

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address PSC 477 Box 38  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City FPO Japan State DD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 96306-0005

County \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (011) 814-6763 X3664 Fax (046) 763-4476

Web site/URL https://www.dodea.edu/LanhamES/about.cfm E-mail LHES.Principal@dodea.edu

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Jacqueline Ferguson E-mail jacqueline.ferguson@DODEA.EDU  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Japan Superintendent Office Tel. (315) 225-3940

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board President/Chairperson N/A N/A  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

**The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.**

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 5 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 20 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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	10	7	17
K	29	16	45
1	27	17	44
2	23	22	45
3	20	24	44
4	19	20	39
5	16	16	32
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>	144	122	266

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 17 % Asian
  - 7 % Black or African American
  - 20 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 27 % White
  - 28 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 68%

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

Our school serves military-connected students. The sponsors are usually assigned to tour lengths of three years or less. Additionally, permanent change of station moves were suspended for the summer of 2020 due to COVID-19. This caused a higher-than-normal turnover during the 2020-2021 school year.

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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	78
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	106
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	184
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	271
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.68
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	68

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

Spanish, Filipino, Tagalog, Visayan, Burmese, Japanese, French, Chinese, Amharic, German, Italian, Portuguese, Thai, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 28 %  
74 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 38 %

Total number students who qualify: 100

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 38 %  
100 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 with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. 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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	13
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	97%	95%	95%	95%	94%
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 2021.

<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.

Our school aligns with DoDEA's mission and vision statements, but we have our own purpose statement. DoDEA's Mission statement is "Educate, Engage, and Empower military-connected students to succeed in a dynamic world." DoDEA's vision statement is "Excellence in Education for Every Student, Every Day, Everywhere." Our school's purpose is "We prepare, inspire, and empower military-connected students to succeed in the 21st century."

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school's nondiscrimination policy.

[https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/PolicyAndLegislation/upload/2500\\_14.pdf](https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/PolicyAndLegislation/upload/2500_14.pdf)

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

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Shirley Lanham Elementary School (SLES) is the home of the Crusaders! More than a school, we are a true family where staff, students, families, and community members come together in the best interest of our students. Embedded within our school's culture, teamwork and collaboration drive our efforts to prepare, inspire, and empower our students to become successful in the 21st century.

Located in the Kanto Plain of Japan and surrounded by Ayase and Yamato Cities, Shirley Lanham Elementary is located on Naval Air Facility Atsugi (NAF Atsugi), 25 miles southwest of Tokyo.

Our student population is unique. Our students accompany their military families to serve our country overseas. On average, students relocate every three years to a new location, each saying "good-bye" or "see you later" as they move on to a new adventure. Because of this, we aim to create a "home away from home," a family-friendly school for both students and their parents. The atmosphere we create allows students to feel loved, safe, and accepted, yet fully engaged in a challenging curriculum that will prepare them to be college and career ready.

We strive to incorporate routines into daily school life to help our students feel at ease. Each morning during announcements, students take the lead by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, sharing the Anchored for Life inspirational quote, relaying daily messages, and singing our school song. As a community of learners with a shared goal, our teachers and staff provide our students with daily opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills through peer guidance and involvement in school-wide programs. Empowering students means providing them with real-life opportunities to become leaders through our school's Student Council, Continuous School Improvement Jr. (CSI Jr) Team, and Ambassador Program to our sister Japanese schools. Through these experiences, Shirley Lanham students are inspired and empowered to develop and apply collaboration, negotiation, empathy, and leadership skills.

Our diverse population reflects the military community we serve. At present, our school is comprised of 279 students ranging in grades Pre-K to 5th grade - all students are military-connected, whether their sponsors are enlisted personnel, civilian employees, or contractors. As diverse as the community we serve, our staff includes dedicated educators from multiple backgrounds including six military veterans and ten spouses of active-duty military members. This helps us connect with our students and have a deeper understanding of their social-emotional needs. Diversity within our school population equates to having diverse needs. To meet these needs, we provide a variety of support programs, including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Special Education, Counseling, Math and Reading support, and Advance Academic Programs and Services (AAPS).

Our school offers several robust programs and services after school that provide additional learning opportunities for our students. After-school club offerings include Handwriting, Problem Solving, Soroban, ESOL Homework, Wadaiko (Japanese Drumming), Spanish, Homework, Gardening, Running, and Chess. Through these clubs, students have opportunities to improve academic skills and develop interpersonal skills outside of the classroom setting.

While many of our students live on the installation, several others live off-base in the local community. This proximity to our students allows our teachers and staff to meet and interact with parents and stakeholders regularly.

As a result of our community-school solid partnership, we have developed strategies to implement effective brick-and-mortar instructional times. This made a major impact during the height of the pandemic, as we were able to remain open while other schools were required to close their doors and offer online remote learning.

Our school nurse also plays an integral part in maintaining close community ties. She keeps in close contact with our base's medical providers to ensure that special attention is given to the health needs of our students. We know that a healthy student is a student ready to learn. Our nurse is always available to assess students'



physical and emotional well-being. The nurse also provides valuable health and nutrition education to students, parents, and staff. She is extremely proactive and always willing to collaborate with teachers and goes into the classrooms to educate students about leading healthy lives. "Staying Healthy" lessons cover topics such as germs, measures to improve the immune system and prevent illness, dental health, heart health, and growth and development.

While there are many features of our school that contribute to its success, the most important of these are our students who are at the heart of all we do.

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

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

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

In recent years, Lanham has shown consistent growth in ELA and Math instruction due to the shift in our focus to using data analysis as a tool to drive instruction practices and increase student achievement. According to data generated from the DoDEA Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), the Summative Assessments administered from 2018 to 2021 show the percentage of students in 3-5th grade who met and/or exceeded grade-level standards made significant growth of more than 10 percent each consecutive year for Mathematics and above the district average in ELA.

The dynamic growth in student achievement can be attributed to the instructional growth mindset that has been made over the past few years in the utilization of the core curricula, instructional approaches, assessments, and data analysis.

We have established a standard-based process of allowing the data and standards to drive instruction. Grade level teams have an embedded practice of unpacking standards to determine targeted learning goals in response to student needs. Collaboration with small groups specialist in Reading, Math, ESOL, and Gifted contribute skills, resources, and strategies to meet the need of the diverse learner in the classroom.

Our implementation of College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) included quarterly professional development focused on Common Student Behaviors of each content area. We aim to educate our students with a deep understanding of core curricular concepts. We inspire students to actively participate in high cognitive demand tasks and empower them to apply their knowledge as 21st Century citizens of the world.

In addition to implementing our district’s adopted curriculums (Go Math, Benchmark Advance, Full-Option Science System [FOSS], and Teacher’s Curriculum Institute [TCI]), we apply the research-based framework for instruction. The instructional framework emphasizes instruction that supports the objectives and stimulation of prior knowledge of the learning target. Much of the instructional time comprises direct explicit instruction and differentiated workstations, followed by a formative assessment to measure the areas of mastery according to the learning target. Within this framework, engaging through student-led discourse, application of technology, and project-based learning is embedded to enhance cooperative learning and student engagement.

Analysis of data is key to targeted student achievement. Focused Collaboration is a dedicated teacher-led time used to analyze data to identify students who may need targeted instruction of skills and determine the most effective ways to provide it. The process of focused collaboration is inspired by Dufour’s 4 critical questions: What do we want all students to know and be able to do? How will we know if they learn it? How will we respond when some students do not learn? How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient? The data analyzed and strategies generated are catalysts for our continuous improvement in the areas of teaching and learning.

#### **1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Developing a vision for literacy means acknowledging that teaching the fundamentals of reading is of equal importance to the acquisition of the skills needed to analyze and evaluate text. We prepare our students by providing rigorous literacy-based instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. We provide students with a wide range of complex texts and scaffold their efforts to read, analyze, and discuss, paying particular attention to the unique demands of communication within the content areas.

Engagement with technology-supported instructional resources and practices allows students to experience online learning that is up to par with traditional print and media formats.

We empower our students by implementing a research-based English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, Benchmark Advance, that allows students to explore literary works and informational text. The curriculum also allows teachers to focus on targeted instruction aligned to the DoDEA College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).

The Benchmark Advance curriculum adheres to the Balanced Literacy Framework, providing students with a variety of grade-level texts designed to be read independently or during whole and small group instruction. Through the Balanced Literacy framework, the teacher provides instruction through the gradual release process by tapering the role of teacher-led instruction and increases the role of student action. This shift in responsibility of the cognitive load is masterfully implemented by employing various grouping structures within the ELA instructional block.

Teachers collaborate with small group specialists and support staff to design and deliver rigorous core instruction that emphasizes differentiated text-dependent questions, analysis of text evidence, and application. The intentional pacing of ELA standards is to spiral through the school year while gauging text complexity. Students are empowered to apply their thinking skills while working collaboratively to interpret and analyze texts through close reading and guided reading text.

Throughout the year, we use unit assessment deconstructed by standard to infuse vertical articulation discussion of standards-based instruction in focused collaboration and lesson planning sessions. School-level job-embedded professional development is also determined by this data to create strategic professional learning for literacy instruction.

Opportunities for reinforcing and extending student knowledge occur during skills-based, small-group mini-lessons or during tasks assigned as independent workstations. We also use digital tools such as Kiddle, Pebble Go, Seesaw, Google Suite, and Wixie to enhance student understanding of academic standards.

Our school created the "Let's Write Masterpieces" strategy to provide students with a tool to improve cross-content area writing. The strategy is based on the acronym –WRITE. “What or who is it about? Reasons and details. Information from the text or speaker. Transition words. End it well!” Teachers implement this strategy to support students as they develop grade-level writing skills. Student-friendly rubrics for primary and intermediate grades were developed to measure the success of the WRITE strategy

For the 2021-22 school year, the "Reading Buddies" initiative was incorporated into daily Literacy Instruction. The purpose of “Reading Buddies” is to provide tier II instructional support to increase student reading achievement. Support staff members dedicate their time to an assigned classroom in which they devote 45 minutes a day to work with small groups of students with target skills for explicit instruction as co-planned with the grade level teacher.

As students begin to build literacy skills, they also learn to apply these skills across all content areas which are essential to the acquisition, construction, and retention of knowledge. This embodies the true meaning of preparing, inspiring, and empowering our students to be college and career ready.

### **1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

The DoDEA-adopted mathematics curriculum, Go Math, offers a comprehensive program of learning opportunities for students that complements and supports their varied learning styles and challenges them to think mathematically. DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards in Mathematics (CCRSM) are the foundation upon which our students build skills in mathematics in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade.

Our instruction aligns with the CCRSM mathematical practices to include real-world problems and rigorous thinking. Students use meaningful mathematical discourse to justify their thinking and are engaged in using domain-specific vocabulary. Across grade levels, students explain their thinking, use manipulatives, or build models to solve problems and justify their answers.

We foster a classroom culture of collaboration where students work together in small groups to demonstrate knowledge of a skill or standard by working on Project-Based Learning (PBL) assignments. Through the implementation of PBL, we have deepened the students' understanding of mathematical concepts through real-world tasks. To ensure consistency, several teachers have taken the opportunity to attend additional PBL training to deepen their understanding of this dynamic approach.

The practice of administering pre-assessments provides teachers with data that is used to strategically plan Guided Math groups and differentiated math workstations. During weekly Focused Collaboration, teachers review assessment data via our schoolwide data tracker. Teachers use the information to identify data trends, develop aligned lesson plans, and determine the next action steps for the implementation of each mathematics standard. During Focused Collaboration, horizontal and vertical collaboration occurs to include classroom teachers, specialists, and paraprofessionals who play an integral role in the success of our students.

After each unit, students are given a Curriculum Embedded Performance Assessment (CEPA) to demonstrate their mathematical understanding and procedural skills. This assessment, in addition to the unit test, helps teachers determine their depth of understanding and mastery of each standard.

For students struggling with mathematical skills and concepts, collaborative support is provided by the Math Support Specialist (MSS). The MSS provides students with additional opportunities to improve their understanding of mathematical skills and grade-level standards expectations by providing tiered support of explicit instruction. As data indicates the instructional needs of developing students, the Understanding by Design process prioritizes learning standards, developing assessments, and instruction around grounded learning outcomes.

For students ready for enrichment tasks, the Advanced Academic Programs and Services (AAPS) resource teacher empowers students with higher mathematical concepts through challenging curriculum and activities. Furthermore, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, the AAPS resource teacher delivers additional whole-class enrichment tasks to contribute to our students' mathematical reasoning and strategic thinking.

Based on the analysis of summative data, we realized that student explanations of mathematical reasoning needed improvement across grade levels. To increase achievement in this area and to elevate higher-order thinking skills, we incorporate "Three Act Tasks" and "Numberless Word Problems" into daily math instruction. As a school, we also teach the CUBES strategy to provide students with actionable steps to use when solving word problems. We know that having common strategies that are used in every classroom gives students a better sense of readiness from year to year.

#### **1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

Encouraging scientific investigation and learning through discovery are priorities we have set for our students, and we achieve this through the implementation of the DoDEA-adopted Full-Option Science System (FOSS) curriculum. We want our students to gain a wide range of scientific knowledge through real-world learning opportunities in the areas of Earth, Physical, and Life sciences with an emphasis on technology and engineering.

We want to inspire our students to be inquisitive, and with FOSS investigations as the catalysts, we can foster a higher-order, strategic thinking mindset. Students are empowered to take control of their learning as they make observations, analyze data, form hypotheses, and draw conclusions. When working through active investigations, students document their observations in science notebooks just the way "real" scientists do by taking notes, drawing pictures and diagrams, and recording any steps taken. In addition to active investigations, students have opportunities to learn through digital media such as simulations, videos, and games.

To promote 21st-century teaching and learning, we created Environmental Neighborhood Spaces (ENS) across the campus with the goal in mind of incorporating a 21st-century design into our traditional school

layout. Our school's Environmental Neighborhood Spaces allow teachers to facilitate the 4Cs of 21st-century learning - Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity - with every scientific investigation. These shared classroom spaces were transformed into dedicated 4C spaces with the purpose of promoting student collaboration and learning. When students enter these spaces, they know that hands-on, collaborative learning will take place and they will be the driving force behind their learning with the teacher as their facilitator.

Teachers use several strategies and techniques to assess student comprehension. We conduct interviews with students to challenge their findings during active investigations. We review students' notebook entries to check for understanding and evaluate these entries using rubrics to check for content complexity and accuracy. We nurture student-led, sense-making discussions, encouraging students to create thesis statements and support their findings with evidence from their investigations.

#### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

To support our teaching of the DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards, our school implements a social studies curriculum created by the Teacher Curriculum Institute (TCI). This inquiry-based curriculum is designed to support the learning styles of all students by presenting a variety of instructional methods and strategies. Whether students learn best through auditory, visual, linguistic, or kinesthetic modes, teachers can utilize the strategies embedded in the social studies curriculum to support the learning of every student. This is the foundation on which we prepare our students to become model citizens in a culturally diverse world and inspire our students to be active participants in our democratic society. This knowledge empowers our students to be college and career ready, no matter which path they may choose.

In addition to teaching to the strengths of our learners, teachers use different strategies to assess student comprehension. Students are presented with criteria of the learning goal and then are allowed to choose which method they prefer to show understanding. Students may create posters, Google Slides presentations, reports, video podcasts, and skits. Allowing students to choose their presentation styles helps them to take ownership of their learning and allows them to work with tools familiar to them. We have seen our students strive to go above and beyond to create dynamic projects with freedom of choice being what motivates them.

Our teachers also pride themselves on using technology to support social studies learning. There are several activities that allow for gamification of learning and assessing learning. Additionally, teachers incorporate other interactive websites, Google Earth for example, that allow our students to extend their learning through exploration and experience.

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

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

The Sure Start pre-kindergarten (PreK) program serves eligible military children and families living overseas. The Sure Start program has four components - health and nutrition, education, social services, and parent involvement - to ensure that we meet our students' social-emotional and academic needs. Our program requires families to actively participate in the classroom through collaboration and volunteering.

Our Sure Start program uses the Creative Curriculum for instruction. This curriculum provides a framework for learning in the areas of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. The standards aim to develop foundational skills that prepare students for kindergarten through a combination of play-based learning, whole group and small group differentiated instruction. Units of study selected by the students focus on developmentally appropriate activities and investigations while integrating all core subject areas. These objectives are predictive of school success and align to DoDEA CCRS for grades K-12. The research-based objectives offer evidence that each contributes to learning and development.

The anchor for intentional instructional practices is the progress monitoring of student development. Teachers document student abilities with anecdotal notes and pictures for parent communication and teacher planning. The PreK team collaborates with other grade-level teachers to ensure the alignment of goals across grade levels.

The structure of our PreK program allows students to build strong foundations of math, literacy, science, and social skills. Math instruction includes guiding students through problem-solving exercises that build number sense, support exploration of spatial relationships and shapes, and teach comparison, measurement, and patterning. Literacy Objectives of Development and Learning (ODLs) set the foundation for pre-reading, writing, and comprehension. Language and Literacy is the foundation of individualized small group instruction and interest area play-based stations. Aligned to the K-5 CCRSL standards, there is a clear correlation between the PreK standards and the skills that will be developed in later years. These learning opportunities prepare students for a successful kindergarten year.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Our school's additional curriculum areas include what we call our "Specials" classes. These classes include art, music, physical education (PE), host nation, and the information center (IC). Kindergarten through fifth grade visit one Special each school day on a six-day rotation. They visit the host nation class twice in each six-day rotation and all other specials, once. Each Special is forty-five minutes long.

Shirley Lanham's art program, much like our student population, is a melting pot of cultures and ideas. Students from diverse cultures come together to inspire and encourage each other. Our art classroom gives students opportunities to work on independent masterpieces as well as school-wide collaborative projects. Our school utilizes a wide variety of mediums and techniques to explore the world – past and present - artistically. Art supports the development of fine motor skills, as well as emotional and cognitive skills. Our rich art curriculum prepares and equips students for their personal and academic journeys.

Our music program is fostered in the belief that students learn by doing. We inspire our students to enjoy the performing arts by exposing students to all facets of learning in music which includes, but is not limited to, music theory, music therapy, musical notation, music and movement, and music technology.

The Physical Education (PE) program is designed to equip and prepare life-long physically literate learners. The PE program supports students' essential skills and knowledge by enhancing critical thinking, problem-solving, creative thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. The goal in PE is to inspire all learners to have healthy behaviors and make healthy choices to live a higher quality life by providing access to tools, resources, and practices they can use both in school and outside of school.

Our Host Nation program introduces our students to Japanese culture. Students are inspired to learn about the host country through many enriching experiences. These experiences include cultural exchanges, academic experiences at Japanese schools, and traditional activities such as Wadaiko drumming and learning to use the Japanese abacus.

The information center at Lanham Elementary supports the acquisition of skills and knowledge by providing opportunities for students to learn and practice how to search for books in the Destiny Discover catalog, find books based on call number, and use online databases such as MackinVIA. Our information center is a learning hub where students can become authors, illustrators, readers, and information seekers.

In addition to Specials, we also offer technology lessons for all grade levels. These lessons are focused on two main areas- teaching our students how to become good Digital Citizens and improving our use of technology from substitution to modification and redefinition according to the SAMR Model. Our Educational Technologist (ET) conducts digital citizenship lessons focused on media balance, online privacy, digital footprints, online relationships and communication, cyberbullying, and media literacy. This is accomplished through collaboration between the classroom teachers and our ET. They meet to discuss

unit plans and identify ways technology can be used to move beyond substitution. Our goal is to empower our students to use technology to create new products and tasks that have real-world applications.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

Monitoring students' academic performance is a collaborative effort. Our school's Student Support Team (SST) is an established collaborative group that meets when a teacher needs strategies for academic and behavioral targeted students. The SST includes the classroom teacher of the student referred, school psychologist, counselor, nurse, principal, and academic specialists. The SST's primary function is routine, structured problem-solving in response to a request for assistance by a teacher(s) towards the resolution of student-centered concerns. In carrying out this responsibility, the SST becomes a peer support group using data-driven educational methods in a systematic process to address the defined student concerns.

The SST is most effective when students are viewed within the context of a continuum of research-based interventions. This process is fluid with all team members working in concert to identify the greater intensity of interventions. The SST will meet to determine if the student may benefit from additional, short-term services from academic specialists. If it is determined that additional services are required, depending on student need, an immediate referral can be made to the Language Arts/Reading Specialist (LARS), Math Support Specialist (MSS), school counselor, or school psychologist. Based on our data, students who receive additional services significantly increase their rate of academic success when combining it with those of the academic and/or behavior specialists.

If these interventions do not meet the desired outcome, the SST determines if the student requires evaluation for specialized services or tier II support in Literacy or Math. Students continue to receive academic services until we determine their formula for academic success.

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

While our students have ample opportunities for enrichment during class time (through project-based learning or increasing the complexity of their work), our Advanced Academic Programs and Services (AAPS) Specialist provides students with additional critical and creative thinking opportunities. During critical and creative thinking lessons, students are challenged to strategize ideas, apply solutions, and justify their thinking.

Our AAPS Specialist goes into each K-5 class on a rotating schedule at least once a month to present Critical and Creative Thinking Lessons. During this time, the specialist is able to identify potential candidates for the program. Although AAPS is designed to serve students identified as gifted, our AAPS Specialist also serves students who have not been identified but who display highly developed analytical and critical thinking skills in specific subject areas.

For students who need an enrichment of grade-level content knowledge, the AAPS Specialist designs interdisciplinary projects to provide these students with opportunities to apply their academic strengths to collaborative discussions and activities. The inclusion of students who participate in these extension activities is fluid and does not require a specific evaluation.

Students who are identified as gifted through formal evaluations receive additional services and instruction to prepare, inspire, and empower them to engage with accelerated material, obtain mentoring, and apply their critical thinking skills to real-world scenarios.

A major factor in the success of this program is the planning of hands-on experiences through participation in study trips. Students observe how the skills they have practiced in the classroom have real-life applications through specific projects. They return to school empowered with visions of how their knowledge can contribute to society.

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

Our special education students are serviced by a Learning Impaired Mild-Moderate (LIMM) teacher, a Preschool for Children with Disabilities teacher (PSCD), and a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP). Our support services range from general education push-in support to resource classroom instruction depending on the level of services needed as indicated in a student's individualized education plan (IEP).

The PSCD teacher implements three curriculums in her classroom which include Creative Curriculum, Handwriting without Tears, and Second Step. The combination of these curricula, and her years of experience in teaching, are what help prepare our preschool students with disabilities for kindergarten. As members of a general education kindergarten classroom, they will continue to receive support from our school's Special Education (SPED) team.

The LIMM teacher implements Benchmark Advance intervention along with additional individualized lessons for the students she serves. She works closely with our school's paraprofessionals to ensure continuity of intervention and support in the classroom.

The speech-language pathologist implements evidence-based therapy for students with speech sound disorders and language deficits.

Our team of special education teachers consistently prepares, inspires, and empowers students with disabilities to meet the rigors of the general education curriculum. They are constantly reviewing data provided by teachers in the online data tracker to determine if changes are needed to students' individualized education plans. Through collaboration with the general education teachers, along with a review of progress in the classroom, the SPED team determines if additional strategies and/or accommodations are needed to ensure access to the curriculum. If changes are needed, then the team, including parents, will come together to develop an appropriate IEP that meets the needs of the student. This team is data-driven as they obtain data on a weekly, monthly, and/or quarterly basis to meet each student's needs. Data is regularly analyzed to determine changes necessary for students to be successful.

### **3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:**

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program at Lanham is designed to support students as they close the gaps between their native language and English. We currently have two ESOL teachers; one services grades K-2, and the other services grades 3-5. Each teacher services ESOL students at Levels 1-5. Under the current DODEA model, the guidelines allow for both push-in and pullout services for lower-level students. An annual World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Language test is administered each year to check the progress of ESOL students. From this data, we can determine what type of instruction each student needs. Other data used to track progress are in-class math and literacy assessments and district required assessments.

ESOL teachers support students in learning the academic vocabulary that is being used in their classrooms under the four domains of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Level 1 students in the higher grades typically have more pullout services than Level 1 students in kindergarten or 1st grade. As a student's language level increases, their pullout time decreases. Students at Levels 4 and 5, who have been monitored for two years, may be exited from the program if they meet the DODEA exit criteria. At the beginning of the 4th quarter, when students finish Japanese school in March, we often have an influx of students, especially in the lower grades. ESOL teachers use a variety of instructional materials to support the students and work closely with the classroom teachers to support students in all subjects. ESOL teachers can follow students' academic progress by using the schoolwide data tracker.

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

As part of the DoDEA Pacific East District, our school is entrusted with supporting military-connected students. We have a population of students who are resilient, courageous, and strong. Our students face many social and emotional challenges that can result in academic and behavioral inconsistencies.



To support the unique needs of our students, our school is staffed with a counselor who abides by the DoDEA counseling standards which are adapted from the American School Counseling Association. These standards promote Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal-Social Development. Our school counselor and the Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC) assigned to our school provide our students and their families with support to ease the strain of the many transitions they encounter.

The school counselor implements a competency-based counseling program that supports all students by teaching age-appropriate social-emotional learning skills. Guidance lessons empower students with interpersonal and educational skills, and occupational awareness. Guidance lessons also teach students the importance of creating positive experiences to increase academic success. Our counseling program guides students in mastering decision-making skills and developing the attitudes necessary to be successful students.

Lanham Elementary's Student Ambassadors and Anchor-4-life programs are student-led groups facilitated by the school counselor. These programs provide peer support for new students during their transition to becoming part of our student body. These peer-to-peer programs provide new students the opportunity to pair up with a student of similar age or grade level who can show them around the school, answer questions, and be their first friend at their new location.

Each year an MFLC trained to work with the military community is assigned to our school to deliver valuable counseling services that support the social and emotional needs of our unique school population. MFLC supports students both in and out of the classrooms. They provide nonmedical counseling services to ensure the social-emotional needs of our students are being met.

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

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

“We prepare, inspire, and empower military-connected students to succeed in the 21st Century.” This purpose statement, which we adopted in 2018, is at the heart of what we do to engage our students to reach academic achievement.

Through a culture of caring, we create a positive learning environment for our military-connected students. Building relationships is a key part of engaging and motivating our students. We know that our students deal with numerous transitions - moving to new schools in unfamiliar countries, parting from friends and family, and coping with parent deployments. We know the importance of connecting with our students by getting to know them, celebrating their successes, helping them develop a growth mindset, and teaching social-emotional learning skills. Our Anchored4Life team is a group of students who support their peers during transitions to or from our school and during parent deployments. We offer several student services that provide academic, behavioral, and emotional support.

Our adopted curriculums prepare students with the skills to think critically, collaborate, communicate, and create. We use data to inform our instructional decisions to guide instructional strategies that will prepare our students for the next stage in their individual learning process. We use collaborative spaces for learning that are focused on student-led discourse. We provide frequent opportunities for students to use digital tools which, in addition to project-based learning, inspire students to create, collaborate, communicate, and think critically. Via the extra-curricular activities and community events that we offer, students are inspired to extend their learning and participate in developing 21st-century learning skills outside the classroom.

Our school’s Continuous School Improvement (CSI) team created CSI, Jr., a student-led group that empowers our students to use their voices to influence the culture of our school. These student leaders provide valuable feedback to the school community about the teaching and learning environment. We encourage our students to make contributions to our school climate by challenging them to support their thinking with valid reasoning and connect their learning to the world around them. We provide opportunities for students to make conscious choices and take ownership of their learning. Other established school leadership programs are Student Council, Anchored4Life, Student Ambassadors for the local Japanese schools, and Safety Patrol (crossing guards).

Through the inclusion of our students in the teaching and learning process, we motivate them to engage with the positive environment we create that supports their academic, social, and emotional growth.

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

At Shirley Lanham, we prepare and inspire our students to be the main actors in their education. They are the reason we established the Partners in Education (PIE) Committee, whose mission was to advocate for strong partnerships amongst the school, parents, and community. The vision was: “How do we place student, family, and community connections at the center of our school?”

The PIE Team established a one-year action plan. We used surveys, formal meetings, and informal discussions to learn how parents could be active stakeholders in school and district partnership programs. Then, we held monthly discussions to monitor and assess the progress of each program. Our goal was to improve our family and community involvement in ways that contributed to our school goals.

Keeping the six keys for a successful school, family, and community partnership in mind, we established Non-Academic and Academic Goals.

The Non-Academic Goals were to ensure a true cultural representation where all members of our community were empowered in a respectful, caring manner. Activities were designed to promote a family-oriented school environment. The desired outcome was to enhance our students’ quality of life by building

strong relationships with our military families. These activities included Professional Business Day (3rd-6th grades), Multi-Cultural Awareness Day, Positive Home Visits (Sure Start and Kindergarten), Pre-Deployment Fair, Donuts and Pastries with the Principal, and Month of the Military Child Celebrations.

The Academic Goals were to establish family-oriented school events that were fully supportive of our curriculum standards. We planned after-school activities for all to enjoy such as Math Night, STEAM Night, Game Night, Literacy Camp Out, and Parent University.

After each event, the PIE committee evaluated the quality of the activities through feedback shared by parents and community stakeholders. We used this feedback to determine how we could perfect the activities and draw conclusions as to the reasons certain activities appealed to a larger audience.

Then, COVID-19 hit. The strongest testament to the success of our family and community partnerships is the powerful bond created during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The installation's health clinic, military personnel, families, and staff members came together as a team to devise a plan to keep our students healthy while actively engaging in a brick-and-mortar learning environment. The start of in-person learning for the 2020-21 school year was delayed for the first two weeks of school. Due to close community ties and determination, we were able to conduct in-person teaching and learning for the remainder of the school year.

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

At Shirley Lanham, we pride ourselves on maintaining a culture where our staff is eager to learn, implement, and refine research-based teaching practices. Within our district, our school has become known for piloting initiatives that propel teachers and students to excel in the work of teaching and learning. These initiatives aim to increase individualized student support, build a healthy school culture, and increase academic rigor and student-led learning. We train staff on these initiatives during staff meetings and on professional learning days led by our school leadership team. Our staff also takes advantage of additional professional learning opportunities offered throughout the year. Our practice is refined through reciprocal accountability during Focused Collaboration, data talks, collaboration with our Professional Learning Instructional Support Specialist, and observations from our leadership team.

“Working together is success.” This quote from Henry Ford encapsulates how our school has developed a culture of professionalism. Our entire staff is involved in our school improvement process through participation in committees that guide the direction and planning of school initiatives and events. We also invite our families and community stakeholders to provide input through participation in school leadership committees and various feedback opportunities. These committees work alongside our student leadership teams to engage all stakeholders in the process of achieving school-wide excellence.

Our mentorship program aims to give ongoing support to teachers and staff members new to our school. Support is offered throughout the school year to help teachers improve their craft and acclimatize them to policies and procedures that may be new to them. Mentorship also extends to our substitute teachers who are welcome to participate in mentorship collaborations.

These professional practices are deeply embedded within our school culture. This embeddedness of professionalism was proven amid the Covid pandemic, which coincided with a 5-month transition between administrators, as our staff worked together to maintain a stable learning environment for our students. Proactive training on the use of digital tools and clear expectations set by our leadership made it possible for our staff, students, and families to feel well-prepared and supported during this adjustment. As we transitioned back to brick-and-mortar instruction, we continued to feel supported as a staff with the option given, by our district, to teach virtually if we felt uncomfortable returning to the classroom. Our surrounding community supported those who chose to return to the building and worked together to ensure a safe return. Due to this support and our continued drive for professionalism, our school maintains high expectations that inspire our students to excel.

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

Our school leadership excels through the involvement of all stakeholders working together to guide our focus on student learning. We work together towards goals that continually improve student learning, develop a united school culture, and promote advocacy for students. Using current educational research, we work to proactively implement strategies that drive continuous improvement.

Our principal leads this initiative by setting the direction of the school, supporting and equipping staff with tools to face challenges, and providing leadership opportunities. Through quality communication and setting an example of life-long learning, the principal of our school develops a culture of trust and a focus on continual growth within the school.

Our entire staff is involved in decision-making as a part of our Continuous School Improvement (CSI) process. In addition, we invite all staff to share their expertise by becoming mentors of other teachers or by leading professional learning sessions for our staff. Most of our staff are also members of committees that collaborate to lead school initiatives.

Our families and larger community participate in providing input to the leadership of our school through our School Advisory Committee (SAC), Continuous School Improvement Leadership Team (CSILT), and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Our principal invites parents to provide input through a monthly meeting called “Pastries with the Principal” and adheres to an open-door policy. We collaborate closely with our school-liaison officer, the military command at our base, and our base health clinic to ensure quality services are provided for our military families.

Students are a vital component of our school leadership team as well. Through our team of K-5 students involved in our Continuous School Improvement process (CSI Jr.), all students are provided with opportunities to provide input into how we can improve our school learning environment. Our Student Ambassador team develops opportunities for us to partner with local schools in Japan. We empower students with leadership skills by providing support to other students dealing with deployments and transitions through our Anchored4Life program, and our Student Council provides opportunities that help develop a healthy culture within the school.

Our leadership approach is defined by a culture of caring, collaboration, and welcoming of different points of view. As a result, we can effectively take action that aligns with our mission to prepare students for success.

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

Lanham Elementary is a culturally diverse alliance of learners. We recognize each of our ethnic, economic, social, and linguistic backgrounds, and understand how our rich diversity contributes to our unique and ever-changing community. We see ourselves as puzzle pieces, each made in just the right way, that fit together to become one cohesive unit.

Our military-connected students face unique circumstances that contribute to a wide range of academic, social, and emotional needs. We advocate for and serve our students and their families by providing them with a well-rounded education that embraces their diverse backgrounds and empowers them to apply critical thinking, independent learning, and self-advocacy skills in unusual scenarios to solve real-life problems using a growth mindset.

To address the diversity of our students and staff, our Cultural Committee takes the lead to arrange celebrations throughout the school year that represent our school community. For each of the months that are designated to celebrate different cultures or people of interest, our Cultural Committee ensures that information is shared school-wide by displaying posters, designing bulletin boards, and hosting contests for students to delve into learning about the many cultures represented by our school community. Every year we anticipate the coming of May when we celebrate our host country and our diverse school community during Culture Day. This is a much-loved, full-day event that immerses our students in a variety of cultures through song, dance, stories, food, games, and sports presented by our school community members and host nation citizens who volunteer their time and resources to make Culture Day an unforgettable event for all.

In our classrooms, we invite our students to show pride in their cultural backgrounds by leading discussions and creating presentations that teach others about who they are and where they are from. These learning experiences not only allow us to embrace each other's differences but also provide opportunities to recognize how similar we all are despite our diverse cultural backgrounds.

To address how our students' military connection is tied to current events, we encourage and support their need to communicate their feelings and concerns about having a parent, or parents, who may be deployed or assigned to duty stations that may put them in harm's way. Supporting our military-connected students is embedded in all we do as we strive to prepare, inspire, and empower them to be 21st-century learners and global citizens.

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

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At Lanham Elementary, data has been key to successfully preparing, inspiring, and empowering our students as 21st century learners. Data is an active entity, driving students' academic and social-emotional growth, daily instructional practices, and a culture of caring that we have built in our community.

Data is analyzed during weekly Focused Collaborations, grade-level and staff meetings, and school improvement sessions. During these protected collaborations, we identify specific areas of need for the class, small groups, and individual students to plan targeted instruction. This targeted, differentiated instruction has propelled our school's continuous growth and student achievement.

We understand that data is not solely defined by its numeric properties, but also by its capacity to propel academic, behavioral, and social-emotional change. To truly prepare, inspire, and empower our students, it is imperative that we address social-emotional and behavioral health, in addition to academic achievement, as foundational pieces of student success.

At Lanham Elementary, data analysis includes the analysis of student behavioral choices. We set goals for student success reaching beyond academics with the support of our Student Services Team (SST), our counselors, and through collaboration with other staff members. We aim to support students in building habits and behaviors that lead to success.

"Tell me, and I forget, teach me, and I may remember, involve me, and I learn." Benjamin Franklin's words define our school culture in which we involve our school community in recognizing student growth and setting goals.

Our students are inspired to set goals for themselves and determine the areas in need of improvement. Through leadership opportunities, our students analyze on-site data to implement initiatives for school improvement. For example, our CSI Jr. team sends surveys to our student body and analyzes the data to form initiatives such as our School Kindness Club.

Parents and families are also involved in analyzing data through the work of different committees. We discuss data with parents during parent-teacher conferences and during many of our after-school events when we share student data results and information about our curriculum.

This synergistic mindset centered around data is the foundation of a school culture dedicated to reciprocal accountability, based on trust and support, where decisions for school improvement are made through collective, committed collaborations. In our military-connected school, our staff is committed to creating and sustaining a family-like school community where students and teachers are loved, supported, and empowered to meet high expectations informed by quantitative and qualitative data.