

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Balboa Gifted/High Ability Magnet Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 17020 Labrador Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Los Angeles State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 91325-1906

County Los Angeles County

Telephone (818) 349-4801 Fax (818) 993-3470

Web site/URL https://balboamagnet-laUSD-ca.schoolloop.com/ E-mail csc3973@lausd.net

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* Mr. Austin Beutner E-mail austin.beutner@lausd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Los Angeles Unified School District Tel. (213) 241-1000

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. Scott Schmerelson
(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 439 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 77 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 88 High schools
 - 8 K-12 schools
- 612 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	63	51	114
2	81	62	143
3	65	77	142
4	72	78	150
5	90	70	160
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	371	338	709

*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
 - 27 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 23 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 6 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 35 % White
 - 7 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: ≤1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	0
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	715
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Farsi, Russian, and Tagalog

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28 %

Total number students who qualify: 195

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %

14 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</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: 2

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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	1
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.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	97%	95%	98%	98%	98%
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 2020.

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. 1988

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

The mission of Balboa Gifted Magnet is to provide an academic program to engage and challenge our 21st century learners to exceed California's Common Core Standards.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

From the first instructional day of the 2020-2021 school year, the entire student population has been on Distance Learning. This includes 90-110 minutes of Synchronous time (teacher/student interaction through Zoom) for grades 1-3 and 90-120 Synchronous time for grades 4-5. Approximately 140 minutes of learning is done during Asynchronously for grades 1-3 and approximately 150 minutes for grades 4-5. During the Asynchronous block of time, students are working on follow-up activities and assignments independently or ongoing thematic projects assigned by the teacher.

Beginning April 19, 2021, Balboa Magnet will reopen the campus for in-person (hybrid) learning. Families were provided the two program options to select from, which are either In-Person or Online Only. Of the 708 students attending Balboa Magnet, 45% have chosen to remain 100% online and 55% have chosen to have their students return to campus for in-person learning.

Beginning April 19th, two cohorts will exist in most classrooms with the teacher providing 3 hours of in-person learning from 8:00 am-11:00 am, and then 3 hours of online learning from 12:00 pm-3:00 pm.

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

Balboa Gifted Magnet is a full Magnet Program school and does not have a resident school. All prospective parents and students must apply through the CHOICES application during the months of November-December of each year. Selection is based on a point priority system and is handled and managed under the Student Integrations Office within Los Angeles Unified School District. There are 5 ways to receive magnet points: 12 points are given for students that are matriculating and the points can be used towards a school of choice that is good for only the year the student is matriculating. 4-12 points can be given to a student not selected and that has been placed on a wait list for an entire school year. 4 points are given to students in which the school of residency is predominantly hispanic, black, and non-anglo school (PHBAO). 4 points is given if the school of residency is an overcrowded school. 3 points are given to students that have a sibling already attending our school.

In additional to the point priority system, because Balboa Magnet is a Gifted and High Ability School, students applying must be identified as eligible by meeting one of the following categories:

*Must meet All four critical thinking and problem solving skills:

Explain meanings or relationships among facts, information or concepts that demonstrate depth and complexity.

Formulate new ideas or solutions and elaborate on the information.

Use alternative methods in approaching new or unfamiliar mathematical problems.

Use extensive vocabulary easily and accurately to express creative ideas.

Or

*Student scored in the Standard Exceeded range on the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) or received a national percentile score of 85% or above on a District-approved standardized norm-referenced test in both English Language and Mathematics (most recent year only).

Or

*Be identified as gifted by an LAUSD School Psychologist in Intellectual, High Achievement, or Specific Academic Ability categories. To be identified as gifted a students must meet criterion of at least 95% and 99.9% for highly gifted on an intellectual assessment administered by the LAUSD Psychological Services Branch.

PART III - SUMMARY

As a full magnet campus, Balboa Gifted Magnet is a Court-Ordered voluntary integration opportunity school that is available to students in grades 1-5 who live within the boundaries of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Balboa Gifted Magnet is part of the LAUSD Magnet Program which offers specialized courses or curricula designed for academic excellence, cooperative/experiential learning, interdisciplinary coursework, and peer collaboration. Balboa Gifted Magnet's openings are determined by the need to maintain a racially balanced enrollment and by available space. Balboa Gifted Magnet's ethnic composition adheres to the mandatory balance of 40% White and 60% Minority.

Students work at an accelerated pace based on individual needs and enriching the standard curriculum with depth and complexity. Because most Balboa students are identified as gifted or high achieving, students are provided with an enriched education that speaks to every kind of learner. The needs of Special Education students and English Language Learners are met through targeted small group instruction and their progress is monitored regularly to ensure their success. Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.

Balboa Magnet offers classes to enrich each child's learning experience by offering Ballroom Dance, Instrumental Music (orchestra), Vocal Music, Theatre, Science Lab for hands-on experiments with the New Generation Science Standard (NGSS) and Technology. Every student is sure to find a special interest of enrichment and given opportunities to cultivate those talents.

In each classroom, one would notice the evidence of Sandra Kaplan's Prompts of Depth and Complexity. Students take each assignment and delve deeper into the study by organizing and showing their learning utilizing the Depth and Complexity prompts. They show their learning through analyzing texts, showing the multiple perspectives of authors, arguing the ethical viewpoints, or demonstrating the parallels found in multiple stories- all around high-level student learning which is evident in every classroom.

We believe our full magnet campus of gifted/high ability students should work at a pace that is appropriate to students' abilities and engage the curriculum in greater depth and with greater complexity. This reflects a philosophy of "quality, not quantity" and fosters critical thinking, independence, and creativity in order to initiate each child's journey as a lifelong learner.

Balboa takes pride in the quality of education it offers. The astounding number of applicants it receives each year, an average of 1,400, with only 150 available seats, is a reflection of its success. Teachers, administration, and staff continue to refine teaching practices and elevate learning through Professional Development and Gifted Trainings to continue to offer an enriched learning experience for all student learners.

During COVID-19, schools were shut down abruptly in March of 2020. 100% of the teaching staff and administrators participated in the District provided Future Ready Program. This process allowed for all participants to learn the components to the district-wide student Learning Management System known as Schoology. The certification process also allowed for teachers to learn the different online applications that would serve as great tools to teach remotely. This learning opportunity was a great springboard for in-house professional development opportunities of how to tweak and plan to meet the needs of our gifted and high ability learners.

For example, Professional Development was led by the principal focusing on Student Engagement Strategies by Dr. Doug Fisher. Teachers reflected and shared best practices they found effective during Distance Learning and presented student samples at Professional Development Meetings. Teachers prepared materials, supplies and packets for families to pick-up in order for students to enrich their learning such as the hands-on Science experiments and projects to enrich the Social Studies units. Teachers and staff offered small group instruction to differentiate lessons through the use of Breakout Rooms and after school "homework club" type of supports during Distance Learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Balboa Magnet realizes that literacy is the key to developing independent learners who can access all curricular areas. Through engaging instruction in all strands of Language Arts (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), Balboa students receive the necessary knowledge and skills that allow them to access curriculum. Students engage in learning using state adopted materials and other staff selected materials that align with the Common Core State Standards. At Balboa Magnet, teachers provide many tools and implement several programs that help students develop higher-level thinking and writing skills. Students use Sandra Kaplan’s Depth and Complexity Icons to analyze texts at a deeper level. Through the Write From The Beginning program, students are taught the structure of writing, providing them with a strong foundation to develop strong and effective writing skills. Balboa uses Benchmark Advance Program as its primary tool for Language Arts instruction and enhance the curriculum through the use of other materials including a wide variety of selected core literature. During Distance Learning, we felt that students, especially in the primary grades, needed opportunities for the traditional "paper and pencil" writing practices. Teachers prepared supplies, packets with writing maps and guides, reflection journals, for families to pick up for their students. Authentic student work was shared between classmates through the use of the cameras built in their device, screenshots and pictures uploaded on our school-wide Learning Management System known as Schoology, or other online platforms such as SeeSaw and Flipgrid.

All students at Balboa Magnet understand the structure and logic of mathematics. Students are instructed as to how to use mathematics as a problem-solving tool using complex, real world applications. All students learn the steps to problem solving, such as identifying facts and

variables, building models, diagramming, and reverse engineering. Students also demonstrate, clarify, and elaborate their understanding of math concepts through manipulating materials, reading, writing, listening, speaking, and drawing pictures. This multi-faceted and hands-on

approach to math promotes the development of higher order reasoning skills necessary for students to succeed in our modern global society. In order to make real-world connections in math, students are given opportunities to work with community members who use different aspects of math in their careers. For example, third grade students investigate, observe, and collect data in STEM activities. Teachers employ various teaching methodologies in their Mathematics instruction. Beginning with concrete experiences, teachers guide students in making connections with prior learning and then build upon that foundation through the use of abstract reasoning and problem solving. The standards are addressed through the use of a variety of materials and resources that may include state adopted and staff selected textbooks that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Supplementary materials and manipulatives are incorporated to extend conceptual, procedural, and reasoning knowledge. Balboa Magnet utilizes Eureka Math by Great Minds as the primary tool for Mathematics instruction but enhance the curriculum with other resources including the prompts of depth and complexity.

The Science curriculum at Balboa Magnet is in alignment with the Next Generation Science Standards. We work towards full implementation of the three dimensions of instruction: Core Ideas, Science and Engineering Practices, and Cross Cutting Concepts. Instruction utilizes both the engineering design process and scientific inquiry in hands-on, integrated, and inquiry-based lessons based on solving real-world problems. Students are expected to understand the methods of scientist and engineers by “Thinking Like a Disciplinarian.” Performance expectations for students are developed by teachers to provide future opportunities for students to show competency in science. Balboa Magnet enhances the science curriculum through videoconferences with scientists, field trips, and integrated activities. For example, when second graders study the life cycle of insects, they do so using live caterpillars and portable butterfly pavilions. They make observations, collect data, and draw conclusions about the life cycle processes, finally releasing the butterflies in our Discovery Garden. Fifth grade students experience the hands-on application of science strands in via a three-day trip to the Pali Institute where they actively investigate, observe, and record learning in a mountain/forest habitat. Fourth and fifth grade students also participate in a yearly Science Expo and/or Inventor’s Expo where they present their investigations and inventions to their peers, parents,

and larger community. Providing students with real life practical application of science skills is a priority of the science curriculum at Balboa Magnet. Balboa Magnet utilizes the Full Option Science Series (FOSS) from Delta Education and its state adopted textbook as a primary tool for science instruction. FOSS kits are used in first through fifth grade to support all students in meeting state and national standards. The Science curriculum is implemented through a variety of materials that include state adopted materials and staff selected textbooks. In addition, teachers use discretion and flexibility to further incorporate supplementary materials and teacher created units into their instructional practices resulting in continued expansion and enrichment of the Science program. During Distance Learning, teachers prepared science materials and science journals to be done together during zoom. Students share their thoughts and process through the use of writing their observations, data collecting, and ideas in the Science Journal. Students share their ideas through discussions during Breakout Rooms or as a whole class.

History and Social Science are brought to life at Balboa Magnet through classroom lessons and activities. Our first graders learn about the community around them by inviting speakers into their classrooms. As they venture out into our community on walking field trips, they meet and see first hand the contributions these helpers make in our local community. The myriad of cultures at Balboa Magnet is celebrated as our second graders share their foods, songs, games, and traditions on Heritage Day. Our third grade students experience the rituals and customs of the first inhabitants of our country when various tribes visit on Native American Day. Gold fever strikes our fourth graders, and in their "rush" to California, they learn about the lives of gold miners and early Californians on Pioneer Day. On a trip to Riley's Farm, fifth graders experience colonial life and prepare for battle as foot soldiers in a reenactment of the Revolutionary War. Frequent and varied opportunities are provided for students to learn about the contributions of the various ethnic populations in Los Angeles, California, the United States, and the world. Students at Balboa Magnet are provided opportunities to share their language, cultural ideas, customs, and heritage, thereby providing multicultural dimensions to the curriculum. The History/Social Science curriculum is implemented through the use of a variety of materials that include state adopted and staff selected textbooks. In addition, the program is expanded and enriched by giving teachers the flexibility to incorporate supplementary materials and visual arts, dance, and theatre into the curriculum. Every student strives toward mastery of the content standards. Balboa Magnet currently utilizes the Scott Foresman History/Social Studies for California materials as the primary tools for instruction for History/Social Science. During Distance Learning, teachers arranged virtual field trips and invited special guests to speak to the students during a unit study. For example, fourth grade students will partake in a virtual field trip with the Sacramento Museum to learn about the Gold Rush.

Ongoing formative assessments are used to monitor student progress, check for understanding, and most importantly, to drive instruction. Teachers use the publisher's assessments after a unit is completed or administer teacher created assessment to gauge mastery of learning and the ability to apply learning in relevant and meaningful ways. During Distance Learning, online assessment platforms were used such as Benchmark Advance, Great Mind, Edulastic, and "worksheet" type of assessments with the Kami application. Students were also able to demonstrate their learning with student voice recordings or video recordings on platforms such as Flipgrid and Nearpod. Teachers are cognizant that during Distance Learning, teaching and learning have posed challenges for many students. For this reason, students were given multiple opportunities to resubmit work for a better grade, provided extended time, offered small group homework help time after class, and monitor grades in their Learning Management System, Schoology, for parents and students. Teachers had office hours built in their work day to meet with parents and students to discuss concerns and offer support as needed.

Each year, students in grades 3-5 take the Summative Assessment, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, in subject areas English Language Arts and Math in the last trimester of the school year. Leading up to the Summative Assessment, students are periodically tested using the Interim Block Assessment on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress portal. The results to the IABs allows teachers to see approximations of levels at which students demonstrate mastery of a set of concepts and skills. This is one piece of many data components that can provide a student's skill level in areas of ELA and Math. The IAB also allows students to become familiar to the computer adaptive online assessment platform and test format.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students at Balboa Magnet are exposed to all disciplines of Arts instruction as outlined in the California State Standards. Through active, hands-on experiences, students explore music, visual arts, theatre, and dance. Our talented vocal music teacher, who also works with the Los Angeles Children's Choir, provides music to all students on a weekly basis. In grades three and up, students have the opportunity to participate in instrumental music classes as well as an orchestra. The Visual Arts are taught and experienced using a variety of programs and tools that enable Balboa Magnet teachers to connect the Visual Arts across the curriculum. For the past 17 years, Balboa Magnet teachers have participated in the Arts Prototype Program that encompasses Dance, Theatre, and the Visual Arts. Teachers are encouraged to participate and learn alongside the students so that they can continue these experiences in their own classrooms. Many teachers have also taken Monart courses and are utilizing this directed drawing method to enhance the arts curriculum. In addition to Music and Visual Arts, Balboa students frequently participate in Theatre and Dance. Theatre is taught through connections to Literature, Science, and Social Studies. Opportunities are provided in every classroom for students to express themselves and demonstrate core curriculum knowledge on the classroom stage. Teachers use curriculum-based plays published by Bad Wolf Press as well as performing original productions. Students experience dance by learning and performing dances that are relevant to history as well as countries of their heritage. The Arts Program is a vital part of Balboa Magnet's curriculum and our teachers strive to continue and expand Arts education in our school.

Ballroom Dance was started for students in grades 4th and 5th grade in 2018. Ballroom dance helps students build social awareness that fosters characteristics such as respect, team spirit, and achievement. Students learn to shine under healthy pressure, accept mistakes as opportunities for learning and carry on with grace and dignity. These important life skills can shape and build strong and positive character traits in students to prepare them in their next chapter as they move onto middle school.

Balboa Magnet utilizes YMCA for Physical Education. The YMCA coaches are trained to plan activities that involve specific skill sets that are aligned to the California PE state standards. Each class is on a weekly schedule to work with the coach for 45 minutes. Teachers are active participants to ensure each student is participating and learning the age appropriate skills. During Distance Learning, students were responsible for keeping a log of the minutes spent on the physical activities at home.

Balboa Magnet has been a 1:1 technology school since 2011. Teachers and students at Balboa continue to embed technology into lessons and assignments daily. Students actively participate in video conferencing, PowerPoint presentations, Coding and Programming, and website creation in their classrooms in addition to weekly time in the computer lab. Before COVID-19 forced schools to shut, Balboa Magnet was in the process of working towards becoming a STEAM Certified school. Many of the Professional Development topics consisted of sharing practices in the classroom that were STEAM aligned. The STEAM Framework provided opportunities at each grade levels to plan thematic units weaving in the different disciplines. For example, third grade students practiced all the disciplines science, technology, engineering, arts and math during a unit study in Fossils. Students thought like paleontologists and carefully put together the "fossils" they dug up while using their math skills in creating grids to build the fossils together. The students use tools such as magnifying glasses, brushes, shovels and glue to know which dinosaur they've "discovered."

The STEAM aligned lessons built in opportunities for more student voice and less confinement. Students created authentic projects that were based on more student interest. Students took risks, and initiated learning and exploring deeper into a study of unit or discipline. Due to the started work during the process of becoming a STEAM Certified school, teachers and students had the practice using technology as a means

to further learning by delving deeper and examine a concept closely, present final assignments using novelty and innovation, communicate with peers effectively, and incorporate engineering practices to solve real-life problems.

3. Academic Supports:

Balboa Magnet budgeted for an Intervention Teacher to work with students in grades 1-2 that have been referred by the classroom teacher. In efforts to fulfill the Primary Promise Initiative, priority is given to the primary grades for additional supports to work towards becoming a fluent reader. As a full gifted and high ability magnet program school, all students participate in the specialized accelerated program. Students that have been selected to enroll at Balboa Magnet, have met the criteria to be placed in a program that covers greater depth and greater complexity in order to keep students thriving.

English Learners is only 1% of the total population. Each school year, the English Language Learners are strategically placed in the EL Designated teacher's classroom so that students are provided their EL Block Time and scaffolding strategies are used throughout the day to support the language acquisition. During this block of learning, students are given extra support in language development in the areas of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. The EL Coordinator and designated EL Teachers work together to monitor student progress through the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Benchmark Advance, and teacher observations. During Distance Learning, EL students are offered extra tutor time to provide additional support with reading, writing and comprehension skills. Students that meet the following criteria are eligible to exit the EL Program and reclassify: Proficiency in the Summative English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) test, report card grades of 3s and 4s, and meeting benchmark on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment. Reclassified students are closely monitored to ensure continued success in academic learning.

The Student Support and Progress Team (SSPT) is made up of classroom teachers, school psychologist, EL Coordinator, Resource Specialist Teacher and an Administrator. Teachers may make a referral of students that are not making progress in the classroom and the curriculum is not being accessed. When a teacher feels he or she has exhausted all RTI Tier 1 strategies and interventions in the classroom and the student is making no progress, referrals are made to the SSPT. Legal guardians are invited to attend the meeting to discuss student's academic progress, concerns, and take part as an active member of the goal planning. During the meeting, the students strengths and interests are shared as well as the concerns teachers or parents may have. Strategies are discussed and attainable and realistic goals are set by the team. Time is given, usually 6-8 weeks, to see if the strategies and recommendations made by the team were effective. The team will meet again to assess student progress during the 6-8 weeks allotted. Students that have made good progress and show good trajectory, have notes indicating this in their official cumulative record, but students that have made little to no progress may require a full assessment made by the School Psychologist and Resource Specialist Teacher to determine if a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is necessary for students to access the curriculum. Necessary action will follow up based on the results to the student's assessment.

The Individualized Education Plan Team is made up of the Assistant Principal-Elementary Instructional Specialist, school psychologist, Resource Specialist Teacher, student's classroom teacher, and student's legal guardian. Teachers with students that have an active IEP, work closely with the AP EIS to ensure all accommodations and modifications are made in the classroom for students with special needs. IEP meetings are held by the IEP Team as required in the student's education plan to discuss progress. Amendments can be made to a student's IEP by the recommendation and consensus by the student's legal guardian as needed.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Balboa Magnet's teachers, administrators and staff understand the importance of "Maslow before Bloom," meaning ensuring each student's social and emotional well being before academic success. During the shut down of schools due to the pandemic, we experienced a heavier and pressing need to take time to ensure each virtual classroom felt safe, welcoming and accepting for all learners. Each morning before the learning day begins, teachers all take 10-15 minutes for Social Emotional Learning Time (SEL). During this time, teachers check in with each student to see how they are feeling and what they are feeling. Teachers practice Second Step Program, character building lessons, journal writing, expressive drawing, and Restorative Justice circles each morning to provide a safe virtual learning environment that students feel a part of.

The principal starts each week with Monday Morning Assembly for 20 minutes. During the assembly, the principal will do an SEL activity. Each day of the week, the entire school community has a SEL themed based day as follows: Mindful Monday, Gratitude Tuesday, Wellness Wednesday, Thoughtful Thursday, and Fun Friday. In addition to the various SEL activities each class and grade level participates in, the principal and coordinator plans a virtual Fun Friday Social Hour to invite all students to participate in. During this time students get to connect, chat, and participate in a fun activity with their peers that are not from their own virtual classrooms. The participation rate has continued to stay high and students have expressed how much they look forward to these events.

The Principal sends home Certificates of Recognition with meal cards through US mail to recognize students' efforts during these challenging times. The students and families have expressed how excited and proud their students have felt to receive this type of recognition during these times of isolation. The teachers have also sent digital recognition along with tangible incentives through US mail to recognize the students' extraordinary efforts during these challenging times. This has been a big factor in keeping students engaged and motivated to continuously do their best during distance learning.

Teachers have used fun and interactive online games such as Kahoot, Interland, and Jeopardy to keep students engaged and learning. Interactive Google apps are also used to allow for students to discuss, share ideas and work on projects collaboratively with peers during distance learning. These opportunities have created moments for team spirit building, that necessitated creativity.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parent involvement is an integral component of our distinguished school and exemplary student achievement. The School Leadership Council, Balboa Magnet Governance Board, consists of parity of 6 school staff members and 6 parent community members. The primary purpose of the Governance Board is to stay the course towards Balboa's Mission and Vision. All members play an integral part of discussing funding, curriculum, school safety, student academic progress, and any concerns the stakeholders feel is necessary for discussion that may lead to a plan of action.

Balboa Spirit Club, our parent group consistently supports school projects and activities. Parent Workshops were held on various topics like Self-Care and Restorative Practices in the home with the school leadership to support our family community. This year due to the pandemic, the Spirit Club had to be creative to find ways that they could continue to involve everyone. They came up with creative ways to virtually involve Balboa families. They've planned activities such as Virtual Math Night, Online Book Fair, Food Drives and a Holiday Toy Outreach. They also sponsored a Sharing of Holiday Traditions video of Balboa scholars and their families sharing holiday traditions. They also put together a Virtual Conversation Heart video. Parents and staff members created a message on a paper "conversation heart" and sent their photo holding their heart to the Spirit Club. All the photos were turned into a video and the video was shared with all our students. At the beginning of the school year the Spirit Club hosted new families by contacting new parents and welcoming them into our school community. The Spirit Club raises money for projects big and small that contribute to an enriched, stimulating school environment. This year they funded computer instructors and

music teacher. They provide supplies, programs, and during a regular school year an incredible amount of volunteer time. Balboa Gifted/High Ability Magnet's parent involvement creates a warm, caring, family atmosphere where everyone feels welcome.

During the holidays, Balboa Magnet families started a Toy Drive and Adopt a Family program for families in need. We served our families first and also extended the program to our local Fire Department. The families donated new wrapped toys and canned foods to help those in need. Our Student Council members were heavily involved by attending the Monday Morning Assembly to help advertise and spread the word to take action and get involved with the worthy cause. Balboa Magnet was able to help many families affected by the pandemic and made the holidays even brighter and cheerier. Our Student Council members along with those that got involved in the cause expressed gaining more from giving to those in need.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Balboa Magnet recognizes the importance of creating a professional culture that permeates throughout the school, whether it be from the homes of students to the classroom, classroom to the yard, or administration to the teaching staff. Professionalism is a standard that all employees and students regard highly and so administration places emphasis on it during Professional Development and for the School-Wide Positive Student Behavior Intervention Plan. In the SWPBIP, we call out the five attributes we want our students and staff to focus on which are: Positive, Punctual, Prepared, Polite and Professional. These are attributes we not only share with students and have posted in every classroom, we discuss it as a whole community. The adult staff and parent community need to model these focus areas to our young learners if we want them to internalize it.

The abrupt closing of schools and the transition to distance learning during the pandemic occurred without much time for planning. We recognized early on that all stakeholders needed to come together and work collectively to continue to offer the learning opportunities that our students deserve and have always known, even during the new challenges. In a short time, Balboa Magnet transitioned to distance learning offering a quality and rigorous online program in each virtual classroom while ensuring students felt safe and welcomed. Without the practice of Growth Mindset from teachers, staff, and students, Balboa Magnet could not have built the plane while flying it successfully.

Teachers spent countless hours planning together with grade-level colleagues to assist each other with new technology learning, shared best practices, and worked as a team in the test of true challenging times. Teachers gave up personal time and gave in extra help for their students, colleagues and families to ensure we were all moving forward together. Administrators made themselves available as much as possible to support and provide resources when needed. These selfless actions exemplifies true characteristics of a professional culture.

Administration understands that with every new learning, best practices require a cyclical plan of action which consists of planning, executing, reflecting and modifying. This is why Professional Development time is dedicated for grade level planning time with specific goals to refine best practices. Teachers' PD time is respected and protected to keep learning relevant, meaningful, and meeting the teachers' needs. This is the only way it is transferable to the classrooms and to our students.

Professional Development topics are relevant and meaningful for teachers based on the needs. Limited PD time is thoughtfully crafted to empower teachers to have the tools necessary and resources to be effective in their virtual classrooms. Teachers and staff trust Administration, knowing all stakeholders have a common vision and that is providing excellence in our program for all learners.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy has always been to lead by example. In order to lead by example, leaders need to partake in all new learning and continue in cultivating their own Growth Mindset with changing times. To know which way to steer the ship in order to achieve student success, leaders need to know what the needs of the students are, design a clear road map to be shared by all stakeholders, have buy in from all members

of the school community, and finally execute the plan. Along the way, keeping the lines of communication open from all stakeholders plays an important role to continue moving in the right path together. The change in action is set by a cyclical action of providing a vision that all stakeholders have complete buy in for. From there, action plans are set and implemented. All stakeholders hold each other accountable with measurable means such as observation, data, and evidence of work. New District initiatives, trainings, and programs have always involved the principal and coordinator heavily alongside the teachers and staff.

A guiding question asked by the leader of the school is "is this in the best interest of the students?" Without this question at the forefront of the leader's mind, you can lose sight and path to where you want to lead your school community. Decisions, action plans, new initiatives, and programs should be aligned to student achievement and success. This is the core basis to driving a school to where it needs to go.

During COVID-19, when Balboa Magnet turned to 100% online teaching and learning, there was a high learning curve for all stakeholders. The teachers and administration took part in trainings and workshops to convert and transform teaching to an online program that continued to provide rigor and quality. As a school all members took part in learning new online applications, strategic and effective instruction through Zoom, and balancing a differentiated program to address the needs of our gifted and high achieving students. Rather than being detached, the principal and coordinator engaged in the newly implemented methods of teaching first-handed; we believe that in order to be inspiring leaders, we must be able to empathize with and understand teachers and by extension, the students.

The principal offered parent workshops to help parents understand some of the online resources, navigate through the student Learning Management System, Schoology, and how best to support virtual learning at home. The principal also offered parent workshops to share helpful resources such as free meals at Grab and Go Centers, COVID-19 testing sites, IT support, mental health services, and foster youth services offered by the District. The principal offered a parent workshop on how to support students emotionally and socially during times of uncertainty that may cause anxiousness, feeling lonely, or exhibiting signs of depression. Keeping students safe and healthy has been a priority during school closures.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Being a Culturally Responsive School has been the pillar to the way we teach and learn. Often times, one of the most common expression we receive from prospective parents that are interested in applying to our school is that they appreciate the cultural and ethnically diverse student population they see in the classrooms. As a full Magnet School, we exist on the core belief of student integration. Our student population maintains the 40% white and 60% minority model with students that reside in 40 different zip codes. The diverse population is represented by all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. Being culturally responsive is an approach to living life in a way that practices the validation and affirmation of different cultures, which is something we celebrate in the classrooms and school-wide.

Teachers bring cultural awareness in the classrooms during their Social Studies unit on learning about different heritages. Students come dressed up in their traditional clothing that represent their country of heritage origin. Students bring in their "Heritage Box" where they happily and proudly share the traditions in their home or country of ancestry. Students also learn about the dances and music from around the world. This awareness will not only create students that are more globally aware, students can feel proud and connected with exposure and learning about their own heritage. This is especially important currently with the racial divide and tension we are seeing in our nation. The teachers and staff are aware of the racial tension students are witnessing through the media. Teachers allow students to express their thoughts and feelings and also allow for discussions that lead to healing and hope. This is the reason Balboa Magnet spend so much time on SEL practices and taking opportunities to celebrate the different heritages and civil rights leaders that have made a positive impact on our society.

The entire staff at Balboa Magnet, teachers to custodial staff, will all partake in the 4 part series training called Anti-racist Journey in LA Unified: Mirror Work Implicit/Unconscious Bias Training. The training will allow for all participants to dig deep and reflect to bring the biases we all have to surface. We will take time to examine what those biases are and reflect how those prenotions can have a negative impact on our students in our classrooms and on the yard. It will be a personal learning experience for many. In the famous words of Mahatma Ghandi, "We must be the change we wish to see in the world." We are excited to begin the training in April and anticipate transformations to occur throughout the school. It will be a starting point to curtail the systemic racism we see and experience in our nation.

Teachers have a deep understanding that a student's learning differences, second language, different cultures, are all an asset and brings a richness to each classroom. Students feel proud and accepted when sharing about their heritage or learning about someone else's. Literature on different cultures and race are read and discussed.

We emphasize the importance of acceptance and respect in the classrooms and treat "difference" as an asset, knowing globally we as a human race is made up of different backgrounds.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Balboa Magnet Elementary School has implemented what we call “Fun Fridays.” These are one hour-long workshops that happen every month via the Zoom application between students and the principal. Various crafts and exercises have been employed during these workshops, spanning from origami to cooking with the principal. This practice is relatively new as it was started during the COVID-19 pandemic. For this hour-long interaction, students are visibly excited and participatory; it is an event students wait in anticipation for all week. It connects the principle to the core of what it means to be an educator. While seemingly small, this practice is a novel attempt at maintaining one of Balboa Magnet’s resonating and core principles -- TOGETHERNESS.

While Balboa Magnet boasts bright and enthusiastic students, committed and creative teachers, dedicated parents, and hardworking administrators, the binding and fundamental principle we all uphold at the end of the day is togetherness. Balboa Magnet is a school of choice, meaning, every involved stakeholder commits themselves to the nurturing, cultivating, and continuing attitude of togetherness. Balboa Magnet accomplishes much and functions effectively because of our togetherness -- a sentiment that we believe permeates through the academic program, socio-emotional well being and results in assessment achievement.

“Fun Fridays” (while still relatively new) is merely a continuation of what we at Balboa Magnet have always believed and have always worked to prioritize -- TOGETHERNESS. The turn-out of students, the thankfulness of parents, and the joy it brings to the principal is what makes Balboa Magnet an excellent school, one that strives to maintain its place as an educational model. “Fun Fridays” have worked exceptionally well in our school’s continued ability to successfully educate and support students since school closures because it provides a fun and interactive activity that reminds students of their community. Students not only can interact with their grade-level peers, but meet students of other grade levels and backgrounds, since we are such a diverse school. These small but genuine interactions give students a sense of pride and togetherness within their community, something that they carry into the (virtual) classroom as well.

We believe students perform at the best level when they feel secure and welcomed, when they are free to take academic risks. Even before the pandemic, Balboa Magnet implemented a variety of school spirit activities that bolstered this common theme of togetherness. “Fun Fridays” has been Balboa Magnet’s attempt at reminding students that we are here and that we will always care, and that TOGETHERNESS makes us stronger and brighter.