

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Kerr High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8150 Sugarland Howell
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Houston State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77083-5712

County Harris County

Telephone (281) 983-8484 Fax (281) 983-8014

Web site/URL https://www.aliefisd.net/Kerr E-mail Kerr.HighSchool@aliefisd.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* Mr. H.D. Chambers E-mail HD.Chambers@aliefisd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Alief Independent School District Tel. (281) 498-8110

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 Mrs. Ann Williams
(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):
- 24 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 12 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 6 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 43 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	87	110	197
10	74	126	200
11	88	109	197
12 or higher	96	100	196
Total Students	345	445	790

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 54.3 % Asian
 - 14.4 % Black or African American
 - 26.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 3.9 % White
 - 0.8 % 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: ≤1%

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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	811
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hindi, IBO, Yoruba

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
35 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 69 %

Total number students who qualify: 549

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 3 %
20 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>1</u> Autism | <u>4</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</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: 5
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.	37
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	18
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	99%	98%	99%	98%	99%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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	186
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	67%
Enrolled in a community college	19%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	3%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	10%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2016

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

Kerr High School gives students the freedom and responsibility to take control of learning and develop skills necessary for success in post-secondary education and beyond.

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

The Alief Independent School District, an Equal Opportunity Educational Provider and Employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, disability and/or age, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in educational programs or activities that it operates or in employment decisions. Additionally, the District does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities. Policies DAA, DIA

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

Students must live in the Alief Independent School District attendance zone and complete an online application to attend Kerr High School. Students are chosen using rubric scoring that includes categories based upon grades, attendance, discipline history, standardized test scores, teacher recommendations, and a short-written response by both student and parent.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Kerr High School is a non-traditional public school of choice located in the Alief Independent School District (ISD) in Houston, Texas. Founded in 1994, Kerr was created to provide an alternative to the traditional classroom by giving students the freedom and responsibility to take control of their learning while developing the critical thinking, social, and academic skills necessary for success in post-secondary endeavors.

As a Title I school district, Alief serves the most ethnically diverse community of its size in the state. Virtually every culture is represented in its 42,000 student enrollment; more than 90 languages and dialects are spoken. Approximately 800 students in grades nine through 12 attend Kerr. About 69 percent of Kerr's students are low-income and 48 percent are at-risk of dropping out. At some point, 73 percent have been identified as English Language Learners (ELL). Kerr's enrollment reflects diversity in ethnicity, beliefs, and culture (26% Hispanic, 14% African American, 54% Asian, 4% white); many students are children of first-generation immigrants.

Since 2018-19, Kerr has achieved the Texas Education Agency's highest accountability rating of A for exemplary performance. In 2019, Kerr earned six distinction designations on the Texas Education Agency School report card for Academic Achievement in Reading/English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Top 25% Closing Performance Gaps, Top 25% Post-secondary Readiness, and met all eligible measures evaluated for federal accountability.

The Kerr experience begins with the accelerated block schedule. Like college, students take four different one-credit courses during each 18-week semester. The day includes a 25-minute multi-grade level advisory and is divided into four 90-minute class periods. Students have the flexibility to follow their schedules or switch classes depending on learning demands.

Kerr is structured around a powerful motivational strategy: student ownership of learning through self-management and choice. As students are offered opportunities to take ownership of their learning, they are more engaged and take responsibility for their education. Student self-management and choice are incorporated into the school's culture. Students choose the order, activities, and pace of their learning within teacher-determined time frames. The online learning management system allows teachers to organize and deliver course materials on demand creating flexibility for students. This proved to be beneficial during the transition to remote learning during the pandemic. Teachers do provide seminars with focus lessons and guided practice; however, most of the time available to students is for collaborative and independent work.

Collaborative learning is an integral part of student self-management. The school is physically divided into large academic "centers" for each curricular department. In each center, there are students from all grades and academic course levels. Centers are designed for small group work with areas designated for group seminars or individual study. This design encourages students to choose their approach to learning. It fosters collaboration and student discussion while offering options for independent work or teacher-led seminars. Collaboration is also encouraged within the curriculum; teachers design activities that require paired and small group interaction.

Responsibility and self-management are further supported by the resources available to students as well as campus communication. The learning management system offers students the flexibility of working from anywhere and at any time. Students have access to online instructional support, course materials, videos, and other resources that meet their individual learning needs. Students must use peers, teachers and outside resources to be successful. School communication mimics the type used in college and the professional world. Students must learn to check emails, electronic calendars, discussion boards, text alerts, and social media to develop the skills required to be responsible and self-managing.

Students have access to a robust counseling and fitness program for socio-emotional and physical growth. In addition to academic counselors, students have access to a Special Programs counselor who works with students individually, and in small groups, to address students' socio-emotional needs. A College Access

counselor is provided to help students navigate the complex pathways from high school to college. Physical growth is encouraged through access to the fitness center for all students throughout the school day. This provides students with the opportunity to continue working on the goals established in their fitness courses.

Success of Kerr's approach is shown by statistics from the National Student Clearinghouse. Kerr's eight-year average of students enrolling in college the first year after high school graduation is 92 percent. The average persistence rate (college retention rate after the first collegiate year) over the last six years is 96 percent.

Receiving the National Blue Ribbon Award in 2010 and 2016 validated efforts internally and legitimized the value of the Kerr experience within the community. Having a nationally recognized school affirmed the efforts of students and staff while revitalizing its presence in the Houston area. This recognition gave families within the community the incentive to stay and attracted those outside the district to move into Alief for the opportunity to attend Kerr.

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:

Kerr's focus on college readiness has proven effective in preparing graduates for college. One way this is achieved is by individual academic planning with counselors where students develop a graduation plan. The personalized plan may include a combination of on-level, dual enrollment, and advanced placement courses. This individualized academic planning support provides the opportunity to highlight strengths and align with students' post-secondary goals. This can be seen in the achievement of 63% of 2021 seniors earning a three or higher on at least one Advanced Placement (AP) exam as well as completing 804 dual enrollment college courses. Course material is developed with a focus on individuality. Teachers deliver instruction through a variety of platforms including the learning management system, videos, seminars, class discussions, and individual sessions with students. This allows students to access the curriculum in a way that best fits their learning style. Due to this learning structure already being in place prior to the pandemic, students and teachers were able to access curriculum and continue with course content with little disruption in March 2020. Because the core curriculum provides a rigorous academic foundation and the instructional delivery method prepares students to be self-managing, they have the academic knowledge and behavioral skills needed to be successful in college. Students are given units of study which require them to utilize time management skills to meet course objectives. Courses are scheduled on an accelerated block, requiring material to be covered at a rapid pace that is congruent with the college model. Alumni often attribute this as a factor in their success at the collegiate level. Success has also been shown by the large percent of students that score at the post-secondary readiness level on all state and national assessments, with 92 percent of students enrolling in college the first year after high school, and 96 percent returning for their sophomore year.

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

Student preparation for college level writing and critical analysis of text is a key instructional component to all English courses. District pacing guides are designed by district content coordinators using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and are the foundation of the curriculum for all courses. Teachers emphasize research-driven, student-centered activities in grammar, writing, media literacy, and both classic and modern literature. Students can access a variety of both digital and print texts. Since March of 2020 librarian-teacher collaboration has provided students with an increase in online resources such as e-books and databases that began as a necessity of remote learning and as grown in its usage. This allows students to access e-books anytime through the district online hub. This accessibility provided students with appropriate resources and reading material so reading and research growth was not hindered. Most students read at or above grade level, so the curriculum focus is on strengthening reasoning and communication skills through discussions, presentations, research, and writing. Course discussions take place both in person and online, with students contributing ideas and teachers giving purposeful feedback through both dialogue and the written word. Students must articulate their understanding of text during differentiated oral exams where the teacher allows each student an opportunity to display their connections to the text in their oral response. Students utilize Cornell Notes for seminars, summary writing, and study. To improve writing skills, learners with below average skills are provided peer and online tutorials as well as individualized feedback from staff on written responses. Teachers and students collaborate through an online document sharing platform that allows the teacher to provide real time feedback to students during the writing process. Students with high academic skills strengthen these skills by providing peer-editing and feedback to students in lower-level courses and are encouraged to complete Pre-AP/AP courses. Students complete assignments both online and in their own handwriting and/or in-person which gives teachers the opportunity to assess student ability across formats.

The accelerated block course schedule requires teachers to quickly identify the needs of students at the beginning of a course. Teachers use student work samples from previous courses, performance on

standardized tests, and pre-assessment writing tasks to determine appropriate writing, reading, and critical thinking goals for each student. Student progress is tracked throughout the course with teachers using a variety of work samples to analyze student growth and adjust instructional strategies to best address the needs of students. Throughout the course, campus instructional leaders coach teachers in evaluating student growth. These coaching conversations allow them to reflect on their instructional methods, student progress, and help them in adjusting their instruction if needed. Standardized tests such as state assessments, college admission exams, and college level course exams measure student growth and all results are shared with teachers which allows them to address deficiencies. Students who need coaching in specific domains are provided support via tutorials both during the school day and after school. Depending on the needs of the student, assistance may be provided by the content teacher, a peer, or the campus academic coach.

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

Math department teachers work collaboratively to develop curriculum and course content to provide a balanced math program that develops students' competencies and basic skills as well as the ability to reason analytically and apply problem-solving skills to new situations. District pacing guides that are designed by district content coordinators using the TEKS are the foundation of the curriculum for all math courses. Teachers working together as a team both on campus and across the district allow vertical alignment of curriculum ensuring there are no gaps in mathematical skill attainment from one level to the next. The math department also works very closely with the counseling team to ensure that students are selecting math courses that are aligned to their abilities and long-term goals. Most students are above grade level in math and take algebra or geometry in middle school. Many are enrolled in Pre-AP courses that focus on the skills needed to continue along a track towards AP Calculus and/or AP Statistics. Arriving at Kerr above grade level in math, coupled with the accelerated block, provides the opportunity for many students to take additional courses above the state graduation requirements. Blended learning programs are used to accommodate different learning styles and include interactive videos and online discussions in addition to more traditional assignments. Teacher created tutorial videos that allow students to revisit course material on their time and as often as they may need to understand the material. March 2020 teachers began expanding their tutorial video libraries out of the necessity of remote learning and have continued to do so. The instructional program also integrates calculators, computers, reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Teachers have the flexibility to work with small groups in need of extra instruction and reinforcement while allowing more advanced students to progress at their own pace. Student assistants that have a high aptitude for math and a desire to help others are assigned to the center throughout the school day to provide peer support in class. Struggling students are encouraged to attend after-school tutorials and given extra assistance using technology, study groups, peer tutors, and one-on-one instruction. An online tutoring program is available for students to access academic support outside of school hours. These online sessions can provide valuable information to the content teacher as transcripts of the sessions are shared with campus personnel and used to follow up with the student during class time.

All math courses utilize assessments on a regular basis to track student progress and provide support for students. As students work through the course content individually, teachers provide seminars to address concepts that are often misunderstood or that have been identified through formative assessments as a struggling area. Student performance on quizzes allows teachers to adjust instruction prior to unit tests. Standardized tests such as state assessments, college admission exams, and college level course exams measure student growth and all results are shared with teachers which allows them to analyze, and address deficiencies. Evaluation of this data drives their instructional goals for current students while also developing long-term curriculum.

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

Science curriculum is lab-based with virtual, hands-on, and field studies allowing students to inquire and explore topics in all content areas. District pacing guides are designed by district content coordinators using the TEKS and are the foundation of the curriculum for courses. The department's focus is on creating connections between science courses and college/career readiness that support and challenge all students. Students work in collaborative groups while teacher-led seminars are provided throughout the day in response to student needs. Direct exploration is supplemented with online resources and "science teacher on-

demand,” instructional videos produced by faculty and other educators. In response to the needs of students during remote learning teachers increased their use of online multimedia content and assessments which allowed them to create personalized learning plans for students. Struggling students get additional help by being offered alternative assignments, labs, and assessments to improve and show proficiency in the curriculum. High achieving students enrolled in the Pre-AP/AP courses are provided with additional labs and learning experiences in preparation for AP testing. The Young Biologist program created by a Kerr science teacher provides the opportunity for high school students to partner with graduate students from local universities to delve deeper into microbiology topics. These sessions are available to students one Saturday a month throughout the school year.

Science teachers utilize data from state, course, and college admissions assessments to drive instruction. Identifying areas of weakness is a key element of decision making in the delivery of targeted instruction during after-school interventions and in-class remediation. Teachers partner with students to increase awareness of their areas of academic strengths and weaknesses by sharing with them a predictive model score for future assessments that is calculated by using their current course scores. Using this data as the beginning of conversations with students, teachers foster stronger student responsibility and accountability for their personal academic performance.

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

Social studies curriculum emphasizes writing, research, and critical thinking skills to help students develop a general understanding and appreciation of social studies concepts. District pacing guides that are designed by district content coordinators using the TEKS are the foundation of the curriculum for all social studies courses. Critical thinking skills are developed through self-study, collaboration, performance tasks, project-based learning, document-based questioning, simulation activities, technology-based projects, and one-on-one instruction. At the beginning of each unit of study, teachers provide a seminar that delivers an overview of the concepts that students will be studying, common misconceptions, and tips for success as they progress through the material. Social studies course offerings include on-level, PreAP/AP, dual enrollment, and electives such as psychology, sociology, and Holocaust studies. To address the unique needs of all learners, instructors reinforce content using a variety of instructional strategies. These strategies include teacher generated study guides, student study groups, the use of various online academic resources and abundant opportunities for face-to-face tutorials. The use of teacher created videos that allow students to revisit seminar material began March 2020 and have continued to be a popular resource for students. Digital resources available to students through the district hub allow students to research topics of interest and access primary sources for social studies projects. Students with high academic skills can extend understanding with project-based learning opportunities.

Standardized tests such as state assessments, college admission exams, and college level course exams measure student growth and all results are shared with teachers which allows them to address deficiencies. Teachers evaluate this data and use it along with student work samples to identify and continually monitor the learning goals of their students. Teachers meet regularly as a professional learning community to discuss vertical alignment of coursework, and to ensure that students are gaining the skills necessary to be successful in subsequent courses.

1f. For secondary schools:

Kerr High School’s curriculum offers on-level, Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), and dual enrollment courses aligned to the TEKS standards. AP courses also meet College Board’s Advanced Placement standards while dual enrollment courses adhere to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board standards. Career and Technology Education (CTE) courses that range from engineering to business are designed with industry standards in mind. Content teachers design course content and make it accessible to students through the learning management system. Curriculum includes activities that require students to work independently, collaborate in groups, and attend large group seminars.

Students enrolled in business courses have an opportunity to earn industry standard certifications once they

have successfully completed the course curriculum. Enrollment in at least one business course also allows students the opportunity to participate in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) program. Participation in FBLA prepares students for careers in business through academic competitions, leadership development, and educational programs.

Engineering students compete in area robotics competitions where they create, analyze and apply course material to real world situations.

There are over 30 different clubs and organizations on campus which allows for many opportunities for students to develop their leadership potential. Many campus organizations require and include community service as part of membership. As a result, Kerr students are often involved, and visible at district and community events. To help students become self-managing learners, curriculum in all courses allows students the freedom to work at a pace appropriate for their levels of understanding, and to choose when and where academic work occurs. The self-managing style of curriculum delivery partnered with the accelerated block schedule provides students a preview of the college academic structure and allows them to develop skills that will be necessary in a post-secondary environment.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Visual and Performing Arts department includes band, orchestra, choir, theatre, art, and speech and debate. Eighty percent of Kerr students are involved in visual or performing arts beyond the minimum high school credit. Each department participates yearly in at least four competitions or performances. Instruction is delivered through a variety of methods including teacher and peer critique, observation, modeling, and web-based instruction. Examples include incorporating research projects with theatre performances, journaling, in-depth analysis, and project evaluation in art classes, and studying current/past events for use in debates. Students incorporate skills from academic areas into performances and productions. The Visual and Performing Arts Department builds the curriculum on the TEKS, but also educates beyond those expectations by providing college and professional level experiences including opportunities to take dual credit arts courses. The willingness to set higher expectations allows students to be prepared for college programs and the professional arenas.

The research-based Health and Fitness Program is offered to all students. Students must take a health course and one credit of physical education to graduate. The program emphasizes exercise and nutrition which enhances cognitive function, boosts scores, and supports learning. Fitness courses include peer coaching, individual goal setting and teacher-led instruction. Students have access to a fitness center and fitness tracking tools to meet their personal goals and state curriculum standards. Students are encouraged to make positive nutritional choices by learning how to prepare simple healthy meals. Lifelong habits are introduced by combining nutritional science, activities, and exercise in a supportive environment.

Foreign language offerings for all students include on-level Spanish I/II, Pre-AP Spanish III, and AP Spanish courses. Curriculum is based on the Texas 5 Cs: Communication, Connections, Cultures, Communities, and Comparisons. All students must take 2 credits of foreign language to graduate. Instruction is delivered through multi-modal activities: flipped and blended learning, audio CDs, board and card games, presentations, and one-on-one conversations with teachers encouraging students to practice their target languages. Additional languages offered through distance learning include American Sign Language, French, German, Latin, and Chinese, depending on student demand and course availability.

Technology/Career-Technology Education (CTE) courses are offered to students in all grade levels in the areas of computer science, computer applications, or digital art and media. Technology education skills are embedded in all curriculum areas with students using an online learning management system that provides 24/7 access to curriculum and assignments, school-provided email, cloud storage with the ability to collaborate, and research tools and resources. Kerr's technology courses focus on learning about hardware

components, information input skills, laws, issues, and ethics in societal use of technology, research skills, and collaboration to deliver products in a variety of media formats. Classes teach skills in web design, computer programming, digital media, video technology, business and finance, accounting, desktop publishing, animation, robotics, graphic design, and industry-standard software applications. The CTE department provides opportunities for students to earn certification in several programs. Students participate in state and national competitions through the Future Business Leaders of America chapter, Microsoft, National Center for Women and Information Technology, and student publication contests.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Transitioning from a traditional classroom to a self-managed environment presents a variety of challenges. All students receive support through campus programming designed to support this transition. The summer prior to their first year at Kerr students are invited to participate in Tiger 101. This two-week summer program focuses on topics including organization, study skills, test anxiety, procrastination, and an introduction to the campus social emotional curriculum. Once the school year begins every student has an advisor that meets daily with students, tracks academic progress, and communicates with parents. Counselors have individual conferences with all ninth-grade students within the first term of the year while academic coaches monitor individual student progress every three weeks. Struggling students are identified and guided through a continuum of customized interventions including peer/adult mentors, targeted conferencing, counseling groups, and tutorials.

A variety of resources are available to students who fall behind in their academic progress. The accelerated block schedule allows students to enroll in a total of 8 credits per school year and earn an additional 1 credit in summer school if remediation is necessary. Students identified by the counselor and academic coach as behind in course credits may be assigned courses in an online self-paced curriculum program as an additional course option outside the school day. The after-school program offers students the opportunity to create study groups on their own or when needed, attend required tutorials with content teachers. The campus academic coach monitors all student progress, meets individually with struggling students, and develops academic plans for those who are behind the progress of their peers. After each grading cycle, the academic coach and assistant principal identify students who have not made positive academic progress and schedule conferences that include the student, parent, academic coach, and administrator to develop an academic plan that includes identifying obstacles, setting goals, and developing a plan for improvement.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Kerr's instructional framework focuses on student-driven learning. Course content is delivered using teacher-created learning guides that include a rigorous curriculum while emphasizing the use of self-management skills and student choice. Learning guides are developed so students can choose from a variety of instructional methods, resources, and technologies. The flexible seating in the academic centers promotes small group work, collaboration, and peer teaching. However, learners are free to work individually. The teacher's role is to act as a resource for the learner by offering periodic large group seminars, small group discussions, and individual conferences. Independent study, one-to-one coaching, and peer tutoring are at the heart of Kerr's program. Courses create a culture of continual differentiation by giving students the ability to choose the instructional method, resources, and setting. Students are instrumental in planning their own academic path and through consultation with their counselor can choose to accelerate in a content area when it is appropriate for their academic goals. Students are also encouraged to extend their learning by using material they have mastered and applying it to real world applications. Examples of these extensions include handwriting analysis projects in Forensics class or statistical comparisons in AP Statistics. The connections made from course content to real world application allows students to see their learning connect in concrete ways.

Blended learning was already an integral part of the Kerr model prior to the pandemic, so when remote learning became a necessity, it provided an opportunity for teachers and students to refine and build their skills. Teachers create a 24/7 learning experience by placing learning guides, calendars, and resources

online. Motivated students may work at an accelerated pace due to the model of instruction. This blended system aligns with the Kerr mission of freedom and responsibility by allowing students to have on demand instruction at their fingertips.

3c. Special education:

Kerr provides special education and 504 services to 20 students. Each student is provided personalized support as defined by their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Campus and district staff meet annually to evaluate each student's plan and determine continued services. A special education or 504 coordinator meets with teachers throughout the year to ensure their familiarity with the accommodations for each student. Content teachers implement accommodations in the course material when working with students in the centers and provide differentiated content online when appropriate through the learning management system. The blended learning model of content delivery allows teachers to easily adjust content to meet special education students' needs. Students who qualify are also serviced by district special education support or dyslexia specialist that meets with students on a schedule that is determined in their individual plan. A Response to Intervention (RTI) team meets monthly to track the progress of all students and develop intervention plans for those that may need additional support. The campus level RTI team documents their meetings and collaborates with district support teams to ensure that all students are receiving the services and support they need to be successful.

The Kerr model of instruction allows teachers to meet the accommodations of individual students through work in small groups, one on one instruction, and targeted tutorials. The collaborative culture of the academic centers creates an environment where seeking help from peers is encouraged and modeled by all students. The large learning spaces of the centers foster collaboration but may be distracting for students that are acclimated to a more focused environment. Multiple quiet learning spaces around the building are reserved for any students that may benefit from a quiet learning environment. These spaces can also be reserved for small groups and one on one testing accommodations.

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

While 35 Kerr students are currently identified as English Language Learners (ELL), 73% have been previously identified as ELL during their educational experience. It is a district priority that all teaching staff attain a supplemental certificate in English as a Second Language. Teachers continually receive district provided training in the four components of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) strategies to support students in their Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. Current ELL students are assessed annually on their progress in these four domains of language development through the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). The campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) is responsible for making assessment decisions and monitoring the progress of both current ELL learners and those that have been reclassified within the last four years so that support can be put in place when needed.

The blended learning style of Kerr allows teachers a great deal of flexibility in lesson delivery for all students. English teachers use online document sharing platforms to provide live feedback during the writing process which allows students to keep their voice in their writing while also receiving support on the mechanics and conventions of the English language. This creates a safe space for students to collaborate with their teacher even when they lack confidence in their writing skills. Online textbooks in English, social studies, and science give teachers the ability to assign targeted scaffolded reading support for students that may need assistance such as guided notes and visual glossaries. Accelerated block scheduling allows for longer class periods, which gives teachers more time to offer individualized support to students who need targeted support. Math and science teachers provide teacher-created videos that students can refer to, which provides ELL students with the benefit of increased visual learning while still working independently.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Kerr High School’s focus on student ownership of learning, a powerful engagement and motivational strategy, creates a culture structured around trust, responsibility, and self-management. This allows for student choice and independence in all aspects of school life. Students are given this freedom while being held accountable for productivity and progress. Developing skills that allow students a successful transition to college along with college persistence.

Students are offered a variety of positive leadership opportunities fostering diversity of thought and emotional growth. For instance, No Tiger Left Behind pairs freshmen with upper-class mentors to aid in the high school transition. Mentors are trained to build relationships and help freshmen develop the social emotional and behavioral skills that support academic success. The 30 plus clubs and organizations offered at Kerr are student run with teacher guidance. Providing students with opportunities to develop leadership skills and positive relationships with both adults and peers creates an environment that encourages personal growth.

The transition to a learning experience that focuses on student responsibility and self-management is often challenging. It requires positive, supportive relationships between staff and students with a focus on social emotional learning. Having time each school day to build relationships with a supportive adult and group of peers helps students develop the trust necessary to take risks and grow academically and emotionally. The advisory class period is time reserved out of each day for Kerr students and teachers to spend time focusing on fostering the supportive relationships critical to student success. The flexible structure of the academic centers and ease of access to support staff stimulates interaction between students and adults. Having all courses of each academic content in one center together rather than in individual classrooms gives students access to a variety of teaching styles and adult role models. Students can access instructional support not only from their own teachers, but any teacher in the content area. This community approach to learning allows for quick access to support for all students.

During remote learning the daily practice of checking in with advisory students continued using an online video conferencing platform. Advisors were trained in a social emotional learning curriculum that was adapted for remote online learning which gave them the tools to support the social emotional needs of their students. The use of this tool gave advisors a modality to connect with their students as they tried to navigate building relationships in a new and unique way.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Preparing college-ready students is part of Kerr’s mission so involving as many stakeholders as possible supports this goal. From business partners, community members, college representatives, parents, and students, to campus and district staff, stakeholders work together in the pursuit of student success.

Kerr uses a thorough, annual district designed survey to shape the Campus Action Plan, and the corresponding community and family engagement efforts. Data from this survey is used by campus committees to target and shape family and community programs. The core committee is the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDC) which empowers many different stakeholders. This committee is actively involved in the planning and operations of the school and its programs. It molds the Campus Action Plan and reviews the strategies for family and community engagement.

The Family and Community Engagement Committee coordinates the campus programs to engage, involve, and support outside stakeholders and maintains data to guide decision making. Programs such as district offered workshops, campus parent education sessions, and business partner activities ensure family/student needs are met. A campus newsletter is published for all students and families to communicate campus activities and resources. The newsletter and other campus announcements are sent to all campus stakeholders using a communication service that sends text messages and phone calls that can be received in

multiple languages. Family workshops are offered both in person and virtually for families to learn more about ways to support students' academic and social emotional needs. Topics covered in the workshops are determined by analyzing the needs identified in campus surveys. During remote learning virtual workshops provided an opportunity for campus staff and families to connect and identify areas of need to best support the changing needs of students and their families.

The high success rate of Kerr students in college enables a partnership with a large and diverse list of institutions of higher education. Working with higher education partners to provide FAFSA presentations, professor visits, virtual tours, and on campus college representatives, students and families are supported in making informed decisions about college. Kerr offers students and families full-time access to an on-campus college center and designated college access counselor. Counselors team with students and parents during annual individual conferences to ensure continual progress towards post-high school goals. Focusing on the skills and information parents need to support their child's college education lays the foundation for the relationships needed to ensure student success at Kerr and beyond.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers are empowered to make the professional choices they think are best for their courses and their students. Campus administrators act as instructional coaches and encourage teachers to experiment, innovate, and enhance the unique qualities of each student. Funding is allocated each year specifically to allow teachers to pursue professional development opportunities that they believe will grow and enhance their programs. All staff are encouraged to submit proposals for professional learning and do not have to be limited to the offerings of the district or school. A variety of professional development is readily accessible across multiple platforms and the administration encourages and supports teachers in trying to best meet students' needs in an increasingly global and technological society. This collaborative approach to instructional leadership creates a culture where teachers feel valued and supported.

The district academic calendar is an indication of the importance of collaboration and professional development of staff. Staff development days are built into the calendar before, during, and after the students' academic year to allow for the continuing education of staff. The district provides a robust catalog of offerings for staff that range from in person, virtual, and blended learning opportunities for staff to extend their own learning. Teachers that are either new to the profession or new to the district take part in a mandatory professional learning program that ensures that they have a foundation of skills expected of all district teachers. The Kerr campus as a whole and individual departments use professional development days to look at data, identify strengths, and areas of concern. Once these areas are identified, teachers make decisions in instructional design, delivery, and assessment. Weekly, students are released an hour early, allowing teacher collaboration in professional learning communities and conversations centered on recognizing and solving problems. Teachers are given four long range planning days spread throughout the school year to extend the work of their professional learning communities.

During the period of remote learning the campus administration ensured that all staff had the technology and digital access they needed to continue working with students. Additional training was provided in the areas of digital learning, with a specific focus on social emotional connections with students. An increase in written communication became imperative, and campus administration used digital newsletters, group texting services, and message boards on the learning management system to ensure that all staff had the information they needed to be supported as they navigated a new system of learning.

4. School Leadership:

Kerr's leadership philosophy stems from the belief that success is obtained through shared responsibility and decision making. The small size of the school allows all stakeholders opportunities to participate. The principal and assistant principal guide and support the staff in making decisions and implementing programs aligned with Kerr's mission, values, and goals.

The leadership team (counselors, administration, academic coach, media/technology integrators) meets to share information, analyze problems, review student achievement, and collaborate on solutions. This variety

of voices brings diverse perspectives to discussions. The open collaboration style of the meetings ensures quick responses to problems, frequent implementation of innovative ideas, and a collective understanding of Kerr's direction. These meetings are open to all staff and minutes are shared online.

The principal meets monthly with content department chairs to discuss campus curriculum, instruction, student achievement data, and to exchange information from district level meetings and departmental professional learning communities. Department chairs share this information and lead discussions centered on student learning with content team members. This two-way communication promotes teacher-driven strategies which meet campus needs and are aligned with Kerr's mission.

Kerr's SDC, composed of staff, parents, students, and community members, is an active part of the leadership structure. This committee reviews and approves the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) which sets goals, lists strategies, and allocates resources aligned to Kerr's focus on student achievement. Along with the leadership team, this committee quarterly evaluates student achievement data to monitor Kerr's progress towards meeting goals established by the CIP. SDC's involvement in this leadership process ensures campus goals, programs, and resources are focused on student success and Kerr is held accountable for making progress towards campus goals.

Students are an integral part of campus leadership. Student Council and National Honor Society presidents are actively involved in the SDC. Students also serve with staff and administration on committees addressing campus policies and safe school initiatives. Student club and organization leadership meet with the campus administration, offering suggestions and providing feedback on campus issues. Student officers work closely with staff sponsors to plan and implement school activities and events.

Campus leadership focuses policies, programs, resources, and stakeholders on student achievement. As stakeholders are offered the opportunity to take leadership responsibility, they become more engaged and invested in Kerr's success. By sharing the responsibility for achieving Kerr's mission and goals, staff, students, and parents join the administration as an integral part of Kerr's leadership structure.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Kerr High School serves families that live in the Houston International District, where over 90 different languages are spoken. Honoring our differences is a key element in Alief ISD's mission: to provide an exemplary education that values diversity of race, culture, gender, learning ability, and socioeconomic background in an environment that is equitable for all students and free of stereotypical expectations to ensure both a physically and mentally safe environment. In January 2018, Alief ISD began the work of ensuring that our district policies uphold the belief that all students will have access to full and complete educational opportunities. A multi-faceted and multi-year equity initiative was developed that included creating a common definition, gathering data, and putting a policy into place that outlined district mission, vision, goals, and foundational beliefs for equitable education. A commitment to professional development in equity, diversity, and inclusion supplied opportunities for all staff to receive unconscious bias training through campus staff meetings.

Kerr takes pride in fostering an environment that honors our diverse school culture. Staff members come from diverse cultural backgrounds that mirror the diversity of our student population. This diversity of staff allows Kerr to communicate with families in a variety of languages to establish clear communication between teachers and families as they work together for student success. Over 30 different active clubs and organizations sponsor events throughout the year to celebrate cultural events as well as highlight social issues of importance. Organizations often hold campus-wide events such as the African Student Associations Black Renaissance that highlights the contributions of African American musicians and authors or the Desi Club's recent cricket tournament that provides an opportunity for students to show off their own skills and teach others how to play this popular sport.

Providing a safe space for all students to learn is an intentional practice on campus. Advisory teachers use a social emotional learning curriculum to develop student skills in the areas of social awareness, relationships, and responsible decision-making. Course material is designed with the diverse needs of our learners in mind

by supplying texts that address issues through a variety of cultural lenses. Teachers work with the librarian to ensure culturally diverse and relevant texts are used in courses and accessible to students as they work on individual projects that are of interest to them. Classroom discussions are designed to be a safe learning space where multiple perspectives can be shared to enhance students' critical thinking skills.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Kerr High School's high college enrollment and persistence rate are the result of Kerr's flexible instructional approach. Students arrive at Kerr already successful in traditional learning environments and have the skills necessary to achieve success in a structured learning environment. The immersion into a self-directed, flexible environment forces students out of their comfort zones and requires them to tap into a previously used set of skills while learning new academic strategies that will prepare them for the collegiate level. Blended learning along with targeted teacher-led instruction prepares students for post high school challenges such as academic self-advocacy, resilience, and adaptability. Students quickly realize that to be successful, they must take risks, make decisions and prioritize tasks.

Kerr's staff gives students freedom, trust, and responsibility which leads to the development of educational ownership, and personal management skills. Students determine how to utilize their time throughout the day by making choices unique to their interests, learning styles, and strengths. When students make the choice to ask a teacher for one-on-one instruction during their class time, they are developing work force skills such as communication, interpersonal relationships, and decision making. Students show initiative by choosing to work ahead in a class and seek out additional projects. Management skills such as organization, time management, and problem-solving prepare students for future endeavors. They must meet deadlines, check online course calendars and syllabi, find information, and communicate with staff online and face-to-face. Actively participating in their learning results in the ownership of their educational progression.

Working collaboratively proves essential, and students must develop this skill to be academically successful not only at Kerr, but in future work situations. Kerr's flexible physical environment and curricular design fosters collaboration and student discussion while offering options for students to work independently. Ultimately, students have choices each day how, when, where, and what they are going to accomplish, and their success depends on them recognizing that flexibility and using it wisely. Students could take part in one-to-one, small group, and large group study sessions with adults and peers to enhance learning. The decision on which path to choose lies primarily in the hands of the student. Staff represent a wide range of teaching styles and experiences with a common objective of supporting students towards their own personal goals. This collaborative effort between students and staff creates a rich, motivating learning experience.