

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Linda Rankin Givens Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 655 Park Vista Drive  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Las Vegas State NV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 89138-7586

County Clark County

Telephone (702) 799-1430 Fax (702) 799-1485

Web site/URL  
<https://givenselementary.wixsite.com/givenselementary> E-mail hungedr@nv.ccsd.net

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr Jesus Jara E-mail jarajf@nv.ccsd.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Clark County School District Tel. (702) 799-2273

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 Ms. Irene Cepeda  
(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.)

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 240 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 60 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 53 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools

353 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

- 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

- 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	9	2	11
K	58	42	100
1	48	44	92
2	54	53	107
3	60	41	101
4	60	55	115
5	63	73	136
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>	352	310	662

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 16.3 % Asian
  - 3.2 % Black or African American
  - 17 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 49.5 % White
  - 12 % 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: 10%

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	27
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	38
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	65
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	625
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

English, Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Cantonese), Chinese (Zhan Gwen), Korean, Russian, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Sinhala, Urdu, Marshalla, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Punjabi, Serbian (Srpski), Persian (Dari), Filipino, Vietnamese, and Arabic

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %

Total number students who qualify: 156

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 12 %  
82 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>62</u> Autism                 | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>34</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: 8
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.	42
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.	6
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

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%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

Ensure the academic and social success of every student.

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

<https://ccsd.net/district/info/non-discrimination/msharley@interact.ccsd.net?employees>

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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Linda Rankin Givens Elementary school is located in a suburban area of Las Vegas, Nevada. Most locals would refer to this area as Summerlin. It can be found on the western edge of the city not far from the famous Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. Summerlin is also home to City National Arena, the practice facility for our Vegas Golden Knights National Hockey League team. The Summerlin community is known by locals for its shopping centers, golf courses, fabulous parks and beautiful neighborhoods. Givens Elementary can be found nestled within a neighborhood known as the Vistas. Adjacent to our school campus one can find a park that houses various forms of recreation such as; baseball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, a football field, a community pool, and much more. Needless to say, Summerlin is an active community. Not only are our students and parents active recreationally, our community stakeholders are quite active within our school. Givens Elementary School families are involved at every level, so it is common to see parent volunteers at the school on a daily basis. Our after school events and activities are always highly attended. Our back to school Meet and Greet, as well as our annual school Open House are always a great success with attendance rates above 90%. We boast an active PTA that meets monthly and circulates a newsletter with upcoming events and activities. Fundraising events are always supported and allow us to provide opportunities such as field trips to area attractions such as Anderson Dairy, Nevada State museum, and many more. Fundraising also helps provide for field trips outside of Nevada to places such as; Sea Camp, AstroCamp, and the Pali institute in California. We hold monthly School Organizational Team meetings, where parents serve as elected officials and help make decisions that directly impact our school. The Linda Rankin Givens school community celebrates and speaks highly of our school on every annual survey conducted by the Clark County School District.

Engagement is the backbone that fuels our students' desire to learn. We encourage teachers to create highly engaging lessons using high leverage strategies to keep students wanting more. We held staff development training sessions on strategies such as; Kagan, brain research, depth of knowledge, high level questioning, blended learning and many more. As a staff we were trained in the implementation of Positive Based Interventions and Supports (PBIS) for our students. This school wide behavior system held students accountable for their actions and promoted consistency. We hold monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to discuss student achievement data, progress monitoring, and how we can adjust our teaching to meet the needs of each and every student. Once a month we ask grade level teams to meet with administration and our learning strategist to discuss our most at-risk students. Individual teachers will bring a small list of students to the table. As a team we develop intervention plans to assist these selected students to reach their full potential. During these monthly meetings we analyze and monitor student progress over time and adjust the plans as needed. We implemented one to one Chromebooks for all students to give them access to digital content. Each classroom is outfitted with an ELMO and Smartboard so that staff can display digital materials to their learners.

Givens Elementary offers a variety of programs to support students in need of an Individualized Education Plan. We have staff on site that dedicate time outside of their contractual day to test and identify students who may have a learning disability. Some of these identified students are enrolled in Givens' pre-K programs to give them early interventions so that they may strive towards social and academic success. We also offer K-5 services for students with disabilities. Some of these students are serviced within the general classroom setting using a push in model provided by a Instructional Assistant. Other students may utilize a resource room staffed by a trained special education licensed teacher. We also offer a primary and intermediate classroom setting for students identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Each of these classrooms have a licensed Special Education teacher along with a Specialized Teacher Assistant (SPTA) for additional support. Although these two programs are self-contained some students are mainstreamed into the general educational setting with support from their Resource teacher or SPTA.

Givens Elementary prides itself in identifying gifted and talented students. In fact, as a school, we have one of Clark County School District's highest enrollments of GATE students. Our GATE program offers project based learning modalities and access to LEGO Mindstorm robotics and 3-D printing. All students have access to the Scott-Foresman-Addison Wesley enVision Math series along with its digital counterpart Savvas Learning. This allows students to have access to the content digitally at school and at home. For

Language Arts, our student body has access to the National Geographic Reading series which offers students a wonderful blend of fiction and nonfiction reading material. Using the Cengage platform provided by our adopted reading series, our students have access to educational material digitally at school or in the home creating an unprecedented accessibility for all of our students.

Beyond academics, we offer our student body a myriad of extra curricular activities. We have a garden club that maintains and operates three raised garden beds and a row of fruit trees. These dedicated students take pride in their ability to grow anything in our desert environment, and have invited local chefs to demonstrate the farm to table approach. We have a flag football team that participates in a league with other local elementary schools. We take pride in allowing a variety of students to participate and understand it is about the team atmosphere over winning championships. We also have a cheerleading squad that consists of a recreational team and a competitive team. These students and families attend all events and create great comradery amongst our school community. We have a school counselor that holds classroom lessons and conducts small groups meetings based off of the data from surveys pertaining to the social emotional and well being of our students. We have a club called Grizzlies Give that works on community projects such as assisting at the local animal shelter, visiting nursing homes, and gathering items needed for homeless shelters. The students in this club spearhead their own community service projects. The goal of this club is to teach children how important it is to give back to the community they love. We also host a monthly recognition ceremony where selected students enjoy pizza with the Principal. The students are selected by their teachers for embodying the monthly character trait.

We did not allow COVID-19 or our mandated quarantine to slow us down. Teachers were already versed in using the Chromebook and Google Classroom as a way to deliver content. As a school, we had been utilizing digital content for several years before the onset of COVID-19. Staff had been using G-Suite for Education, Canvas, Freckle, Pear Deck, Kahoot and many other forms of digital content to plan and deliver daily instruction.

## **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:**

Across all grade levels, we work diligently to unify our instructional approaches. Our overarching philosophy is that “it takes a village.” We possess a significant advantage due to our low transiency rate for both students and staff. Our enrollment consists of involved families with many siblings and thus naturally provides a sense of familiarity with our high expectations. Therefore, teachers are able to easily establish relationships with students, both in their classroom and across grade levels. Inevitably, stronger bonds with students and families results in higher achievement. As a staff, we have been able to dissect the Standards to ensure that instruction is scaffolded from Pre-K to 5th grade and still allot for multiple opportunities to revisit topics in a variety of ways. It is not uncommon for our intermediate teachers to work with primary students, and vice versa. Teachers are willing to share resources across grade levels to meet the needs of underperforming students or those that need enrichment. Several of our teachers have taught multiple grade levels and are able to share instructional insights with their respective teams.

When a shared approach to instruction is commonplace, teachers are supported by their colleagues and feel that their burden is lessened, which likewise results in improved teacher efficiency. As an ongoing school-wide goal, we continue to become more student-centered in our approach when delivering instruction. We’ve witnessed the success associated with student choice when completing independent projects. Student interest is piqued when offered simulated experiences such as virtual field trips, and engagement is increased when working in small peer groups to problem-solve. We’ve created opportunities for students to participate in individual and group competitions, use manipulatives to further understanding, and attend presentations from guest experts. Overall, direct instruction has decreased in favor of more productive learning, in which our teachers serve as facilitators.

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

Differentiation is our game changing instructional reading approach. As reading is interwoven into every subject we teach; differentiation is interwoven into the way we teach reading. By meeting each student’s reading level in their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), true progress occurs. Our teachers are reading experts. They’re able to assess, gauge, intervene, monitor, and determine next steps for their students. They work cooperatively with families to develop positive reading habits. Teachers supplement our school-wide reading series with enrichment activities, engaging reading experiences, and wide text exposure. Teachers differentiate the delivery of language arts instruction, the level of complexity, and means of assessing. Adjusting reading instruction to meet student’s needs exists within our balanced literacy approach and is the reason our students outscore the 5th largest school district in the nation, on high stakes reading assessments.

Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Reading Foundational Skills, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language, and Knowledge of Language are the strands that are addressed throughout our daily reading instruction. First and foremost, teachers use MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessments as a screener tool to determine each student’s strengths and areas of focus. Diagnostic assessments are then administered to students that require more prescriptive results. By narrowing a student’s reading deficit or strength, teachers are then able to design more targeted lessons. Whole group reading instruction is most often represented in mini-lessons. Our teachers use assessment results to create small, flexible ability groups. By differentiating instruction in these small groups, focus skills are taught based on need.

Our student population is equipped with resources to guide our students to become lifelong readers. By involving families and invested community stakeholders, students are supported in their ELA (English Language Arts) learning journey. Local bookstores host storytelling events for our families, neighborhood restaurants reward our students for reading stamina, and Literacy Nights showcase student work. We welcome visiting authors, middle and high school alumni as “buddy readers”, and parents in classrooms as

guest readers. Every classroom in our building boasts its own extensive library in addition to access to a leveled literacy lab filled with student and teacher resources. Students are provided with free access to multiple online ELA programs designed to review and practice reading, writing and spelling with adaptability to improve student's individual progress. By engaging families through reading challenges, published student writing pieces, book exchanges, and providing every student with weekly reading materials to take home, we are instilling that our belief in a strong ELA foundation is imperative for reading success and for enjoyment.

Upon completion of our MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) ELA assessment window, teachers share scores and results with each student's family. A family-friendly report helps explain their student's growth from season to season over time. It offers an opportunity for teachers and parents to openly discuss present levels and literacy goals. In intermediate and primary groups, we analyze our high stakes annual test results to determine areas of strength and focus. These ELA assessments results likewise inform our overall school improvement plan, student learning goals and action steps needed to attain growth in literacy.

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

Mathematics is a curricular area that has become our school-wide focus in which to improve upon. After analyzing our State Assessment results, we noticed two outlying factors. The first factor is that there is a commonality across intermediate grade levels regarding both our strengths and areas of focus. Secondly, although relatively strong with numbers and operations, our primary students showed academic gaps within varying content areas, such as counting money, telling time, or identifying fractions. Our curricular approach is multi-dimensional. We want to ensure that teachers are able to identify grade-level standards that need reteaching while still maintaining appropriate pacing for the year. Additionally, our staff continues to unwrap their grade-level standards and those standards applicable to the grade level prior to and for the following year.

Our instructional approaches vary to meet the demands of our student population. As with all of our curricular areas, our instruction encompasses multiple avenues to ensure all types of learning are addressed. A significant advantage is that our entire student population utilizes the same math resources. Consistency has assisted us tremendously in a scaffolded approach to teaching and reteaching mathematical concepts.

One of the assessments that teachers rely on is a "Quick Check." This serves as an introduction to the lesson and offers instructors a gauge to see what students already know. We've found that implementing this review/check has increased instructional minutes by focussing on what students are ready to learn. It is also at this point that teachers are able to adjust accordingly if it appears that students need reinforcement with a particular concept. We've improved success in math by posing problem-based questions to promote student discourse as well as another informal checkpoint to gauge student understanding.

As with all of our content areas, reliance on small flexible groups have proven to yield greater success than whole group direct instruction. With teacher guidance, students know that small groups are fluid and, at times, can be self-selected to offer students some ownership over their learning. When students are working in math groups with partners or peers, teachers provide a variety of formative assessments to determine where reteaching may be needed. The formative assessments are offered in multiple ways, so that all learners are able to "show what they know." Sometimes this is evidenced through a math game, traditional paper and pencil worksheet, or creative problem-based activities.

Every K-5 student participates in a MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment 3 times annually. The data yielded from this adaptive assessment gives staff an opportunity to view school-wide, grade level, classroom, and student performance. In grade-level groups, we analyze the strengths of the team. If there's a particular strength that is another grade level's deficit, collaboration is the next step to improve student performance. Due to the MAP assessment's adaptability design, the results are a true reflection of a student's skills. The results come in a user-friendly format with clear explanations that is an effective conversation starter when communicating with families. By sharing current mathematical data, families become more apt to invest in their child's mathematical progress.

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

Science learning standards are addressed through the use of a district-provided curricular resource, hands-on experiences, inquiry, design, and investigations in the realms of science and engineering. Science instruction in our classrooms is synonymous with group dialogue, shared experiences, and naturally lends itself to robust student discourse. The NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) framework was devised so that core science ideas remain consistent as performance expectations are scaffolded from year-to-year. As our students advance from preschool through 5th grade, the content complexity increases. Students in grades 3-5 participate in a science MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment three times yearly. First, we analyze MAP results to identify trajectories for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders collectively. Next, we look for both positive and negative trends by disaggregating each individual classroom's data. After narrowing down the results to a specific standard, teachers target science content to fill in academic gaps and also provide enrichment based on our areas of strength. Our current data shows that 82% of our 3rd graders, 83% of our 4th graders, and 93% of our 5th graders meet or exceed the district threshold. Our impressive science MAP data shows that our intermediate students outscored the district by 27, 29, and 40 percent respectively.

What science instructional approaches would you observe if on our campus? Our staff utilizes an agreed upon, common scientific vocabulary to ensure consistency for all of our learners. Through teacher efforts, we have a stocked, organized, and student-centered science lab providing a productive space to work. A variety of living creatures in primary classrooms are shared with intermediate classrooms to provide increased opportunities for scientific observation. Assigning a primary student an intermediate lab partner resulted in a genuine investment in the lessons (protégé effect) and academic/interpersonal relationships organically formed. Our endeavor is to ensure that our elementary scientists are engaged learners, building intrinsic motivation, forming campus connections, evidenced by growth on mandated assessments.

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

Through combined efforts from our staff, and extensive collaboration, we have creatively planned lessons and assessments that embed social studies standards within our ELA (English Language Arts) instruction. Departmentalized social studies teachers have become experts at designing PBL (project based learning) activities. Upon implementation, we have witnessed notable school-wide improvement, specifically from students that typically struggle with reading. Nonfiction, high-interest articles have been particularly motivating. Through the lens of current events, literacy instruction sparks student interest which likewise increases overall learning. To build a literacy home-school bridge, we provide each pre kindergarten to 5th grade student a yearly subscription. Every student receives their own copy of a weekly, non-fiction social studies magazine. Students also have access to online content including interactive comprehension games, language and vocabulary support, and extension activities. To support teachers' lesson delivery, the subscription includes research-based lesson plans. The researched-based accompaniments to the magazine offer quality formative assessments covering both ELA and social studies NVACS (Nevada Academic Content Areas). This cross-curricular connection uses a traditional literacy approach while actually assessing social studies. Grade level teachers analyze assessment results and use them to guide future instruction, determine student interest trends, and identify topics that teachers and students opt to explore further.

Social studies instruction is evident across all grade levels. In primary classrooms, Holidays Around the World activities are an effective and engaging way for students to study traditions around the world, identify geographical locations, sample food from various cultures, and document their learning through journal entries. Intermediate students build galleries of United States state reports after extensive study and present their findings to a peer group. Fifth graders teachers support students in accepting the Great American challenge. To meet the needs of all of our learners, we strategically create units of study which ensure social studies content is presented authentically within an ELA context.

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

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

Our school offers preschool for three and four-year-old students. In our Early Childhood program, we utilize “Creative Curriculum.” Creative Curriculum focuses on the interest areas of: Literacy, Mathematics, Social Studies, Arts, and Technology. Additionally, we incorporate five distinct skills that contribute to a positive learning environment. These include social/emotional, cognitive, communication/language, motor, and self-help domains.

The alignment of early childhood and kindergarten-grade three academic standards is outlined in our crosswalk resources. The crosswalk defines the necessary skills for a particular standard. It connects the learning objectives, related vocabulary, and offers essential questions for enrichment. Most notably, it shows prerequisites for each kindergarten standard. Knowing specifically what kindergartens will be expected to master, our preschool students are exposed to skills to ensure their preparedness.

The positive impact of early education is evident in our primary grades. Due to our low transiency rate, we are able to track many of our students as they advance from preschool to kindergarten. With a high percentage of continuously enrolled students, we analyze the effectiveness of our preschool program and adjust accordingly each new school year.

In August, kindergarten teachers administer the Brigance Assessment. Those students that attended preschool typically show strengths in multiple areas over their peers whose first educational experience is in the kindergarten classroom. We also have found that the entering kindergarteners have higher letter and sound recognition after attending our preschool.

Oftentimes, their strong social skills are evident simply due to exposure and interactions with peers and adults on our campus. In addition to entering Kindergarten with a strong social and academic foundation, students are also well-equipped with our school-wide expectations and procedures. Finally, our preschool families have already been welcomed into our school community. The exposure to climate, social, and academic opportunities contributes to a greater level of success in the early primary grades.

Using a checkpoint scale, our observational data helps determine readiness skills that drive classroom instruction in preschool. Three times annually, preschool students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate their skills based on 51 different objectives. Students are identified as delayed, on target, or advanced based on each objective. Our preschool teacher can then guide and adjust her instruction based on each individual student’s needs.

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

Our school’s other curricular areas include art, music, P.E. (physical education), and library. Each specialist serves our general student population, from kindergarten to 5th grade, which is approximately 650 students. We work to appreciate the talents our students possess beyond the typical classroom. We utilize a rotation system so that students participate in a special class at least once per week for 50 minutes, aside from P.E., which is held twice weekly.

Our Physical Education (P.E.) specialist is an athlete that exhibits and supports a healthy lifestyle. Our students have been taught the importance of exercise both within and outside of the P.E. setting. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with our P.E. instructor to align health, math, science, social studies, ELA (English Language Arts), and P.E. standards appropriate for their respective grade levels. Utilizing a structured long-term plan, students are able to document their physical skills, such as pushups, running, and flexibility, several times throughout the school year. Tracking their progress serves as a goal-setting opportunity while students are simultaneously participating in essential P.E. skills and activities.

Our art specialist is a published author/illustrator whose passion for the visual arts wholly supports our student’s acquisition of artistic knowledge. She presents art lessons that are paired with literature and illustrations to give students a deeper grasp of language and support ELA (English Language Arts) standards. Students are exposed to Art History and study the links between artists of the past and present. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with our art instructor to align health, math, science, social studies, ELA (English Language Arts), and art standards appropriate for their respective grade levels. Our specialist

addresses student health and safety within her art classroom. Within a structured lesson, she naturally incorporates the proper usage of art supplies, procedures to keep the art room clean and organized, and the safe ways to handle artists' tools.

Our librarian instructs our general student population and allows all students the opportunity to check out a book every week. She effectively meets her instructional goal by guiding students to become competent users and producers of information and ideas. She ensures that technology and resources are accessible to both students and staff. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with our librarian to align health, math, science, social studies, ELA (English Language Arts), and library standards appropriate for their respective grade levels. Our librarian has created a safe and inviting space where students read, research, and enhance their critical thinking skills.

Our music specialist is a local instrumentalist whose devotion to music and students is evident in every aspect of her instruction. She ensures all learning styles are represented through the use of movement, listening, singing, and playing of instruments such as recorders, drums, and xylophones. She has completed Level I and Level II of the Orff Schulwerk Certification courses. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with our music instructor to align health, math, science, social studies, ELA (English Language Arts), and music standards appropriate for their respective grade levels.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

We utilize a myriad of assessments to determine how to best tailor instruction, interventions, and assessments for underperforming students. The information yielded from summative district-mandated tests, screeners, formative surveys, teacher's anecdotal records, online practice, and diagnostic assessments are only our initial determiner of the type of intervention to employ. When one of our students is not making adequate growth, the long term improvement plan isn't solely the responsibility of the teacher on record. Rather, our RTI (Response to Instruction) team collaborates to support the classroom teacher and the struggling student.

After identifying students that are scoring below the 10th percentile on our district mandated MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment, our teams' roles are delegated. The school nurse conducts vision and hearing screeners. The school learning strategist provides student materials for at-home practice. The school counselor shares relevant student behavioral data. The school psychologist communicates with families of struggling students. The school office clerk shares any relevant information from previously attended schools. The school administration supports the classroom teacher and enforces RTI compliance. The school learning strategist facilitates the analysis of assessment results alongside the classroom teacher and pinpoints appropriate intervention.

When faced with the task of closing the achievement gap, teachers consistently invest time in daily interventions with small groups of students. Using differentiated instruction and meeting students at their academic level over a period of 6-9 weeks allows ample time to monitor student's progress and make instructional decisions.

As part of a statewide reading initiative, schools are legally required to notify families of students that are deemed at-risk. On our campus, notification to parents serves as a communication tool and often forges a school-home relationship with a common goal of student success.

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

Differentiated instruction is a key component of lesson planning at our school. Teachers utilize small group instruction to tailor the needs of all their learners. Teachers will create guided reading groups to engage students at their instructional level. It is not uncommon to see multiple reading groups within one classroom, teachers use diagnostic materials such as CORE Phonics, Diagnostic Reading Assessments (DRA) and Qualitative Spelling Inventory (QSI) to precisely know each child's reading level. Similarly in math,

teachers will use assessments to determine if a student needs small group instruction to reach that student at their ability level. We also conduct benchmark assessments 3 times annually to determine student growth over time. The MAP assessment provides a blueprint for each student so that the classroom teacher can analyze a child's strengths and weaknesses based on grade level standards. Using the data from this report, teachers and students alike can create appropriate goals for the school year and check the progress along the way. Students and teachers have access to the MAP Accelerator digital platform. MAP Accelerator has videos and tutorials that allow students to work at their own pace. Also, the school built into the master calendar time during each day for tutorial and enrichment activities. During this time, grade levels work together to create lessons that provide extensions on various topics to extend student learning for those students that are ready. Teachers are able to utilize project based learning activities to promote student engagement and encourage high level thinking. Teachers have access to Full Option Science System (FOSS) kits that are aligned to the Next generation Science Standards (NGSS). These kits give students a hands-on approach to science discovery that fosters inquiry based learning strategies. Our Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) teacher will test each and every second grader for the GATE program which begins at grade three. By testing all students, we are ensuring that all students have equal access to this dynamic program.

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

When an IEP meeting is held for a student receiving special education services at our school, the classroom teacher is invited to the meeting. They are able to provide information on grade level expectations, as well as, help plan how they can scaffold and support the lesson so that a child needing special education services can take part in the lesson or activity. In many cases with our students in the autism classrooms, a specialized teaching aide (SPTA) will accompany that child during the time they join the general education setting and provide direct support to help the student find success. We also have students that have an IEP that are not part of a self contained classroom. These students are placed in a general education classroom but may need the support of a special education paraprofessional or at times, may travel to a resource room to gain that small group direct support from a licensed special education teacher. Each and every IEP will directly state how and where we will deliver the support outlined in the IEP. Oftentimes, students need to go beyond academic support. Sometimes a student may need occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech therapy to help them fully engage in the lesson. If these needs are identified during the IEP process, then we can provide those services on site.

Our students and their families, special education teachers, administration, and general education teachers are integral members of a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team. Input regarding all facets of an IEP are required and welcomed by our team. By tailoring instruction and creating goals, the diverse needs of our special education population can be better served.

To work towards accessing general education curriculum, collaboration between a student's homeroom teacher and their special education teacher is imperative. Together they brainstorm lesson supports, short and long term plan, consider best practices including accommodations, and determine the specialized instruction that the student deserves.

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

Our EL (English Learner) population has steadily increased over the past two years. Currently, there are over 20 different languages spoken by our students and families. Our teaching staff has been trained to help students acquire the English language. Several of our classroom teachers earned additional credentials to become TESOL endorsed (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) specialists. Over the past two years, our staff participated in professional development to implement the Academic Language and Content Achievement Model (ALCA-M) into our daily instruction. Our teachers strategically ensure that instruction in all content area classes create multiple opportunities for second language students to engage in activities and assignments. Simultaneously, EL students develop conceptual understandings of core concepts, engage in key analytical practices, and develop the language needed for these practices. We also use the information from the WIDA Consortium (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment) to identify our students needing language support. Those identified participate in after-school tutoring sessions to gain support in

learning the English language. Also, during our scheduled tutorial and enrichment time, students needing support with language instruction can meet in small groups or work individually using the Imagine Learning digital learning platform. Also, our second grade assessment tool that we use to determine which students will be eligible for gifted and talented (GATE) instruction has been modified to decrease the language barrier that may have inhibited our ELL students from demonstrating their intellectual abilities. Furthermore, the adaptation to this screener has given some of our ELL population access to our GATE program who may have previously overlooked. Within the classroom setting, teachers offer a variety of assessment opportunities to meet the diverse needs of their student population including English language learners. These opportunities allow for teachers to gain authentic assessment of individual students strengths.

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

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

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

Social and emotional growth is equitable to academics in our building. The success of one is contingent on the success of the other. We actively work to provide a positive environment that supports students on every level. This is understood as our common practice, and we strive to achieve a welcoming atmosphere that's felt upon entering our front doors. Our goal during remote learning was to maintain student engagement using innovative, albeit non-traditional methods to continue the business of educating students. Rather than approach remote learning as a barrier, we chose to focus on the advantages and the ingenuity of our staff to combat the inevitable challenges associated with distance education.

In a typical school year, students' academic and social/emotional well-being is at the forefront of all that we do. Developing motivation with our students has been most successful through an exploratory instructional approach. One accomplishment is the creation of a school garden. The planning process incorporated real-world math, such as measurement and cost comparisons. Students researched flowers, fruits, and plants that are best suited for growing in a desert considering the heat and water needs. Effectiveness of irrigation systems were tested and revised for optimal watering. We partnered with a local company that assists schools in garden education. This company helped us train our students by supporting teachers with curriculum aligned with NVACS (Nevada Academic Content Standards). Students worked in small groups to create garden layouts and conducted peer reviews to determine (using a rubric) pros and cons of the suggested designs. Parents volunteered their time, resources, and energy to assist in the creation of our garden. A classroom teacher assisted students in organizing a school-wide penny drive to earn funds to support the purchases and upkeep for the garden. This level of involvement, alignment of standards, applicability to preschool-5th graders, research, and passion is our expectation in the activities that we offer our students.

Our ever-flexible staff united and planned innovative methods to encourage participation throughout distance learning. We provided weekly deployments of at-home materials, teachers connected with students outside of contractual time, and colleagues collaborated to share best practices to engage students. The use of music and art became deeply integrated into core instruction, and informal interactions between staff and families forged unique connections and improved student attendance.

Engagement evolves organically, willingness from staff and students is contagious, and our academic success directly correlates to our dedication to every learner.

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

Working alongside families and forming community partnerships is an integral component of our student success rate. When we build these relationships, we are solidifying our connections beyond our building walls. The more active interest in local education from outside stakeholders we have, the more student success and school improvement ensue.

When our family members are involved in their child's education, students and staff reap the benefits. By listening to our students' families, we have learned that there exists a desire and wide range of levels of involvement. We consistently have a large turnout and overwhelmingly positive feedback when organizing student centered family events. Initially appearing non-academic, these family nights support our school improvement goals in a plethora of ways. Students and their families have an opportunity to interact with teachers, administration, and staff in an informal and relaxed setting. Oftentimes, family events are planned in cooperation with local eateries and activities which then donate a portion of proceeds to support classroom literacy purchases. Students are allotted opportunities to visit with classroom friends and peers outside of the school setting. Our staff's determined outreach efforts have resulted in purposeful events such as family ice skating nights, storytelling at a local bookstore, and outdoor movie watch parties. Through our partnerships with local establishments, students and staff invite family members to witness the products of their hard work. Our intermediate choir sang the National Anthem at our local Triple A baseball stadium,

and our school family was widely represented in the stands. Art students showcased their masterpieces in an art reception at a local library. We remain connected with our alumni and they serve as tutors, classroom volunteers, and mentors for their elementary counterparts. At our site, we invite families into our building throughout the year. Our families wholeheartedly attend our school's annual traditions, such as a picnic celebrating 5th graders' advancement, family continental breakfast, guest readers, and talent show.

Local businesses have formed long-lasting partnerships with our school community. Whether it's through donations for student incentives, family discount nights at an eatery, or sponsorship for one of our athletic teams, we want for little.

Engaging families and our community helps us to meet our student population's social-emotional needs. When their needs are met, they are more receptive to learning and school improvement.

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

Our school is built around family values. We strive to create an environment where teachers feel safe to deliver their daily classroom instruction free from distraction, equipt with the necessary tools and training, and free to take risks. Professional development is designed to provide ways to reach and engage the students. Also, professional development topics are selected to enhance teaching and learning in regards to the state standards and Nevada Educator Professional Framework, which is the basis for teacher evaluations. Teachers also have input in what type of professional we deliver. Prior to the pandemic, lead teachers were afforded the opportunity to take part in various national teacher conferences. Those lead teachers would then bring what they have gleaned back to the staff in the form of staff development and grade level PLC meetings. Years of an open door policy have created a relationship of trust between staff and administration. It is not uncommon for the school administration to bring a coffee truck on campus, or stand in the lounge and make omelets for everyone.

When the pandemic forced us to a model of teaching we had never envisioned, we answered the call. Teachers were quickly equipped with various technology needs such as webcams and extra monitors. We held online trainings on topics such as Google Meets, Google Classroom and Canvas, which became our platforms for daily instruction. We learned how to link all of our digital resources using a tool called Clever so our students could find what they needed quickly. School administration and teachers were trained in using GoGuardian, an application that assisted staff in supervising students while they utilized online technology. GoGuardian gave teachers more control over their students' digital learning environment. We received alerts if there was concerning behavior from students' online usage. Students completed surveys about their social emotional health using Panorama so we could gauge if a student needed more support. During distance education we maintained online lunch bunches, where students were able to join a Google Meet and chat with classmates, teachers, and school administrators. We created online bulletin boards for students to display school work and pictures of student generated art. We did scavenger hunts that promoted getting outside, yet maintaining social distance. During the pandemic, PTA and school administrators made special deliveries featuring cupcakes and hand sanitizer to the teachers and staff's homes. We simply found ways to stay connected as a community even though we couldn't be together in the school.

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

Life Coach, Lisa Haisha said, "Great leaders don't set out to be a leader...they set out to make a difference. It's never about the role - always about the goal." This should be the driving force for anyone seeking a position in administration. The role of an administrator should not be seen as a purveyor of power rather they should be seen as a democratic visionary and instructional leader.

Under a democratic system, the administrator has the final say, but collaboration with team members is the key. This style of administration uses teamwork and support to incorporate creativity and high engagement. Team members will actively participate, and productivity will be increased with the administrator's support. It may appear that the administrator is taking a back seat to his staff, but that is where the role of visionary steps in. A visionary administration has just that - a vision. One that they genuinely believe is best for students. These beliefs are long time engraved and developed over years of trials and tribulations. They are

formed from collaboration with peers and best practices in the field. They are motivational and inspirational. The visionary administrator exudes their vision, talks their vision, walks their vision, and people want to be a part of it.

Educators are in the business of children, so children should come first. Being a leader of instruction will foster strong instructional leaders within each classroom. An administrator should be a trusted resource for educators to collaborate and grow with. Administration should be willing to attend curriculum trainings and stay up to date with the programs in his school. Educators should perceive an open door policy and feel the support from their administration. The support should be genuine enough that teachers are comfortable enough to take risks in their teaching practices. This will foster educational growth. Administration needs not to be afraid to get their hands dirty and remind teachers how valuable they are for our future. An administrator needs his staff to see him as an instructional leader with an attainable vision guided by a democratic system.

Morals and ethics should be the driving force behind the standards or principles of any administration. Administrators should not only be concerned with themselves but also the ethical standards of their staff. If leaders do not act from a place of “integrity,” then their “authenticity” will be questioned. Authenticity creates trust, and with trust, an administrator operating with moral and ethical decision-making can lead a whole school to success.

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

The city of Las Vegas, Nevada is a diverse community. The community of Linda Rankin Givens Elementary is a reflection of that diversity. Our students have roots from all points on Earth. In fact, we have over 20 different languages spoken by our families. In an effort to maintain an environment that embraces diversity, our teachers have been trained in best practices that help students that are acquiring skills in the English language. Over a two year span, our staff was trained in the Academic Language and Content Achievement Model (ALCA-M). This training gave teachers skills that allow students to receive high-quality, rigorous, engaging grade-level, standards-based instruction. This model also gives students opportunities to learn through structured academic discourse. Each year, teachers take informal surveys of their students to gain insight into their families backgrounds and traditions. The Clark County School District has a department dedicated to equity and diversity. Over the years, we have worked closely with that department to help students that were having gender identity issues. Through the support from the Office of Equity and Diversity, we have helped students make personal choices about the demographic information they wish to display. This year, a student approached school administration about overcoming her challenge with alopecia. This student along with school administration invited a community speaker to talk with her classmates and raise awareness about alopecia. Also, each school year we take part in a statewide week of respect. During this week we focus on engaging in activities and learning opportunities that highlight the importance of safe and respectful learning environments. We also implement Positive Based Intervention Strategies throughout our school. This system allows for students to have an equitable approach to behavior management. We offer intervention support for struggling students needing Tier II instruction. The Gifted and Talented (GATE) program is offered in grades 3-5. For this reason, we choose to test each and every second grade student in the spring prior to his or her third grade year so that we ensure that our GATE program reflects our diverse student population.

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

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“I am a proud student of XX Elementary School. I come to school to learn, and I will learn. I will show respect to myself and others. I will take responsibility for my behavior and my work. Today I’ll be the best person I can be, let’s go to work”.

This is our school’s mantra. Our students are taught self-pride, the importance of learning, exhibiting respect, appropriate behavior, and a strong work ethic. Students and staff recite this school pledge as a daily reinforcement of the high standards we adhere to, both in and out of the classroom.

Our high achievement is attributed to multiple factors, but we believe the singular practice that has been most instrumental to our school success has been our emphasis on the importance of community involvement. Our surrounding community respects education and is a willing partner to support student achievement. We have enhanced student’s learning by bringing the experts to us. Presentations, performances, and assemblies from a wide range of community members is our innovative approach to capitalizing on our local resources. Our students have enjoyed learning from meteorologists, storytellers, and Flamenco dancers. We’ve sponsored visits from authors, magicians, and dentists. Firefighters, musicians, and athletes have graced our lunchroom stage. K-9 dogs, dragon dancers, and band members are yearly favorites. We strive to broaden our student’s horizons, add to their background knowledge, and deliver refined experience-based learning opportunities. In doing so, community involvement is paramount to teaching children the importance of becoming a productive member of society.

Our school namesake has visited our building every Friday, for over a decade, to reward students by reading to them. District survey results show that our families are satisfied with instruction, have open communication with staff, and feel confident that their child is part of a safe learning environment. Our parents attend school functions en masse. Families support teachers by providing needed supplies, donations, and contributions to classrooms. Teachers feel comfortable conferencing with families to discuss their student’s academic progress and goals.

The greatest success gleaned from community involvement is that our students know they have a united team, with members from their school, neighborhood, and family supporting them.

“It is not more bigness that should be our goal. We must attempt, rather, to bring people back to the warmth of community, to the worth of individual effort and responsibility, and of individuals working together as a community, to better their lives and their children’s future.”

-Robert F. Kennedy