

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Drum Intermediate School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4909 79th Avenue West  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City University Place State WA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 98467-1954

County Pierce

Telephone (253) 566-5660 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL https://di.upsd83.org E-mail mcarr@upsd83.org

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. Jeff Chamberlin E-mail jchamberlin@upsd83.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name University Place School District Tel. (253) 566-5600

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 Dr. Rick Maloney  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

**The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.**

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 TOTAL

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

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

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	110	111	221
6	89	99	188
7	126	98	224
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	325	308	633

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 8.7 % Asian
  - 11 % Black or African American
  - 17.5 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1.7 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 44.6 % White
  - 15.5 % 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: 6%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	23
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	40
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	633
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

Arabic, Chinese, French, Korean, Marathi, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Ukrainian

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 40 %

Total number students who qualify: 256

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 16 %  
103 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>10</u> Autism                 | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>26</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>49</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>2</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: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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.

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	93%	91%	93%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

In a safe, civil, and caring environment, our Drum Intermediate School mission is to develop respectful, responsible, kind, lifelong learners.

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

[https://www.upsd83.org/about\\_upsd/non-\\_discrimination\\_statement](https://www.upsd83.org/about_upsd/non-_discrimination_statement)

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

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Drum Intermediate School is one of eight schools in University Place School District, a small city of about 38,000 people within a much larger urban area (Tacoma/ Pierce County). The city was only incorporated in 1995, but the school district has existed as the focal point of the community for many years. Drum is located in the center of the city in a residential neighborhood. The school was built in 1994 and is in good condition. The quality of the school reflects the community's long standing commitment to education and to public schools. Local funding (levies) are strongly supported in University Place. In February of 2022, two important local ballot measures for financial support passed by large margins with strong turnout.

Drum serves a very diverse community of students in grades 5, 6 and 7. This “intermediate school” model includes components of both primary school and middle school models. Students have three to four core teachers (elective, math/science, and language arts/social studies) with some additional “pull-out” for intervention and support. Drum’s diversity spans race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. Many students live in one of several large apartment complexes while others live in middle to upper-middle class residential homes in the community. Due to the reputation of the school and school district, Drum also serves families in nearby Tacoma who "opt in" to the district.

The key strategies used in our district, and specifically at Drum, focus on the development of strong, core academic programs in math and literacy. These programs form the foundation of our success and are characterized by high-quality, fully guided instruction and a demonstrated guaranteed and viable curriculum for students. Students needing more than our core program can offer have access to effective, targeted interventions that serve to bolster their ability to find success in core programs. Staff interactions at Drum are professional and collaborative. Most importantly, they are focused on measurable student academic success. Also, teachers at Drum work closely with a partner intermediate school, Narrows View Intermediate, to ensure alignment of curriculum and assessment for all students in grades 5-7.

Drum is committed to implementing best practices for equity, racial equity, school safety, and classroom management. Celebration of diversity has long been a part of the culture at Drum. More recently, a building equity team has been created to guide building work in this vital area. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) systems have been in place at Drum since 2008 to ensure that best practices for managing student conduct and teaching good behaviors are in place and support learning.

Leadership at Drum has been consistently outstanding. The current principal is in her seventh year at Drum. Prior to this position, the principal was an assistant principal and teacher in the district at other schools with a common mission and approach. She is also an alumni of the district. This longevity and familiarity in University Place Schools is a strength. The principal’s commitment to serving all students - but particularly students who have been historically underserved by traditional public schooling - is strong and is an ongoing focus for building leadership and staff development. In addition, the principal is highly knowledgeable about quality instruction and the district’s adopted curriculum. She is very visible and participates in this work with staff. This academically focused, "hands-on" leadership is essential.



## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

A guaranteed and viable curriculum is the backbone of our academic program, aligning intervention, support classes, and core classrooms. Aligned assessments and content provide the necessary components for effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which work in concert with the district to develop and improve the curriculum and fine-tune instruction to foster academic success for all students. Close attention is paid to the quality of instruction in classrooms by school administrators to ensure that the district’s “UPSD Basics for Instruction” are utilized in all classrooms. These research-based best practices include the basic components of explicit, fully-guided instruction.

Our curricular structure and instructional design rest on the idea that academic background knowledge is the foundation of student success in each content area. From a classroom perspective, this means that teachers are, at all times, building academic background knowledge to spur accelerated growth later, or leveraging academic background knowledge to accelerate growth and learning now, or doing both simultaneously. This lens for learning establishes a coherence across grade levels and a mutual accountability with the teachers in grade levels before and after them. Such vertical alignment and shared responsibility result in a loss of teacher autonomy in some areas, but gains in student learning. This alignment allows intervention and support teachers to focus on pre-teaching academic background knowledge that lines up perfectly with core instruction. As a result, students who were previously struggling to learn at a typical rate find themselves on a more level playing field with their more successful peers. This curricular and instructional coherence is a primary factor in the success of students who historically have struggled to learn on pace.

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

5th grade curriculum - Core Knowledge Language Arts - This aligns with student texts in grades 2-4. This text is heavy on informational text and historical information. In fifth grade, students learn about Don Quixote, The Renaissance, and read A Midsummer Night’s Dream. The emphasis is on building historical context and background knowledge.

6th and 7th grade curriculum - Holt Literature - This aligns with student texts in grades 8-12.

In 6th and 7th grades, students read culturally rich fiction and non-fiction in both excerpts and in original form. Students write essays and extended responses after reading stories like: The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, Amigo Brothers, Scholarship Jacket, Encounter with MLK, Thank You Ma’am, The Red Guards, Ant and the Grasshopper, etc. The goal is to read, analyze and respond to rich literature and to write effectively. Students build background knowledge by connecting these texts with historical timelines, characters and events.

Assessment - Grade level teams and cadres have developed common unit assessments and writing tasks to be used as formative and summative assessments. In addition, students’ overall level of reading comprehension is monitored using the AimswebPlus platform, which provides separate normed scores for reading comprehension and vocabulary. PLCs monitor student progress using curricular-based assessment by analyzing results, discussing student work and making instructional decisions about how to spur more or deeper learning. These results are compared to nationally normed results over time to adjust the curriculum map and content to maximize growth. In other words, the curriculum-based assessments inform teachers about whether students are learning and mastering the content taught, and the nationally normed assessment results inform them as to whether the content, skills, and current expectations are spurring adequate growth. If not, this content is adjusted to add rigor, complexity or to insert specific skills.

Instruction - Teams and cadres have spent years developing common student tasks, which we describe as

“high bar” tasks, for the most important learning targets in each unit. These student tasks clearly describe the expected level of proficiency and mastery. They are purposefully designed to be higher in cognitive demand and are placed thoughtfully within the unit after foundational ideas and concepts have been taught. Lessons early in the unit are structured in a fully guided or more direct fashion. This instructional design results in a general ramping up of cognitive demand throughout the unit. Students revisit and apply previously learned concepts or knowledge in an interleaving fashion, culminating in these “high bar” tasks. This structure effectively builds the academic background knowledge required for success at more academically rigorous levels later.

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

5th grade curriculum - UPSD Math - This is a locally developed research-based curriculum that aligns with curriculum in grades K-4. This content aligns with the Common Core State Standards for Washington State. There is a heavy emphasis on fractions and decimals, learned in a format and manner consistent with prior grade levels. We believe that consistent mental models, notations, vocabulary, and representations build coherent learners. In fifth grade, we spend a disproportionate amount of time on rational number skills in order to build fluency for 6th and 7th grade.

6th and 7th grade curriculum - Pearson Envision - This aligns with student texts in grades 8-9. Students repeat models and vocabulary from fifth grade and below while spending time mastering fraction operations, simple and two step equations, and understanding the idea of slope on their way to pre-algebra skills. Throughout 6th and 7th grade, the content is geared to prepare the vast majority of students for algebra in 8th grade. So, we forgo some 6th and 7th grade standards in order to spend more time on algebra-ready skills and concepts.

Assessment - Grade level teams and cadres have developed common unit assessments and exit/entry tasks to be used as formative and summative assessments. In addition, students’ overall level of numeracy is monitored using the AimswebPlus platform which provides norm-referenced results. Assessment results for units and major concept formative assessments are compared within PLC teams to identify students who are yet to master significant ideas. Students are retaught or content is reviewed in order to ensure mastery. As with ELA, curricular assessment results are compared with nationally normed results to identify ways to enhance and strengthen learning and growth compared to the norm over time.

Instruction - Teams and cadres meet regularly to develop and maintain common curriculum maps, pacing guides and assessments. As in ELA, the units are designed to generally increase in cognitive demand as each unit progresses. Common student tasks provide interleaving practice that steadily increases in cognitive demand. One hallmark of the pacing and maps at all grade levels is the dedication of time to concepts considered the most leverageable for later math success. At each grade level, teams have identified 2-3 concepts as the “most leverageable.” These are skills of fluency with concepts that ensure student success in later grades. These concepts are given more time, because mastery and overmastery/fluency with these concepts correlates with success in secondary math. This structure also means that some skills and concepts get less instructional time and focus by design.

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

5th grade curriculum - UPSD Science - This is a locally developed curriculum that aligns with the literacy-based science units in grades K-4. Fifth grade students see a mix of science in class, establishing a broad set of background knowledge. These topics range from Force and matter, to environments, cycles and ecosystems. This broad entry point is purposeful as future grades become more specific and narrow in their approach and to deepen content in specific areas.

6th and 7th grade curriculum - Pearson Interactive Science - Science texts in all three grades are due for renewal or adoption in the coming school year. Sixth grade is a life-science based year. Students learn about life, categorize life into domains and kingdoms, and discuss viruses, bacteria and fungi. Students study plant and animal life and reproductions as well. Seventh grade focuses on the human body, ecology, and the environment.

Assessment - Grade level teams and cadres have developed common unit assessments, notes and student tasks to be used as formative and summative assessments.

As in other subjects, the PLC teams analyze student data and work to identify first, who has yet to master the concepts being taught. There is also an emphasis on what we describe as “predictive planning.” Because we don’t have nationally normed assessments to which we can compare data in order to improve the rigor or content of the curriculum map, we ask questions specific to what concepts students will struggle with, what are the prerequisite skills and knowledge required and how do we scaffold that knowledge.

Instruction - Teams and cadres meet regularly to develop and maintain common curriculum maps, pacing guides and assessments. As in ELA and math, the units are designed to generally increase in cognitive demand as each unit progresses. Common student tasks provide interleaving practice that steadily increases in cognitive demand. Instruction in science includes direct instruction, but also encompasses lab situations and safety. Students write and test hypotheses, explore experiments and data, and work in groups to complete projects and tasks.

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

5th grade curriculum - Core Knowledge History and Geography - This curriculum that aligns with the ELA texts in grades K-5.

Fifth grade students begin with the Age of Exploration, England’s Golden Age and trade. This is followed by a tremendous amount of time on Pre-Civil War US History. These units also involve Native American resources and units designed to incorporate Since Time Immemorial resources and resources from local tribes. Students end the year exploring feudal Japan and early Russian governments.

6th and 7th grade curriculum - Cengage - World History: Great Civilizations

Assessment - Grade level teams and cadres have developed common unit assessments, notes and student tasks to be used as formative and summative assessments. Students' data and work are analyzed in the ways described above for ELA and math, but typically include more group and project work associated with the content. Teams calibrate this work with the other school at their grade band, which allows for more consistent expectations for work and student production expectations.

Instruction - Teams and cadres meet regularly to develop and maintain common curriculum maps, pacing guides and assessments. As in ELA and math, the units are designed to generally increase in cognitive demand as each unit progresses. Common student tasks, specifically writing tasks are integrated into the units as “high bar” tasks in order to arrive at increasing cognitive demand within each unit.

Because our ELA topics are often historically based, there is sometimes overlap between the two subject areas and interdisciplinary writing. Instruction is divided between geography, history, analyzing historical events in context, understanding an historical sequence of events, and human aspects, such as: trade, migration, war and conflict, etc.

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

Drum serves students in 5th through 7th grades. Elective options mirror these developmental levels with a strong academic focus in course selections and a limited set of electives such as music, PE, and homeroom. Core academics are supported by a strong intervention system that helps prepare students for success in Junior and Senior High School. Two full-time school counselors provide academic and social/emotional support for students as they mature into adolescence. After school programs are also in place to give support to students and connect them with peers in positive settings such as clubs, athletics and activities.

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

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

Students at Drum Intermediate School are enrolled in one of three music choices each year - Orchestra, Band or Choir. These comprehensive programs align with available programs in grades 8-12. Students in orchestra may start in fourth grade, prior to Drum Intermediate, as part of a supplemental program, “4th grade strings.” The music instructors at the intermediate level teach these programs to maintain alignment and encourage enrollment.

The physical education program at Drum is taught by a team of two teachers and all students attend PE class three times a week. PE teachers at Drum provide intentional and engaging lessons that build upon the skills and concepts outlined by Washington State standards. 5th graders at Drum also participate in swimming and are transported to the high school aquatic center for one session per year. Sessions last approximately two weeks and help students at all ability levels develop their water safety skills as well as improve upon their swimming skills for safety and recreation.

In 6th grade, Drum students attend a local camp for a three-day “outdoor school” experience where they learn about nature, wildlife, boating, archery and other engaging topics. 6th grade camp is a long-standing Drum tradition.

Students at Drum also have access to technology to help them learn. Students use Chromebooks to engage in a myriad of different learning activities. Our teachers use google classrooms and engaging educational sites to help students with different levels of work.

Visual art activities are not part of separate art courses but are used in core classes, as appropriate. Extensive visual art opportunities are available to students and many teachers provide art opportunities during their homeroom time.

## **3. Academic Supports**

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

Intervention programs for ELA and math which are designed to align with and increase access to core instruction are provided in all three grade levels as pull-out programs.

In ELA, this program is staffed with one FTE and provides direct instruction designed to increase students’ academic background knowledge related to the core curriculum. Vocabulary instruction and supplemental reading of texts related to the core/classroom reading program to build prior knowledge are the focus.

In math, this program is staffed with two FTE and provides pre-teaching of 4-6 highly leverageable topics and review of previously taught topics within the grade level pacing guide. The content is aligned with core instruction in terms of mathematical models, anchor charts, vocabulary and timing. Pre-teaching units in intervention are timed to culminate at the same time students are learning related topics in core instruction. This provides students who have historically struggled with the background knowledge to be successful in the units that teams have decided are the most important, or leverageable.

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

Teachers are trained to differentiate for lower and higher performing students. Because our curriculum is geared to increase cognitive load as units progress, there is enough rigorous content to allow teachers to be successful challenging all learners. The district Highly Capable Program is officially located at Drum’s sister-school, Narrows View Intermediate. There are a few students who require acceleration through a highly capable program who choose not to attend, or stay, at Drum. Some of these students work on content at grade level that is differentiated and a few work in accelerated grade level content.

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

Students at Drum Intermediate who are identified as having learning disabilities have access to a continuum of services as designated by their IEPs. Drum is home to the district's intermediate Special Programs class which is designed for students with more significant disabilities. These students vary widely in their individual learning targets, but are typically focused on life skills and behavioral life skills. Drum also serves students in the Learning Resource Center. The goal for all students with disabilities at Drum is to provide the least restrictive environment and to foster a sense of belonging within the school.

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

English Language Learners are provided pull-out services for direct instruction in language acquisition and increasing academic background knowledge. The district uses a Ballard and Tighe - Champions of Ideas and Frames for Fluency text to provide explicit and guided instruction. These services are dedicated to be provided outside of ELA class time to ensure that students have full access to core instruction.

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

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

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

The engagement of students at Drum begins with strong hiring. Administrators at Drum actively seek out staff who appreciate and like intermediate-aged kids and who are the right fit to work with adolescents. Staff intentionally create strong, positive relationships with students by getting to know students as individuals, by celebrating the diversity each student brings to the school, and by helping students be successful in the classroom and throughout their days. Drum staff engage students during instruction by ensuring that their effective, high quality instruction is appropriately paced and includes numerous student tasks. Staff emphasize student engagement during lessons. Highlights include sixth grade camp, field trips to the WA State History Museum, and our partnership with Pierce County Environmental Educators.

Students at Drum are also engaged in numerous school sponsored after school activities including: multiple sports opportunities, art clubs, yearbook, ASB, homework assistance programs, language classes, dance classes, wellness classes, and game clubs.

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

The administration, counselors and teachers at Drum believe that the best foundation for student success is a strong relationship with families and the surrounding community. Drum dedicates time and resources to this relationship in many ways. First and foremost, Drum provides clear and frequent communications so that parents know what is happening at school. Leadership emphasizes the importance of working closely with parents and these partnerships are an organizational value. Staff communicate frequently through online gradebooks, emails, virtual conferences, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings. Teachers and other staff know that parents must be involved in the education of their children to provide direction to the school and support to their students. Only strong partnerships between classroom teachers and parents can make this possible.

Drum has a long history of parent and community involvement. Prior to Covid-19 shutdowns, a strong and active PTSA group organized regular events to bring parents and students together at school including a multicultural night event, family dances, student socials, and grade level celebrations. Moving forward, staff and parents are working together to create new traditions that build community. These school events contribute to a positive, inclusive school environment and are essential prerequisites for strong student achievement. As families feel more a part of the school community, they can better support their students by advocating for their needs, communicating with staff and supporting learning at home.

Drum seeks input from parents in concert with the school district through surveys on key topics such as the school calendar, use of federal funding and online learning.

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

Drum staff work together to create and sustain the highest level of professional culture. Through their dedication to collaboration and data analysis, professional learning communities are the mechanism that keeps Drum working for what's best for all students. Teachers meet weekly in PLCs and have daily common plan time with their grade level content teams. Staff at Drum also go above and beyond during the summer, and throughout the school year, to revisit curriculum maps and pacing guides. Teachers understand the importance of keeping a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students and collaborate about what is occurring in classrooms on a daily basis. They make adjustments programmatically if/when adjustments are needed.

Drum administrators support this professional culture by providing both pressure and support to staff members. Drum administrators serve as the instructional leaders of the building and actively work with teachers by being involved in weekly PLCs, curriculum work and by being active in the observation and evaluation process. Administrators model high expectations for themselves and their staff by leading

pertinent and organized building professional development and by being involved in the everyday practices of instruction, supervision, and discipline.

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

Drum is led by a committed, knowledgeable principal in her seventh year of service to staff and students at Drum. Most importantly, the Drum principal is a person of strong character. She is honest, consistent, fair, hard-working and communicates well. This is always the first, and most essential component of quality school leadership. The principal also possesses strong instructional knowledge that is critical. Knowledge of craft allows for effective monitoring of instruction and professional development.

The principal and assistant principal at Drum team up to provide supervision to all classified and certificated staff in the building. High value is placed on classroom observation and feedback and both building administrators spend considerable time engaged in this important work centered on teaching and learning in classrooms. Drum, like the rest of the district, focuses supervision of teaching on “UPSD Basics” of quality instruction which emphasizes explicit, fully-guided instructional methods. These methods focus on high levels of student engagement, feedback and clarity.

Teacher leadership is also a critical component to Drum’s success. Professional learning communities (PLCs) are the heart of professional development and improvement at Drum. PLC groups are organized around shared content and time is provided regularly throughout the year for these teams to meet, plan lessons, review curriculum and look at student achievement results for their students. Each PLC team has a paid “PLC Leader” to coordinate the work of that team. The principal provides guidance and direction to this team of teacher-leaders in regular PLC Leader meetings. Training is also provided to these leaders and systems are in place to monitor the focus of the PLC teams. While this model of leadership is “distributed,” with multiple teachers in the building in important leadership roles, there is an expectation that instructional approaches and curricular emphasis are highly guided/directed. In general, it is expected that the work be more similar than different across classrooms within PLCs. It is also expected that the general focus of PLC work be the same for each grade level and content area (i.e., the work is focused on best instructional methods, guaranteed and viable curriculum and student achievement data).

Both teacher-leaders and the principal in this environment value the coordination in service to students. The principal, as chief communicator of the schools vision and purpose, keeps student achievement at the forefront of her messaging and, most importantly, at the center of all teacher collaboration and professional learning. Teacher time is carefully protected by leadership to avoid distractions and keep everyone focused on critical work. Not only is academic achievement the ongoing focus of everyone’s time and energy at Drum, but there is particular focus on achievement for traditionally underserved students and students whose progress demonstrates the need for additional support.

Additionally, decisions are made through this same lens of equity via academic intervention and increased supports. It should also be noted that the leadership at Drum is closely aligned with a long-standing and well-supported district mission with the same focus. The leader at Drum, while exceptional, leads programs that are aligned to larger, district-wide initiatives creating coherence and predictability in the system at the primary level. District leadership, in this sense, supports the leadership work in the building.

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

Drum is dedicated to culturally responsive teaching by serving all students with research based best practices and by closely monitoring sub-group data. Staff analyze sub-group data frequently to determine who is learning from general practices and who needs additional support or extension. All staff members participate in equity literacy training throughout the year and discuss at length how to increase opportunity and decrease marginalization for traditionally underserved students. Drum staff members also work with a nearby university to review and supplement social studies curriculum and attend a Race and Pedagogy Institute.

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

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Drum is part of a district-wide system geared toward student success and high academic achievement. The strategy at Drum is aligned with, and in many places identical to, the district strategy. The heart of Drum's success and ongoing improvement efforts is the work of PLC teams. At Drum, we are committed to ensuring every single student meets essential grade level objectives. These outcomes will only be realized when teams have the capacity to identify essential learning objectives, create assessment systems to monitor student learning, identify students who are not learning, and utilize effective, common interventions for monitoring and support. This work is the focus of every grade-level PLC at Drum.

PLC teams meet regularly to preview upcoming content, determine possible learning challenges, and agree on the most effective instructional strategies. Common lesson plans, templates, and organizers are developed to scaffold learning for struggling students. They break complex learning into small chunks and create small, common formative assessments to measure students' progress toward critical learning in real time. Teams regularly examine these assessments and discuss, develop, and implement intervention plans to ensure struggling students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to move forward.

The understanding of - and commitment to - authentic PLC work centers around the achievement of all students. For this reason, historically underserved and at-risk populations of students experience extraordinary levels of growth and achievement at Drum. Individuals and teams do not perseverate on student limitations or make excuses for lack of performance. Instead, they focus on the specific teacher actions necessary to advance students' learning. In doing so, they continually advance their collective knowledge of appropriate assessment, scaffolding, and intervention. As their knowledge and expertise grows, so does student learning, further reinforcing and validating their exceptional work.