

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 [] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 230 W. Martin Luther King Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Denison State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 75020-2546

County Grayson County

Telephone (903) 462-7550 Fax (903) 462-7609

Web site/URL https://denisonisd.wixsite.com/terrell-
elem E-mail aneidert@denisonisd.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. David Kirkbride E-
mail dkirkbride@denisonisd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Denison Independent School District Tel. (903) 462-7000

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

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

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

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

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 TOTAL

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

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	10	11	21
K	29	33	62
1	41	35	76
2	32	25	57
3	26	20	46
4	33	23	56
5	0	0	0
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
Total Students	171	147	318

*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):
- 1.7 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 15.5 % Black or African American
 - 18.3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 55.5 % White
 - 9 % 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: 21%

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

21%

The mobility rate is over 15% due to the number of at-risk and socio-economically challenged families that we serve. These families move often due to financial hardships. We also serve the Grayson County Shelter, in which families come and go often.

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	28
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	33
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	61
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	290
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.21
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

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

Spanish

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

10 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 58 %

Total number students who qualify: 184

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 24 %
76 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>16</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>15</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>54</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: 3
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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

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	93%	99%	96%	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.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Our mission is to forge strong, positive connections with our students, our parents, and our community. These strong connections allow our students to achieve independence, build confidence, and gain academic knowledge.

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

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Nondiscrimination

A district shall provide equal opportunities to all individuals within its jurisdiction or geographic boundaries. Education Code 1.002(a)

No officer or employee of a district shall, when acting or purporting to act in an official capacity, refuse to permit any student to participate in any school program because of the student’s race, religion, color, sex, or national origin. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code 106.001

A district may not deny services to any individual eligible to participate in its special education program, but it shall provide individuals with disabilities special educational services as authorized by law. Education Code 1.002(b)

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination by any district that receives federal financial assistance, on the basis of any of the following protected characteristics:

1. Sex.

2. Race, color, or national origin.

3. Disability, or relationship or association with an individual with a disability. [See EHB, EHBA series, and GA]

4. Age.

20 U.S.C. 1681 (Title IX); 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI); 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); 29 U.S.C. 794 (Section 504); 42 U.S.C. 12132 (Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]); 42 U.S.C. 6101 et. seq. (Age Discrimination Act of 1975)

Sexual harassment of students is discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX. *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Schools*, 503 U.S. 60 (1992) [See also DIA and FFH]

A district must adopt and publish grievance procedures for prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by these provisions. 34 C.F.R. 106.8 (Title IX), 104.7(b) (Section 504) [See FFH]

A district shall not coerce, intimidate, threaten, retaliate or discriminate against, or interfere with any person who attempts to assert a right protected by the above laws or cooperates with investigation and enforcement proceedings under these laws. 34 C.F.R. 100.7(e) (Title VI), 104.61 (Section 504), 106.71 (Title IX) [See FFH]

The Texas Education Agency shall produce and provide to school districts a written explanation of the options and requirements for providing assistance to students who have learning difficulties or

1 of 8

Federal Funding Recipients

Sexual Harassment

Grievance Procedures

Retaliation

Students with Learning Difficulties

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Disability Discrimination

ADA Section 504

Designation of Responsible Employee

Definitions

Student with a Disability

who need or may need special education. The explanation must state that a parent is entitled at any time to request an evaluation of the parent's child for special education services under Education Code 29.004 or for NBRS 2022

aids, accommodations, or services under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794). Each school year, a district shall provide the written explanation to a parent of each district student by including the explanation in the student handbook or by another means. Education Code 26.0081(c)

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a district, or be subjected to discrimination by the district. 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 C.F.R. 35.130

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. 29 U.S.C. 794(a)

A district shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with Section 504 and the ADA. The district shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated. 34 C.F.R. 104.7(a), 28 C.F.R. 35.107

A “student with a disability” is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the student’s major life activities, has a record of having such an impairment, or is being regarded as having such an impairment.

The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, such as medication, medical supplies, low-vision devices (which do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics, hearing aids, mobility devices, oxygen therapy, assistive technology, or learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.

An impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a disability. An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

A student meets the requirement of being “regarded as” having an impairment if the student establishes that he or she has been subjected to a prohibited action because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits

2 of 8

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Qualified Individual with a Disability

Major Life Activities

Reasonable Modification

Direct Threat

or is perceived to limit a major life activity. This provision does not apply to impairments that are transitory or minor. A transitory impairment is one with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

29 U.S.C. 705(20)(B), 42 U.S.C. 12102(1), (3)–(4)

The term “qualified individual with a disability” means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a district. 42 U.S.C. 12131(2)

“Major life activities” include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. “Major life activity” also includes the operation of major bodily functions, including functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. 42 U.S.C. 12102(2)

A district shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. 28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(7)

“Direct threat” means a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services as provided below. 28 C.F.R. 35.104

The ADA does not require a district to permit an individual to participate in or benefit from the services, programs, or activities of that district when that individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

In determining whether an individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, a district must make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain:

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

1. 2.

The nature, duration, and severity of the risk;

The probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and

3 of 8

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

3. Whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

28 C.F.R. 35.139

A district shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability within the district’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the student’s disability.

A student with a disability is “qualified” if he or she is between the ages of three and 21, inclusive. 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(1); 34 C.F.R. 104.3(1)(2)

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related services that are:

1. Designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students who do not have disabilities are met; and
2. Based on adherence to procedures that satisfy federal requirements for educational setting, evaluation and placement, and procedural safeguards, as set forth below.

34 C.F.R. 104.33(b)

Implementation of an individualized education program (IEP) under IDEA is one means for providing FAPE. 34 C.F.R. 104.33(b)(2)

Note: See EHBA series for policies regarding the provision of special education to students with disabilities under IDEA who require special education in order to benefit from a free appropriate public education.

A district shall place a student with a disability in the regular educational environment, unless the district demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. 104.34(a)

In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, a district shall ensure that a student with a disability participates with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student with a disability. 34 C.F.R. 104.34(b), 104.37

A district shall conduct an evaluation of any person who, because of disability, needs or is believed to need special education or related services before taking any action with respect to the initial

4 of 8

Educational Setting

Evaluation and Placement

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Evaluation Procedures

placement of the person in regular or special education and any subsequent significant change in placement.

A district shall establish standards and procedures for the evaluation and placement which ensure that:

1. Tests and other evaluation materials have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer;
2. Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient; and
3. Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

In interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, a district shall:

1. Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior;
2. Establish procedures to ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered;
3. Ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options; and
4. Ensure that the placement decision is made in conformity with 34 C.F.R. 104.34.

A district shall establish procedures for periodic reevaluation of students who have been provided special education and related services. A reevaluation procedure consistent with the Education for the Handicapped Act [now IDEA] is one means of meeting this requirement.

Placement Procedures

Reevaluation

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

34 C.F.R. 104.35

5 of 8

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Military Dependents

Procedural Safeguards

In compliance with the requirements of Section 504, and with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Sections 12131– 12165), the district shall make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of incoming military dependents with disabilities, subject to an existing Section 504 or Title II Plan, to provide the student with equal access to education. This does not preclude the district from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student. Education Code 162.002 art. V, § C [See FDD]

A district shall establish a system of procedural safeguards with respect to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of persons who need or are believed to need special instruction or related services.

The system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with the opportunity for participation by the student's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. Compliance with the procedural safeguards of IDEA is one means of meeting this requirement. 34 C.F.R. 104.36

A district shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status. [See FDC]

A district shall designate an appropriate staff person, able to carry out the required duties, as the district liaison for homeless children. A district shall inform school personnel, service providers, advocates working
NBRS 2022 22TX138PU Page 12 of 27

with homeless families, parents and guardians of homeless children, and homeless children of the duties of the liaison. [See FFC]

42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(i), (ii), (g)(6)(B)

A district may not substantially burden a student's free exercise of religion, unless the burden is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code 110.003 [See also DAA and GA]

Notwithstanding any other law, a district may not take any adverse action against any person based wholly or partly on the person's membership in, affiliation with, or contribution, donation, or other support provided to a religious organization. Gov't Code 2400.002 [See GA]

6 of 8

Children Who Are Homeless

Liaison

Religious Freedom

Adverse Action Prohibited

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Discrimination on the Basis of Sex

Title IX

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any district receiving federal financial assistance. 20 U.S.C. 1681(a) [See FFH for information regarding Title IX coordinator designation, policy notification, and complaint procedures.]

A district shall not provide any course or otherwise carry out any of its educational programs or activities separately on the basis of sex, or require or refuse participation therein on the basis of sex, including health, physical education, industrial, business, vocational, technical, home economics, music, and adult education courses. 34 C.F.R. 106.34 [See FFH for information on sexual harassment that may constitute discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX.]

A district may provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of sex, but the facilities provided for one sex shall be comparable to the facilities provided for the other sex.

34 C.F.R. 106.33

Portions of classes in elementary and secondary school that deal primarily with human sexuality may be conducted in separate sessions for boys and girls.

A district may make requirements based on vocal range or quality that may result in a chorus or choruses of one or predominantly one sex.

A district shall not, on the basis of sex, exclude any student from admission to an institution of vocational education or any other school or educational unit operated by the district. 34 C.F.R. 106.35

A recipient shall not apply any rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently on the basis of sex. 34 C.F.R. 106.40 [See FND]

A district may group students in physical education classes and activities by ability as assessed by objective standards of individual performance developed and applied without regard to sex.

Where use of a single standard of measuring skill or progress in physical education classes has an adverse effect on members of one sex, a district shall use appropriate standards that do not have such effect.

A district may separate students by sex within physical education classes or activities during participation in wrestling, boxing, rugby,

7 of 8

Separate Facilities

Human Sexuality Classes

Vocal Music Activities

Single-Sex Programs

Pregnancy and Marital Status

Physical Education Classes

Skills Assessment

Contact Sports

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

Denison ISD 091903

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FB (LEGAL)

Athletic Programs

Single-Sex Teams

Equal Athletic Opportunities

ice hockey, football, basketball, and other sports the purpose or major activity of which involves bodily contact.

34 C.F.R. 106.34, .43

A district shall not discriminate, on the basis of sex, in interscholastic or intramural athletics or provide any such athletics separately on such basis.

A district may operate or sponsor separate teams for members of each sex where selection for such teams is based upon competitive skill or the activity involved is a contact sport. However, where a recipient operates

or sponsors a team in a particular sport for members of one sex but not for members of the other sex, and athletic opportunities for members of that sex have previously been limited, members of the excluded sex must be allowed to try-out for the team offered unless the sport involved is a contact sport.

A district that operates or sponsors interscholastic or intramural athletics shall provide equal athletic opportunity for members of both sexes. The following factors shall be considered in determining whether a district provides equal athletic opportunities:

1. Whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both sexes;
2. Provision of equipment and supplies;
3. Scheduling of games and practice time;
4. Travel and per diem allowance;
5. Opportunity to receive coaching and academic tutoring;
6. Assignment and compensation of coaches and tutors;
7. Provision of locker rooms and practice and competitive facilities;
8. Provision of medical and training facilities and services;
9. Provision of housing and dining facilities and services; and
10. Publicity.

34 C.F.R. 106.41

8 of 8

DATE ISSUED: 7/7/2020 UPDATE 115 FB(LEGAL)-P

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

Terrell Elementary School is located in Denison, Texas and is part of Denison Independent School District (DISD). Denison is located approximately 60 miles north of Dallas, Texas, and sits right on the border with Oklahoma. Within our district, Terrell is one of five elementary schools. With approximately 315 students, Terrell ranks 4th out of 5 in size, with only one school having a smaller student population. Our families work primarily in the area at the local hospital, manufacturing facilities, local call centers, and at a nearby casino. Some families do make the commute south and work in McKinney or Allen.

Our Terrell students are diverse and face many challenges: economically disadvantaged, non-traditional family structures, and are often mobile. Terrell serves students from the Denison Housing Authority as well as two other rent-controlled apartment complexes, along with students from the Grayson County Homeless Shelter. We are essentially a neighborhood school with many who walk to school, are car riders, and a few arrive via limited bus service of two main routes. Another distinctive characteristic of Terrell is that we are home to the district's emotional adjustment classrooms, the Journey program. These students can provide unique challenges but seeing their growth over time is something we celebrate. And while all of these factors are shown to increase a student's likelihood of being at-risk for learning challenges, we do not see it that way. As a Terrell staff, we cultivate an atmosphere of no excuses and very high expectations. Our Terrell Texans rise to the occasion with the support, both academic and social-emotional, love, and high expectations of our staff. Despite these many obstacles, Terrell's state assessment scores are the highest of the 5 elementary schools in Denison ISD.

To help our students reach their goals, we have many key strategies to support success and learning. We are in year three of implementing Morning Meetings in our classrooms. This is a time that is focused on the class building strong connections with one another with opportunities to turn and talk, focusing the class on skills for life, academic vocabulary, and character trait development, brain research, strategies for emotional regulation and brain facts, and social-emotional songs and activities that support social-emotional growth. This time also helps teachers develop relationships with their students, and we feel that when students understand how their brains work, have strategies to regulate their emotions, and have clear expectations about school-wide and classroom expectations, a calm and cool and collected environment, conducive to learning and success, is created.

Another strategy is our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. We model, encourage, and expect students to "Act Like a Texan." This means that they will be always respectful, constantly engaged, and they will take responsibility for their actions. They demonstrate these traits in their classrooms, in the hallways, in the cafeteria, and all other common areas of the school. When students exhibit the traits of a Texan, respect, engagement, and responsibility, they can earn Texan tickets that are drawn for treats and surprises each week.

In addition, our staff meets in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Student Success Team (SST) meetings weekly and monthly, respectively. During these meetings, the focus is on students and success. In PLC meetings, we focus on: what all students need to know and be able to do, how we know if they learn it (data), how to respond when some students are not successful, and how to extend the learning for those who are already proficient. In SST meetings, we focus on students individually and the RTI process (response to intervention). We document their progress, interventions they are receiving and their growth, or lack thereof, and we make decisions about testing accommodations and possible referrals to special education. Our staff knows their students' strengths and weaknesses down to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) level. To support students, we have a dedicated intervention time for each grade level. Grade levels have access to the resource teacher, dyslexia teacher, speech teacher, tutors, interventionists, and differentiated groups with the classroom teacher. We take a "Win" approach, Whatever I Need.

The most interesting, distinctive, and unique process that we implement at Terrell is The Terrell Way. It is our way of doing things at Terrell, both students and staff. In addition to the tenets above of respect, engagement, and responsibility, the Terrell Way encompasses doing our personal best, having mutual respect, and being engaged with our eyes, ears, and heart. Students recite these words during their Morning

Meetings, and teachers praise these traits when they are exemplified. There are reminders of these traits in classrooms and in hallways, they are encouraged daily by the principal on the morning announcements, and the words, “The Terrell Way,” are emblazoned in the main areas of the school.

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:

In Denison ISD and at Terrell, our philosophy is driven by three main factors: we do make a difference, improving our people is the key to improving our schools, and significant school improvement will impact teaching and learning.

With these beliefs in mind, teams of empowered teachers, led by campus administrators and curriculum coordinators, have created a district-developed curriculum that contains units of bundled TEKS for each core area. Curriculum teams and teachers developed common formative assessments that are administered after each unit to students. Students are given two benchmarks during the year to prepare for state assessments. To better support students with accommodations, all common assessments and benchmarks are available in an online administration through Eduphoria with read aloud option and other supports. Both common assessments and benchmarks are used district-wide as calendared by the teams. After the administration of each common assessment or benchmark exam, data is scrutinized during the next PLC, and a plan of action for remediation and/or acceleration is developed. Districtwide PLCs meet in the summer to revise units and assessments based upon state assessment data or new TEKS. The district uses an online application to house curriculum documents.

To deliver the curriculum, teachers use many research-based teaching approaches, including: mini lessons, tiered small groups, centers, hands-on manipulatives, project-based learning, a district-wide learning management system, a wide-range of online programs. The focus is always on student engagement no matter the content.

For the 2021-2022 school year, all students are learning in-person with no home learning options. We did offer virtual learning in 2020-2021 with virtual teachers instructing the in-person students and home learners via video conferencing, simultaneously. Because of the experiences last year, we came to realize the importance and value of our online learning management system.

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

Our goal for reading instruction is to ensure that all students are effective readers who understand what they read and effective writers who can be clearly understood with their written words. Success in all other subject areas and in life is contingent upon effective literacy instruction that produces independent readers and writers. Through a collaborative grade level team approach, reading instruction is driven by the TEKS, and a structured and balanced approach to literacy is the focus. The structured and balanced approach brings together explicit phonics instruction, memorization of high frequency words, comprehension strategies, small group work with leveled readers and decodable readers, read alouds, fluency practice, book clubs/novel studies, and shared reading. The DISD Curriculum Coordinators, with the assistance of teacher-teams, created an English/Language Arts/Reading (ELAR) framework to guide each campus. The framework identifies the specific skills in the areas of shared reading, read alouds, sight words, vocabulary, phonics, spelling pattern and spelling list, and writing. This approach creates a clear plan and ensures consistency across the district.

The delivery of this structured and balanced approach to literacy is accomplished by a similar instructional plan in all grade levels. A mini-lesson is delivered to the whole class based on the TEKS focus for the day and by ELAR strand. During a mini-lesson, the skill for the lesson goes through the lesson cycle in an accelerated manner: I Do (teacher modeling), We Do (guided practice), and You Do (assessment-informal or formal). Students are then grouped in unique ways to best meet their needs and begin a rotational model for differentiated instruction. Students complete different, engaging tasks at each rotation that support the TEKS focus or a personal area of growth or enrichment. The nitty-gritty work happens at the teacher table.

Using either leveled texts where the meaning is the focus and many high frequency words that students know are in use, or decodable readers where the phonetic patterns are known and used repeatedly for ease of decoding, or grade level novels or texts, teachers can target each groups' literacy needs.

To assess students, a variety of data-gathering tools are used. With the proven benefits of early intervention in mind, students in grades K-2 have their fluency monitored each nine weeks, with goals to meet each nine weeks. Students get better and faster at reading by reading, so the students who do not meet the goals will be given more reading practice time and support where needed. Also, students in K-2 are assessed three times year using a benchmarking kit of leveled texts. Students who do not meet goals in this assessment are often scheduled with the reading interventionist. In reading intervention, small groups of students receive intensive phonics and reading strategy instruction for 30 minutes daily. Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) is used to assess letters, sounds, phonological elements in K-2 also. Amira was newly acquired this year. This assessment records and analyzes students as they read. All grade levels are currently using it. The reports that follow each benchmark have recommended learning paths and resources for intervening.

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

Our goal for math instruction is to ensure that all students can fluently perform math facts and use strategies to solve math problems. The math curriculum is driven by the TEKS. Grade level teams meet with the curriculum coordinators to develop the scope and sequence, and they refine it each summer. This supports consistency and clarity on a campus and across the district. Number sense, fact fluency, problem solving strategies, and manipulative use are the main hubs of math instruction. Grade level teams work together to plan engaging lessons to create success in the math classroom. Units of study are TEKS-based and are easily accessed in the online lesson plan application. Formative assessments are consistent across the campus and district, and summative/benchmarks, also consistent, are given two times a year.

To deliver the math curriculum, most classrooms follow the same lesson flow as for ELAR with addition of a number sense talk. During the number talk, a word problem or numerical problem will be presented to the class. Using paper/pencil, a small dry erase board, or mental math, students will solve the problem. During the actual talking about the numbers, students will share how they approached and solved the problem. Hearing and seeing multiple ways to solve math problems is a much more effective math teaching strategy as it showcases thought processes, number sense, and provides many ways to solve rather than a one-size fits all approach. These number talks also present an opportunity to spiral review past math topics.

After the number talk, a mini-lesson is presented using the I Do, We Do, You Do model. The mini-lesson will be TEKS-based. When the concept is new, manipulatives and concrete models will be used and are available as long as a student needs them. Many teachers utilize math interactive notebooks for notes and foldables that support the TEKS being taught. Students can consult these notes as needed. Some classrooms use the Visual Instructional Plan (VIP) approach. The VIP breaks down the steps of solving the problem in a visual and sequential way and really supports those learners who often lose track of where they are in the process.

Following the mini-lesson, students will be grouped according to needs for guided math. Each station will have targeted activities like Imagine Math on the Chromebook or think-pair-share review work or maybe even partner flash card games. The heart of the differentiated instruction happens at the teacher table. A new concept could be previewed before a mini-lesson, past TEKS could be reviewed, or a new skill could be practiced.

Each unit has a formative, common assessments. These are produced by the grade level district team and the curriculum coordinator, and a Form A and Form B are available. As data is analyzed, students who are not successful on Form A will be re-taught/remediated, and Form B will be administered to check for growth. Benchmarks are also given to prepare students for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessments and to check summative growth.

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

Science instruction is rooted in the TEKS and in the understanding that scientific knowledge helps us comprehend the world around us better. At each grade level, real world experiences, hands-on experiments, the scientific method, and problem solving are at the heart of the science classroom instructional practices. To support these experiments and hands-on activities, a science materials collection was created, and the materials are stored in a central place for easy access. From petri dishes to balance scales to a portable greenhouse to test tubes, teachers have extensive supplies available for their lessons. Students are also encouraged to document scientific processes by creating lab notebooks and/or science journals.

Several grade levels have “big” science projects that students look forward to each year. Kindergarten students study the life cycle of a pumpkin from seed to pumpkin and then visit the pumpkin patch. Third grade students create 3D shapes with toothpicks and marshmallows to visualize the vertices, faces, and edges, but the real surprise comes when they dip the structures in bubble solution and are wowed by the bubble effects. And fourth grade students “birth” seed babies using soil, seeds, a cup, and pantyhose. They name them, and we track the growth of the babies on the announcements. Pre-COVID, an academic fair was held for families where students presented research projects on the topic of their choosing; these projects were often scientific experiments.

District grade level teams met and developed thematic science units for the year with the TEKS bundled for ease of use, and these units are easy to access in the Eduphoria system. The goal is to ensure that students are competent in knowing about and understanding the scientific world around them. Common/formative assessments are given at the end of each unit. These skills help support growth as students prepare for the summative fifth grade science STAAR test.

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

The main focus of the social studies curriculum is to assist in the development of productive members of society. Using the TEKS as the basis, units are created to teach basic historical facts, parts of the community, governmental systems, and civic duties. The units are available to all teachers in Forethought in Eduphoria. The common scope and sequence creates unity of learning in DISD.

To convey the social studies curriculum to the students, many, varied experiences are provided for the students. During the height of the pandemic, a plethora of virtual field trips were produced to bring the world to the students in the classroom. Our first graders take an actual field trip to Main Street in our town. They learn about maps and addresses and navigating Main Street and visit many of the local businesses. Third grade visits Eisenhower’s Birthplace. They learn about the life of Eisenhower what life was like in the times in which he lived. The campus gets a visit from a real fire truck during Fire Safety Week and learn firsthand about safety. During election years, we hold mock elections, and students anxiously await the announcement of the winner at the end of the day. Our third and fourth grades also complete in-depth Texas history units. Through map studies, city research, state symbols projects, and guest speakers, our students gain a well-rounded picture of our state.

To develop a lifelong love of service and civic responsibility, Terrell participates in several service projects each year. Our students donate cans for a fall canned food drive. They have collected pet items for the animal shelter, and they are active and involved in our United Way fundraiser by donating money to various projects. With each of these events, we use our morning announcements and Morning Meetings to convey the details and importance and impact of each project.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The core curriculum is aligned to the 2015 Texas Pre-kindergarten Guidelines and is designed to prepare children for kindergarten. Teachers provide many rich opportunities for children to acquire knowledge and skills through intentional play and exploration experiences. Denison’s early childhood curriculum consists

of:

Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Emergent Literacy Reading and Writing, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Physical Development, and Technology.

An established daily routine helps children thrive in an active way. The day begins with Meet and Greet, Morning Meeting, and Song. Lessons throughout the day include high-quality oral language and literacy-rich activities where children listen actively, ask questions, engage in rich discussion, share information, and work collaboratively. A variety of center activities helps develop children's cognitive and social skills with a variety of multisensory activities.

The Texas Pre-kindergarten Guidelines are the foundation used to guide the learning experiences of the prekindergarten year and provide the groundwork that guides children academically, socially, and emotionally. The Texas Pre-kindergarten Guidelines are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and are used to help teachers design and implement a comprehensive curriculum.

Teachers use the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System three times per year to evaluate pre-kindergarten students. CIRCLE PM enables teachers to quickly assess a child's progress in all domains.

Part of the campus comprehensive needs assessment includes evaluation of the Texas Public Education Information Resource (TPEIR) pre-kindergarten and kindergarten reports and data. Annually, school staff evaluate prekindergarten enrollment trends, pre-kindergarten assessment results, kindergarten readiness results, and third grade STAAR results.

The TPEIR kindergarten readiness beginning-of-year results provide high-level information on enrolled kindergartners. The reports compare kindergarten readiness for those kindergartners who were eligible for and attended Texas public prekindergarten to kindergartners who did not attend Texas public pre-kindergarten. This data is one means used to evaluate the impact of early education on school success.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

While academic rigor and high expectations are important, we also provide many other curricular experiences for our students. Pre-kindergarten through fourth grade students attend an hour-long rotation program each day. For 30 minutes 4 times a week, they have physical education, and on the 5th day, they have health. The goal of our PE and health program is to instill a desire to become physically active and to understand healthy living practices. The TEKS serve as the guide for both of these classes. Students are physically active and work in teams through the various games and activities that the coach plans. The PE coach also prepares our older students for the FitnessGram, which tracks aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Each grade level begins work on these activities at age-appropriate levels as preparation for this assessment. Additionally, the other 30 minutes of the hour-long block is spent in the library or the computer lab, on an alternating schedule. In the library, they hear read-alouds, learn about authors, and check-out books for independent reading. In the computer lab, they learn about online safety and online manners as well as complete activities using our many online programs. Students also have a Chromebook in their classrooms for daily use.

For art and music, our district elementary schools share two music teachers and one art teacher. The teachers move to each elementary school for 7 weeks of art with 1-2 hours per week per class and 14 weeks of music with also 1-2 hours per week per class. The TEKS drive the instruction in both music and art, and the growth and development of our students in the fine arts has been remarkable. We have students reading music and playing marimbas and developing basketball bouncing routines to popular songs. In art, they use a variety of mediums to create. Our local performing arts group sponsors art contests, and our students perform well in these events. Our high school theatre department presents several musicals and plays throughout the year, and the local performing arts group sponsors the bus and tickets for our students to attend a musical at the high school each year. And a traveling group of high school actors bring a play to us and include the audience in the show. Our high school band department also provides musical programs for our student. At Christmas, small groups of band members play carols in the gym. For many of our students,

these performance experiences are a first!

To support the character development of our students, we utilize morning meetings with elements from SEL curriculum. The morning meeting promotes unity of the class and provides students with a chance to talk and formulate ideas about various topics. Our SEL curriculum provides songs and short videos to help students better express their thoughts and feelings. Our counselor also uses our SEL curriculum to support her small groups that focus on study skills, getting along with other, and self-regulation.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Our approach to supporting our students is through the use of the RTI (response to intervention) model. RTI is a three-phase support plan that is rooted in collection and analysis of student data. In Tier 1, engaging and effective whole group instruction is expected. Through formative assessments, running records, TPRI, and the like, progress at Tier 1 is monitored. Rigorous, engaging core instruction meets the needs of approximately 80-85% of our students. For those students who do not demonstrate mastery of one or more TEKS, they are moved to Tier 2. This group represents maybe 10-15% of students. Tier 2 instruction is taught to a smaller group of students and is a focused approach to the TEKS that were not mastered. Supplemental materials are used to target the needs. Students who are in need of Tier 2 instruction and remediation are also added to our SST (student success team) documentation. This team meets monthly to monitor growth in Tier 2 and Tier 3. All interventions and progress monitoring and collected and tracked and additional interventions are planned as needed. When success is still elusive for a student, he or she is moved to Tier 3. This the most intense level of academic and/or behavioral support in the smallest setting for more minutes per week and is made-up of about 5% of our students. Tiers 1 and 2 can be taught by the classroom teacher. Tier 3 is typically taught by an interventionist. At 3-4 week intervals, progress is monitored to maintain the Tier level or move up a tier, with the goal being to be back in Tier one instruction. All interventions are research-based. We prefer to have these interventions be teacher-led, but some support comes from online programming. This process supports all of our students who are performing below grade level.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

For our students who are performing above grade level, we have several programs in place to support their continued growth. We have an enrichment program, called ACES (Academic Challenges Enriching Students), that meets each week to meet the higher level learning needs. The teacher for this enrichment program is our Gifted and Talented teacher. Students participate in 6-week units focused on areas of learning that are not typically covered in depth or at all in their grade level. For example, the 4th grade ACES students study the ocean. They build models of the ocean floor, research a marine life animal of their choosing, and take a trip to an aquarium to see their learning come to life. Our ACES groups are available for our 2nd through 4th graders. After spring Iowa testing, a group of 1st graders is added to the program. The GT teacher also monitors fall CogAT scores of 1st and 3rd graders and gives a 2nd round of testing to qualify students for our gifted and talented programming. GT students attend the ACES units but also work on an independent research project of their choosing. This is a yearlong project that is displayed and discussed at a GT Expo in the spring where staff and parents are encouraged to attend. Students have programmed apps for smart phones, built robots that tackle obstacles courses, and some choose to research a person whose life is of interest to the student.

All grade level teachers also meet above level needs in the classroom with differentiated groups for both math and reading. Guided reading, book clubs, math clubs, and the like are used to enrich students who have mastered the required TEKS. Also, the librarian supports our above-level learners by guiding them to book selections that will interest and challenge them.

3c. Special education:

Our RTI model, along with our tutoring program, MTA, reading intervention, teaching assistants, and our SPED resource and inclusion programs, have proven to be very successful in closing the gaps for our students over the last several years. In fact, our only achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points between the test scores of all student and test scores of any subgroup is in reading in the sub-population of special education students. All students are at 48% approaches (passing) on the STAAR assessment, and special education students are at 38%.

To help these special education students close this gap, we are working on several supports. In addition to our special education teacher, we have a paraprofessional working in the resource classroom as well. While the teacher plans and prepares for the lessons per the students' IEPs, the support para can help students accomplish tasks while the teacher leads small groups. In addition, the support para can keep the classroom open and functioning while the teacher attends ARD committee meetings. This limits the time the room is closed, and SPED students can continue to get support. An additional support that we are working on is more inclusion time. Research shows that the general education classroom is the best place for supporting all learners. We are re-arranging anything that we can to get the SPED support into the classroom rather than always pulling the students out to another classroom. Also, we began a process two years ago that has all students, both general education and special education, setting an academic goal(s) and tracking their growth. This is developing ownership of their learning and creating a culture of goal setting and goal accomplishment. We celebrate all students who accomplish the goals when they are met, and we also celebrate growth toward goals.

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

Denison ISD offers bilingual education in Spanish on another elementary campus for pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. When a family completes a Home Language Survey upon first enrollment in a Texas school, the school notes the languages listed. If another language than English is listed, in this case Spanish, a student is tested for placement in the bilingual program

For those students who do not qualify for the bilingual program, or is the program is full, students are placed in an English as a Second Language (ESL) certified teacher. English Language Learners are instructed in the general education curriculum with accommodations provided through the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). The ELPS provide supports for these students in the areas of learning strategies, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In the state of Texas in the spring semester, all ELLs in kindergarten through grade 12, take Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Each student receives a Performance Language Descriptor (PLD) of Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, or Advanced High in the skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Terrell teachers use each student's PLD as the launching point for individual instruction. Teachers scaffold instruction to make the curriculum accessible for each learner.

The lower the PLD, the more scaffolding is necessary for the learner to experience success. Picture cues aid in activating schema for establishing vocabulary for our lowest English Language Learners. Texts are made more accessible in many of our online programs by manipulating the Lexile level to a more accommodating level for our higher English Language Learners. Much time is spent on developing both English vocabulary and academic vocabulary to support ELLs.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

As our Terrell Texans enter the building each day, they are greeted by a staff member, including the principal, called by name, given a high five, and given a compliment or a word of encouragement. This starts our students' days on positive notes and creates connections and a sense of belonging. We also can take a quick pulse check, and if a student is having a rough morning, we can intervene early and help the student re-set before entering the classroom. Research has shown that students who are welcomed and supported from the moment they enter the school building have increased engagement in the classroom and decreased emotional dis-regulation. We see this every day.

We also engage students by creating a culture of “The Terrell Way.” The Terrell Way guides every part of a student's day. What The Terrell Way looks like in all areas of the school is explicitly taught, modeled, practiced, and expected. One of the tenets of The Terrell Way is engagement. Students promise themselves and each other every morning to be constantly engaged with their eyes, ears, and hearts. The Terrell Way also encourages students to always put forth their personal best in the areas of learning, actions, and choices. The Terrell Way is also about mutual respect. Students are expected to treat others the way they want to be treated. When students are exemplifying The Terrell Way, they can earn a Texan Ticket. Tickets are drawn for prizes each day. The students also take the ticket home for a parent signature to share their success. Students who exemplify The Terrell Way consistently can be honored with the title of Lone Star Kid for the week. Lone Star Kids are awarded preferential seating in the classroom and at lunch, and their accomplishment is announced on the morning announcements. The Terrell Way, Texan Tickets, and Lone Star Kids are all part of our PBIS program.

Our morning announcements are one additional area in which we work to engage students. We have the same routine each day, and students commit to ‘Act Like a Texan’ during this time. We also celebrate all sorts of accomplishments of our students: earning multiplication licenses in 3rd grade, learning to count to 100 in kindergarten, good scores on common assessments and benchmarks, hitting a reading goal, participating in a fundraiser, etc. The love to hear their name called, and it instills a great sense of pride.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our Terrell Families are the single-most important group that we strive to engage with during the school year. While COVID protocols have limited many of our parent engagement activities such as the Fall Fest, Open House, Meet the Teacher, Movie Night, families visiting for lunch, in-person parent-teacher conferences, etc., we have worked to provide new channels of communication and new ways of parent engagement during the pandemic. Teachers utilize Schoology to send assignments to and communicate with students on quarantine, they utilize Class DOJO to communicate behavior and other messages, and they utilize Zoom for conferences and ARD/504 meetings. The school office sends home monthly newsletters, and we use the large digital display outside of the school to impart information. Our school website and our Facebook page have become critical means of information dissemination during the pandemic. We work to always let parents know that we work as a team, and when we do, students are successful! We also make it our goal to make more positive contacts with families than negative contacts. We never want our first contact with parents to be reporting an issue. We anxiously await the days of allowing families back into our building on a regular basis.

Terrell has also developed some community partnerships that have direct, positive outcomes for our students and support for our staff. Waples Methodist Church does many things for us. The members hold a school supply drive in August to help us supply students in need, church members bring notes and snacks for staff periodically, and they provide lunch for us several times a year. Their biggest project is the Angel Tree PJ Project. Students who need a warm set of jammies for winter need only to fill out a form, and Waples provides. Some years they send 100-150 sets of PJs. We all say “Thank You” by wearing the PJs on the day before Winter Break and sending pictures to the congregation.

Another community partner is First United Bank. They, too, provide school supplies at the beginning of the year to help our students. Two employees of the local branch serve on our PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) and our SBIC (Site-Based Improvement Council). They are interested in anything they can do to help. They have cooked hot dogs for us (in non-COVID time) and provided many dozens of donuts for Donut Deal attendance incentives. And, several bank employees come and help serve the donuts!

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The professional educators at Terrell Elementary are given the freedom to teach students using research-based practices and following the TEKS and scope and sequence. Staff are given the “what” to teach, but they make the educated decisions about what is best for their students in “how” they teach. This creates an atmosphere of risk-taking and continual learning by the staff as they work to find the most effective means of curriculum delivery. As an example, a 3rd grade teacher was beginning a unit on 3D shapes. Through a series of introductory lessons, she found that students were having difficulty with the practical application of the vocabulary. They could tell her what a face or vertex was, but they had trouble counting them on a printed 3D shape. So, through some research and talking with the team, she decided to use marshmallows and toothpicks to create the shapes, and the students could then more clearly apply the vocabulary to the shapes in this hands-on way.

Our weekly PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings facilitate this sharing among teams. We take the approach that these are “all our students,” and staff learn and share together. If one teacher has excellent data on a formative or summative assessment, all team members want to know what steps the teacher took to lead students to those successes. When data shows that there is an area for growth, the team, with the support of the principal and/or curriculum coordinators, works to plan a new path for teaching the concept(s).

The Denison ISD curriculum department is our main source for professional development. This approach allows us to call upon our district specialists to support whatever our needs are. We have provided needed training right here on our campus, led by professionals and experts that we know. Our regional service center also provides excellent options for professional learning.

During the pandemic, we shifted resources and time to better support our well-being in more targeted ways. We have tried to be mindful of time by limiting after school meetings and sharing the load of duties when possible. And although a Sonic drink or a salad lunch cannot erase all of the stress, anxiety, and extra workload that the pandemic has created, the staff finds small bits of extra joy on the days that we can treat them. And a jeans pass, or 10, can go a long way, too!

4. School Leadership:

Terrell Elementary School is led by the principal and the school counselor. While the school counselor’s primary function is leading the social-emotional learning for the students and staff, she does have the domains of 504 plan development and meetings, TELPAS testing, and she is a crucial member of our crisis team.

The principal wears many hats! But, she approaches all of these tasks in a servant-leadership way. She continually strives to remove obstacles for teachers to make learning happen for the students. Her motto is happy teachers make happy students, and happy students make happy families.

The principal sees herself as an instructional leader, a classroom management advisor, and takes the approach that developing the individual potential of each teacher is just as important as vision and goals for the school as a whole. Drawing on the expertise of great leaders such as Todd Whitaker and Brene’ Brown, the principal sees the support and growth of the staff as the single-greatest predictor of student success. To quote Todd Whitaker, “It is the people, not the programs,” that create success. Using walk-throughs and other formal and informal classroom visits, the principal gets to know every teacher’s strength and areas for growth. But this is not a micro-managing approach. Staff at Terrell have great autonomy in how they teach and deliver the curriculum. Coaching, additional observations, and targeted professional development are

provided to those teachers with growth areas.

The principal also sees herself as an important relationship-builder with students. She strives to know every student by first and last name, and she greets the majority of them each morning. Using a wink or an 'I love you' sign, a pat on the back, or a high five, students know the principal is there for them and is out amongst them daily. This relational approach at Terrell creates a calm, stable environment, and it also improves outcomes when behavior issues must be dealt with in the office. Sometimes, students are apprehensive if called to the office, but they quickly see that although there is great disappointment and sadness, and maybe even a little bit of anger over the choices that have been made, problem solving to keep the issue from happening again and grace are always part of the response. Even if the consequences are the harshest given, the student will leave the principal's office with a sense of a second chance (or 3rd or 4th).

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Geneva Gay's book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, has quickly become a foundational support for our work at Terrell Elementary as we assess and grow our culturally responsive strategies. Drawing on Gay's work, we have begun to implement the following strategies and are working toward fidelity: creating classrooms that care, developing relationships with all families, showcasing people from all walks of life in our lessons, and always holding students to high expectations.

To create classrooms that care, we promote harmony and support through our morning meeting routine. Students share life truths and life happenings with all students in the classroom throughout the week. Our hope is that as our morning meetings continue, students will understand each other on a human-level and not just by race or creed or color or gender.

To develop relationships, we have our students take interest surveys and draw upon those interests in any way that we can, we interview family members for various projects, and we work to create open doors of communication for all. If this relationship-building with a family requires home visits or translators or a little extra grace for religious or family needs, we work to accommodate and understand.

Many of our teachers attended a Get Your Teach On virtual conference in the summer of 2020. Many attended a session on culturally responsive teaching, and the big take-away from the presenter was that students need to see themselves in the materials used in class. This brought about a big change for many teacher's classroom libraries. Rather than all traditional picture books, many staff members worked to purchase or have donated books that represent many outlooks and many cultures. This has brought about more unity and understanding in our classrooms. The librarian is working on updates to our school collection as well.

Lastly, we hold our students to very high expectations. And while we understand that there are cultural, socio-economic, non-traditional family structures, life-experiences, or the lack thereof, and other factors in play that put students at-risk for learning difficulties, and we are working to support and show this diversity in our classroom in a more organized way, we do not ever let these factors become an excuse for our students. Geneva Gay says, "Academic success is a nonnegotiable goal for everyone and the responsibility of all participants in the teaching-learning process." We live by this motto every day at Terrell Elementary School

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While Terrell Elementary School teachers and staff use a wide-range of strategies and processes, such as high expectations and relationship-building and rigorous and engaging Tier 1 instruction and the like, to support our learners, the practice that plays the most crucial role in our success is our dedicated intervention time at each grade level. One hour for each grade level, kindergarten through fourth grade, is embedded into the master schedule for intervention activities to be provided. Students have access to the resource teacher, the dyslexia teacher, the speech teacher, the reading interventionist, the school counselor, and/or small group time with their classroom teacher.

This targeted, student-centered approach has many benefits. This dedicated time allows students to receive re-teaching, remediation, or enrichment to fill gaps or extend learning. During weekly PLC time, student data analysis drives the best use of this intervention time for each student. Through class work, formative assessments, anecdotal notes, exit tickets, and other assessment measures, targeted and research-based activities are developed and planned for students. Tier 2 and Tier 3 differentiated instruction is the goal of intervention time. In addition, IEPs and 504 plans drive placement for some students during intervention time. Our scheduled intervention system also protects instructional time for classroom teachers and greatly limits students coming and going from the classroom throughout the instructional day. In addition to all academic areas, the counselor can work with small groups in need of social-emotional support. The counselor covers such topics as organization, regulating emotions, peer relationships, and all manner of social-emotional topics.

Our use of tutors during our intervention time is an additional, unique factor that helps intervention time promote student growth. Through Title I funding, and additional district funding, we are able to bring in retired teachers or other certified teachers to work with students. These tutors bring a wide-range of experience and expertise to our students.

During intervention, data is collected and analyzed on each student to continually assess needs and adjust instruction, with the goal being to move students back to Tier 1 instruction full-time. Progress monitoring in the form of reading and math running records, exit tickets, phonics inventories, and screeners provide this data. Students with IEPs and 504 plans also show growth, and schedules are amended to move more of their instructional time to the general education setting. We have seen amazing student growth through the use of this plan.