teams are present to welcome students and publicize camps and activities going on. Overall, the event helps stoke the excitement of the students for returning to school.

There are numerous ways that the school maintains and strengthens relationships with the community. School community members are part of the formulation of the Title I Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan. An annual carnival alternates between Langham and another district elementary school. Volunteers come to campus to be part of the reading program, where they sit and read with a few students at a time. Langham hosts a "family night" for the annual book fair. High school students work in classrooms across campus as Peer Tutors, helping set an example for the younger students to follow. Partners in education are always sent a school-themed, handwritten note of gratitude for their contributions to the staff, students, and school. Whenever possible, Langham strives to have a personal touch when interacting with community members.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Langham teachers are excellent examples to the students of being lifelong learners. Teachers are provided with professional development opportunities through the district and campus, but are also encouraged to seek out other training that address their individual needs. Money is budgeted to provide funding for these opportunities. Professional conferences are attended by administrators, classroom teachers, the librarian, music teacher, and other members of the staff. Whenever possible, the school pays for the expenses incurred for professional development.

Many teachers on campus have certification in teaching Gifted and Talented students, allowing for more students to be given proper opportunities to reach their full academic potential. Teachers at Langham consistently exceed the required number of professional development hours because they want to hone their craft.

Training for "guided math" has been instrumental in achieving consistently high scores on state assessments. All teachers have been trained in dissecting data to identify problem areas, and been introduced to a variety of instructional strategies and activities to help address these areas in multiple ways. Teachers have access to a list of strategies, complete with directions and templates, that are sorted by instructional purpose. Nederland ISD hosts technology training throughout the year for teachers who want to strengthen and broaden their technological abilities. A reading consultant has been hired by the district to help facilitate the implementation of the balanced literacy program. The elementary curriculum coordinator is available to support teachers with whatever needs may arise. Weekly professional learning community meetings ensure vertical and horizontal alignment. Guest speakers attend faculty meetings to provide information on mental health of students and teachers, as well as other topics. New teachers attend regular training sessions throughout the year to help them be supported in achieving success. Langham wants to provide the staff with all the tools they need to uphold the high standards of the school.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy of Langham is that decisions should be made as part of a collaborative effort. Campus leadership oversees the operation of the campus, but believes firmly in utilizing the strengths of everyone on campus. Langham operates under the belief that "The smartest person in the room is always the room." The driving force behind every decision is to do what is best for the students. Everything from the master schedule to room assignment is determined based on what best benefits the students.

Langham's Response to Intervention team meets to determine what interventions and strategies are best for the individual student. The Campus Leadership Team meets every month to discuss issues facing the campus and formulate plans to address student needs. This team includes campus administrators, grade level representatives, a special education representative, and campus counselor. Monthly faculty meetings take place to keep the staff updated on upcoming events, disseminate information, and illicit feedback about issues and concerns. Utilizing these meetings helps to create a sense of ownership in decisions by the staff.

Campus leadership works very hard to maintain open lines of communication. Staff members have multiple channels available through which to get feedback or guidance on any number of issues. The team leader, counselor, assistant principal, and principal are readily available to address any concerns that staff members may have. Langham leadership maintains an open door policy and encourages staff members to feel comfortable seeking assistance with whatever needs they may have.

There are many abilities that make for strong leadership, but availability, approachability, and visibility are the three things stressed for campus leaders at Langham. The counselor is in every classroom each month providing entertaining and interactive character lessons to classes. This is intended to educate the children in the lesson being presented, but also to help students feel acquainted and comfortable with the counselor. In the event that there is ever a need for a student to speak with the counselor, having already established a relationship allows for more productive sessions for the student. The principal and assistant principal work to be visible throughout the school. Both can consistently be seen in the driveways for student drop off and dismissal, in the cafeteria during lunches, in the hallways, and classrooms. It is important that relationships are developed between campus administration and all students.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

More than anything else, the success of Langham Elementary can be attributed to the family atmosphere on campus. There are strong relationships between the school and the community. Staff members have forged bonds with one another and made lasting connections with their students. These ties are what create success for students. Kindergarten teachers help tutor 4th grade students. Custodians know the students individually and discuss their interests and activities with them. Child nutrition workers set aside favorite lunch items for students. Administrators call kids by name and can be seen emptying trash or pitching in with any task that needs to be accomplished. Parents and family members are on campus to help make special memories for the students. Staff members show up at the homes of colleagues to clean and repair flood damage. Teachers learned how to deliver instruction through distance learning with no warning due to Covid-19. General education teachers, special education teachers, and support staff work together to provide students with whatever their individual needs call for. PE coaches use warm-up exercises to review spelling words and multiplication facts. All of these are examples of the deep and genuine love that the Langham school community has for one another, doing whatever they can to take Langham from good to best.

Students strive to be successful because they care. They care about making their family, their teacher, and their school proud. They care because they know their community cares. As is often said, students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Langham strives, every day, to let every student know how deep that sense of care runs.

Teachers strive to do their best because they care about their colleagues. Langham rejoices together when it is time to celebrate and pulls together in times of tragedy. The Langham community has faced several catastrophic events in the past several years. There have been multiple major flooding events, a refinery explosion, and the global pandemic. Langham students have all dealt with numerous traumatic events in their lives. What they need is to know they are loved and cared for. Langham believes in showing students the love they deserve through words and actions.