

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 Mr. Mike Schaap
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Smyer Schools
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 401 Lincoln
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Smyer State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 79367-0206

County Hockley

Telephone (806) 234-2935 Fax (806) 234-2411

Web site/URL https://www.smyer-isd.org E-mail chris.wade@smyer-isd.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. Chris Wade E-mail chris.wade@smyer-isd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Smyer Independent School District Tel. (806) 234-2935

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 Mr. Juan Cavazos
(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):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 1 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	9	11	20
K	11	17	28
1	15	13	28
2	13	20	33
3	14	12	26
4	12	11	23
5	9	19	28
6	13	12	25
7	12	17	29
8	21	10	31
9	23	20	43
10	20	21	41
11	21	19	40
12 or higher	14	7	21
Total Students	207	209	416

*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 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0.7 % Black or African American
 - 45.7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 52.2 % White
 - 1.4 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 10%

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

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

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	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	42
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	421
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

Spanish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 51 %

Total number students who qualify: 212

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 25 %
102 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>5</u> Autism | <u>12</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>21</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>52</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>2</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	37
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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

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	96%	99%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	97%	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	37
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	21%
Enrolled in a community college	46%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	27%
Joined the military or other public service	3%
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.

The mission of the Smyer Independent School District is to provide a diversified system characterized by quality, equity, character, and accountability. All students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be productive members of a global world.

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

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/666?filename=FB\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/666?filename=FB(LOCAL).pdf)

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Smyer Independent School District (SISD) is in Hockley County, in the heart of the Texas South Plains. The town of Smyer was established in 1925 and the school district was formed in 1927. Tragedy hit soon after in 1929 where the school was destroyed by a devastating tornado. The town, including the school, was rebuilt and slowly started to grow over time. Farming has been the primary industry in Smyer for almost 100 years, bringing families to the area for work. SISD embraces the impact that agriculture continues to have on the students in the district and is mindful of this when making program and curricular decisions.

SISD's mission involves the future success of our students, and we strive to provide a united front within the community. School activities occur on school grounds, and the community is very active in using the facilities for functions such as Little Dribblers, fall festivals, homecoming, Little League baseball, local stock shows, and other special events that occur throughout the year. Community involvement is vital to the success of our district.

SISD is a designated District of Innovation within the Texas school district system. Our district utilizes the flexibility of this program to better meet the needs of our diverse student demographic. SISD is considered a Title I school district with a high percentage of at-risk students. Additionally, SISD caters not only to the students within our small community, but our district includes a 26.8 percent transfer population from nearby districts. This high transfer population speaks to both the level of education as well as the overall social and emotional climate at SISD. Our district offers several programs designed to meet the needs of our student population. Beginning freshman year, students are given the opportunity to take part in a non-profit service that provides college-preparatory skills and opportunities for low-income, first generation, and at-risk students. This no-cost program provides after-school tutoring, weekend academies, and on-campus college residential programs for eligible students. During their senior year, these SISD students begin meeting with specialized counselors to prepare for the transition into college. This federally funded non-profit organization provides students with one-on-one assistance in exploring college and career pathways, applying for financial aid, submitting both college and scholarship applications, and budgeting for the cost of either a college or vocational education. It is intended to support these affected groups: low-income, first generation, and disadvantaged students.

SISD provides many programs that promote the achievement of our students. The district utilizes both traditional paper and several technology-based curricula. Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways promote real world experiences and hands-on learning through courses such as Graphic Design, Digital Art, and Agricultural Mechanics.

SISD instills a desire to pursue greatness in our students by recognizing accomplishments in academics, character, and extracurricular activities. Our district-wide Perseverance, Responsibility, Integrity, Dignity, and Excellence (PRIDE) Program encourages student academic achievement, attendance, and positive character through recognition each six weeks. Teachers play an integral part in identifying students on our campus as being deserving of such accolades as well. Students are rewarded with an engaging field trip at the end of each semester, as well as being entered into a drawing at the end of the year.

The district counselor provides services to all students and is also available for character lessons when needed. Our school culture is developed through weekly pep-rallies during football season in which our entire district supports our teams in pursuit of excellence. In the elementary, upperclassmen involved in athletics, join our younger students for a dance party during breakfast to boost morale and unity throughout our school. These programs provide support and encouragement to our students and contribute to our school's unique character; this sets us apart from other districts.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, the lack of technology exposed our inability to service our students in a non-traditional setting. Fortunately, our school board and school administration reacted swiftly in acquiring the needed technology to support our students virtually. SISD became a one-to-one district with each student in the district receiving a technology device. Teachers worked diligently to adapt their curriculum to an online platform to meet the needs of our virtual learners. Once we were allowed to return to

in-person learning, the school's policies and procedures for maintaining normalcy within the realms of the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) was met with support from both students and staff as well as the community. By adhering to these guidelines, our attendance was higher than it had been in the previous few years. The district's attendance rate was directly reflected in our state assessment scores, which showed growth despite the widespread achievement gaps left behind by the COVID-19 pandemic. The district is utilizing this new technology to continue to enrich the instruction and learning.

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:

The core curriculum SISD adheres to for all subjects is the Texas Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-mandated curricula for all Texas public schools. This curriculum is followed in order to show the level of mastery for each subject through the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests for grades three through eighth and for the End Of Course (EOC) exams for students in high school. These tests cover the following subjects: math, science, social studies, and English Language Arts (ELA).

Subjects are taught following a tiered approach that builds upon each grade level, from grades three through eight, then becomes more specialized in the high school levels. Covering the subjects of: Biology, Algebra, United States History, and English I (English I places more emphasis on higher level language, reading skills, and expository writing) and English II (English II places more emphasis on persuasive writing while maintaining an emphasis on the same skills found in English I). Teachers of these subjects apply various means of differentiated instruction, in each of their classes, based on the subject being taught and the student's needs, abilities, and learning styles. SISD further incorporates problem-based learning for our students using various educational programs from rigorous online academic resources to more traditional instructional resources directly in their classrooms.

Our district utilizes both formative, interim, and summative assessments to gain an understanding of student knowledge. Formative assessments have included daily work, quizzes, and class discussions. The district teachers utilize interim assessments to determine student weakness; they use this data to drive their instruction. Summative assessments involve a series of chapter, unit, and six-weeks tests, along with course projects and essays. Data is collected through the summative assessments and disseminated by the teachers to place emphasis in areas that are of most concern.

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

SISD's kindergarten through twelfth grade ELA instructional methodology is designed to flow seamlessly from elementary through high school. Vertical alignment strategies have been designed and incorporated to strengthen and reinforce academic vocabulary, fundamental language, reading, and writing strategies. All ELA courses adhere to state standards according to both TEKS and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) guidelines.

Our elementary ELA classes incorporate technology-based reading and phonics programs that allow for differentiated instruction for all student levels. These techniques are also used as supplemental tools in both junior high and high school. Intervention time is built in daily at all grade levels to allow teachers to focus on individual student needs. This additional time allows teachers to target a wide range of groups including at-risk students, at grade-level students, as well as higher achievers who need the opportunity for challenge. Student progress is evaluated through formative, interim, and summative assessments.

Elementary ELA classes include a variety of learning opportunities to promote inclusive learning among all student levels including literacy centers, classroom manipulatives, novel studies, and cross-curricular reading studies. Individual student reading is encouraged outside of class as well and students take part in reading challenges each year. These foundational reading, writing, and analysis skills continue as students move into junior high.

Students continue to build upon the knowledge and skills they have learned in elementary as they move into a more demanding and rigorous level of skills and analysis. Junior high students are exposed to more diverse and comprehensive texts including multicultural poetry, nonfiction selections, as well as a variety of short stories and novels. Students at this level continue to work on essential ELA skills including reading

comprehension, grammar, language usage, and writing strategies.

High school ELA courses utilize a variety of resources in addition to multicultural texts from American, British, and world literature. Freshmen and sophomore students are instructed in various writing techniques, with a strong emphasis on expository and persuasive writing. Students from these two grade levels are prepared and remediated for end-of-course STAAR English I and II exams. These preparations include multiple benchmark exams, as well as individual and small group remediation instruction.

Junior and senior students focus on upper-level analysis and researched writing that utilizes Modern Language Association (MLA) style. All levels of high school ELA courses focus on Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) preparation. Teachers help students to formulate a solid plan for how to take these tests which includes an emphasis on advancing their academic vocabulary, study and pacing aids, and reading comprehension skills. Junior and Senior students who qualify, can enroll in dual credit courses, to satisfy both high school and first-year collegiate requirements. A high rate of seniors from SISD also take part in college-preparatory classes to fulfill the required college-entrance standards. SISD has been recognized for postsecondary readiness by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). All SISD seniors prepare for college and career opportunities through extensive work on resumés, scholarship essays, and career exploration projects.

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

The math curricula selected for SISD maintains a targeted focus on integrating the TEKS, by specifically focusing on concepts such as mathematical fluency, number operations, statistics, algebraic reasoning, computational thinking, probability, and financial literacy. These concepts work together to ensure that students are proving a solid understanding of what has been demonstrated and instructed within the various grade levels. Each class displays a daily objective which serves as the foundation for the lesson being taught. Individual grade levels have been given the freedom to incorporate different materials that are conducive to their students' needs and abilities. Teachers use multiple instructional strategies based on different learning styles while still ensuring vertical alignment and a core connection to the TEKS.

SISD has seen significant growth in students' basic math computation skills, while also demonstrating strength in the relationship between math problem solving skills and real-world applications. Specifically, in grades three through sixth, the teachers have integrated a new five-step process that ensures a complete analysis of each question as the student works towards solving the problem. The process includes the following steps: analyzation of the text and circling all numbers, underlining the targeted question, boxing all keywords, and elimination of excess information. The final step is to solve the problem and double check the solution. This technique requires students to take the time to fully analyze the problem and properly solve. The vertical alignment of this process has helped create immediate success within these grade levels, which is evident from the continual increase in testing scores across all four grade levels in math.

In grades seventh through twelfth, teachers provide weekly fundamental practices, re-visiting previously taught skills, solidify understanding of gained mathematical knowledge, and eliminating any preconceived misinterpretations or misconceptions. In the upper-level classes, ACT and SAT practice, is provided to ensure college readiness. Teachers help students to formulate a solid plan for test taking strategies, which include an emphasis on advancing their academic preparedness in a variety of mathematical problem-solving techniques. Flexible grouping is utilized within the math classroom settings, which provides struggling students the opportunity to learn from a group of their peers or engage in one-to-one peer learning. SISD math teachers utilize numerous instructional programs that provide data, utilized in the creation of their tutorial, and intervention groups. Multiple sets of data gained from these programs has been central to the district's awareness of the impact to student learning and retention from the interruptions caused by COVID-19. Each teacher spends a significant amount of time adjusting and developing lesson plans and instructional strategies that will ensure these found interruptions in the student's learning are addressed as quickly as possible. The district has worked diligently to incorporate a better system of communication and implementation between these grade levels, which has allowed these teachers to provide best method intervention techniques and continual support, to help close any learning gaps these students

have shown. Teachers also utilized an online platform to ensure students had access to the curriculum if they were impacted by Covid-19 or for other reasons such as extracurricular activities.

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

Integrating the TEKS through hands-on learning activities is at the core of our science curricula throughout the district. This is achieved by conducting experiments that are geared more toward a student-led lab. Such labs have either been created by the science teachers themselves or obtained from viable sources to ensure that the proper procedures and safety aspects are being adhered to and the objectives discovered.

Specifically, there is a focus on investigative learning which is demonstrated through the 5E learning cycle which leads students through the five phases of experimentation to include being engaged, exploring, explaining, elaborating, and then evaluating the results. Teachers work diligently to ensure lessons are vertically aligned to further cement the foundations that are set each year.

Cross-curriculum strategies in the elementary are utilized by having the science and English teachers working together on reading prompts that are shared between the classes. The English teacher uses reading guides from science to help with identifying words that may be unknown to the students and helping them become more comfortable with the meaning. This is reiterated in the science class as well. On the secondary campus, math, history, and English teachers align their teaching with what is being covered in the science department when it is possible to do so.

Multiple assessments occur throughout the year and the data shows that these techniques as being effective in closing learning gaps. On the secondary campus, teachers use the six-weeks tests as benchmarks to gain an understanding of what objectives need to be reinforced and which ones appear to be mastered. As the school year proceeds teachers make it a priority to spiral in previously covered concepts into these six-week tests to give relevant data that is then integrated through the instructional program.

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

SISD's social studies curriculum includes a variety of subjects and is vertically aligned with the mandatory TEKS standards. Instruction in social studies involves several methods: whole group instruction, small group discussion, and turn-and-talk sessions. Students take part in several civic-related activities over the course of each school year. Offerings include a presidential mock voting project, an annual student-led Veterans Day school assembly, citizenship projects, and a holiday blessings charity drive.

Elementary classes focus on the building blocks of communities and cultures. These courses further introduce younger students to the foundational understanding of state, national, and world histories. Lessons are centered around hands-on learning that is supported by social studies texts, primary source documents, and historical reenactments.

Junior high students engage annually in a variety of group activities. The Angel Tree program assists both students and their families within our small community who need additional support during the holiday season. Students also participate in Red Ribbon anti-drug activities where guest speakers and school spirit days promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle within the SISD community.

As students enter high school, they can explore more detailed studies in world history, American history, sociology, financial literacy, as well as senior-level courses in government and economics. These upper-level courses expose students to a variety of learning opportunities. Included options are current events projects and discussions, historical character studies, research projects, detailed timeline studies, technology-based lessons, and digital historical exhibits. Students are provided numerous opportunities to correlate historical and governmental events of the past with real-world events in the present. High school students can participate, by earning funds and other required activities, to attend a school-sponsored trip to Washington, D.C. The students who attend can explore our nation's most iconic landmarks, monuments, and museums. This level of interaction and engagement further immerses the student into the subjects.

1f. For secondary schools:

SISD provides support to students' by ensuring curriculum is comprehensive and diverse for college and career readiness. SISD partners with South Plains College (SPC) to allow Dual Credit Course Enrollment (DCCE) college courses beginning with tenth grade students who have exhibited aptitude and interest in excelling academically. All twelfth-grade students are enrolled in College Prep Courses, with monthly access to the SISD guidance counselor and a financial aid counselor as effort to better prepare them for college. Students receive aid in filling out college applications, scholarship applications, and financial aid forms.

Students are given yearly opportunities to visit college campuses, attend guest speakers covering a variety of career fields and military opportunities. These occasions add value to the SISD college and career readiness program. Additionally, Career Technology Education (CTE) courses are offered to all students beginning in the eighth grade. These students are first exposed by attending a yearly career exploration workshop held by the local Region 17 Service Center. The purpose is to explore college and career interests and take career interest surveys to better prepare for CTE courses offered in high school. All eighth-grade students are required to take two high school level CTE courses for credit. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test is given yearly to eleventh grade students to allow for further exploration of future college and career endeavors.

All students enrolled at Smyer High School will take at least two CTE courses during their high school career. Concentration on specific CTE pathways is a goal for SISD to allow students to earn industry certifications in the fields of Agriculture, Family and Consumer Science, and Computer Technology Courses. As the emphasis on career and college readiness planning increases, SISD is focused on offering CTE courses that enable students to be better prepared for life after high school.

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

The core curriculum areas provided in the early childhood education program include reading, math, science, and social studies. SISD utilizes the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (PKG) provided by TEA for the math and reading classes and are embedded into the curricula. These guidelines vertically align with the TEKS for kindergarten through grade three, ensuring reading and math skills are taught daily to the children in the early childhood education program and will provide useful, strengthening skills as they move to the primary grades.

In science, pre-K focuses on areas such as animal and seasonal identification, environmental changes as they occur yearly, and general introductions to the natural world. Social studies place an emphasis on school community, the United States, the State of Texas, and neighboring countries such as Canada and Mexico. Concepts of fine arts are incorporated into the classroom through crafts, drawing, and coloring activities. Music is implemented into the curriculum to help with the learning processes through movement and dance activities initiated by the district music teacher. Movement activities for the children, organized physical education lessons, and recess are key components of pre-K development.

Children involved in early childhood education programs are better prepared for the demands and responsibilities required in the daily procedures and routines of primary school. These strategies include a better understanding and subsequent following of rule methodology and give clearly defined expectations. These daily implemented activities are highly emphasized and promote a smooth transition into the primary grades. Students who are more familiar with different teachers and staff members in the school system, will allow them to adapt easier while being well-rounded and comfortable in the overall school environment. SISD has found that children who attend a pre-K program are often more successful socially, emotionally, and academically, as they move through the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

SISD promotes educational environments offering additional opportunities beyond core courses. SISD ensures the student body a selection of elective courses beginning in elementary. Students who are permitted to select courses become well-rounded learners, demonstrating intelligence, imagination, and creativity.

SISD places value in the arts; fostering opportunities for students to explore creatively builds confidence and utilizes higher-level thinking skills. SISD utilizes TEKS for fine arts as guidance for instruction. Music is embedded into the schedule of all elementary students. Band is offered for students in the secondary classes, these students perform in a variety of events over the entire school year, including concerts, sporting events, and special programs. SISD high school band has won multiple awards at various levels of competition. These students have advanced to statewide UIL Solo-Ensemble and Area Band Marching Contests. Theater Arts is offered to high school students and enables students to learn the basics of theater arts and operations while conducting public performances.

Physical education is offered daily to all students, pre-K through eighth grade. Following TEKS for physical education; the district incorporates the methods for proper exercise formats, teamwork building skills, and basic understanding of physical health. Students in elementary school participate yearly in a Field Day, promoting fun and healthy living activities. Middle school students choose where to participate, either athletics or general physical education. Students involved in the SISD athletic program are taught to exhibit excellence qualities: good sportsmanship, mental, emotional toughness, and valor. Many SISD students under the guidance of district educators have earned academic honors for hard work achievements in the classroom.

Spanish is a required course for all ninth and tenth graders. Upper-level courses of Spanish III and IV are offered as electives. Students who are enrolled in Spanish courses gain knowledge of the culture and language utilizing various technology methods, classroom events, and exercises. Students are encouraged to join the Spanish Club, helping to cultivate a better understanding of another culture from learning another language.

SISD is a one-to-one campus where all students in pre-K through twelfth grade have access to tablets or laptops. This technology integration has enhanced classroom learning and the addition of these devices has allowed the district to integrate the Technology Application TEKS into all classes. All classrooms are equipped with technology to present academic content in various ways, helping faculty meet a variety of student needs, and learning methods. The SISD elementary library hosts a yearly book fair and a reading competition; elementary students receive awards based on their academic success. Each elementary classroom visits the library weekly.

SISD offers a variety of activities which allow students to demonstrate learning outside the classroom. Such activities include an elementary chess club, middle school students are offered opportunities to explore science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related activities via robotics, math clubs, and science competitions. Students at all levels can participate in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization. SISD offers a wide variety of individual growth possibilities through diversity of organizations, clubs and sponsored activities that encourage student growth and improvement.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

For students performing below grade level, SISD offers a variety of opportunities for all students to grow academically. Teachers focus on tiered level intervention that is built into daily schedules from kindergarten through twelfth grade. This is done through teacher-led small group instruction and online intervention tools. Formative and summative testing is administered in each unit of study. Data from these assessments helps drive instruction and adjust interventions.

A full time reading and math interventionist is utilized in the elementary school. Based on multiple data points, students who are found in need of additional supports are assigned time with the interventionist. This is done in small groups based on individual student needs. Teachers work closely with the interventionist to ensure the students have the best possible chance to grow academically. These intervention groups change throughout the year based on data collected from ongoing testing. Additionally, a full-time reading intervention aide position was created to help with reading gaps that occurred in the primary grade levels because of COVID-19. The utilization of these two positions has been instrumental in helping close the gaps

of our younger students who are struggling in reading proficiency.

For secondary students a zero hour is provided before school begins for those students struggling in the regular classroom. Data from interim and summative assessments assist in the creation of the intervention groups. Students who have been previously unsuccessful on state assessments attend a daily enrichment time where specific skills are targeted. These small group interventions allow students to learn additional strategies to further their journey toward mastery. Additionally, an online program is utilized at the high school for students who need to recover credits for classes previously failed; this program can be adjusted to either complete a semester worth of growth or a full year depending on student needs.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

SISD promotes a highly rigorous academic environment. To assure students at all levels continue to perform above grade level, many programs have been implemented. Teachers engage students in differentiated instruction that allow students to achieve excellence in the learning environment. Learning objectives are aligned with the TEKS and address the diverse needs of all learners. Benchmarks and STAAR testing data are used to address the learning level of all students. This enables students performing above grade level to be pushed further and find success and challenge at a higher level.

Students in elementary and middle school are further challenged in pursuing academic excellence by participating in academic competitions. Students have the opportunity to participate in the University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic contests. Other programs such as robotics, Texas Mathematics and Science Coach Association (TMSCA), chess club, and Gifted and Talented are offered to students who show aptitude for learning above grade level and thirst to be pushed academically. In addition, weekly visits to the library by elementary classes encourage students to explore books of their choice to support reading above grade level.

Students in high school who are performing above grade level are encouraged to enroll in Honors courses along with Dual Credit College classes. The district has worked to expand the Dual Credit program by hiring teachers with master's degrees so classes can be taught on campus directly to students. The program also offers remote direct instruction and online courses to expand the offerings available to the students. Additionally, high school CTE courses have been added as electives that students enrolled in eighth grade can choose to take adding rigor to the middle school curriculum. Secondary Gifted and Talented students are served directly in the classroom with a focus on the core subjects.

3c. Special education:

The SISD belief in learning, regardless of ability or special needs, is a system that fosters and encourages all educators and learners holistically. SISD special education teachers adapt and modify TEKS-based curricula, to meet special education students needs at their individual instructional level, while pushing these students to achieve at or above their ability levels. Special education teachers have the discretion to choose and modify the curriculum that meets the needs of each student. Instructional modifications and adaptations are made in resource reading, English, and math to meet state TEKS standards. SISD utilizes standardized curriculum and course materials along with validated computer programs to further provide needed skills practice in reading, English, and math.

Special education teachers offer content mastery classes to provide students with additional support in their academic pursuits. Inclusion aides assist and support the special education teachers and students by bridging gaps in understanding and accessing content in core reading, English, and math courses. Continual communication, between special education teachers, inclusion aides, and general education teachers, allows the educators the ability to address any concerns with special education students' curriculum access.

Continual assessments are essential in providing special education teachers analysis of resource students' progress. The process is helpful in determining future modifications and accommodations needed to help students be academically successful. Across the elementary and secondary campuses, special education and general education teachers work together to utilize a variety of curricula-based assessments and benchmark

testing to aid in the development of curricula and methods of instruction for resource students. Using data from these assessments allows the special education teachers to analyze the progress made by the special education students, and determine if current curricula, modifications, and accommodations meet the needs of these students. The combination of these elements enhances the school inclusion experience of our special education students and helps bridge learning gaps.

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

SISD has a small English Language Learner (ELL) population, efforts are made to ensure they are not overlooked. Students are identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) upon entering their earliest level of education via the Home Language Survey and an approved ELL assessment. Once identified, and with parental approval, they are placed in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) along with designated teacher input, provides specific instructional accommodations for each student. Classroom teachers implement these aids as they deliver instruction, monitor understanding, create assignments, and provide feedback. Some of the accommodations are gestures and visuals, wait time, word banks, clarification of directions, rephrasing/repeating, and peer support. A bilingual dictionary is also made available to each ELL student to use daily.

The LPAC meets in the middle of the year to determine if additional accommodations should be given to the ELL students as they prepare for the STAAR assessment. Provided accommodations, extra time, oral administration, and content/language support are granted to each student on an individual basis and specific needs. These accommodations are given on the provision that students have been using them throughout the year.

In addition to the academic needs of ELL students, social and emotional needs are also a priority. Many English learners come to Smyer with little or no experience of the English language and are immersed into difficult environment. There is social, emotional, and educational ramifications. SISD teachers and staff work diligently to develop relationships with these children to provide needed emotional and social support. Students are given opportunities to express themselves verbally and in written formats and are encouraged to take control of their emotions by how they react in situations. Additionally, these students are pushed to take responsibility for their own learning.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

SISD staff make a concentrated effort to allow for the maximum amount of student engagement by utilizing a wide array of extracurricular activities that not only support our main academic core, but also brings our student body together to fully support each other's endeavors. SISD purchases school shirts at the start of every school year for every staff member and student on our campus to incorporate a sense of belonging and togetherness. We have bridged the technological gap in that every student in grades pre-K through second grade receives a tablet while students in grades three through twelve are provided a laptop to use in class and at home. Daily tutorials, enrichment, and online programs are geared toward the needs of the students and can be found through our school website.

SISD provides on-going celebrations of achievement to motivate students to do their best in all areas of school life and activities through assemblies and programs. Students are included in a drawing at the end of the year for prizes that can only be offered to those who have met requirements every six weeks. Special school trips have been implemented to celebrate students who acquire the necessary achievements during the semester in which their attendance, overall semester grades, lack of discipline issues, and no unexcused absences are targeted.

SISD offers many different opportunities for our students to grow and develop socially. Homecoming week allows for the students to enjoy different dress-up days and activities with the culmination of the homecoming bonfire and parade that is celebrated by the entire community. Our Veteran's Day program and local stock show are also wonderful opportunities for our students to grow as well.

Throughout the school year, SISD provides a fulltime guidance counselor that is available for our students that require support that caters more toward the emotional growth of our students and is instrumental in giving them instruction on the handling and working through problems that they encounter in life.

During the height of the COVID shutdown, SISD implemented strategies that involved teachers utilizing online programs and provided instruction through remote learning. The students social and emotional wellbeing was also of top priority during this time. Teachers made it a priority to have regular video conferencing each week to help provide some normalcy during this very difficult time. In addition, the district counselor was also available to work with students via phone or video conference.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

SISD is in a rural town with no large businesses within the city limits. Therefore, the community is excited for the completion of a newly constructed convenience store and the owner has contacted the district extending a desire to become an influential partner for the district. The intent is to offer work-related opportunities for upper-level students via a work-release program. Even with the lack of businesses and partnerships, the community has established a variety of avenues for community involvement helping the students with monetary donations and events to prioritize student academic growth. The community has created various booster clubs that support educators and students. These include the following: Academic Booster club – offering teachers wish lists grants for classroom supplies and hosting events for students and families for interaction with teachers and school leadership; Band Boosters club – provide meals, support for equipment and chaperones during the marching season for band members; Athletic Booster Club – host events for athletes families to engage with peers, educators and local residents and weekly meals are provided throughout the year for all sports; Ag Booster Club – comprised of parents, educators and local businesses provide students who raise livestock financial and mentoring assistance, they host a local stock show and other events to raise money for student scholarships. Support is provided during the stock show season at events across the state.

SISD makes continual efforts to create meaningful parent relationships through events in which students, parents, and educators can fellowship. Such events work to create and maintain open communication with

students, family, and school partners. SISD operates a variety of social media pages and school website with interactive calendar to provide information. Sites are updated frequently to share information about school events, closures and generalized information to the parents, community and local businesses. Events are planned yearly to celebrate students' accomplishments academically and in extra-curricular activities. Events are open to the public and help to bridge relationships across the community.

SISD fosters community activities not related to the school's function by allowing the use of campus facilities to various organizations and individuals. Leagues for Pee-Wee football, Little Dribblers basketball, and Little League baseball are granted access to campus facilities for use in practice and competition. SISD facilities function as a community center by allowing access to the track for exercise, the playground for recreation, access to the auditorium for various events, and the cafeteria for large scale non-school related events.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

SISD staff are encouraged to pursue extra professional development opportunities throughout the school year and in the summer. A robust professional development budget provides these opportunities at no additional cost to the employee. Professional development is offered on campus and through the Regional Service Center. Courses and training are continually available to the staff. Teachers who attend trainings are asked to share ideas, implement collaboration activities with co-workers, and provide training on gained knowledge. Principals also help with the implementation of the acquired training into the classroom.

SISD personnel serve as vital members on various committees. The Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) coordinated by the campus nurse has faculty from elementary and secondary campuses contribute input. Teachers are instrumental in the Attendance, Campus, and District Site-Based Committees. These meet regularly for dialogue, plan development on increasing student achievement, and overall district goals and needs. SISD personnel enjoy these inclusion points as their input is vital to achieving campus wide goals.

The Board of Trustees is proud to support the staff and students of Smyer ISD. A priority of the board is to help provide faculty with the tools they need to be successful in the classroom. Goals, activities, and committee reports are shared in monthly meetings. This process allows the board members to understand and support ideas generated by the staff. The board continually seek out methods to help the SISD personnel obtain classroom and campus-wide goals. Principals convey requests and feedback gathered from the staff at monthly board meetings. Open communication between staff, administration and the Board is essential in goal and vision accomplishments.

The small scale of the SISD campus allows for constant connection points between administration, faculty, and students. The climate emphasized within SISD is to continually work towards improving and maintaining strong relationships with all. Trust between the faculty, administration, students, and families allows for freedom to express ideas in an open and supportive environment.

SISD is fortunate to have tremendous support via a Parent-Teacher Organization. As a campus-wide group, support is made available to all faculty and administration in an effort to enhance the work and learning environment. Yearly fundraising events are organized and executed to provide additional supplies, books, and other necessities that arise during the school year. This added level of support from the community reduces the burden that is often placed on the faculty to provide what is needed for their classrooms.

4. School Leadership:

SISD administration forms district leadership methods with service parameters in the forefront and incorporates continual contributions for improvements from staff, student, and community members. Leadership delivered in this format is created by the encouragement of open communication between all district stakeholders and administrative staff, placing a heavy emphasis on the variety of student needs. Ensuring all are given every opportunity to succeed.

The campus principals actively engage in fostering relationships with students and their families. Being present at extracurricular events displays support and continuity to all who are involved in school related functions – academic, athletic, or extracurricular. SISD seeks opportunities to recurrently celebrate students’ achievements. Principals at SISD have incorporated an “open-door” policy, promoting members of the student body or staff to approach them any time a need arises.

School safety is a primary priority of SISD administration and the Board of Trustees. Extensive measures are taken each year to ensure each student, staff, and family members have a safe environment to work, learn, and grow. SISD administration work cohesively to annually review safety protocols and adjust as needed. Regular safety drills are enacted to train staff and students in campus process for emergency events such as fire, tornado, and safety lockdowns.

SISD implemented a new program centered on a focal point of individual student improvement. The Perseverance, Responsibility, Integrity, Dignity, and Excellence (PRIDE) program celebrates students who maintain an 80 percent or better average in all classes. To be eligible, students are not allowed failing grades, discipline referrals, tardiness, unexcused absences, or more than ten absences within a semester. Ideation behind this program stemmed from the need to improve attendance numbers, homework turn-in rates, and numbers of office referrals.

SISD administration provide structure and guidance in during the creation of yearly school calendars. Collaborative efforts between faculty and administrators work to ensure yearly events will foster opportunities for students, families, and the SISD staff to actively participate in and celebrate together for all school activities. Athletics is a major component of the daily function at SISD. The athletic director provides leadership and communication in the coordination of all scheduled sporting events as they occur throughout the year.

The leadership of SISD seeks professional practice methodology to implement into daily procedures. Ensuring continual evaluations will be conducted to further establish a climate in which students, faculty, and staff can explore new forms of education, adapt to ever-changing technologies, and create a holistic environment that is steady while being forward progressing.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

SISD is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment ensuring equity, cultural awareness, and respect which is continually modeled by staff and instilled in the students. Ready, responsible, and respectful is the school motto and encouragement and promotion of respectful behavior is a daily district commitment. Respect is a fundamental focus across all grade levels. Students are taught with respect and prompted, encouraged, and motivated to be respectful to everyone. The model of respect and cultural awareness is showcased by students and staff. The instances of bullying are infrequent due to the climate for respect.

SISD is comprised of 46 percent Hispanic students. Values from different cultures represented within the community are instilled by staff to all students. Adaptations to instructional content have been adjusted to incorporate Hispanic and Latino cultural norms in effort to promote equity for the entire student population. Continual open channels of communication between families and SISD employees is vital and encouraged. The strength of the community is exemplified by attendance at school sponsored functions. Students and families receive school communication via newsletters, social media, and other technology methods.

SISD seeks to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) into curriculum and campus culture. A valued sense of belonging is foundational to student success and the core values of DEI have been integrated into the curricula and class discussions at all levels. Every student comes to the classroom with differing perspectives and experiences and are provided an environment for exploration and expression. The incorporation of the DEI value system has given students an introduction to coping mechanisms providing necessary capabilities and understanding needed to tackle hard topics such as racial issues and mental health.

One-to-one technology integration into SISD curricula provides students with direct access to learning about culturally relevant topics. Information sharing further takes place throughout campus via a variety of methods to provide access to current local, national, and worldwide influential people and cultural topics. Elementary students study world holidays and current events; from this exposure they gain a better understanding for different cultures, races, socioeconomic differences, and backgrounds. Secondary curricula integrate historical and current events to bring value to all subjects. Exposure to varied topics encourages ideation for problem solving solutions related to these topics. The integration of social understanding and acceptance into the curricula is accomplished in various and appropriate methods. Awareness of social and cultural issues historically will cultivate compassion in students for how these topics are relevant in daily life.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

SISD has many strategies in place for student success, however the district-wide move into the digital age, through the integration of new technology and increased teacher capacity to utilize these technologies for in-person and home learning, has contributed the most value in supporting and educating students. Forced methodology and integration changes came as an action towards continuing education during the COVID-19 pandemic district-wide shut-down. Unfortunately, it was apparent that SISD was not technologically prepared for this major change in methodology. SISD administration, faculty, and staff worked diligently with students and families to provide support for education from home. SISD employees and students struggled to adapt to Distance Learning (DL). The implementation of one-to-one learning to all students and the faculty quickly adapting their capabilities in device utilization allowed SISD to make this urgent modification.

In the summer of 2020-2021, SISD created an extensive campus wide DL program, providing high quality in-person and remote professional development, acquiring one-to-one devices for all students, and made improvements to faculty technology. Faculty and staff spent countless hours preparing and learning new technologies in-order to better serve the needs of students in a DL setting. The 2020-2021 school year began with the options of at-home or in-person learning. It was quickly apparent the implementation of the campus wide improvements to programs and the new technology additions would prove to be instrumental towards the success of both remote students and in-person students. Through many trials and implementation of new platforms, the benefits were visible via student knowledge retention improvement and testing successes.

SISD has taken further steps to improve technology integration campus wide. Classrooms across the campus are being modified to include new interactive television panels replacing out of date technology. This was an effort made to improve daily application of digital formats within all disciplines and age categories. Allowing faculty to digitally display lectures, students had access to lectures remotely and could interact with classmates remotely to conduct group-based assignments and activities. The district intends to continue with technology integration and improvements over time.

The implementation of new instructional programs into curriculum, classroom functional methodology, and the continued use of validated educational websites will ensure SISD continues to gain strides in the accomplishment of our students becoming more technologically savvy. This new strategy will allow for sustained success of our students in the post-secondary educational realm and aid them in preparation for employment beyond graduation.