

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 5816 Stephenson Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City El Paso State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 79905-1895

County El Paso County

Telephone (915) 236-8900 Fax (915) 775-2699

Web site/URL https://www.episd.org/hawkins E-mail axlowere@episd.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\* Mr. Vince Sheffield E-mail vasheffi@episd.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name El Paso Independent School District Tel. (915) 230-2000

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. Alfonso Velarde  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 50 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 16 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 17 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 83 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	13	10	23
K	17	19	36
1	21	31	52
2	27	24	51
3	24	23	47
4	22	25	47
5	39	20	59
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	163	152	315

\*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 97 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 1 % White
  - 0 % 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: 19%

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

Due to the close proximity to the Mexican border, many of our students move frequently between Juarez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas.

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	31
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	28
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	59
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	314
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.19
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	19

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 60 %

189 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 96 %

Total number students who qualify: 302

8. Students receiving special education services: 21 %

66 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>8</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>26</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>7</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: 9

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.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

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 16:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
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.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
 Yes  No

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

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

Hawkins will provide a safe, respectful, and productive environment to inspire and motivate all students to achieve their maximum potential and become successful citizens.

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.

Our school began virtual instruction for all of our students in March 2020. Starting in November, we brought a limited number of students who were experiencing hardships, attendance issues, or failing to our "Learning Pods." In January 2021, parents were given the option to return face-to-face or remain virtual which is the current model we are following.

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**

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Hawkins Elementary, "the little school that could," has proven that children learn no matter what obstacles stand in their way. The overall success at Hawkins is not about a program or an intervention. It is 100% due to the partnership built between students, teachers, staff, administration, families, and the community. It is simply investing in students' academic, social-emotional development, and self-worth. Although demographics and low socioeconomics are a challenge, every student is the school's priority. No matter their struggle, it will never be an excuse for them not learning and reaching their full potential.

Hawkins was built in 1942 and has remained a consistent "family school." Many of the students have relatives (mother, father, aunts, uncles, and grandparents) that once attended Hawkins. It is centrally located in El Paso, Texas, off I-10 east. The playground is adjacent to a public park funded through an inner-city local agreement. The park is open to the public after school and caters to the surrounding community. It is also connected to a senior and a recreation center. San Juan Recreation Center has been a haven for students, offering after-school care and club activities free of charge. San Juan Senior Center has become a vital support system for seniors and students. Hawkins has combined a partnership with San Juan Seniors and students to enhance learning and cultural activities. These activities include Halloween parades, Christmas concerts, "Reading Buddies," and "Adopt a Grandparent." Hawkins faculty and staff strive to involve the community with student events and become familiar with each family.

Hawkins is a school of diverse needs and challenges. All students qualify for free breakfast and lunch. The campus is currently providing weekend meals to families. Parents are allowed to pick up meals daily for children who have remained virtual. More than half of the students are second language learners, and all learning strategies and techniques are based on student needs. Every child is considered in planning lessons, data analysis, interventions, and placements. Teachers have monthly family training focusing on different content Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These skills are introduced to families in English and Spanish. This strategy improves teacher-parent communication, and families feel at ease when attending. When families are directly involved in knowing what their child is learning, it sets clear expectations between school and home. Various family activities are held throughout the year, such as "Art & Abuelos," "Dads and Donuts," and "Pan Dulce with the Principal," integrating family culture. As formative and summative assessments are administered, administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers look at data weekly and contact families to schedule face-to-face conferences pertaining to student achievement. Working together with families increases communication and results in students working to their full potential. Currently, all meetings are hosted virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Academic nights are a commonality within elementary schools. Academic nights at Hawkins include students, families, and the community. These events are designed around a "Make and Take" before the actual event. In preparation for the "I Heart Reading Fair" and science fair, the "Make and Takes" offer free materials, teacher assistance, and one-on-one guidance for students. Families are invited to work alongside their children while creating their projects. This practice bridges the learning between school and home. Not completing projects due to monetary reasons or understanding the topic is never an issue.

Hawkins begins every day with social emotional learning (SEL) lessons. The counselor pre-records 15-minute "Morning Meetings," which includes; acknowledging peers, mind growth videos, and reviewing the month's Core Value. This results in feeling loved and appreciated and allowing students to begin their day positively. The school promotes a bully-free environment by encouraging random acts of kindness. When a student is observed being kind by faculty or staff, they are rewarded with a "Ram Buck," which qualifies them to win prizes. At Hawkins, it is believed that physical health contributes to overall learning and success. Frequent "Brain Breaks" and "Mathersize" videos are practiced in the classroom daily. They allow students to get out of their seats, move around, and boosts learning. Community eye doctors and dentists offer vouchers for free eye exams, glasses, and dental kits.

All activities and practices directly impact the school's success, creating a stable and supportive environment that focuses on overall students' academic, emotional, physical, and social success. As a result, Hawkins has maintained the highest accountability rating given by the state. Hawkins received all six distinction

designations for the 2018-2019 school year. The school has also been awarded the Educational Result Partnership Honor Roll Award for the last four years.

Hawkins Elementary faculty and staff are honored to be a part of this prestigious nomination. By receiving this recognition, it validates the hard work, dedication, and love for the campus and surrounding community. It is no longer the "little school that could," it is the "little school that DID!"



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

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

Hawkins Elementary K-5 curriculum follows the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). When planning for reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, and fine arts, these contents are driven by specific objectives and vertically aligned to meet every standard. Three instructional coaches specialize in math, reading, and science. Coaches receive training from the district over the summer to prepare teachers as they return. This training provides the blueprint for planning. El Paso Independent School District's Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) department have content facilitators who assist instructional coaches throughout the school year to better implement TEKS and provide professional development for teachers. Hawkins is also a dual language campus focused on English and Spanish TEKS.

Teachers plan lessons using the English Reading and Language Arts (ELAR) and Spanish Reading and Language Arts (SLAR) standards. The district's reading adoption is followed closely and used for teaching grammar and reading. Campus-created reading strategies are modeled and implemented to address literary and informational texts. These strategies are made into anchor charts and displayed throughout the school to implement a common practice throughout grade levels. Several activities are planned throughout the year to highlight ELAR/SLAR TEKS; "Idiom of the Week," "Awesome Authors," and "Ram Book Club." A campus-created tracking system designed to improve comprehension and independent reading practice allow students to monitor their reading level based on assessments. The reading coach awards monthly classroom winners. The "I Heart Reading Fair" is designated for February 14th and encompasses all ELAR/SLAR TEKS and the love of reading. K-5th grade students participate and create projects representing standards that focus on literary elements and informational text features and structures. Due to libraries being closed because of the pandemic, Hawkins designed the "Rams Reading Rainbow" program to encourage students' reading practice throughout the summer. During virtual instruction, the reading tracking system has continued. The reading coach makes books accessible by creating independent reading level packets for curbside distribution.

Math instruction follows state-mandated TEKS. Math interactive notebooks, "Problem of the Day," graphic organizers, and "I Scream for Ice Cream Facts" provide engaging activities to cover all standards and objectives. At the end of the year, the school hosts "Nachos and Numbers Family Night," with activities that focus on different TEKS. All grade levels use the campus-created "RAMS" problem-solving strategy. This graphic organizer simplifies word problems by organizing information into a quadrant. Each classroom is equipped with manipulatives in a math cart for hands-on learning. The school provided students with TEKS-based manipulative bags for home use during the transition to virtual instruction. Faculty and staff made home deliveries to accommodate parents unable to pick up curbside at Hawkins.

Science instruction follows the TEKS and meets content objectives. The science coach creates lessons for all grade levels and conducts labs for third through fifth grade classrooms. Hands-on learning and problem-solving are essential in mastering science TEKS. Experiments, graphing, observing, and presenting are significant for all students. The "Hawkins Science Fair" is an annual event. Students research and evaluate data and involve parents for a "Science Make and Take." Due to the pandemic, this year, the school hosted a "Hawkins Virtual Science Fair" with the help of community members as judges. Science lesson plans integrated virtual field trips. Students were able to visit and experience different places in a virtual setting. All science labs have continued during virtual learning.

The social studies curriculum is planned and integrated with ELAR/SLAR TEKS. Teachers merge social studies and reading lesson plans and standards no matter the objective. Different cultures and celebrations are integrated within social studies instruction. A favorite activity celebrated yearly is the "Living Wax Museum." Students research a biographical figure and present it to other classes and families. This year students will present the museum virtually due to the pandemic.

Tracking data and analyzing student areas of need is a top priority. Teachers consistently adjust and differentiate weekly instruction depending upon formative and summative assessments. Teachers create plans to accommodate students' diverse needs and address above or below grade level interventions.

Formative assessments are ongoing to ensure students are mastering grade-level state standards. Before students arrive in August, teachers analyze the previous year's data. They are prepared to plan, differentiate, and strategize beginning lessons and activities. Every student is tiered based on end-of-year results that are color-coded and organized in the data room. This data is accessible to all teachers, and students are assigned to different levels depending on their individual areas of need and continuous progress monitoring. Hawkins implements district-purchased programs, screeners, and campus-created assessments to ensure success with differentiated and tiered instruction. Summative assessments are either campus-based or district-directed. The district's C&I department creates end-of-unit assessments per content, semester benchmarks, and end-of-year grade-level assessments. During weekly professional learning communities (PLCs), instructional coaches, administrators, and teachers disaggregate student data and collaborate to provide best practices and strategies to ensure student success.

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

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

The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines are the pre-K teachers' standards for planning. They are aligned with the Kindergarten Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to prepare pre-K students to enter kindergarten with the foundational skills needed. These foundational skills provide a pathway for students to have better success in kindergarten. The guideline contents include the following core subjects; social and emotional development, emergent reading, emergent writing, math, science, social studies, fine arts, and technology.

The guidelines are vertically aligned to connect with early childhood TEKS. Through play and exploration, pre-K students can achieve maximum learning and growth. Students must be exposed to all contents by exploring with manipulatives, role play, peer collaboration, and instructional small group. By attending pre-K, students are better adapted to school and daily routines. Teachers are also alerted to early detection of student needs such as speech, language development, and problem-solving. Summative assessments are administered three times a year, as per district. Formative assessments are ongoing throughout the year. This data drives instruction and guides teachers and paraprofessionals to implement best practices in areas of need.

During the pandemic, pre-K teachers have met the challenges of teaching their students virtually. From March 2020 to December 2020, all learning in the district was virtual. Virtual learning was challenging for pre-K students because routines were disrupted, and learning new technology was difficult for some families. In January 2021, 20% of pre-K students could return in person. Teachers adjusted to teaching online along with face-to-face students. A positive from this pandemic has been the outpouring of help from parents. They have taken the role of "teacher" by helping keep their little ones online, logging into classes, and making sure they complete assignments. The connection teachers and families have developed during this trying time has been nothing short of a successful transition.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Hawkins offers other curriculum programs that allow students to learn new skills and prepare them for 21st-century learning success. All extracurricular programs follow the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum, and the district created vertical alignment. District curriculum includes year-at-a glance that serves as a pacing guide, resources, activities, and end-of-year mastery skills.

All kindergarten through fifth grade students receive digital citizenship lessons that address cyberbullying, online safety, media literacy, and privacy guidelines. Following the TEKS, students learn how to research information and evaluate digital content for reading and science lessons. Students attend computer lab for 45-minutes a week and practice keyboarding skills to assist with new writing standards. Classrooms are equipped with smartboards, document cameras, and projectors. As a result of virtual learning, the district allotted each student in pre-K-second grade iPads and third-fifth grade MacBooks. Students complete online

assignments using their devices and access various district instructional programs.

Hawkins provides music to all pre-K-fifth grade students. Each classroom attends once a week for 45 minutes. Implementing fine arts TEKS leads to many benefits; increased academic achievement, higher-order thinking, improved communication, and collaboration skills while promoting creativity. The music teacher conducts lessons where students can recognize instruments, understand rhythm and beat, and learn essential note reading. Since most of the student population consists of English Language Learners (ELL), music plays a vital part in language acquisition. It provides an opportunity for students to practice words, sounds, and phonics. Fifth-grade students can join the orchestra program for daily 45-minute lessons. Students can play various instruments such as violin, bass, viola and learn to read music. During the pandemic, the music program has continued by teaching in a virtual setting.

Hawkins Physical Education department is an integral part of students' education and development. By following the TEKS, they provide social development through physical activity, promote a physically active lifestyle, and teach the relationship between physical activity and health. Pre-K, Community Readiness Classrooms (CRC), and kindergarten through fifth grade students attend daily classes for 45-minutes. Students participate in "Marathon Kids," where they have a goal to run four marathons throughout the school year. Third through fifth-grade students participate in the State's Physical Fitness Assessment Initiative Fitnessgram. Students perform different physical activities such as sit-ups, push-ups, and stretches. They are measured at the beginning and end of the year to document student progress. Hawkins provides students with a rollerblading program paid for by the campus. This program teaches students how to skate and use equipment that might not be available for low socioeconomic populations. Hawkins invites family members to run or walk during "Wellness Wednesday" to promote a healthy lifestyle. During virtual instruction, coaches have offered extra activities to promote wellness. Activities include; making healthy snacks, theme-based four corners workout videos, and High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) full-body workouts.

Library lessons are offered every two weeks to all students. The librarian exposes students to different genres, books, and stories. During virtual instruction, the school has provided weekly curbside book pickup. Students can check out books virtually from an online catalog. This added support strengthens reading programs.

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

Hawkins serves various learners with distinct learning needs. Hawkins has excelled in meeting the academic needs of each student by identifying and tailoring instruction as a collaborative team.

The Special Education Department (SPED) consists of a teacher and a paraprofessional. Between Inclusion and Resource, they ensure that SPED students are challenged and follow Individual Education Plans (IEPs) daily. They are in constant contact with families and collaborate with administrators and instructional coaches to better plan and serve these students during weekly PLCs. SPED teachers also cater to their students after school for extra instruction and smaller groups. A Dyslexia/Related Disorders (DRD) teacher meets with struggling readers four days a week. The reading specialist individualizes reading plans per student and builds their basic reading skills to their independent level.

To close the over 10% gap, the SPED teacher plans weekly with the science instructional coach to target the SPED subgroup in science based on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test. Students receive science tutoring after school, Saturdays, and additional science lab time.

As a result of recent school closures, the campus welcomed the Community Readiness Classroom Unit (CRC) in the fall of 2020. CRC is a specialized program that consists of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A teacher and two paraprofessionals lead three separate

classrooms. CRC teachers join in weekly PLCs, and their students are an integral part of the campus activities and celebrations. Hawkins was recommended by the district and selected by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to implement practices that will increase the support and capacity of students in the CRC program. Data gathered after the conclusion of this pilot will be used at a broader scale throughout the state by the Texas Complex Access Network (TX CAN).

Hawkins is 97% Hispanic, and most of the students are English Language Learners (ELL). Hawkins also follows the dual language District Program. There are two dual language teachers per grade level. ELL students have support in their first language and learn a second language. Hawkins offers Saturday School throughout the year, which targets all intervention groups. Saturday sessions allow teachers to target specific objectives and provide more individualized instruction. To ensure all objectives are mastered towards the end of the year, teachers and instructional coaches differentiate students into different groups to strengthen low mastery objectives. The counselor addresses any emotional or social problems that may hinder achieving academic success through individual or small group sessions.

Gifted and Talented (GT) students are serviced through the district's Schoolwide Enrichment Program. Alongside GT students, teachers challenge high-performing learners in all content areas. Hawkins has a Novel Club, and a Robotics Club offered after school. The Ram Reporter Newsletter provides an opportunity to enhance writing skills and showcase various creative abilities.

During the transition to remote learning, all programs and best practices continued with added support. All teachers established a weekly distribution to provide instructional materials for students. The school also purchased additional technology to support online interventions.

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

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

Hawkins works rigorously in providing meaningful and engaging activities to maintain student interest and engagement. Student engagement is essential for academic, social-emotional growth and school success.

School attendance is an important part of academic growth. Teachers reward perfect attendance weekly with incentives in their classrooms. As a campus, there is a monthly perfect attendance celebration that students look forward to with great excitement. Some of the activities are: dances with live music, playing sports with high school sports teams, water activities in the park, and face painting. Monthly celebrations have continued during online learning by providing students with virtual dance parties, sing-alongs, chat-it-up activities, and online games. These activities motivate students to attend school daily and engage in academics. Hawkins has met and maintained 97% of its attendance for the last consecutive years contributing to student success.

The "Rams with Character" program sets high expectations for students and creates a culture of respect for all. Classroom teachers nominate a student that reflects the month's character trait throughout the school day. Students must exhibit the character trait during physical education (P.E.), library, science lab, music, and cafeteria. Nominated students and their families are invited to enjoy a special lunch on the decorated cafeteria stage. Students receive a certificate, dessert treat and have their picture taken with the "Rams with Character" Board. All faculty and staff utilize positive behavior strategies as a proactive approach to address discipline. These practices create a positive environment that results in the decline of behavior issues and referrals. During the pandemic, the school has continued to celebrate "Rams with Character" with recognition during virtual morning announcements by the counselor and curbside distribution of prizes.

Hawkins offers various clubs that allow students to develop emotional and social traits and meaningful relationships with others. To be part of these clubs, students must demonstrate good behavior and attendance. The counselor's "Friday Lunch Bunch" promotes social emotional learning (SEL) strategies and provides a friendly and safe setting for all students to discuss common issues while enjoying lunch. The Daily "Ram Book Club" brings students into the library and promotes critical thinking. "Ram Reporters" offers an opportunity for students to develop collaboration and problem-solving skills by creating the monthly newspaper. All activities from clubs have continued during virtual learning. Students are motivated to participate by receiving certificates or rewards from faculty and staff to connect with classmates and teachers regardless of whether they attend school virtually or face-to-face.

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

Family and community engagement is the foundation of Hawkins success. Involving families in the learning process and strong community support have contributed to the school's academic achievements. Teachers conduct monthly parent meetings in English and Spanish, rotating core content areas. Parents are taught strategies to implement and monitor at home for increased student achievement. Parent lessons have resulted in increased student success contributing to school improvement. During the pandemic, teachers have continued providing parent lessons via online platforms.

Providing for families is essential for students to come equipped and ready to learn. Marathon Petroleum has been Hawkins' strongest partnership for over 10 years. The refinery contributes financially to the school, which assists in providing various resources. In return, the school is an active member of their Community Advisory Panel, which meets monthly with other community and business members to discuss the needs and areas of improvement. These monthly meetings have continued virtually during the pandemic and included a vaccine reach-out program for the community. Every year, the refinery hosts a community health fair targeted for the community in which the administration volunteers. Other contributing partners in education include; Chick-fil-A, Peter Piper Pizza, Walmart, Walgreens, and Texas Tech Health Science Center.

By offering a variety of events designed for different family members allows opportunities for everyone to

become involved. Events such as "Dads and Donuts," "Menudo and Moms," "Pan Dulce with the Principal," a monthly community food bank, and the school-sponsored Health Fair attract families throughout the year. Organizations such as the A & A All the Way Foundation provide shirts and shoes for students participating in the Special Olympics. The organization also donates bicycles and turkeys during the holidays. The San Juan Senior Center has become a mutually supportive part of the community. The fifth-grade orchestra students perform for them throughout the year and participate in reading activities with "Adopt A Grandparent," who frequent the school. The community center hosts a Halloween parade for students.

During the transition due to COVID-19, Hawkins has provided support for families to adjust during this challenging time. These supports include social-emotional resources, childcare information, home utilities, and grocery assistance. As learning platforms became dependent upon technology, the need to assist parents became a priority and a challenge. Teachers, counselor, and parent liaison provide training on the different programs and applications used. The campus created its own instructional technology team, "Ram Its," which assists with technology issues.

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

Hawkins has proven that a defined culture and strong morale amongst faculty and staff have led to continued success. Every year the campus selects a theme and uses it as a focal point to center academic, professional development, and extra-curricular activities. Monthly celebrations and special activities such as "Teacher Egg Hunt," "Skate STAAR Stress Away," and "Flip Flop Friday" are crafted to support the emotional wellbeing of the entire school staff.

Professional development provided throughout the year centers around professional learning community (PLC). The model consists of weekly 90-minute grade level PLCs led by administrators, reading, math, and science instructional coaches. The principal uses this weekly PLC to communicate district updates and campus needs. This model alleviates before or after school faculty meetings, allows the opportunity to differentiate according to grade-level needs, and provides a setting for all attendees to participate. The assistant principal utilizes this time to facilitate state-mandated training as needed. All grade levels plan and collaborate with the assistance of instructional coaches focusing on student needs and areas of concern. After December, a shift to "Teacher-Led PLC's" consists of grade levels submitting requested topics to the instructional team as the focus of their PLC. Teachers also participate by presenting best practices with their colleagues. An extension of the PLC's system is the support provided to teachers after collaboration has ensued. Instructional coaches are readily available to model for teachers, provide specific material requested, and assist with small group instruction and interventions. These practices ensure that teachers receive support with ongoing professional development aimed to increase staff capacity.

Grade level chairpersons who represent every group on campus meet monthly with the leadership team to discuss concerns or bring forth ideas to address campus improvement. Teachers are also instrumental in the decision-making process regarding appropriate student placement. Teachers and the leadership team complete a campus-created student profile at the end of the year and upon the arrival of any new student. This profile is analyzed as a team to place students for the upcoming school year to ensure student success.

As the campus transitioned to virtual learning, the "RAM ITs" became an added support for teachers and not just parents. The overwhelming amount of technology issues created an extensive backlog for the district Instructional Technology (IT) department. The team is available to assist teachers and students with immediate attention to experience the least disruption. All support practices have continued virtually.

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

Hawkins administration team consists of the principal, assistant principal, and counselor. Administrators' philosophy is based around the obligation to provide a safe and challenging environment that creates opportunities for students to achieve high expectations. The role of the administration team is to work alongside teachers to set goals, monitor student performance, and provide continuous communication with families. As a team, they engage in extensive monitoring of student progress and policies. The administration team prioritizes being present in all training, staff development, and professional learning

communities (PLCs). They also make the necessary adjustments to ensure all monies, resources, and programs are centered towards student success.

Hawkins' collaborative approach includes the leadership team and administration that work together to ensure that the campus goals are carried out successfully. The leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principal, counselor, instructional coaches, special education teacher, dyslexia teacher, librarian, and secretary to the principal. The team's focus is to monitor and track student data throughout the year. The team meets weekly to plan PLCs, assist with events, and are first to fill essential duties in any capacity to ensure no instructional time is lost. The leadership team is also an essential part of data conferences held with parents and classroom teachers. All stakeholders are present to plan and collaborate with parents to develop an intervention plan of action for students in need of additional assistance and ready to be challenged at a higher level to surpass grade-level expectations. Parents are familiar with all the leadership team and may reach out at any time for additional assistance. This collaboration has been an essential part of the school's success as the entire staff is familiar and fully invested in every child.

During the COVID-19 transition to virtual learning and the gradual return of face-to-face students, everyone quickly adapted to a "no job description" approach. The leadership team and grade-level chairs quickly initiated or volunteered for several committees necessary to fulfill daily operations. "Pod Monitors," which consisted of hourly employees and leadership team members, became essential personnel needed to keep the first group of returning students safe. Their performance provided the foundation of the current operations as the remainder of the staff and students came back to campus. Students have continued to receive the same quality education thanks to consistent, collaborative teams in place.

## **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Hawkins Elementary is a campus with a limited diverse population. Student demographics consist of; 1% White, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% African American, and 97% Latino. Faculty and staff demographics are 97% Latino and 3% White. Being a border town school located two miles away from Mexico, one of the primary needs students face is English language acquisition. One goal at Hawkins is to celebrate culture, respect students' and staff heritage, and make it an integral part of the campus experience.

Hawkins highlights different celebrations and cultural events that showcase diversity throughout the school year and expose students and staff globally to understand equity between races. Some of the activities celebrated are; 16 de Septiembre, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, Posadas, Chinese New Year, and Dragon Boat Festival. During Día de Los Muertos celebration, all students and staff participate by making altars. The school's hallways are filled with decorations, flowers, and colorful student work. Students and staff bring pictures of their loved ones, personal items, and favorite foods to the altars. The school invites families to admire the altars and continue a tradition of uniting family and friends as one community.

The Ram Reporter includes a cultural section in the monthly school newspaper. They report on different customs and celebrations around the world. Faculty and staff are welcomed to share recipes, traditions, and stories as well. Teachers discuss and create lessons based on the articles to deepen respect and broaden appreciation for other cultures. The literacy lab and library consist of various leveled Spanish Language books available for dual language classes and newly enrolled students from Mexico.

Classroom lessons such as Black History Month assist in addressing current events and social movements. Some students and their families are affected by present immigration laws and procedures. The counselor provides social-emotional support, and teachers and administration ensure students' education is minimally interrupted. The school's parent liaison offers English classes to parents that want to learn the language. The school counselor also facilitates guidance

and help for newly immigrated families.

For classroom celebrations, students and teachers are encouraged to bring home-cooked meals that are often served in their homes instead of the traditional pizza, chips, and sodas. Both families, students, and teachers are excited to share a part of their traditions, which results in classrooms filled with Mexican, Filipino, and Korean dishes. It provides an opportunity for all families to participate equally.



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

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Academic success at Hawkins Elementary revolves around professional learning communities (PLCs). Weekly 90-minute PLCs provide the foundation of the action plan that encompasses planning, collaboration, data analysis, and family engagement. The continued implementation of this practice guides teaching strategies throughout the year.

Collaboration between teachers is a necessary ongoing process essential for student success. With lack of time as one of the biggest challenges that teachers face, it is vital for Hawkins to offer a time and place for collaboration to occur. Facilitated PLCs offer a space where teachers, coaches, and administrators can share ideas, information, and resources. Campus faculty create a solid professional relationship that allows critique and feedback while promoting accountability. The PLC model allows for cross-grade levels to meet simultaneously, which highlights the importance of vertically aligned planning. Teacher collaboration during PLCs is essential to develop lesson plans with creative and innovative approaches that work towards campus goals.

When planning with teachers during PLCs, instructional coaches collaborate with them and differentiate every PLC to meet individual grade level needs. This collaboration allows teachers to work one-on-one with coaches as a team. Each content coach prepares PLCs by analyzing data before the meeting. They specialize the training, activities, and discussions based on low TEKS using student formative and summative assessment data. Materials and resources are collected and presented to that grade level for targeted standards and practices. Through planning, coaches offer teacher support by scheduling dates to model classroom lessons and strategies for teachers to observe and integrate into their planning.

After every district assessment, teachers collaborate during a “Data Disaggregation” PLC. Half-day substitutes are provided for teachers to meet with their grade level, instructional coaches, and administrators. During this time, the team analyzes results and categorizes objectives by performance. The instructional coaches lead the grade levels into a discussion regarding reteaching strategies and provide any additional resources needed for interventions. The principal reviews every student and collaborates with the teachers and coaches to set up “Data Conferences.” Conferences include; administrators, teachers, coaches, and any other intervention teacher that directly instructs the student. Conferences occur before school, during teacher preparation time, and after school. Stakeholders make every effort to accommodate parent schedules and plan for the team to be available throughout the day when necessary. By collecting feedback from teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, parents, and the student, the team creates a solid individualized intervention plan.