

***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) [X] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 82144 Highway 25  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Folsom State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 70437-3024

County St. Tammany Parish

Telephone (985) 796-3820 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL https://folsomelementary.stpsb.org E-mail juliana.sciortino@stpsb.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. Frank Jabbia E-mail frank.jabbia@stpsb.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name St. Tammany Parish Tel. (985) 892-2276

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 Brandon Harrell  
(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 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):
- 26 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 21 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 8 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 55 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	21	16	37
K	31	25	56
1	39	43	82
2	33	28	61
3	34	21	55
4	29	23	52
5	39	32	71
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>	226	188	414

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 15.4 % Black or African American
  - 7.9 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 76.3 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 9%

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

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

<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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	35
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	376
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
12 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 414

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 29 %  
119 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>3</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>28</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>13</u> Developmental Delay    | <u>35</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>37</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<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.	23
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.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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

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	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
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 vision is to provide an excellent educational experience where the school, home, and community come together to ensure that students achieve to the best of their abilities.

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

<http://folsomelementary.stpsb.org/>

See very bottom of homepage

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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Nestled in the heart of the Village of Folsom located in the northernmost part of St. Tammany Parish, Folsom Elementary School is the pride and joy of our local community and all who are fortunate enough to visit. Its family-oriented charm and quiet, country setting is inviting to visitors near and far. Folsom has a population of 987 residents in the incorporated portion. The Village is approximately 1.7 square miles, however just outside of the incorporated village there are several ranches, large residential properties, and a few subdivisions. The landscape of Folsom differs from most of St. Tammany Parish. It is primarily a wooded area with pine forests and hills. It is best known for its horse ranches and nurseries. Many community residents are born and raised in this quaint little town. Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren have been educated through our institution for many decades. Many staff and faculty members, present and past, have laid a phenomenal foundation for all students and continued our traditions of quality education and community support through the years. It truly is and forever will be, “A Great Place to Be.”

Folsom Elementary, a Title I school with students in grades prekindergarten through 5th grade, incorporates many strategies that are used to promote a positive, successful learning environment. Our faculty, staff, PTA, and community members make a consistent commitment to student success. We host a quarterly Honor Roll Breakfast as well as Student of the Month gatherings for students and their families providing coffee, food, conversation and celebration for all involved. We have daily Positive Office Referrals for our students in which administrators make a distinct effort to call each family to share the good news as well as announcing our fabulous Folsom students over the loud speaker to all of their peers. Our students have the daily opportunity to collect “Tiger Bucks” to spend in their classroom treasure boxes as well as earn school coupons for things such as eating lunch with the principals. It brings such joy to their day to spend time with their principals and share in quality conversation and feel important because they ARE so important. Our school resource officer began an initiative entitled “Cool to be Kind.” Students are “caught” by their peers and staff for doing kind things for others even when no one is looking. The positivity spreads abundantly and students are recognized in morning meetings and have the opportunity to receive quarterly prizes for their routine kindness. Our school counselor and MHP have a direct role in the implementation and success of this strategy by supporting students in and out of the classroom and providing lessons and teachable moments for positive behaviors throughout their day.

Academically, we strive to educate each child by identifying their current level of performance and the specific needs they have, and implement an individualized plan providing interventions, small group instruction, tutoring, and accommodations to meet the needs of the child. We track their progress and make adjustments to their plans as needed. We pride ourselves in educating all students in the general education class to the greatest extent possible and have made gains in minimizing the achievement gap of students with exceptionalities compared to the whole school. We believe this is a direct result of the co-teaching and inclusion models we implement and the hard work of all of our teachers.

Folsom Elementary School has implemented many programs that contribute to our unique character and success of our school. We have several clubs that our students have participated in such as the 4-H Club, the Robotics Club, the Friendship Club, and the Yoga Club, all of which promote positive behavior, enhance communication skills, foster leadership skills and provide an environment for success. We have quarterly positive behavior celebrations in which all students are able to connect and engage with each other. Celebrations include BINGO, popcorn and a movie, cake walk, dance parties and water day! Our students also enhance their physical skills with weekly running challenges with our P.E. teacher. Students have weekly goals per grade level and have the opportunity to earn yearly rewards for their efforts including certificates, medals, trophies, plaques, and jewelry. Some students even have the great opportunity to participate on the Folsom Fitness Team and compete together for regional and state awards.

Our school also celebrates culture in unique ways as well. Our first grade classes host “Christmas Around the World” each year. Every four year, Folsom also hosts a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony. Our third grade classes host “Louisiana Day” annually and enjoy cuisine unique to Louisiana, participate in crafts and dances specific to the Cajun culture, and design projects specific to Louisiana showcasing the Superdome,

the Plantations, famous Louisianans, the Causeway, our sports teams, our State Capital, and many other topics. Folsom Elementary continues to find unique ways to celebrate who we are as a school and utilize every opportunity to contribute to student success.

## **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:**

Folsom Elementary’s overarching philosophy is fueled by our district’s motto, “Every Child, Every Day for a Successful Tomorrow.” Our students’ needs are the number one priority when it comes to academics. We use the following methods to meet the needs of each individual student to ensure that they are successful: differentiated instruction, co-teaching, inclusion, modifying assignments, implementing accommodations, small group instruction, and interventions. Through the use of the aforementioned methods, our students are not only growing and learning beyond students across the state, they are doing so in fun, engaging, and positive learning environments. In each of our content areas, those methods are used with fidelity. We believe in doing whatever is necessary to provide what is best for our students, from dressing up as a character from a story or science lesson to creating an entire day based on our great state, ensuring that our students have a great understanding of the content being presented.

To help prepare “Every Child, Every Day For a Successful Tomorrow,” we believe that our parents are key members of our team. Involving our parents in problem solving for our students is a major part of our students’ success story. We communicate with our parents in a variety of ways including: email, Zoom meetings, parent-teacher conferences, robo calls, robo texts, teacher newsletters, principal newsletters, school website, and School Advancement Plan (SAP) Committee Meetings. We even utilize either a weekly envelope (grades 2-5) or a daily red folder (grades K-1) to aid in communication with our parents. Every day, our students in upper elementary (4th and 5th) record their assignments (and any other pertinent pieces of information) in their agendas. The students’ agendas go home every day for parents and caretakers to view.

At Folsom Elementary, we are committed to providing our students with whatever is needed to ensure that they are successful. Between our parents and faculty, success is inevitable for our students.

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

Grades K-5 implement the required English Language Arts Core Curriculum of the St. Tammany Parish Public School District. In K-2 classrooms, educators teach the Louisiana State Standards using the core curriculum Ready Gen. In reading and writing, explicit, modeled, and scaffolded teaching is incorporated in whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. Each day, student performance is assessed formally and informally allowing teachers to plan for small group instruction and increase a child’s proficiency in a skill. Students participate in teacher-led small groups, which are planned and tailored to the needs of students. Within the curriculum, there is a cumulative progression of the state standards within the unit lessons. Once standards are explicitly taught, students have additional practice within teacher created learning stations. These learning stations are aligned to the units and contain engaging, interacting, and stimulating activities for students. In addition to the core curriculum, K-2 classrooms implement IRLA (Independent Reading Level Assessment). This tier one curriculum assesses and provides students with daily individual independent reading practice and instruction.

In grades 3-5, the Louisiana State Standards for English Language Arts are taught using the core curriculum Louisiana Guidebooks (Learn Zillion). The Guidebook units ensure all students can read and express their understanding of complex, grade-level texts. Each text collection includes content-rich nonfiction and student-friendly novels that are relatable and centered on a theme. The content lessons give students the opportunity to explore, think, and learn through engaging assignments and explicit instruction. All students routinely participate in discussions and higher order questioning of complex texts. The Guidebook lessons work toward a series of unit assessments aligned to end-of-year expectations. In each lesson, teachers implement a combination of whole group and small group instruction. Students with exceptionalities are taught through whole group and small group instruction. Through inclusion, students receive support from

the Students with Exceptionalities teacher throughout each day's lesson and activities. Grade level teachers frequently collaborate and plan supplemental activities for instruction. Decisions and plans are based on student performance and data from lesson assessments. Throughout the school year, students consistently demonstrate growth and improvement in their achievement of mastery levels with state standards. In 2019, data results from the LEAP (Louisiana Educational Assessment Program) standardized English Language Arts test showed that the third graders at Folsom Elementary scored the highest percentage of student proficiency in our entire district. In English Language Arts, 82% of our third grade students achieved a level of advanced or mastery on the LEAP Test. This level of proficiency was well above the district score of 66% and the state proficiency score of 46%. Fourth grade students' achievement level of 73% at Folsom Elementary outperformed the state average of 45% scoring mastery or advanced. Fifth grade students shone with their 2021 LEAP scores, with 74% of students scoring mastery and advanced, which was the highest in the district and far surpassed the statewide score of 37%.

For K-5 English Language Arts intervention, teachers identify children through formal and informal assessments conducted within daily instruction and student conferencing. Student data from the LEAP 360 Diagnostic Assessment and the Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy) assessment are analyzed to ascertain specific deficits for teachers to target for intervention instruction. For intervention, identified students improve their deficits through instruction using Project Read and Amplify Reading, which target specific skills that each at-risk student needs. Students are progress monitored every two weeks to track their progress and adjust instruction when needed.

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

In 2013, Eureka Math was implemented as Folsom Elementary's Core Curriculum for students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. This curriculum was chosen due to its focus on the three levels of rigor: Procedural Fluency, Conceptual Understanding, and Application. Each component of rigor is found throughout the Mathematical Standards for grade levels Kindergarten through 5th.

Since the curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop key mathematical concepts, students are able to deepen their mathematical understanding rather than focus on rote memorization. The Eureka math curriculum is written as a story with layers of integrated concepts, so students, over time, are able to build confidence and conceptual understanding about units, operations, and problem solving.

In addition to teaching Eureka math during core instruction, teachers at Folsom Elementary utilize tiered instructional processes like small group instruction and math stations to respond to students' individual needs and reinforce key concepts. Teachers are able to do this by allotting the first 30 minutes of the day to interventions for students. Exit ticket data allows teachers to pinpoint specific areas of improvement for students so that they are able to create small groups. During instruction, teachers collect observational data and use the last 20 minutes of the math block to respond to students' various needs in small groups. While teachers are facilitating small groups, the other students are collaboratively participating in math stations to reinforce previously learned concepts and build fluency through the use of Zearn, fact fluency activities, and Mountain Math(a spiral review).

Providing for the individual needs of students has always been a priority; however, after sudden changes to our traditional learning system due to the global pandemic, teachers at Folsom Elementary saw huge fluctuations in students' academic and social emotional needs. The pandemic required teachers to change their approach to remediation and daily instruction. As a result, teachers focus heavily on proactively identifying students' needs before a module is taught through the use of Eureka's assessment portal Equip. Before a Eureka module is taught, students take a short, Equip pre-assessment that specifically identifies the essential content a student needs to succeed with the upcoming grade level content. The pre-assessment results allow teachers to collaborate with their Professional Learning Communities to plan and customize grade-level content, interventions, small groups, and stations to address unfinished learning. To support teachers, planning, professional development needs, and data analysis, a math instructional coach was added to their team. This addition, in conjunction with the curriculum and assessment enhancements, has given Folsom Elementary students an opportunity to continuously outperform the district and state on the LEAP assessments and Folsom Elementary teachers an opportunity to continue to provide high-quality, equitable

math instruction. On the LEAP assessment taken in Spring 2019, 92% of 3rd grade students scored Mastery or Advanced, outperforming every other school in St. Tammany Parish, as well as the state average of 43%. In addition, Folsom Elementary 4th grade students outperformed the state average of 41% with a score of 80%.

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

In grades K-5, our teachers utilize the Inspire Science Curriculum to teach our Louisiana State Standards for Science. Each begins with a phenomenon and inquiry activity. These activities mentally prepare students for the actual Science Lesson. After those two activities, our teachers move into teaching the actual lesson. When teaching the actual lesson, our teachers include a variety of hands-on activities. Some of those hands-on activities include dissecting owl pellets, conducting experiments, and creating animal biomes. Around Spring Break, our 4th and 5th grade students participate in the Egg Drop Contest. For this event, students have to bring in a raw egg, creatively packaged. The egg needs to be wrapped in such a way so that when it is thrown over the basketball goal (on our playground), it will not break. The students get really excited about participating in this activity. Prior to COVID, our students (4th and 5th graders) also participated in our annual Science Fair. This activity allows students to actively participate in the Scientific Method. Our ELA and Science teachers work together with the students so to ensure all parts of the project (both the writing part and the experiment) are completed successfully. After each of the projects are judged, students from the other grade levels are invited to the gym to see each of the projects in an effort to get them excited about Science and their future experience with this activity. Along with the hands-on activities, our students engage in meaningful discourse related to the daily lesson. These discussions vary between teacher-led discussions and student-led discussions.

Teachers begin their units with preparation and planning which includes assessing what background content needs to be taught in order for the students to understand the unit and what will be included on the standards based assessments that will be given. All of this process is part of knowing the “audience” and understanding the proper approach to instruction. Implementation then begins in the classroom with anchor phenomena, essential questions, engaging activities, and rich discussion that often leads to multiple unexpected learning opportunities.

To aid in the teaching of the Science standards, teachers utilize the Discovery Education platform for articles, interactive strategies, storyboard lessons, virtual field trips, and engaging videos and links that provide an opportunity for further exploration. Achieve 3000 is also used to support cross curricular content utilizing non-fiction articles on all student’s reading levels and achievement criteria. The teachers are able to choose content that is currently being taught in the classroom while getting the standardized assessment approach to analyzing articles and responding to multi-level texts. These programs along with multi-sensory teaching strategies are what makes a well-rounded, engaging science curriculum successful here at Folsom Elementary.

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

In the area of Social Studies, we focus on teaching the Louisiana State Standards using a variety of resources. We use the Social Studies textbook My World Social Studies, published by Pearson in 2016, as well as variety of documents from the Louisiana Believes website that are aligned with the appropriate grade level state standards, such as graphic organizers, PowerPoints, videos, charts, maps, excerpts from historical documents, and journal entries. These resources are easily accessible and updated frequently, and provide the students with the tools and knowledge they need in order to succeed in both an academic setting and the real world.

More important than the curriculum/materials chosen is the delivery of instruction. Students are taught how to properly analyze primary sources that correlate with the standards. Through collaborative conversation, students at Folsom Elementary can examine sources such as historical paintings, newspaper clippings, speeches, and political propaganda posters and make connections to current learning. When viewing a primary source, the children know to ask themselves and their classmates a variety of questions that will assist in the analysis of the document. They look for the following clues before making connections to prior

learning: point of view, setting, time period, mood, symbolism, etc. This skill benefits the students cross-curricular and will follow them all throughout their education. Social Studies teachers also collaborate with ELA teachers and cross-plan topics that coincide in both subjects. The ELA curriculum uses a lot of nonfiction sources which correlates with Social Studies standards. In addition, students complete weekly assignments on Achieve 3000. Articles are chosen based on the weekly curriculum topics. Students work on the articles that are scaffolded down or up to their current Lexile level.

As the rigor and expectations continue to rise within the educational community, students at Folsom Elementary continue to surpass expectations. Children leave our school with a strong historical background and the skills to succeed. On the LEAP taken in spring 2019, our 3rd and 4th grade students had the highest scores in all of St. Tammany Parish. Our 5th grade students trailed only two other schools in their performance. Compared to the statewide results, our students outperformed the state by the following percentage amounts: 3rd grade-26%, 4th grade-36%, and 5th grade-24%.

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

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

Prekindergarten introduces children to developmentally appropriate language and behaviors to gain a positive attitude and understanding of real life situations and academic skills. We use a state approved Tier 1 curriculum based on Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) for 4-year old children called OWL. Second Steps is the Social Emotional Curriculum used daily. The core curriculum areas provided are as follows: Social Emotional, Physical, Language, Literacy, Cognitive, Math, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

These core areas are set by the state as a foundation for and to align with K-Grade 3. TS Gold by My Teaching Strategies is the ongoing observation assessment tool used to track student progress over time. TS Gold is comprised of student objectives that are in complete alignment with the ELDS. Teachers observe and assess students on all objectives for development and learning and complete checkpoints in the fall, winter, and spring which reflect the skills and knowledge the student have gained and predicts their school success and readiness in primary grades.

Teachers are held to CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) standards of teaching and are observed and scored by District and State administrators several times a year. PreK teachers provide a nurturing and well-managed environment where the children can be highly engaged with the goal that children will love learning and want to be at school learning and growing with their peers in a positive environment. Folsom PreK has been recognized for our CLASS scores, receiving Certificate of Recognition CLASS Scoring in 2020, Certificate of Effectiveness for Outstanding Achievement in 2018-2019, and Excellence Honor Roll in 2018-2019 for meeting the highest standard of early childhood program quality established by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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

Folsom Elementary School students are actively engaged in multiple areas outside of the core curriculum. Other curriculum areas offered include weekly 45 minute art (PK-3rd), band (3rd-5th), computer (PK-5th), music (PK-5th), and physical education (PK-5th) classes. Students participate in guided and independent learning activities in all of these areas. The content is rigorous and aligned with the state standards.

Art classes aim to foster children's individuality and self-expression through studying famous artists, works of art and different styles of producing art. Art is language and one of the goals of the curriculum is to teach budding artists to learn to use their artistic voices.

Band classes for third grade students focus on rhythm and notes using mainly percussion instruments such as bucket drums. Fourth grade students continue to build on the foundation of notes and rhythms and are

introduced to the concept of instruments as they learn to play the recorder. Fifth grade students participate in beginning band class where they learn the fundamentals of playing band instruments. Students perform at the Christmas Concert, Spring Concert, and provide music at the annual Mardi Gras parade.

In computer lab classes, students are taught to use Google Suite as well as basic keyboarding skills. They work on Hour of Code which introduces students to how to create and code programs. Students also work on various math and ELA programs to enhance core curriculum lessons. Students also participate in yearly cybersecurity and digital citizenship lessons.

During library classes, students are provided with an opportunity to discover a love of books and reading while also learning about the library. Students learn about the Dewey Decimal system, how to select appropriate literature, how to navigate a book, use a table of contents, index, appendix etc. They also learn how to research as well as how to sequence and order information. The librarian collaborates with the ELA teachers to help meet standards and benchmarks across the curriculum.

In general music class, students learn about different eras and genres of music and develop an appreciation for different music styles and genres from around the world. They are also introduced to basic rhythms and music notation such as the staff, treble and bass clef, note names, and note values. Fourth and fifth grade students have a more in-depth focus on reading music and styles/genres. Our school choir performs at various programs throughout the year such as the Red Ribbon Week pep rally, Veterans Day program, Christmas Concert, Black History Month Program, Spring Concert, the fifth grade promotion ceremony, and in the yearly parish-wide festival. This program prepares students for the more rigorous expectations of choir class at the junior high level.

Students in physical education classes are introduced to exercise and physical activities as they learn valuable life lessons such as locomotor skills, balance and posture, sportsmanship, and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Students start a running program in first grade that allows them to earn various rewards as they progress through the program. Students who complete all five years of the running program at Folsom earn a special award.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

To address the individual needs of the students performing below level, teachers collaborate during their bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings with their grade level teachers, administrators, and instructional coaches to identify the specific needs of those students. Once they identify the need, they make a plan on how to address the needs in reading, writing, and math. The majority of the interventions come from small group instruction by general education teachers, Students with Exceptionalities teachers within the general education class, paras within the general education class, and Title I tutors. Through our Title I funds, students are able to work with tutors to help close the gap in reading levels by using programs such as Voyager, Achieve 3000 and Project Read. The general education teachers use Reflex Math, Moby Max, and Zearn along with small group instruction for students who perform below level in math. For students who perform below level in writing, teachers work in a small group to sharpen skills using programs such as Write From the Beginning and Guidebook strategies. Data is collected on a bi-weekly basis, reviewed, and through collaboration, used to decide if the plan of instruction is working or if it needs to be modified to better meet the needs of the student.

Some students are strategically placed in classrooms that have the co-teaching or inclusion model. These are the students who gain the most by having the extra support in the classroom. This practice has enabled children to be successful receiving instruction with their peers instead of being pulled out to another setting.

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

To address the individual needs of students who are performing above level as compared to their peers, teachers meet during their bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings to collaborate with their

grade level colleagues, administrators, and instructional coaches, to discuss how to help students further excel to their greatest potential. One specific plan put in place is for our Gifted Education teacher to pull those general education students who scored Mastery on benchmark assessments in small groups and challenge them to think critically on more advanced skills. This practice allows those students to be challenged and to grow academically. Computer-based interventions such as Moby Max, Zearn, and Achieve 3000 are also used. These programs allow students to work at their established elevated level and progress even further at their individual rate of learning.

Folsom also has a Gifted and Talented program for students who are performing at a level above their peers. The design of our Gifted program is two-fold. Students in lower grade levels receive the enrichment model of the gifted program while students in fifth grade receive the academic model of the gifted program.

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

To address the individual needs of the students that receive special education services, we begin with the child's IEP. Based on the IEP, the child's schedule is created. Children are strategically placed in classes that either use a co-teaching model, inclusion model, resource pull out, or students who are monitoring only may be placed in a setting with minimal support. Support is provided to the best extent possible. Data is collected weekly to check the progress of students in these settings and adjustments are made as needed.

During bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings, team members collaborate with their grade level colleagues, administrators, and curriculum coaches to discuss the specific needs of the students. Once they identify the need, a plan is made on how to address the needs in reading, writing, and math. General education teachers, in collaboration with special education teachers, identify areas of need and establish academic plans on how to close the gap. This need is met through accommodations and small group instruction/testing as needed. Special education teachers scaffold the general education curriculum to ensure success for the special education students. Referrals are made to the assistive technology team to address any assistive technology needs in the areas of reading, writing, communication, listening and/or access. These students also have access to the same interventions as general education students including Project Read, Voyager, Moby Max, Zearn, Write from the Beginning, and Achieve 3000. Progress monitoring data is collected on a bi-weekly basis, reviewed by teachers, and through collaboration decides if their plan of instruction is working or if it needs to be modified to better meet the needs of the student.

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

According to the data from the 2018-19 school year, approximately 2% of our student population are English Language Learners. Children whose native language is a language other than English receive help through the ESL program if they are unable to function on grade level. The program aims to help these children become proficient and function on level as quickly as possible.

To address the individual needs of the students that are English Language Learners, we offer them the same interventions that we provide for our students that are performing below level, with the exception that ELL students have a specific para available to help them while in the general education classroom or in a pull-out model. Teachers meet during their bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings to collaborate with their grade levels, administrators, and instructional coaches to discuss how to identify the specific needs of those students. Once the teachers identify the need, they make a plan on how to address the needs in reading, writing, and math. The majority of the interventions come from small group instruction by general education teachers, Students with Exceptionalities teachers within the general education class, paras within the general education class, and Title I tutors. Through our Title I funds, students are able to work with tutors to help close the gap in reading levels by using programs such as Voyager, Achieve 3000 and Project Read. For students who are performing below level in math, programs such as Reflex Math, Moby Max, and Zearn are used, along with small group instruction by the general education teacher. For students who are performing below level in writing, teachers work in a small group to sharpen skills using programs such as Write From the Beginning and Guidebooks. Once interventions are in place, data is collected on a bi-weekly basis, reviewed as teachers meet as a grade level, and through collaboration decide if their plan of instruction is working or if it needs to be modified based on the data.

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

According to the data from the 2018/2019 school year, 4.8% of the student population were Kids in Transition (KIT), or homeless. The goal of the KIT program is to provide support that promotes academic success and student achievement. At Folsom Elementary, this is done through tutoring after school by certified classroom teachers, providing basic needs for students such as clothing and snacks, and putting families in contact with community resources that are beneficial to their needs. These students' classroom academic needs are addressed in the same manner as those listed in above sections.

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

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

The faculty and staff at Folsom Elementary creates, plans, and implements a variety of activities to keep students motivated and ready to learn in a positive environment. In the classrooms, teachers use methods such as hands-on activities and student-led discourse to continue to keep students engaged. Through the hands-on activities, students are able to actively participate in the classroom lessons as opposed to just sitting and listening. When students participate in student-led discourse, it allows them to learn from each other while providing the opportunity for the teacher to get a better understanding of whether the students are grasping the concepts. We use motivation as a tool for student engagement. Students earning at least a 3.0 GPA receive an invitation to our Honor Roll Breakfast. Our Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) Team provides many incentives for students. Each month, classroom teachers select a student to be recognized as their “Student of the Month.” These students and their parents enjoy breakfast before the presentation of their awards. Within the classroom and other areas of the school, students can earn Positive Office Referrals. These referrals are for students who go above and beyond with respectful, responsible, and/or safe behavior. Once these referrals are sent to the office, an administrator calls the parent to share the great news. The students then get his or her name placed on a star on our “Pawsitive Behavior Hall of Fame.” As it pertains to emotional growth, our Mental Health Provider (MHP) and our Guidance Counselor are key. Both support the entire child—offering services to address the emotional, social, and/or academic needs of the students. Our MHP meets with students one-on-one or in a small group, while our Guidance Counselor goes into our classrooms and meets with the students as a whole group. Our Guidance Counselor provides our students with information regarding college and career readiness. For these lessons, our students participate in whole group conversations about their future, complete surveys, and get a glimpse into the world that they want to be employed into. Our students get really excited about our Drug-Free Week. Our school counselor plans a variety of activities for our students to participate in to help promote being drug-free. On a daily basis, students earn “tiger bucks” for displaying respectable, responsible, and safe behavior. They can spend these bucks at the monthly Tiger Buck Store. Students who display appropriate behavior, following our school rules for the entire quarter, are invited to attend the big event of the quarter. This includes Bingo, Christmas Cake Walk, Popcorn and a Movie, and the most anticipated event, Water Day.

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

Working with our families and community members is such an integral part of Folsom Elementary. We have a phenomenal Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) who always finds inventive ways to include our parents in participating in fundraisers such as PTA Membership Sign-Up, Chocolate Fundraiser, Santa’s Secret Shop, Fun-Run, and Fall Fest. Hosting these events allows parents a variety of opportunities to volunteer and support our students. Prior to COVID, our PTA celebrated students’ birthdays monthly in our cafeteria. When entering the cafeteria, the students would sit at a special table where they would eat their lunch, along with cupcakes, and receive treat bags. Parents would also volunteer to be a part of this event. Our parents are also included in volunteering to help run our Scholastic Book Fair. With COVID guidelines in place, we have engaged our parents in events via Zoom and through slide presentations, along with paper copies of information pertaining to our events. Parents also have access to our School Advancement Plan (SAP) via our school’s website. This plan outlines the events that we have planned for the year. Parents have the opportunity to participate in an annual survey that gives us insight into what is working and how we can improve. Each day, as our parents pass by our school, they can view our electronic display that shows each of our upcoming events. Our parents are also invited to a plethora of events on our campus such as Christmas programs, Literacy Night, violin concerts and many other Parent-Family Engagement events.

Our community members participate in our on-campus events on a regular basis. In January/February (before COVID), our community members served as judges in our Science Fair. In April, our Guidance Counselor has a “Career on Wheels” day for our students. On this particular day, she invites our local police department, fire department, and ambulance services, along with others, to discuss their careers with our students. During the month of October, our local Fire Department comes to our school during Fire

Prevention Week. At this time, they speak with our students about fire safety. Our school librarian has a partnership with the librarian at the public library. We work with them to promote the summer reading program, offering incentives to the participants. The librarian from the public library will also attend Parent-Family Engagement events such as Literacy Night. At this event, families participate in literacy activities and the librarian provides families with applications to apply for library cards through the public library. We are lucky enough to have a school board representative that stays involved in school events. He visits our school quite often and even donates gift cards to be given to three students who earn A/B Honor Roll.

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

At Folsom Elementary, the professional culture is created and maintained by the faculty and staff. There are many ways our administrators strengthen this culture. We give “shout-outs” within the weekly newsletter, write “Pawsitive” notes to faculty/staff members, and provide positive feedback and praise on a regular basis. We also have quarterly socials, provide complimentary snacks in the break room, and maintain an open door policy. Our administrators visit classrooms often. By doing so, our administrators can visually see what is going on in the classroom and offer guidance. Each month, our faculty and staff nominate and vote on an Employee of the Month. Our administrators believe in not only leading, but creating leaders. They allow teachers to plan and create a myriad of initiatives to help ensure that our students are successful. We also make sure to recognize employees during designated times such as Teacher Appreciation Week, Cafeteria Appreciation Week, Bus Driver Appreciation Week, etc. When making decisions, from staffing to purchasing instructional materials, teachers are involved. Teachers assist with interviews for open teaching positions in their grade level and aid in the selection process. As a Title I school we have a budget with a specific allocation for instructional materials. Teachers are part of this committee and help decide how the money is spent. They are given the opportunity to sit down with administrators and select supplemental materials to help teach the standards and incorporate hands on learning as much as possible. All of these actions enable our faculty and staff members to feel like they have a valuable role at Folsom Elementary.

During the duration of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year, Folsom Elementary held in person classes. Distance learning was primarily used when a student was either exposed to or tested positive for Covid-19. We also have the occasional distance learning day when severe weather is forecasted. In the event distance learning has to take place, teachers post the schedule to their Google Classrooms. During weather related distance learning days, administrators visit the Google Classroom sessions to make sure that students are doing what they need to do and to support the teacher in any way that is needed. One of the challenges we face in our rural community is the inconsistency of reliable internet. This makes it important for administrators and co-teachers to also be enrolled as teachers in the Google Classrooms. In the event that the teacher has an internet failure, other adults have the ability to monitor the classrooms and end the Google Meet session, if needed.

Teachers often suggest ideas for professional development. For example, teachers of students with exceptionalities noticed a need for teachers to be more familiar with reading and interpreting behavior intervention plans, so we added that topic to one of our professional development days. Teachers also serve on the Instructional Leadership Team. During these meetings, we look at work samples and have discussions of what we can do differently to better reach the students. At PLC meetings, teachers look at data and have discussions with administrators and instructional coaches about areas in which they need a deeper understanding.

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

At Folsom, our leadership team is comprised of the following individuals: Principal, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, Mental Health Provider, Technology Resource Teacher, and Instructional Coaches. Each team member works to ensure that our teachers receive what is needed to make certain that our students are successful and are provided with the services needed to actively participate in a positive, fun learning environment. Our principal and assistant principal work closely to create, implement, and monitor school-wide policies, plans for professional development, and evaluate programs and resources to increase student achievement. Throughout the week, they make classroom visits to gauge instructional practices in action and to verify that the Louisiana State Standards are being taught with fidelity. Each fall semester, our

principal and assistant principal conduct Compass Observations of the faculty. This tool is used to detect whether the overall classroom expectations are being met. A pre-observation and post-observation are conducted prior to and at the conclusion of each observation. During the post-conference, if there are any areas of needed improvement, the administrator addresses those area(s) and ways that the faculty member can improve in those areas. Both principals recently worked together to create an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). This team meets once every other month. The goal of this team is to come up with instructional goals (based on data) and a plan that helps increase student achievement.

Our Technology Resource Teacher (TRT) provides the tools and knowledge needed to support our teachers with school wide interventions, Google Classroom, statewide testing expectations and Chromebook delivery, expectations, and maintenance. When needed, the TRT goes into classrooms to help classroom teachers conduct and track their interventions. By going into the classroom, the TRT can get a detailed picture of what the need is and support that specific need. The Guidance Counselor visits each classroom at least one time per month. During those classroom visits, students are taught lessons that are related to one of the following topics: bullying, college and career readiness, friendship, kindness, social skills, respect, safety (school and personal), and responsibility. Through those lessons, students are given the tools and skills needed to be successful, academically and socially. Our school is fortunate enough to have a Mental Health Provider (MHP). Our MHP also works with our students, on an individual basis and in themed-group sessions. Some of those groups included: Yoga (for our students who needed help relaxing); Cool-Down Club (for our students who needed assistance with learning how to get calm); and the Friends Club (for our students who had difficulty making friends). With COVID restrictions in place at the beginning of our current school year, we were unable to implement any of the themed-group clubs. Through each of the aforementioned supports, our students are able to perform in the classroom and feel safe outside of the classroom.

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

Folsom Elementary students are consistently a part of culturally responsive teaching practices. At Folsom, we ensure that students from all backgrounds have access to all of what is needed for students to be successful. To assist families of whom English is their second language, we use Google Translate to send home an additional version of important documents. For students who are a part of our KIT (homeless) program, they receive a wealth of supports so that they can also be successful in the classroom. Some of those supports include after-school tutoring, basic school supplies, and free meals. With the initiative to put a Chromebook in the hands of every student, students have had huge successes. Having the Chromebook allows our students to view math videos, work on Google Suite projects, and learn basic word processing skills. During their PLC meetings, our teachers dissect student data to determine which students, if any, are in need of any interventions to help close the academic gap, thus allowing those students to be successful. When teaching, our teachers always activate students' prior knowledge of their upcoming lessons through questioning, conversations, and/or through problem-solution scenarios. By doing so, students are able to make a connection to whatever the lesson topic might be. First grade students learn about different cultures and traditions as they participate in the grade level Christmas Around the World. Teachers and students work together to learn about a different culture and traditions that are centered around the Christmas season. The Olympics are celebrated at Folsom every four years. Each class chooses a different country to represent and they learn all about that country throughout the school year. In the spring of the designated year, we host a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony in which the whole school and community participate. The students travel to the nearby recreation center and perform a class presentation, usually a dance or musical performance, that represents their chosen country and reenact the opening ceremony. Every May, third grade teachers host "Louisiana Day," a celebration of the culture of Louisiana. Students create three-dimensional projects and write and present a research paper on the topic. Topics range from the Superdome and local sports teams to historical figures to music and other topics specific to our great state. The school cafeteria prepares fried fish and parents prepare foods such as gumbo and seafood pasta. Guest speakers present on local wildlife and governmental topics. During Mardi Gras season each year, first grade students hold a book report float parade. They read a book and create a shoe box float depicting important information from the book. They parade through the school to Mardi Gras music. We also host a school wide Mardi Gras parade each year. During the parade, 3rd-5th graders throw beads and trinkets, prekindergarten through 2nd grade students catch the throws and parents enjoy a fun time with the school family.



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

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The practice of Inclusion and Co-teaching has been instrumental to the success of Folsom Elementary students with exceptionalities. Before our school year starts, we look at our roster of students, their IEPs, and the previous year's data. In August 2018, based on this information, a decision was made for our teachers to implement the inclusion and co-teaching models to best meet the needs of our students. Seventy-five percent of first through fifth grade students with exceptionalities remained in the general education classroom for their instructional time for more than 80% of the day.

In an inclusive classroom, general education teachers and students with exceptionalities teachers work together to meet the needs of students. This gives students with exceptionalities the support they need while they stay in the general education classroom. All students can benefit from inclusive classrooms due to the fact that students can learn from one another and model for each other. Co-teaching is a collaborative approach to instruction in which two teachers, a general education teacher and a students with exceptionalities teacher, work together to plan and implement instruction for their class that includes students with exceptionalities. We used a variety of models including: one teach/one support, supplemental teaching, and station teaching. The one teach/one support strategy is a model in which one teacher has primary instructional responsibility, while the other assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, and/or offers feedback on assignments. The supplemental teaching strategy allows one teacher to work with students based on assessment data, who are on level with the strand, while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials re-taught, extended, or remediated. For station teaching, the co-teaching pair divides the instructional content into parts and the students into groups. Groups spend a designated amount of time, usually about 20 minutes, at each station. Independent stations are used along with teacher-led stations.

Because of our decision to provide this method of instruction to our students, we saw growth in all areas. Our students grew from the benefit of having two teachers strategically placed in their classrooms during core instruction. Our teachers grew from the benefit of collaboration. Our school grew from the positive impact inclusion and co-teaching provided to the learning environment, and from the inclusion of all students. We believe that the inclusive models we utilized made a direct impact on the tremendous growth our students with exceptionalities subgroup made for the 2018-2019 school year compared to the previous year. On the LEAP assessment taken in spring 2019, the index for the students with exceptionalities subgroup made the following gains: ELA-increase from 43.5 to 77.6, Math-increase from 52.9 to 92.8, Social Studies-increase from 38.2 to 71.6, and Science-increase from 44.0 to 82.0. This data proves that the co-teaching and inclusion models can lead to huge gains for all students, those with and without exceptionalities.