

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 700 Acequia Madre
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Santa Fe State NM Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 87505-2815

County Santa Fe

Telephone (505) 467-4000 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://acequiamadre.sfps.info E-mail ddemaeseneer@sfps.k12.nm.us

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* Hillarrio Chavez E-mail hilchavez@sfps.k12.nm.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Santa Fe Public School District Tel. (505) 467-2000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The 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

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):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 25 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	0	0	0
K	6	11	17
1	8	9	17
2	10	12	22
3	21	14	35
4	12	8	20
5	12	11	23
6	15	5	20
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	84	70	154

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1.9 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4.6 % Asian
 - 6.5 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87 % 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: 8%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	12
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	153
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

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

Spanish, Hungarian, German, Swiss German, Chinese, and Tibetan

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %

Total number students who qualify: 29

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 8 %
13 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>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>2</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.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	8
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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.

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	95%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

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

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

Acequia Madre Elementary School is a small school community that is dedicated to all students being educationally successful, physically sound, socially aware and artistically inspired.

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

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1723725/200_Nondiscrimination_Policy.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

The culture at Acequia Madre Elementary School (AMES) is strongly interwoven with the identity of the surrounding diverse Santa Fe community. Santa Fe is home to a vibrant local art scene, innovative technology business hub, world-renowned science facilities, and historic and culturally diverse neighborhoods. The historic connection is embodied in the school's name, "Acequia Madre," a reference to the city's main irrigation channel ("Mother Ditch") located right across the street and dug over 400 years ago by Spanish colonial settlers to divert water to their fields. The Mother Ditch and its many tributaries provide a perfect metaphor for how Acequia Madre educators feed the inquisitive minds of the diverse student body. More than half of the students are interzone transfers, with students all over the district choosing to travel to the historic neighborhood, and many families, both from the neighborhood and from outside of it, stay with Acequia Madre Elementary for multiple generations, solidifying the strong connection between the school and its community. Canyon Road, the city's historic vibrant art district, is a block away from the school, inspiring the school's performance arts focus and annual authentic, local field trips. Lastly, AMES is part of Santa Fe Public Schools' first computer science cohort, integrating technological innovation with science education into the core curriculum and effectively preparing students for successful careers in Santa Fe and beyond.

AMES is a small public school with one class per grade level (with the exception of one grade with two classes) where the overwhelming majority of students stay from kindergarten through sixth grade. Many students have siblings and cousins attending the school as well, resulting in many families staying involved with the school for well over six years. In addition, although school bus service is available to students outside the district on request, all families bring their students to school, providing an opportunity to visit the school daily and interact with staff and the community. All these components enable AMES to foster deep, meaningful relationships among students, staff, and families. Besides this strong community bond, the school offers a wide variety of academic and artistic opportunities (with the support of parent volunteers), such as weekly schoolwide assemblies, integrated grade-level musical performances, violin, gardening, cooking, arts, choir, poetry recitals, sports, and STEAM fairs. This unusual breadth of offerings ensures each and every student has an opportunity to discover their strengths and to shine. This undoubtedly plays a huge factor in developing student self-efficacy, which in turn is positively reflected in academic achievement and life happiness and success. While many more key strategies are employed, such as a foundational Responsive Classroom culture, AMES excels perhaps more than any other local school in providing genuine ownership to all stakeholders. Students run many aspects of the school and are always actively involved when new projects and initiatives are developed. Parents lead the way in organizing some of the most iconic community events, such as the annual Harvest Festival, where students, family, and staff all come together in the garden over a plate of fresh vegetables grown in the school garden and roasted in a traditional Native American horno (outdoor oven). And staff collaboratively design and implement a standards-based planning and grading system during the weekly vertical professional learning communities.

In addition to the key strategies mentioned above, Acequia Madre Elementary buttresses its performing arts focus by closely collaborating with local artists, such as musicians, poets, and drama coaches. A generous donation from renowned conductor Joe Illick and his wife, Gina, launched the violin program for third and fourth grade approximately 20 years ago, and the program continues to provide the foundational preparation for the band program in fifth and sixth grade. To strengthen the science focus, AMES works with the Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation and invites local scientists and mathematicians to speak to classes and organize after-school clubs. Moreover, as a leading computer science school, AMES collaborates closely with a digital learning coach to design and upgrade the Creative Commons area, a digital tools playground for students and staff alike. The area borders the library and has become tightly coordinated with library classes. Lastly, wrapped around the east corner of AMES sits a beautiful garden, designed in 2005 by parents, staff, and local community members, fully equipped with raised beds, outdoor and indoor classroom spaces, and an impressive greenhouse. Parents and staff work together to write grants to maintain, update, and expand the garden space. Furthermore, the Parent Teacher Committee has committed to contracting with a doctoral horticulturalist from Hungary to ensure students receive a weekly, high-quality gardening curriculum fully integrated with the academic curriculum and the historic significance of the land.

The forward-thinking technology department of the Santa Fe Public School District ensured all students have had 24/7 access to a personal device since March 2020 and that virtually all students have access to a high-quality broadband connection (in collaboration with the E-rate program and the Federal Communications Commission). In addition to the well-developed infrastructure, the district has heavily invested in Google Education platforms (and professional development and digital learning coaches), which enabled AMES to creatively transform its unique programming and adapt it to the virtual world through Google Meets and Google's cloud-based collaborative platforms, such as the Google Suite products. During remote learning, AMES continued to have spirit days, weekly schoolwide morning assemblies, a Valentine's Dance, National Dance Institute programming, and cross-grade student peer tutoring organized and delivered by student council members.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Acequia Madre Elementary uses a multidisciplinary integrated curriculum and instructional approach. Because each grade has just one teacher (one class year, currently in third grade, has two due to enrollment), all teachers create their own grade-level curriculum and instruction using the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and reflecting the individual needs of their students. In addition, the arts are used to implement a variety of academic content. While Covid-related remote learning and social distancing and changes in staffing (principals and teachers) has sometimes turned the arts-integrated curriculum into more of an “arts-enhanced” curriculum, teachers continue to use an arts-enhanced curriculum across grade levels as a tool to showcase students’ learning. As the world adapts to Covid, AMES’ main goal will be to find a pathway back to a more fully involved approach to teaching that fosters student understanding in both the art form and other curriculum areas and requires teachers to engage in professional development to learn about art standards and how to connect the arts to the curriculum they teach. This effort will be enhanced by the district’s standards-based planning initiative that provides for deconstructing CCSS into practical, useful, workable learning targets and success criteria; AMES will be allowed to focus on arts-integrated teaching and learning opportunities to help the students master (and, research on arts and student achievement suggests, exceed) the skills they are expected to acquire in each grade level.

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

In the area of English language arts, Acequia Madre Elementary School’s core curriculum is directly aligned to the Common Core State Standards. In addition, AMES implements the district-adopted language arts program, ReadyGen, as well as follows a structured literacy approach that emphasizes highly explicit and systematic teaching of all important components of literacy. These components include both foundational skills (e.g., decoding, spelling) and higher-level literacy skills (e.g., reading comprehension, written expression). ELA instruction is developed using researched-based practices from Guiding Readers and Writers by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnel, CORE Learning reading curriculum, Words Their Way by Donald Bear, Wilson Phonics Foundations, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, and guided reading using decodable readers.

Most importantly, formative and summative assessments drive instruction. These assessments include Istation, Star Reading, Accelerated Reader, Developmental Reading Assessment Running Records, and Foundations, as well as teacher-developed checklists, rubrics, and portfolios. Furthermore, students use reading-response notebooks to help with close readings of text and, subsequently, demonstrate their comprehension through conferring with their teachers, responding to text-dependent questions, and participating in other high-order thinking/questioning activities.

Teachers at Acequia Madre all share a common ambition to create “a classroom community” of readers and writers with the knowledge students learn best in a print-rich environment; instruction is not enough. As a result, students interact with reading throughout the day utilizing their own classroom libraries and a variety of other resources. Each classroom library provides high-quality, engaging texts to read independently, in a group, or with a buddy in a wide range of genres, levels, and interests to authentically match students to books of interest, as well as support their overall reading process. In addition, students have access to reading-practice apps, such as Accelerated Reader, Epic, Read Works, and the activities in Istation.

For writing, Acequia Madre Elementary employs the Writers Workshop model developed by Lucy Calkins (founder of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project). This platform takes a constructivist approach and centers on independent student work in combination with teacher modeling, one-on-one teacher/student conferring, and small group guidance. During writing instruction, teachers support all writers at their developmental level through scaffolding and modifying instruction. Calkins units of study allow

students to build strategies for writing a variety of genres, such as personal narratives and poems. Students use checklists to set goals for themselves and take ownership over their own writing progress.

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

The core of the AMES approach to math learning is helping students build a strong foundational understanding of mathematics by actively creating meaning through the connection of new knowledge to prior knowledge. The focus is on a solid foundation of number sense held together by the mortar of critical thinking, problem solving, and cooperative activities. Building a strong mathematical platform of number sense and metacognition is a crucial first step to scaffold math subcategories as developmentally appropriate. To do this, teachers use a variety of instructional approaches and materials that challenge students and support them in building new knowledge. The approach chosen is always intentional, keeping the students' learning styles in mind. Across grade levels, teachers utilize the Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) approach to build conceptual knowledge and support students' understanding of abstract concepts. Staff focuses heavily on hands-on activities and the use of math manipulatives. They then work with students to draw models to represent their thinking. Finally, teachers show students how to attach mathematical equations to these concepts to demonstrate their understanding. Teachers encourage students to use multiple strategies to solve problems while also building procedural and fact fluency. The use of slideshows and videos, explicit instruction of multiple strategies, and repetition contribute to this as well. Many teachers also enlist the students' help in creating anchor charts and math notebooks used for reference. Furthermore, teachers facilitate discourse, like Number Talks and Math Circles, to strengthen students' reasoning skills.

Acequia Madre students are assessed at the beginning of the year using Istation Math and other screening tools, many of which are based on the work of John van de Walle. The data from these assessments help teachers tailor their instruction to meet the needs of their students, as well as find appropriate resources for their lesson. In addition to following Common Core State Standards and using the district's core curriculum, Envision Math and Mid-School Math, teachers enhance their instruction with additional supplemental resources provided by Marilyn Burns, Everyday Mathematics, Greg Tang, and Illustrative Math. To reinforce mathematical concepts, students utilize technological resources such as code.org, ST Math (a research-based math program), ALEKs, First in Math, Khan Academy, and Math Olympiads.

Student progress is monitored on a monthly basis using iStation Math, and students are assessed at the end of each unit. Three times a year, third- through sixth-grade students take part in New Mexico's Measures of Student Success Assessment (NM-MSSA), a summative assessment.

To build professional learning in math among staff, many teachers attend outside professional development and share their new and enhanced learning with colleagues. As part of the AMES' professional learning community, teams align vertically to work on standards-based planning. This also helps teaching staff to know where students have been and where they are going and to develop a common vocabulary used schoolwide.

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

The Acequia Madre Elementary science curriculum is closely connected to the community (the Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories are in New Mexico) and is inspired by identifying and teaching to 21st century skills. Because a standards-based planning approach provides a broad framework of 21st century-aligned learning targets and success criteria, teachers can work with the digital learning coach to determine how technology and computer science can help students succeed.

All students are referred to as scientists and are encouraged to ask questions and define problems through sentence stems, such as "I notice, I observe, I wonder" and, "What would happen if ... and why?" In addition, science kits from the Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation provide rich opportunities for all students to develop and use models, plan and carry out investigations, and analyze data.

Among the culminating science projects is the STEAM Innovation Expo, which brings together innovative

STEAM projects and their creators from across the district. The students then briefly present and demonstrate their work and subsequently respond to any questions the audience may have. This year, several Acequia Madre students won awards. All students also participate in a school-based science fair for third through sixth graders.

Beside the 21st century learning skills, the school also connect to science through an innovative garden curriculum that ties various science standards with hands-on experience. During the 22 weeks of the academic year, the garden curriculum focuses on the different life cycles in nature, soil science, plant science, basic genetics, plant and animal anatomy, and other important topics. These topics are always adjusted to each grade level, and staff encourage critical thinking, analytical skills, and complex problem-solving. Research shows garden-based activities increase overall academic achievement, engagement, and learning in science classes. Students participate in weekly garden classes, after-school gardening, community events, and the summer program.

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

Working with the New Mexico standards and benchmarks in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards, Acequia Madre Elementary develops and implements a hands-on, project-based curriculum based on student interest and choice. The utilization of such resources as Scholastic News and the Santa Fe New Mexican (the local newspaper) help students stay up to date with current events around the nation and world.

Many of Acequia Madre Elementary's social studies and history objectives are mastered on the school's stage, where students actively apply what they have learned in the classroom through script-writing, characterization, stage composition, action, and expression. The annual Colonial Fair and sixth-grade productions on ancient civilizations are prime examples of bringing history to life on the stage. Creating a dramatization provides an authentic context for students to learn more about the social studies content, and as students delve deeper into the social studies content, their growing understanding impacts their dramatizations.

In addition to the standards, many teachers use the community's culture, location, and surrounding landscapes to enhance their social studies instruction. Classes can walk to nearby historic landmarks and museums and learn about the history and culture of New Mexico with direct exposure. For example, all Acequia Madre Elementary students recognize the importance of the Acequia Madre to the development of Santa Fe and the sustainability of the community because they've watched the water fill the ditch in the spring and possibly participated in the annual cleaning. Many students also pass by the state capitol each day and the older classes routinely take walking field trips to the capitol when the Legislature is in session. The location of the school also allows many local experts and guest speakers to visit classrooms and give presentations related to the curriculum. In past years, as sixth grade discovered the importance of archaeology, experts from the New Mexico Center of Archaeology have visited the classroom to present about local native settlements, such as Chaco Canyon, and allow the student to participate in exploring replica artifacts found in an actual archaeological dig in New Mexico. Together with the New Mexico Bar Association, local attorneys and judges on Constitution Day help teach the fifth grade about the United States Constitution.

Finally, the school garden program provides an outdoor space where students can enjoy nature and learn about the connections between food and culture, including the connection of culture to farming methods. As with the research showing the positive impact of garden programs on science learning, evidence also demonstrates school's gardens also have a positive impact on student teamwork, sense of responsibility, and awareness of environmental stewardship. During their garden classes, students learn about community by helping to maintain the garden for the school as a whole and by doing seasonal garden work (planting, sowing, composting, pruning etc.).

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

“Essentials” classes are an integral part of the Acequia Madre Elementary school day. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade receive 50-60 minutes of instructional time each week in the areas of art and music, in addition to time in library and physical education.

As a performing arts and arts-focused school, the arts are integral to all learning. Because every child is considered an artist, a guiding question is, What do artists do? Artists make art about things that matter to themselves and draw on their unique experiences, from academic to diverse personal cultures. In visual art, Acequia Madre Elementary’s choice-based art curriculum fosters engagement, creativity, and individual expression through exploration and discovery, inquiry and ideation, skill development and artmaking, reflection, and presentation.

In addition to visual art, Acequia Madre has a longstanding tradition of excellence in the performing arts. All students receive a comprehensive general music curriculum that incorporates singing, movement, instruments, music literacy, and performances. During music class, students are consistently making cross-curricular connections between their core subjects and music instruction. Literacy and numeracy are especially emphasized during music instruction. Music instruction includes violin in third and fourth grade and band in fifth and sixth grade.

Physical education at Acequia Madre Elementary School is guided by the mantra “move well, move often.” Instruction emphasizes age-appropriate movement standards, mobility, and strength for all students and includes running, jumping, throwing, catching, and tumbling. Students’ general physical preparedness is assessed using the Cooper Institute’s Fitnessgram tests for strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular endurance. In 2022, students learned the history and development of the ancient and modern Olympic Games coinciding with the Beijing Winter Games. The 100 Lap Running Club – a movement incentive program during pre-Covid-19 years – has returned to encourage movement outside of class sessions.

During library classes, students are introduced to a new and diverse collection of authors and literature. Students are given time to explore and choose from a wide variety of genres and books. Library instruction is focused on fostering a love of reading.

The National Dance Institute provides an in-school program of 50 minutes per week to the fourth grade class. Research on NDI shows advanced participants, who are recruited from school-based programs, have higher average standardized test scores and higher grade point averages. NDI strives to teach in a collaborative manner to ensure deep and authentic learning in the art form, providing opportunities for every student to be successful. Pre-pandemic, the program culminated in a final performance of hundreds of students from schools throughout the district.

All Acequia Madre students also have the opportunity to submit poetry, stories, comics, jokes, and artwork to Bull’s Eye, an annual schoolwide literary magazine. Selections for the magazine are curated by the fifth grade, which also solicits submissions through posters and assembly presentations. Three educators guide the students through the process of the editing and production refinement.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Student data from diverse sources is essential to recognize, acknowledge, and understand precisely where each student is on the academic continuum but is meaningless without the collaboration of educators in reviewing, revising, and articulating concerns. The results of authentic assessments, provided by the data coach, are used for identifying and subsequently verifying below-grade level students. Once the deficiencies

have been established, the teachers, reading interventionist, math coach, and principal begin the process of supporting struggling students to help them become independent lifelong learners.

If a student needs one-on-one or small group instruction, the reading interventionist, math coach, or both will utilize their extensive knowledge of well-researched intervention strategies to ensure students can grapple with material from different angles and achieve proficiency. If a student needs the curriculum modified to succeed, the teacher will differentiate on a deeper level from beginning to end. This can include presenting the concept in a new way and ascertaining the student's preferred delivery of new concepts. Approaches might include visualization techniques, manipulatives, modified assignments, more flexible due dates, and organizational strategies, along with a student-teacher collaborative rubric that includes academic choice, both the student and the teacher grading the rubric.

Students showcase their knowledge through various means of expression. For example, a student might verbally articulate the work, use an adult scribe, teach another student the skill just acquired, or drawing instead of writing a response. If the above strategies prove to be ineffective, the student is then referred to the Student Assistance Team, chaired by the principal and the data coach. This makes it possible for the principal to keep tabs on all performance data easily and support struggling students in a timely and effective manner by facilitating communication between interventionists, teachers, the wellness team, and the data coach.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Again, student data from diverse sources is essential to recognize, acknowledge, and understand precisely where a student stands in the academic timeline. Once the above-grade-level status of the student is established, educators meet and create a plan to address the needs of the student. The curriculum is adjusted to meet the learning capacity in all or some areas of study and is adjusted to provide time and resources so students can pursue areas of special interest. Some drill and repetition approaches and lesson reviews are eliminated to provide time for students to plan and complete project extensions from the standard curriculum and participate in independent study. Enriching activities emphasize higher-order thinking and cooperative learning and encourages out-of-the-box thinking, steering students away from the idea that thinking can be "right" or "wrong" and providing a safe environment that encourages and accepts mistakes.

For students performing above grade level in math, the math coach creates a menu of activities for the students to work on independently in the classroom. The menu, intended to introduce academic choice, also offers activities and games designed to do at home with family members. The math coach grades the activities on the math menu and shares the information with the classroom teacher. The activities stretch beyond the student's capabilities to foster critical thinking, logic, and reasoning. The math coach will also work one on one with students if it proves to be more beneficial to the student.

3c. Special education:

Acequia Madre Elementary has just under 10 percent of its student population in special education, although that figure is higher if students in speech (not language) services are included. All staff work with related service (speech, occupational therapy, etc.) providers to ensure all needs and time commitments are met per the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), including behavioral intervention strategies. All relevant staff have been recently certified in nonviolent intervention by the Crisis Prevention Institute.

Acequia Madre Elementary offers a continuum of services that includes inclusion as well as support in a special education setting. Staff and families work together to create a plan that provides for the least restrictive environment and flexibility of services. When developing strategies and interventions, students' strengths and learning styles are the foundation on which the services are built. Students attend and participate in IEPs and consideration of their expressed needs inform the decision-making process. Students are able to set goals, track their own data, and celebrate their growth in meaningful ways. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and articulate what works best for them. Evidence-based practices are combined with metacognition and executive function lessons with a focus on ownership for successes and progress. Special education teachers, general education teachers, and related service providers

collaborate continually to ensure consistency and share successful strategies.

Fourteen percent of the students at Acequia Madre Elementary also qualify as “gifted” and, therefore, receive special education services by the special education/gifted teacher. These services consist of multi-modal and cross-curricular project-based learning opportunities and encourage explorations that focus on building critical thinking, creativity, communication, and interpersonal skills. Students build self-understanding (metacognitive awareness) and independence in learning while acquiring advanced knowledge and developing interests. Acequia Madre Elementary also has twice exceptional students.

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

If a parent or guardian indicates their child speaks any language other than English during the enrollment process, New Mexico law requires a public school to assess the child’s English language proficiency. The WIDA Assessment is used at the beginning of each school year to determine which students need interventions. English Language Development and Access testing is conducted on a yearly basis to determine a student’s progress and whether a student can leave the program. The Access assessment has four components: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. English language development is instrumental in increasing a student’s English language proficiency and ability to acquire grade level content. Once in the program, all general education teachers, especially those who have ELL students in their classes, utilize visualization strategies, such as the GLAD model. Specific tactics are geared toward the students’ individual language acquisition needs. ELL students are also tied to TESOL-endorsed staff to ensure that any additional support, such as Imagine Learning interventions, are utilized as needed.

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

While Acequia Madre Elementary does not have many migrant or homeless families, the school works closely with homeless shelters and community organizations at various occasions each year. For example, this year students, families, and staff organized several food, basic sanitary supplies, and school supplies drives for the Afghan refugees relocated to Santa Fe. A student with Afghan roots also volunteered to do schoolwide presentations to help students and staff better understand the turbulent political situation in Afghanistan and its impact on Afghanistan’s citizens. In addition, the school participates in a food drive for Adelante, a local homeless shelter, and works closely with an Adelante liaison to ensure any students transferred to Acequia Madre Elementary from the center are well-supported. Acequia Madre Elementary families and staff have also collaborated with Wings for Hope to ensure all of students have winter coats to help them be comfortable when temperatures dip below freezing.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Acequia Madre Elementary staff employ the Responsive Classroom approach to teaching, an evidence-based method that brings together social-emotional (SEL) and academic learning throughout the day. From the first day of the school, AMES students from grades K-6 work with their teachers to develop a collaborative and inclusive learning environment through such activities as: 1) generating their own annual learning goals, 2) establishing classroom rules, 3) practicing and modeling academic and behavioral expectations, 4) setting up and maintaining the materials in the classroom, 5) developing logical behavioral consequences, and 6) creating playground guidelines. Students, thus, begin to create a climate of positive academic, social, and emotional learning that is built on throughout the rest of the school year. Grade-level morning meetings and weekly all-school assemblies provide daily opportunities for building community, strengthening interpersonal connections, and sharing individual experiences, successes, and projects.

Experiential learning is everywhere at AMES. A school board member once remarked that he loved visiting AMES because the students' excitement and love of learning was palpable the moment he walked through the doors. Here are just a few examples: Sixth graders are offered leadership opportunities, such as organizing Valentine's and Halloween celebrations, spirit days, morning announcements and assemblies, and field day, while fifth graders make early U.S. history come alive through an interactive colonial fair with demonstrations, folk dancing, and role playing. Each grade level works on a class-wide performance throughout the year — all tied to their classroom curriculum (in addition to a schoolwide winter performance). Students build and paint the sets and props during art class, learn and practice singing and movement during music instruction, and even come up with the performance theme and write the scripts during class time in the upper level grades. The link between performing art opportunities and student engagement and achievement has been well documented.

AMES engages students by establishing the school as a safe and welcoming environment for all students, often utilizing outside resources, such as Girls, Inc. and restorative justice mediators. These opportunities for leadership and advocacy not only boost self-efficacy among students but also ensures the school feels safe and welcoming to all identities and aspirations. Next, all students are explicitly recognized for desirable behaviors and excellent displays of upright citizenship. Students can receive an "awesome behavior" award for exemplary behavior and the accomplishment is recognized through a schoolwide announcement. At weekly assembly, each classroom takes turns presenting to the entire school. Students often share academic content but also share SEL strategies, such as meditation techniques, playground rules (composed by students), and artistic presentations. Classes also partner across grade levels for teaching and learning.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Acequia Madre Elementary staff have found the strategies most successful for student success and school improvement leverage the expertise of the community. A New Mexico Supreme Court Justice visited classrooms as part of Constitutional Law Day to discuss the history and meaning of state and federal constitutions, and the Santa Fe poet laureate has taught poetry lessons; St. John's College students provide tutoring services, and Girls, Inc., a local organization that champions female leadership and empowerment, provided training to the third grade girls on building and sustaining healthy and sustainable relationships. School board members and district administrators attend performances and community events. Neighbors are invited to garden workdays and to other school celebrations and fundraisers. In turn, the school community is invited to participate in the spring cleaning of the acequia and participates in the neighborhood festival of lights (called the Farolito Walk here in Santa Fe) attended by thousands of Santa Feans on December 24th. AMES is a vital part of neighborhood and community, and learning is deeply interwoven with long-held cultural traditions. These unique connections with community resources are an inextricable contributing factor to the success of the school.

Collaborations with the extensive local arts community resources projects with the Santa Fe Opera, International Folk Art Museum, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Pro Musica community orchestra, and

Artworks. Due to school's location, students can take walking field trips to historic sites in downtown Santa Fe, such as the Main Library, the Plaza, and the New Mexico History Museum. Teachers recommend and place students in the summer leadership programs at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and Breakthrough Santa Fe (a college preparatory program for first generation middle and high school students). Visiting artists come into classrooms to present pre- (and post-) performance workshops, and then accompany the classes on field trips to cultural offerings, such as classical music concerts, plays, dance recitals, and art museums.

Parents are encouraged to share their expertise with the students and school. Some offer after-school clubs; others volunteer at performances (costume and set design), the school garden, and fundraising events. Moreover, some parents have obtained their substitute license to support the school through temporary staffing shortages due to pandemic-related quarantine regulations.

This school-home connection clearly provides a strong boost to academic achievement potential by helping Acequia Madre Elementary erase any thresholds or barriers that may otherwise exist between the school and the surrounding communities.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Having a collaborative environment is an important part of AMES. Teachers and staff are included in many of the decision-making processes that take place. As with recent revisions to the pick-up and drop-off system or a new behavior response approach, staff members are consulted before any systemic changes are implemented and, more importantly, their input is incorporated. At the beginning of the school year, a committee consisting of several primary grade, upper grade, special services, and resource teachers worked together to create a master schedule. The administration values staff's needs and opinions. They want to ensure that what is being done works for the staff, students, and their families.

Teachers are also included in seeking out or creating professional development opportunities for their colleagues. Several years ago, staff members received extensive training in Responsive Classroom. Due to some turnover in staff, the current administration has made it a goal to leverage the expertise of those experienced teachers to provide in-house professional development to new staff members. This ensures SEL strategies are consistent and maintained throughout the school. Staff who run the professional development meetings seek input from their peers to ensure all staff feel included and the training fits their needs. Responsive Classroom professional development has been integrated into the school's strategic 90-day plan.

The administration also works with staff to investigate other professional development opportunities that could be beneficial and relevant. For example, 2 percent of the current student population has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, so the entire staff is receiving autism training and all relevant staff are receiving Crisis Prevention Institute training as well. In addition to in-house professional development, teachers are encouraged to seek training outside of school and district offerings and then share strategies and resources they receive, as well as information about upcoming training that might interest fellow staff members.

When the school transitioned into distance learning at the beginning of the pandemic, the administration held daily check-ins with the staff so they could share the joys and trials of remote learning and to provide staff with space and time to bounce ideas off one another. Furthermore, teachers were provided professional development training and support from the school's digital learning coach. The focus was to share ways teachers could modify their instruction to maximize student engagement and most effectively utilize their time.

This support for teachers continued during hybrid learning. The principal, secretary, and various other contributing staff members went into the school each day to work with entire classrooms and small groups of students. Those teachers still teaching from home felt reassured their students who required the greatest amount of assistance were receiving it from an experienced educator.

4. School Leadership:

Acequia Madre's leadership philosophy is built chiefly on four pillars: inclusiveness, collaboration, authenticity, and lifelong learning. Teachers' and principal's actions and demeanor not only set expectations and standards for all stakeholders but also provide an example for students (and parents) to emulate. This shapes and maintains the school culture. The principal at Acequia Madre Elementary strives to be inclusive by ensuring all voices of all stakeholders are heard, valued, and considered. Authentic collaboration builds ownership, pride, and capacity within the building, which translates into an all over positive climate that will ultimately far outlast current leadership. Recently the principal worked together with student ambassadors of three different grades to design a "fix-it" ticket as part of a larger discipline plan. Students helped think through natural consequences for unfortunate decisions and offered feedback on the design and parameters of the plan. Once their feedback was incorporated, the principal sent out the ticket to all staff to ensure the plan seemed fair and effective. Last, the student ambassadors have communicated the new plan to the other grade levels during morning assemblies. Once all stakeholders are aware and approve of the new plan, the new system will be implemented, and students will be able to see how their voices helped shape an equitable, accountable system that ultimately will have a positive impact on the entire school.

The fix-it ticket process is one of many examples that demonstrate Acequia Madre Elementary's inclusive, collaborative, and authentic approach to leadership for students, mirrored in how the staff works together to move the school forward as a staff. It is important to note as well that the fix-it ticket is a positive, hopeful approach to discipline (as opposed to punishment and rejection) and is in addition accompanied by an "awesome behavior" form to ensure excellent behaviors and attitudes are highlighted and offered as examples to aspire to.

Acequia Madre Elementary's collaborative approach extends to all members of the community. One custodian loves to sing mariachi and will be featured at the sixth grade graduation ceremony. At Acequia Madre school, each and every individual contributes to overall academic and socio-emotional success.

While all staff is involved in important decision-making because of the collaborative leadership structure, AMES does have a Leadership Team, typically consisting of a teacher representative of the younger grades and a teacher representative of the upper elementary grades. Together, the team works, not just on the bigger academic and socio-emotional challenges such as the 90-day plan, but also on keeping the school's highly valued community traditions and rites in place (or innovating and adapting them). AMES also has an Instructional Leadership Team, which focuses mainly on standards-based planning and grading, a new initiative rolled out by the Santa Fe Public Schools that focuses on mastery of learning targets rather than inputs like on-time homework. Lastly, the principal and the math/data coach both lead the Student Assistance Team. This enables the principal to keep a close eye on all struggling students and ensure they are receiving appropriate interventions to support their academic and socio-emotional needs. The school has one reading interventionist and one math/data coach to bolster this effort.

Finally, because the school is small, the one secretary must act as an assistant principal and personal assistant to every staff member, student, and family. The Acequia Madre community treasures its school secretary, and the secretary's birthday is a schoolwide celebration.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Acequia Madre Elementary is uniquely positioned in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion. While the school site is located in the charming and, therefore, much coveted, expensive, historic district, less than half of the students actually reside in the neighborhood. Over 50 percent of students, all selected through a random lottery process, travel from all over the city to attend the school. This means Acequia Madre Elementary serves students from a wide variety of backgrounds with significant differences in social, economic, and cultural capital. AMES is arguably the most diverse school in the district because the Tibetan community and other ethnic communities have decided it's the school for them. In addition, international academics on fellowships at the American School of Research often end up sending their children to Acequia Madre because of the proximity to the center.

To provide an inclusive environment that goes beyond mere equitable practices, the staff has made a conscious effort to bring in a wide variety of voices to enhance the curriculum. Despite being small, the staff is diverse, hailing from various places across the globe, such as Germany, Mexico, Hungary, and Belgium. In addition, community stakeholders from a diverse range of backgrounds enhance the curriculum content and expose students to a myriad of role models. For example, Darryl Wellington, a local poet laureate, has read his own poetry and taught poetry to the sixth grade students, several parents from across multiple grades have taught students about the lunar new year, Black culture, European culture and habits, and Diwali, the Indian New Year celebration, and students have tuned in to online presentations about, for example, the work of multidisciplinary artist Fyutch Simmons.

Besides bringing in distinct voices from the community, staff also instills respect for other cultures and differences through explicit tokens of appreciation. The principal speaks Spanish to the custodians and includes them in staff celebrations, performances, student learning, and the sixth grade graduation ceremony. One of the third grade teachers speaks German to some of the German-speaking students, and the first grade teacher invites parents and staff to speak to the students in their native languages and present something valuable from their cultures. Furthermore, each morning the sixth graders recognize the Native land the school is built on (White Water Shell Place) to ensure Native students are acknowledged. Moreover, kindergartners lead the school each morning into the New Mexico pledge that references the Zuni Pueblo Zia symbol of perfect friendship among united cultures.

To ensure families are welcomed at the school, the garden is open to various celebrations, community workshops, and Parent Teacher Committee meetings. To support parents in their interests and career pursuits, parents are invited to propose and lead-school clubs addressing a wide range of needs, including academics (homework support for example) to STEAM projects (e.g., choir or computer science club) to life skills classes (e.g., cooking classes or bike basics).

Finally, the district is currently providing monthly diversity and inclusion training to all principals and interested staff. In combination with the principal's doctoral degree in educational leadership and his dissertation on the impacts of identity labeling on student self-efficacy, Acequia Madre Elementary is well-positioned to continue on a road of improvement and take the lead in diversity and inclusion efforts.

All such practices significantly impact the students' sense of belonging in the school. Coupled with a socio-emotional, holistic curriculum grounded in Responsive Classroom, restorative justice, and the performing arts, Acequia Madre Elementary is a true reflection of the cultural, historic, economic, and social narratives that make up the Santa Fe community.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Perhaps paradoxically, it is the breadth of offerings at Acequia Madre Elementary that is the one thing that makes it an exceptional school. The diverse Acequia Madre students are confident, ready learners because they can find where they fit among the widely varied curriculum steeped in practice and closely tied to the community. All students have an opportunity to shine, with different activities showcasing each student's unique talents and gifts. Consequently, students' self-esteem and confidence in their abilities is increased.

Among the opportunities unique to Acequia Madre Elementary within the Santa Fe Public Schools:

First and foremost, Acequia Madre Elementary's use of Responsive Classroom empowers the students as they learn in a safe, secure environment where students are comfortable taking risks in their learning. In addition to Responsive Classroom, students' social emotional needs are being addressed, after a year of remote learning, with the implementation of a restorative justice program in certain classes.

Second, Acequia Madre Elementary's location within the heart of Santa Fe's historic and art communities allows students to extend their learning opportunities by walking to museums, historic sites, and even the state capitol, where students are able to view first-hand what they have learned in the classroom. At times, they can apply what they have learned by serving as pages for the New Mexico Legislature.

Third, AMES has developed an amazing garden where students attend weekly classes about gardening in the spring and fall. The older students are even given the opportunity to help plan the garden for the upcoming growing season. In the fall, students are able to join in the harvest.

Fourth, arts have been an integral part of Acequia Madre for decades. Whether it's fourth-grade students dancing with the National Dance Institute of New Mexico in the gym or selected older students who have continued their training through NDI's after-school programs dancing past the art hanging in the halls or third graders squeaking through their first violin lessons while fifth graders practice colonial era songs on their recorders, the school is filled with the voices and sounds of students preparing for class performances, musical theater, or choir, violin, or band. A visitor to the school can easily see where the heart of Acequia Madre lies. From the first step through the doors, the view is filled with the artwork of current students, former students, and visiting artists. Art is part of every lesson, and all students can submit visual art and creative writing to the annual Bull's Eye Literary Magazine.

Fifth, Acequia Madre has extracurricular activities that give students additional opportunities to explore their interests and succeed beyond the school day. In addition to performance and STEAM clubs, the annual yearbook is created by students in a club where they learn photography, how to lay out pages, and how to take a project from concept to completion under the guidance and editing of the yearbook sponsor. Students who enjoy athletics have opportunities to develop their skills in basketball, soccer, and track. A wide selection of after-school programs offer something for everyone.

Acequia Madre focuses on developing the entire student. The school's wide ranging curriculum and other activities demonstrate our belief that all students can be successful if given the correct tools and opportunities. Acequia gives all students the chance to shine, building their self-esteem and confidence along the way.