

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 [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Richard Henry Lee Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 11481 Foster Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Los Alamitos State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 90720-3818

County Orange County

Telephone (562) 799-4540 Fax (562) 799-4550

Web site/URL https://lee.losal.org/ E-mail avento@losal.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. Andrew Pulver E-mail apulver@losal.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Los Alamitos Unified School District Tel. (562) 799-4700

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 Mrs. Marlys Davidson
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 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	59	49	108
1	55	45	100
2	48	53	101
3	41	42	83
4	41	25	66
5	52	47	99
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	296	261	557

*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 13.5 % Asian
 - 1.5 % Black or African American
 - 34.6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 34.9 % White
 - 13.3 % 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: 2%

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	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	654
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Hebrew, Mandarin, Thai, Cantonese, Farsi, Telugu,

Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Hindi

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
25 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 21 %

Total number students who qualify: 116

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
67 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>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>24</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>35</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: 6
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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 25:1

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%	97%	97%	97%	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 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. 2001

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

We believe ALL children can learn. It is our mission to provide an environment where children feel safe to take risks to enhance their learning, develop problem solving and critical thinking skills through collaboration with peers, express consideration for others while celebrating diversity, and demonstrate academic excellence in all areas.

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.

The school year began with all classes delivering instruction virtually due to state restrictions. However, after just one week the district received a waiver from the state to open our elementary school based on our enhanced opening safety plans. Families were given an option to keep their children in a year-long, all-virtual classroom or return for in-person instruction in a hybrid model. At Lee, five classrooms remain in an all-virtual model and seventeen classrooms are open in a hybrid model.

In the hybrid model, students receive in-person instruction for half of the school day with 50% of the class. Students learn remotely the other half of the day, receiving asynchronous instruction. Students are placed into two cohorts: AM Cohort and PM Cohort. This model has provided students live interaction with their instructor and peers. Strict safety procedures have kept staff and students safe. All individuals wear masks, use desk shields and practice social distancing, in addition to our heightened sanitation protocols. Students are assigned specific entry/exit gates, visitors are not allowed in classrooms, and cohorts between classes do not mix. These enhanced practices keep the cohorts of students safe and secure.

The all-virtual model, called LosAl@Home, offers students live instruction from one of our teachers via video-conferencing. These teachers, instructing from their classrooms, provide whole-

class and small-group instruction to meet individual student needs. All curriculum and materials have been provided to students learning from home. Organized drop-off and pick-up events are scheduled each week to ensure students and families have all their needs met.

Our priority is to provide students as much live instruction as possible. In fact, 75% of all mandated instructional minutes are met through live instruction for students in both models.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

Richard Henry Lee Elementary School is a three-time California Distinguished School, a California Gold Ribbon School, and a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence which has earned an enviable reputation as a top-ranked school in the state and nation. Lee, one of nine schools in the Los Alamitos Unified School District, is nestled in a quiet residential area surrounded by single-family homes, tree-lined streets, and nearby parks. Lee Elementary has high expectations for both staff and students, proving its long-standing reputation of providing rigorous and exemplary education for all learners. Lee is proud to be ranked as one of the top elementary schools in the county with students exceeding grade level standards in both English language arts (ELA) and math. The focus on best, first instruction in every classroom, the commitment of the parent community, and the devotion of the students to always do their best is what makes Lee Elementary School extraordinary.

Lee warmly opens its doors to 600 students each day. Students come to Lee from the cities of Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, and the community of Rossmoor. Additionally, 25% of the population come from neighboring cities in the counties of Orange and Los Angeles. Lee's broad attendance boundary brings tremendous diversity to the student community. The student population is diverse in all areas, from the ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds of students to the wide continuum of learners it serves. Lee teachers focus on differentiation to meet the needs of English language learners, students requiring individualized instruction to access curriculum, and students identified as gifted and talented. The dedication of both teachers and students led to 90% of students meeting or exceeding ELA standards on the 2019 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), ranking Lee as the 2nd highest performing school in Orange County.

Lee operates with a growth mindset and is firmly committed to developing the learning potential of all students. Innovative ways to deliver instruction and reach a diverse population of learners is approached in a number of ways. Best, first instructional practices are implemented consistently across all grade levels. These research-based, signature practices include a balanced literacy workshop model for reading and writing, Cognitively Guided Instruction in math, and Depth and Complexity prompts to deepen understanding across all curricular areas. These programs combine high-quality curriculum and student-centered activities to promote critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity in every classroom.

Lee is purposeful with instruction and intervention to meet the needs of the entire student body. Using data from district benchmarks, standardized testing, and Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments, teachers work together to analyze results, plan units of study, and develop focused intervention and strategy groups. Lee's on-site Reading Lab provides targeted, tiered reading intervention for students needing intensive phonemic awareness and phonics support.

The ultimate goal at Lee is to provide unlimited possibilities for all students. Students can extend their learning in after-school classes through our partnership with the Los Alamitos Education Foundation. Igniting curiosity and an enthusiasm for taking on new learning challenges is achievable for all students. Enrichment classes in foreign language, instrumental music, vocal music, art, and martial arts are available to all students. Students who enjoy tinkering, designing, coding, and building join the after-school "Maker-Club" which provides children an introduction to engineering, computer science, and robotics. A performance-based choir program for fourth and fifth graders, a PeaceMaker (conflict manager) program, Junior Master Gardener training to tend the on-site vegetable garden, and Student Council Leadership opportunities offer students at Lee varied options to connect with others, develop leadership skills, and show pride in their school.

The community at Lee is affectionately known as the "FamiLEE." Parents are dynamic partners who strive to provide students with relevant technology and access to unlimited educational opportunities. Parents participate in School Site Council, PTA, Parent Advisory Committees, and Lee's education foundation, Project LEAP, to support the school vision. Project LEAP funds a part-time, credentialed media center teacher to focus on 21st century learning skills. The PTA works tirelessly to create events such as family

dinner nights, a school carnival, the Kinder Play Date, and Camp Lee's overnighter to unite the community within the school.

The 2020-21 school year has proven to challenge our routines and practices due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Lee, using an AM/PM cohort model, has been open for in-person instruction the entire school year. Regardless of what the world faces, the staff at Lee is dedicated to providing a rich academic and social experience for all learners. The reduction of instructional time has caused staff to center every learning minute on the most critical instruction and skills. Team goals and expectations for students continue to remain high. Students are truly achieving while facing unprecedented adversity. Moreover, students are developing emotional stability with the connections made while at school. With dedication and perseverance, children will overcome!

In 2001, Lee was awarded the National Blue Ribbon School Award for its signature instructional practices. This award had enormous impact on the culture and dynamics of the community. Lee staff has become laser-focused on data analysis of district benchmark and state assessments, utilizing results to determine growth and next steps for student achievement. The shift has transcended instructional focus, improved targeted interventions, and is a major contributing factor to the unique student-centered approach of the site's instructional philosophy and practice. The National Blue Ribbon Award is highly valued by the community and a source of pride by students and staff.

The heart of Lee's mission centers on rigorous curriculum, high expectations, skillful and well-trained staff, character development, social responsibility, and family partnerships. Pride is woven in every word and action at Lee and lives through every student, teacher, and community member. Each day students and staff work hard to live up to being a National Blue Ribbon School.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Lee Elementary School has a carefully developed, well-rounded program of instruction designed to challenge children to develop their own full potential. While the instructional programs focus on high academic standards, each child has opportunities to develop qualities of leadership, initiative, creative expression, self-discipline, and a growth mindset. Lee’s master schedule is designed to allow for uninterrupted, long instructional blocks of time to maximize bell-to-bell instruction. The infusion of collaboration, communication and creativity in all curricular areas arm our students for success in a rapidly changing global society.

Teachers use the Reading and Writing Workshop model to deliver a comprehensive and blended literacy program. This model provides students choices in books to increase engagement, extended time to build reading stamina, daily targeted small-group instruction to develop reading strategies, and shared reading opportunities to model high-level thinking and engage students in thought-provoking discussions. Additionally, daily lessons from the classroom language wall strengthen phonemic awareness, high frequency words, spelling, and grammar. Students are assessed at a minimum of three times a year using the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment System. This one-on-one reading assessment has proven powerful in determining students’ independent and instructional reading levels because teachers are able to observe and quantify student reading behaviors, engage students in comprehension conversation that go beyond the text, and make informed decisions about responsive teaching based on assessment data. Assessment data as well as small-group observations allow teachers to create flexible strategy groups, focusing on comprehension, vocabulary and reciprocal teaching strategies in both fiction and nonfiction texts.

This intense work continued during the school closure from March to June 2020. Teachers delivered whole group lessons for a period of time in the morning via Zoom, then dedicated the remainder of the day to work with small groups of students. The site created packets of materials students needed to access these powerful lessons while at home. Packets included whiteboards and markers, sentence stems, and anchor charts. Chromebooks, hot spots, classroom supplies and instructional materials were purchased by the site and available to every student at Lee.

Students needing added support attend the Reading Lab four days a week to receive small-group intensive reading intervention. The Lab is designed to provide early literacy intervention and a second dose of reading instruction for struggling readers. The Lab develops phonemic awareness, phonics, and decoding skills using strategies similar to the Lindamood-Bell program. Students are recommended to the Lab based on targeted phonics data and are grouped based on specific phonics needs. After participating in eight weeks of instruction, students are reassessed, and new groups are formed.

Lee feared the Lab could not operate during the school closure of 2020. Knowing the Lab is critical to the success of many of our neediest students, the Lab team restructured the sessions to allow them to be delivered via Zoom. Again, packets of resources and materials were assembled and delivered to students in the program. Delivering intensive lessons virtually was a challenge. In order to deliver the most impactful instruction, the Lab shortened sessions from 45 to 30 minutes and limited each group to no more than three students. Starting school in a hybrid cohort model in the fall of 2020 also presented scheduling challenges. With creative grouping and scheduling, Lab has been able to support nearly 50 students either in-person or virtually beginning in November 2020.

Lee delivers a balanced math program of skill acquisition through concrete experiences and problem-solving strategies with an emphasis on real-life application. Math instruction is implemented using our signature practice, Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI). It is the site’s belief that students come to school with informal systems of mathematical knowledge and problem-solving strategies which serve as a basis for learning new math concepts. CGI provides students the opportunity to use their background knowledge to support conceptual understanding. CGI is a shift from rote memorization to encouraging multiple approaches to problem solving in order to focus on students’ mathematical thinking. As a result, students are empowered to explain their reasoning, justify their solution strategies which ultimately deepens students’

collective mathematical understanding.

Teachers use ongoing assessments and daily work to drive instruction and create small, instructional groups. Dialogue and description of understanding through daily “Math Talks” help teachers determine learning gaps and skill mastery in students. Students participate in district benchmark tests three times a year. Together, grade level teams analyze data and skill proficiency to guide classroom instruction and create after-school intervention groups based on specific skills.

A challenge that teachers faced during school closure was facilitating a meaningful math dialogue over Zoom. Students were required to learn how to manage a teleconference platform. The camera, mute button and home distractions forced teachers to rethink the delivery of math instruction. Teachers discovered CGI math instruction was more meaningful in a small group rather than whole class. Thus, teachers met via Zoom with small groups throughout the day to deliver purposeful math instruction.

Lee ensures all students demonstrate mastery of state science standards by providing hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences which incorporate science process skills and the scientific method. Each grade level has a closet full of science material to make learning come to life. Science journals are used to document and extend classroom learning. Each year students participate in a schoolwide STEAM Fair. STEAM projects are utilized to reinforce the engineering design process and provide real-life connections. Project-based learning allows teachers to assess students on their application of science standards.

Fifth grade students spend a week at Outdoor Science School (OSS), living and learning about science in the San Bernardino Forest. Students learn first-hand about ecosystems, food chains, and watershed. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the camp is closed for the 2020-21 school year. Lee’s 5th grade team created a week of hands-on science to occur at school as an alternative to the traditional OSS week.

History is taught by connecting one event to the next and expecting students to articulate the impact and motive behind these events. History becomes meaningful when it comes to life at Lee. For example, first grade students participate in the “Long Ago Days” full immersion activity to culminate their Change Over Time unit. Other examples include “A Walk Through the Revolutionary War” and “Battle Reenactments” for fifth graders. Fourth graders travel to Sacramento to explore gold country, a major focus of 4th grade California history. These experiences lend themselves to strong civic understanding. Students explore topics, formulate opinions based on data and experiences, and have opportunities to articulate historical events through creative speaking. Depth and Complexity prompts, developed by Sandra Kaplan, help students develop knowledge and skills to participate in a 21st century global economy and society. Applying universal themes such as change, conflict, order vs. chaos, patterns, power, and systems to essential questions supports student thinking and leads them to a deeper understanding of big ideas from all disciplines. Students at all levels participate in “grand conversations” to develop listening and speaking skills and to apply these universal themes. Students learn to clearly present ideas, link ideas to others’ remarks, and contribute to the discussion with follow-up information. Students are assessed on their ability to explain and justify current and historical events rather than on their opinion of these events.

Fortunately, students have been able to participate in most relevant and engaging activities during the pandemic. Though the traveling has been postponed, teams have been able to adjust activities to allow for social distancing. Students at Lee are still gaining valuable learning lessons through a modified program.

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:

Lee actively pursues avenues to extend and enrich curriculum beyond the core curriculum for all students. Lee's community believes in providing students with opportunities which foster an appreciation for the arts and healthy living. Many enrichment programs are provided to students by outside groups such as our PTA, Project LEAP, and the Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF).

Students in all grades receive weekly music instruction by a credentialed music teacher. Grade level performances during the school year demonstrate achievement in vocal music and dramatic play. Beginning in second grade, students receive a unit of piano/keyboarding instruction. Students in third through fifth grade learn to play the recorder. Fourth and fifth graders are offered the opportunity to join the Lee Choir. The Choir performs at community events throughout the school year. All students are able to participate in weekly musical theater and showchoir classes after school. Lee partners with the Orange County Philharmonic who visits classes to inspire and encourage students to learn an instrument.

In addition to classroom art lessons, students receive explicit art instruction from a credentialed art teacher who is generously funded by Lee PTA. This part-time, visual arts teacher delivers monthly, grade-level specific lessons on current curriculum and state standards. Visual art is celebrated with a schoolwide art installation, transforming a section of the campus to center on a specific theme or type of art. For instance, the last installation focused on optical illusion art which combined patterns, color, and lines in ways to make the art appear to move or bend.

Covid-19 restrictions do not allow the music nor art teacher to move from class to class. Therefore, both teachers create video lessons for all students. The music teacher creates weekly grade-level lessons which students access via their Google Classroom. The visual arts teacher shares recorded art lessons on Lee's YouTube Channel for easy student accessibility. Keyboarding and recorder instruction is postponed this year, but the Lee Choir performs virtually and through video recordings shared with the community.

Students receive 100 minutes of physical education each week. Instruction, provided by classroom teachers, includes activities to develop movement, patterns, and endurance. All fifth-grade students participate in the California Physical Fitness Testing, measuring aerobic capacity, abdominal strength, upper body strength, body composition, and general flexibility. Additionally, sports and other activities like soccer, jiu jitsu, gymnastics, lacrosse and more are offered after school to all students for a small fee. Due to the pandemic, California has suspended the mandated P.E. minutes and the Physical Fitness Test. However, all classes at Lee continue to participate in outdoor physical education each week.

Lee partners with LAEF to offer free, after-school foreign language classes to all second, third and fourth graders. Languages offered in the 2020-21 school year are Mandarin, French, Spanish, Japanese and American Sign Language. All language classes are held virtually in the 2020-21 school year due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The Lee Media Center is a place of pride for the Lee community. It houses the school library, computer lab and innovative MakerSpace. Students receive weekly technology instruction from a credentialed media center teacher. This program includes hands-on engineering and design lessons in the MakerSpace, coding lessons using Project Lead the Way, and robotics lessons using Ozobots and Cubelets. Students in upper grades may participate in the after-school Maker Club to advance engineering skills by undertaking STEM challenges. Students in all grades may join the Lee STEAM Team to collaborate and create science projects. The STEAM Team competes at the District STEAM Fair at the end of each school year. The media center staff, including the credentialed teacher and a part-time librarian, are funded by parent donations.

This year, the media center teacher creates video lessons for each grade level. Students complete weekly STEAM challenges at home. An interesting benefit of this model is it requires students to think creatively about solving engineering challenges. They must use resources found in their home to build their challenges. Students share pictures and videos of their work in the media center Google Classroom. Students are highly engaged and innovative while participating in home STEAM challenges.

Social-emotional learning programs are implemented to develop self-efficacy, coping strategies, and character development in students. Teachers have been trained on Conscious Discipline, a philosophy of

child development based on brain science. The training showed staff how to coach students on managing feelings and behaviors. Classrooms have “safe-places” or “cool-down corners” to offer students a quiet place to regulate themselves in order to return to learning. As a school, we teach and celebrate character traits such as honesty, respect, generosity, responsibility, compassion and acceptance. Each month students are recognized in those areas.

Students needing additional support are invited to participate in one of several social-emotional groups facilitated by the school counselor or school psychologist. The Social Skills Group revolves around empowering students to overcome obstacles at school or barriers to educational access by practicing how to regulate emotions. Mindful Monday Group uses yoga to focus on breathing techniques and strategies to combat feelings of being overwhelmed.

School closure created an enormous challenge in meeting with groups. Meeting via Zoom created confidentiality issues for the participants. In order to ensure the groups remain secure, all groups met in-person at Lee. Social-emotional support is needed more than ever for children dealing with isolation and anxiety related to Covid-19.

3. Academic Supports:

Supporting high levels of student learning and achieving begins with rigorous best, first instruction. Lee teachers use common instructional practices, proven through research, to lead to higher levels of academic performance and achievement. Students are instructed at levels meant to challenge all learners. Intensive interventions are quickly implemented to fill in gaps and support academic achievement through frequent and careful evaluation of assessment data.

Lee staff uses an array of instructional methods, understanding that our school has a diverse group of learners and learning needs. Instruction takes place in the form of small groups in order to differentiate the work to meet students’ needs. Reading Workshop allows teachers to model a reading strategy and students to practice the strategy in their self-selected “just right” books during independent reading time. This time allows for teachers to pull small strategy groups to further differentiate learning. This model encourages individual student growth.

Students requiring further assistance are referred to a variety of intervention programs at Lee. In classrooms, intervention teachers work alongside teachers to further provide small group and/or one-on-one instruction in ELA and math. At-risk kindergarten students attend after-school “Kinder Club,” focusing on phonemic awareness and fine motor skills. Students in kindergarten through third grade attend Reading Lab, an intensive phonics intervention, targeting specific areas of need. These areas are aggressively addressed, and students are successful in the process.

Gifted students are provided with opportunities to develop skills in inquiry and creative expression as well as develop foundational skills at a rate and extent appropriate to their abilities. Kaplan’s Depth and Complexity prompts are used to support students and drive deeper thinking. Students synthesis information, increase their depth of knowledge, and apply high-level thinking skills in written text analysis and creative projects.

The community at Lee firmly believes in a least, restrictive environment for all learners. Classes are carefully formed to allow the Education Specialist to push into classrooms to deliver specialized academic support to students with disabilities alongside their classroom teacher. This model provides students specialized support they need to access grade level content without removing them from grade level peers. This co-teacher model has been extremely effective in both student achievement and emotional health of our students.

In addition to immersing English learners in a highly engaging, vocabulary-rich classroom setting,

English learners are offered Reading Lab support and after-school intervention to address their unique needs. Depending on student need, writing and language development classes are available for all English learners to increase language proficiency.

Frequent assessment is essential to providing appropriate interventions for students. Teachers analyze standardized state and district benchmark data early in the school year. Throughout the year, students are assessed for progress using reading running records, standards-based math skill assessments, and a wide-range of formative assessments. Instruction is adjusted and intervention plans are created based on student data. If cycles of interventions do not reveal significant improvement, a Student Success Team meeting is scheduled to look deeper into what may be hindering student progress. The meeting may result in additional interventions, a 504 Plan to formalize necessary accommodations, or a recommendation for a psychoeducational assessment to address various learning concerns.

Lee is a data-driven school that strives to maintain high academic standards for every student. All student scholars are challenged and encouraged to be their personal best. Small-group instruction allows for targeted, differentiated learning. Academically, the programs at Lee provide all students with the ability to meet and exceed state and national standards.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Lee's community takes great pride in appreciating how a growth mindset influences the outcome of student success. Students are taught to love challenges and be intrigued by mistakes. Lee allows students the opportunity to face challenges requiring them to develop critical thinking skills. Mantras heard in all classrooms include "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." "Got GRIT?" "You have the Power of YET!" Students at all grades are explicitly taught how to have a growth mindset and why it is important.

Our school motto is "You are the MAGIC!" Students are taught they have MAGIC within themselves to help them grow and MAGIC within them to share with others. MAGIC is a special acronym staff uses to teach behaviors we feel are crucial to student success: M (Make eye contact), A (Accept failure & LEARN from it), G (Get up and get involved), I (No I in TEAM), C (Celebrate and empower others).

Having MAGIC is embodied in everything at Lee. Students share how and when they see MAGIC on campus. It is written on our school spirit shirts, laced in curricular lessons, added to every student recognition, and included in our daily school pledge. This motto, developed five years ago, has overwhelmingly united and connected our community. It is a believe encouraged and respected by all stakeholders.

Compassion, acceptance, and inclusion are reoccurring themes at Lee which are threaded throughout every lesson, every action, and every word. Lee truly embraces inclusion as it strives to engage and motive the entire community. From the parent community to staff and to all students, Lee believes inclusion supports a healthy culture where everyone is accepted and is a valued member of the community. This is supported by the many activities established to support compassion and inclusion. Peace Week is a week at Lee dedicated to anti-bullying and compassion. Start With Hello Week is a time focused on inclusion, teaching students how to notice social isolation and giving them tools to appropriately respond. Guest speakers and authors visit Lee, virtually in the 2020-21 school year, to encourage inclusion and empower students to use their voice for the betterment of those around them. Truly, the school climate at Lee is positive, joyous and loving. Students lookout for one another, encourage one another, and appreciate differences around them.

Although school closure did not change the values at Lee, the school had to find new ways to remain connected to students and families. The administrator posted weekly read aloud stories on the site's YouTube channel, made personal birthday calls to students at home, and hosted a fundraising auction night via Facebook Live. Student Council, Math Team, Choir and Peacemakers continued to meet virtually. The staff created entertaining dance videos to share with the community. Teachers organized bedtimes stories via Zoom and made personal house visits to support students needing extra attention.

Engaging students is a critical component to every child's success. Lee's climate is one where students feel safe to be themselves and make mistakes. They are surrounded by trusting adults who build them up as they learn and grow.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The community at Lee affectionately calls itself the "FamiLEE." Families are highly engaged and directly involved in instructional processes as Lee views our parents as primary instructors. The home-school partnership is strong and a pillar to the success of the school.

The open-door, parent policy connects and involves families. The site administrator welcomes concerns, questions, and suggestions as it is the belief that parents are partners in the development of the children at Lee. Parents are encouraged to participate in school events in all capacities. Families are urged to volunteer in classrooms, attend PTA meetings, join School Site Council meetings, and support Project LEAP activities.

Supporting families is critical to ensuring a strong home-school partnership. For the last two years, Lee created and facilitated parent book clubs to help support parent needs at home. For example, families read and discussed *Easy to Love, Difficult to Discipline*, a parent guide to *Conscious Discipline*. Educational nights intended to assist parents in understanding instructional processes and language used in classrooms are, also, developed yearly. Parent participation is high and classrooms are packed with eager parents enthusiastic to learn.

Events created to bring the community together foster strong support for Lee. Monthly family dine-out nights, the annual “Kinder Play Date” scheduled before school starts, the school carnival, the ice cream social, science night, and math night are just a few events connecting the community. Many of these events were canceled due to Covid-19 restrictions, causing the community to rely on virtual gatherings and dinner take-out nights.

Lee fosters positive relationships with local businesses and agencies to assist families. Care Solace is a free, concierge service offered to support families in need of emotional and mental health assistance. The company intakes information and finds local providers tailored to family needs. Lee partnered with the City of Los Alamitos to coordinate special 5th grade events when their Outdoor Science School was canceled due to Covid. The city allowed use of the parks and provided staff to create a week of leadership, friendship and memory-making for Lee’s 5th grade students. Local businesses, banks and restaurants generously donate to support the media center programs at Lee.

The site administrator communicates to all families via a weekly e-newsletter and personal emails and phone calls. The site also maintains an Instagram, Facebook and Twitter account to provide parents with glimpses of the school day.

Prior to Covid-19, parent involvement was abundant daily on campus. Covid-19 restrictions forced the site to deny any non-essential visitors entrance on campus. In order to continue creating a deep partnership with parents and encouraging their engagement in school activities, teachers regularly share motivational messages and videos of classroom activities with families. Additionally, teachers invite parents into the classroom via Zoom for award assemblies, book read alouds, and guest speaking opportunities. Videos, pictures, and telecommunication opportunities are offered as much as possible to connect parents with their child’s classroom.

Lee believes in a high level of connectedness and parent involvement. Lee is a family. Lasting friendships are formed as a result of attendance at this unique and special school. Staff and parents work together to support the success of all students. Parents trust teachers and work diligently alongside them to ensure student and school success.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Lee’s professional development program addresses our goal of “Exemplary Teaching and Learning” by fostering repeated training opportunities and robust coaching to increase student achievement in all curricular areas. Specific comprehensive, long-range development plans are designed through analysis of student assessment data and in collaboration with teaching staff.

Professional development is abundant to ensure signature practices are aligned across the site, and all teachers have the tools needed to implement these practices in a meaningful manner. Lee’s professional development program empowers teachers to help create a growth plan to support high student achievement.

A five-year professional development plan is created for teachers new to the district in order for all teachers to fully implement signature practices with fidelity. The five-year plan balances conceptual understanding with hands-on coaching. This plan includes training in CGI math, Reading Foundations for the Common Core, Depth and Complexity Prompts, Thinking Maps, and Restorative Practice.

Professional development across all disciplines is available to all teachers throughout the year. Training opportunities include Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) implementation, Reading and Writing NBRS 2021

Workshop Collaboratives, Cultural Awareness & Stereotyping training, and refreshers on all signature practices. Teachers in the five-year professional development cohort attend all trainings.

Teachers at Lee have a strong desire to improve their craft. Even the most senior teachers request coaching and an opportunity to learn from others. District math, reading, and science coaches push into classrooms to model strategies and provide on-the-spot coaching for all teachers. Lee teachers open their classroom doors to each other and teachers around the district to model signature practices, looking for feedback to improve their own instruction.

Additionally, each year the site analyzes data and determines significant site needs requiring attention. The Leadership Team, consisting of a teacher from each grade level and the site administrator, collaborate to develop a course of action. For example, in the 2018-19 school year, the site saw a great need to implement social-emotional learning (SEL) at all levels. This determination was made based on the number of Student Study Team referrals, mental health referrals, and overall loss of classroom instructional time due to time spent with students struggling to self-regulate their behaviors in class. The site, determined to meet these essential needs, selected to fully implement Conscious Discipline, a social-emotional philosophy of child development based on brain research, at all levels. The implementation required extensive training and coaching. An SEL team, consisting of a teacher in each grade, the site administrator and the school psychologist, was formed to long-term plan and support classroom teachers. The team applied for and received a grant to fund a year-long training program, materials, and coaching. Teachers attending monthly trainings, studied the Conscious Discipline book for teachers, and received weekly coaching from an on-site teacher.

The collaboration among teachers and support by site administration build a culture of unity; all staff are working toward a common goal. Teachers feel valued, heard and appreciate as they have a voice in the direction of the site's professional development.

4. School Leadership:

Although there is only one site administrator, the leadership at Lee is team-oriented and a shared responsibility. The Leadership Team meets monthly to make decisions, discuss issues, and plan according to goals determined by the team. Prior to implementing plans, team leaders gather input from their colleagues to ensure all teachers' concerns and suggestions are addressed. Decision-making truly is a shared effort at Lee.

Yearly, the site principal conducts fall planning and spring review meetings with each staff member. Student data is discussed, intervention plans and options for advanced learners are developed, and personal, professional goals are set by each teacher. To provide support, the site administrator releases teachers and/or grade level teams from the classroom for a number of reasons. Teams meet to analyze student assessments and plan units based on student data. Other times, teachers are released to allow for observations and coaching to meet professional goals set by teachers. The time to collaborate is essential as it allows teachers to share exemplary lessons, discuss best practices and, ultimately, provide the best academic, creative, and social-emotional experience for students. The Lee site principal is committed to supporting and fostering this collaboration.

The School Site Council is a body comprised of certificated and classified staff members, parents and the site administrator who serves to create school goals and ensure communication is open with parents, staff, and community. Decision-making is met with a student-centered approach that takes feedback and input from all stakeholders, resulting in solutions which put student achievement and well-being first.

Lee believes in providing student voice in decisions affecting the school. A very active student leadership program, Lee Student Council, provides students in third, fourth and fifth grades with many leadership opportunities. Student Council teaches students leadership, civic involvement, public speaking skills, and social justice norms. Student Council facilitates food and clothing drives to support the under-served members of our community. Council members are delegates from upper grade classrooms and act as liaisons to lower grade classrooms in which they are assigned, ensuring all students have influence in school

decisions. Members encourage school pride by promoting spirit days, sharing videos of gratitude and inspiring others to do the same, and greeting students with a smile every day as they enter campus gates.

In order to keep Lee operating in an in-person environment during the Covid-19 pandemic, many steps are taken to ensure the safety of all staff and students. Advanced safety measures and procedures are followed, and it is the responsibility of the site leader to ensure staff has necessary equipment and all individuals on campus are following safety guidelines at all times. Adult and child masks are provided, new desks to accommodate six feet of distance between staff and students are supplied, cleaning materials are stocked, and individual student supply boxes are provided to limit sharing of materials. Staff has been instructed to notify the site administrator when running low on supplies to ensure materials are immediately replenished.

The site administrator also strictly limits interactions between stakeholders. A schedule has been created to ensure cohorts of classes do not mix. All staff meetings and daily announcements are executed via Zoom. Parents remain off campus this year so award recognitions, parent conferences, and all other necessary meetings are carried out via Zoom to allow for parent participation.

Overall, decision making is met with a student-centered approach that takes feedback and input from all stakeholders.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

The Los Alamitos Unified School District proudly adopted Teaching Tolerance's National Social Justice Standards, an anti-bias framework for education for K-12 instruction. The standards, organized into four key domains (identity, justice, diversity, action) are based on skills of action and student self-awareness. Culture, citizenship, and advocacy are woven throughout the standards. Lee students engage in anti-bias, multicultural and social justice education along the continuum of these standards. A strategic plan to implement these standards was created by the district's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee, including a teacher leader from Lee. The plan addresses each of the four domains sequentially and includes activities, discussions, and lessons to be implemented in all classrooms.

In addition to the new standards implemented districtwide, an inclusive classroom and school culture is critical to the success of the students at Lee. Honoring student experiences and offering opportunities to celebrate cultures provide occasions to educate, engage and empower the diverse community at Lee. Each year, grades K-3 have family heritage celebrations to showcase students' family cultures. Celebrations include the sharing of music, attire, food, and history. Students in upper grades self-select a famous person to research and report. Students "become" their famous person as they dress as and report on accomplishments, contributions, and history of their famous person. These examples of Culturally Responsive Teaching provide a view into the cultural heritage and experiences of others. These unique experiences allow students to gain an understand and appreciation for the lived realities of others.

On top of the culturally sensitive and anti-bias learning at Lee, students and staff participate in community events to enhance cultural awareness. Lee partners with the Global Cultural Foundation to celebrate the Lunar New Year at school. Black History Month includes daily lessons to recognize and honor the challenges and accomplishments of Black Americans. Women's History is shared through books, stories and videos to celebrate the roles women have played in the country. The larger goal of this learning is intended to develop perspective-taking and challenge stereotyping.

Lee School is represented on the district's Human Relations Advisory Council (HRAC) and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. These groups have been instrumental in developing lessons, purchasing culturally relevant materials, and training staff in unconscious

biases. Lee staff is devoted to supporting this work.

Educating, informing, and partnering with families is critical to implementing responsive teaching. The HRAC partnered with the Anti-Defamation League to invite parents to participate in an interactive parent education workshop, Leading Courageous Conversations, to explore identity, bias and prejudice in society. In partnership with Padres Unidos, parents participated in education nights to explore how to engage in restorative practices at home, focusing on strengthening family relationships. Virtual workshops such as Stay Calm and Parent Strong, discussing compassion and self-care, were offered during the school closure. These opportunities are avenues to open discussions about current events and movements in the community as well as around the country.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The staff at Lee has firmly committed to providing students rigorous and differentiated instruction in reading. This commitment is fulfilled by our devout use of the Reading Workshop model of instruction in partnership with the Reading Lab literacy intervention program. Learning to read develops with prescriptive instruction, teacher demonstration, supported practice, and on-going student assessment. For students to continue to move on the reading continuum, they must use skills and strategies with increased complexity.

In the workshop model, reading strategies are addressed, reinforced, and practiced in daily mini-lessons. Teachers model reading strategies through whole-group instruction using mentor texts and students apply the skills using self-selected books at their instructional reading level. After a strategy is modeled, students spend the remaining time applying, discussing, and analyzing text. While students are independently practicing literacy skills, teachers pull small strategy groups to closely monitor, assess, and assist students in targeted areas of need. Student thinking is shared, whole-class, in the middle of workshop and again at the end to engage students in provocative thinking, making readers more responsive, critical thinkers.

Students needing additional support receive a second dose of small-group instruction in the Reading Lab. Students are identified and closely monitored using data from phonics inventories, running records, and fluency and comprehension assessments. Lab teachers drive instruction around the specific needs of each student. Students participate in this four-day/week program, and after 7 weeks of instruction, students are reassessed to form new groups.

Reading Workshop has greatly impacted the culture of the school and has become sacred at Lee. The master schedule is developed to ensure students are provided large doses of uninterrupted time dedicated to reading instruction. To fully implement Reading Workshop, students need to have access to unlimited high-interest, leveled books. Lee strives to find ways to bring books to our students. Thanks to grant opportunities and parent donations, classroom libraries continue to grow to support the workshop model and students' appetites for reading.

School closure in March 2020 presented challenges in how teachers implement these programs. Because Reading Workshop and the Reading Lab have proven to have the most impact on developing reading proficiency, teachers were determined to find a way to continue using these practices. Teachers continued to use the workshop model by utilizing "break-out rooms" in the Zoom application. Teachers would deliver whole-group lessons before partnering students together in "break-out rooms." During "break-out" sessions, teachers kept small groups in his/her Zoom "room" in order to provide targeted, small-group instruction.

Reading Lab required training and restructuring in order to effectively deliver purposeful instruction via Zoom. Students in lab were most at-risk for learning loss, therefore, time was of the essence. Within a week's time, teachers learned how to share screens, use cell phones as document cameras, and packaged materials and resources for at-home use. Additionally, the team created groups with no more than 2-3 students in order to maximize student attention. Lab sessions were restructured from 45-minute to 30-minute sessions to allow for more groups to meet in the day.

When students returned for hybrid, in-person learning in the fall of 2020, Reading Lab reopened with a creative schedule. Due to varied cohort schedules, many groups continued to meet via Zoom. However, it continues to be the site's priority to deliver in-person instruction as much as possible. In-person groups were conducted before, after, and in-between cohort classes.

Lee's schoolwide use of Reading Workshop and the Reading Lab directly influence student achievement. As evident from our annual state assessment data, these instructional programs have directly contributed to students' academic successes. In conjunction with intense, meaningful professional development and teacher collaboration, teaching and learning is at its highest at Lee. Students are destined for college and career success.