

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2023 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[X] Choice

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

Official School Name Neely Traditional Academy  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 500 East Houston Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Gilbert State AZ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 85234-3427

County Maricopa

Telephone (480) 892-2805 Fax (480) 497-6953

Web site/URL  
<https://www.gilbertschools.net/neelytraditionalacademy> E-mail neelyinfo@gilbertschools.net

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Shane McCord E-mail shane.mccord@gilbertschools.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Gilbert Public Schools Tel. (480) 497-3300

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

## PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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 (2022-2023) 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):
- 26 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 6 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 39 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	35
K	112
1	118
2	124
3	118
4	122
5	111
6	110
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	850

\*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):
- 0.5 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 13 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 23 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.5 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 54 % White
  - 7 % 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 2021 - 2022 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, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	48
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	34
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	82
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	791
(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):

Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Kiswahili, Konkani, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Oriya/India, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Telugu, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 18 %

Total number students who qualify: 153

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 3 %  
Total number of students served 27

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>3</u> Developmental Delay	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 2 %  
Total number of students served: 14

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 6

11. 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.	40
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

12. 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 22:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	98%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2009

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Neely Traditional Academy will provide a rigorous educational experience, with high expectations for all students in academic achievement, music and art performance, physical education, and technology, with a focus on character development. A traditional instructional model in Reading and Math will be complemented with the inclusion of critical thinking, cooperative learning, higher level thinking involving application of 21st Century skills in real world situations, creativity, and enrichment, in the areas of Science, Social Studies, Art, Computers, Music, PE, and in certain Language Arts and Math lessons. Neely students will leave 6th Grade with a distinct advantage, due to the acquisition of all the foundational skills required to be extremely successful in their future education and career, combined with advanced levels of academic achievement in reading, writing and math and proficiency in critical thinking, creativity, and group collaboration. Neely students will also demonstrate good character, confidence, motivation and determination to be successful in any endeavor of their choice.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.gilbertschools.net/Page/192>

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

Neely accepts students within Gilbert Public Schools District boundaries, as well as students from outside of GPS boundaries in accordance with GPS open enrollment policy. Priority admission is based upon 1.) siblings of current Neely students, 2.) children of a district employee (cap of 20%), 3.) residents of Gilbert Public Schools, 4.) non-residents of Gilbert Public Schools and space available in the grade level. Applications for an upcoming school year are accepted October 1st of the prior school year.

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Located in Gilbert, Arizona, Neely Traditional Academy, the proud home of the Neely Knights, where students are “Knighted for Success.” Neely was originally a conventional elementary school that was established as a Traditional Academy in 1999. We offer students access to a rigorous education experience, with high expectations for all of the Gilbert Public Schools community and surrounding areas.

Our Mission, Vision, and Core Beliefs are a collaboration of teachers, parents, and staff based upon a founding principle that parents and staff shall work together as partners to provide an education that encourages students to pursue academic excellence to the best of their abilities. The curriculum, pace of studies, and specific behavior expectations require a firm commitment from every parent, student, and teacher. By selecting Neely Traditional Academy, parents, students, and staff are responsible for and committed to supporting Neely’s programs and upholding our standards. The Neely community fosters a culture of belonging through respectful and supportive relationships in order to reach common goals.

Neely Traditional Academy is unique at its core. By utilizing a traditional approach, our teachers develop a solid foundation of fundamental and higher-level thinking skills through a structured curriculum that is consistent with each grade level and sequential throughout the grades. The kindergarten through sixth grade curriculum is taught using direct teaching techniques, whole class instruction, small group instruction, and has minimal interruptions for non-curricular programs/activities. Through this approach, Neely was awarded the distinction of being a National Blue Ribbon School in 2009. In 2021, U.S. News and World Report ranked Neely as the number eight Arizona elementary school. In 2023, the Arizona Education Foundation awarded Neely with the A+ School of Excellence award. Since the state of Arizona has issued letter grades, Neely has been awarded a letter grade of A, and teachers have been awarded Results Based Funding Stipends every year since their conception.

Integral to our school is the phonics-based Spalding method, which serves as the foundation for Neely’s language arts curriculum. Neely has utilized the Saxon math program since its establishment as a traditional school, but will transition to the Math in Focus program next year, as Saxon will no longer be published. These math programs are advanced one grade level across the school in traditional classrooms and two grade levels in gifted classrooms. Character education is implemented using the Character Counts program, along with Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), and Digital Citizenship. Special area classes, such as library, music, and physical education are included in the curriculum, and technology is incorporated throughout the curriculum as aligned with state standards and district guidelines.

The Neely staff is a dedicated group of highly educated professionals. All teachers are highly qualified, SEI endorsed, and Spalding trained beyond their teaching certificate. Many teachers hold endorsements, certifications, and/or advanced degrees. All teachers work collaboratively to plan a rigorous curriculum along with interventions and enrichments to meet the needs of all students. Neely maintains a high teacher retention rate, with twelve teachers having been a part of the Neely family for over ten years.

Accompanying the data-driven interventions and enrichment, Neely also offers a wide variety of supports. Gifted students, which make up 24% of the student population, are serviced in kindergarten and 1st grade in the classroom following the cluster model. In grades two through six, students are serviced by being pulled out to a separate, gifted class for Math and/or English Language Arts, taught by a gifted certified teacher. The sixth grade offers an enriched Science and Social Studies class as well. Neely has a Reading Specialist, Resource teacher, and ELL Specialist on staff for intervention services. Students also interact with Google ChromeBooks for the integration of technology across the curriculum, and all classrooms are equipped with a BenQ board for instruction.

In addition to academics, Neely offers a wide variety of clubs to participate in. The Student Council and National Elementary Honors Society offer students the opportunity to serve their school and community at large. Student Ambassadors welcome new students and families to campus. The Garden Club works to beautify our campus. Battle of the Books, Debate Club, and our annual Spelling Bee offer friendly academic-focused competitions, and our Walk, Jog, Run Club focuses on physical fitness and healthy habits.



Our community events bring together students, families, and staff while raising funds for our school. These events include a Teacher Reveal Night prior to each school year, Spooktacular around Halloween, a Spring Carnival, Sweetheart Dance, a Mother/Son event, and several Kids Night Out events. Our annual Evening of the Arts and Culture showcases the artwork of every student, our music programs, and allows an opportunity for students to share their culture through dance, food, crafts, and other activities.

Neely's sense of community is what sets us apart.

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

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

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

Neely utilizes the Arizona State Academic Standards to outline essential content for each grade level. This ensures continuity and progression of knowledge and skills between grade levels. Priority Standards have been identified, and curriculum maps have been formulated to guide teachers in their instructional planning, assuring essential content is covered and maximizing student learning. Instruction is collaboratively designed to scaffold and embed collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, character, and citizenship within learning experiences.

Unique to Neely is the incorporation of the Spalding program in English language arts. This program includes handwriting, phonics, spelling, spelling rules, morphology, text analysis, and mental actions to monitor comprehension. Spalding is written to be taught in a precise order which is followed with fidelity. This is taught in conjunction with the district-wide ReadyGen English language arts program which incorporates real-world applications and cross-curricular connections that are relevant to students' lives and cultural backgrounds.

All classroom teachers utilize a variety of high-yield instructional strategies to implement a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners and maximizes student growth and proficiency. The school as a whole has made a collective commitment to providing ample think time, random calling, and active learning experiences, such as turn and talk. Many classrooms utilize Socratic seminars, holding formal discussions to open-ended questions, to sharpen critical thinking skills.

Assessment is performed by students and teachers alike. Students are often given choices on how to demonstrate their learning in their homework and on projects, empowering students in their learning. They are also taught to self-assess their work using learning targets and clarity maps to identify areas of strength and areas in which to work.

Baseline data is collected on all students at the beginning of each year in the areas of reading and language arts in order to identify any learning gaps to be addressed. As the year progresses, teachers monitor learning through formal and informal formative assessment and summative assessments, in conjunction with District benchmark assessments to identify areas of need that drive their instruction and State Assessments are given as the final summative assessment in grades three through six.

Each week, when meeting in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), the focus is on data collected from these assessments. Teachers plan interventions, reflect on their teaching, and adjust instruction based on student needs. Administration, the instructional coach, and the reading specialist also check in on each team every week to offer support to help support student growth. This is an ongoing process in which adjustments to teaching practices are made regularly to support each individual student.

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

The Arizona State Academic Standards are utilized to outline essential content for each grade level in the area of mathematics as well, ensuring continuity and progression of knowledge and skills between grade levels.

Neely utilizes the Saxon mathematics curriculum across all grade levels which is taught one grade level ahead. This program has been utilized since Neely became a traditional school. Saxon emphasizes math fact fluency and teaches lessons that are built upon over time and reviews prior concepts daily as opposed to other programs that focus solely on the new concept. This cyclical approach requires an orderly progression through the curriculum, providing teachers with its own curriculum map. This curriculum is going out of production, and Neely will be transitioning to the Math in Focus curriculum next year which will still be

taught one grade level ahead.

The use of a variety of high-yield instructional strategies are used to implement the math curriculum to meet the needs of all learners and maximize student growth and proficiency. The aforementioned collective commitments to providing ample think time, random calling, and active learning experiences, such as turn and talk, are also utilized during math instruction.

Assessment is performed by students and teachers alike. Students are taught to self-assess their work using learning targets and clarity maps to identify areas of strength and areas in which to work. Teachers focus on informal assessment throughout lessons as well as during independent work times to ensure student understanding. Saxon assesses student understanding of concepts covering all previous concepts every five lessons along with benchmark assessments every thirty lessons.

The mathematical baseline data collected on students at the beginning of the school year is again utilized to facilitate in identifying any learning gaps that need to be addressed either as a whole group or in small group interventions. As the year progresses, teachers monitor learning through informal formative assessment throughout each day, common formative assessments based on targeted goals, and summative assessments, in conjunction with District benchmark assessments to identify areas of need that drive their instruction. Finally, summative state assessments are given at the end of each school year in grades three through six.

PLC time each week is based on grade-level needs, driven by data, and can be utilized to focus on language, mathematics, or both. Teachers plan interventions, reflect on their teaching, and adjust instruction based on student needs. Administration, the instructional coach, and the reading specialist also check in on each team every week to offer guidance to help support student growth. This is an ongoing process in which adjustments to teaching practices are made regularly to support each individual student.

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

The Arizona State Academic Standards are used as the foundation to outline essential content for each grade level to ensure continuity and progression of knowledge and skills between grade levels. Gilbert Public Schools strives to “Ignite a passion for science by focusing on what can be done today to influence the discoveries and innovations of tomorrow.”

Neely utilizes both Picture Perfect Science and Inspire Science. These programs integrate science content with reading comprehension strategies and incorporate Science and Engineering Practice Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Students learn to read and read to learn using fiction and non-fiction texts to study real-world phenomena, then investigate, problem solve, and discuss. Both programs utilize the 5E Instructional Framework. Students regularly work collaboratively to perform investigations and experiments as a part of their learning with science kits provided by the District. In addition, teachers collaborate to plan cross-curricular activities around science content, and the utilization of a variety of high-yield instructional strategies and collective commitments continues in the area of science.

In addition to the conventional science curriculum, students are also introduced to a variety of technology including ChromeBooks, Ozobots, Code-a-pillars, and more. Beginning in kindergarten, students learn how to utilize computers as a tool to further their education.

As with all other academic subjects, assessment is performed by both students and teachers. Students self-assess their work using learning targets and clarity maps to identify areas of strength and areas in which to continue working. During experiments, students are required to reflect on their findings and adjust their approach when appropriate. Teachers conduct a variety of formal and informal formative and summative assessments throughout each unit to ensure student learning. Success is measured based on knowledge and understanding, not experimental outcome. Fifth grade students are also given the standardized state assessment in science.

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

Social studies content is determined by the Arizona State Academic Standards, again ensuring continuity and progression of knowledge and skills between the grade levels. Priority Standards have been identified, and curriculum maps have been formulated to guide teachers in their instructional planning, assuring essential content is covered and maximizing student learning. Instruction is collaboratively designed to scaffold and embed collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, character, and citizenship within learning experiences.

Across grade levels, reading comprehension and writing are highly integrated into the curriculum. Social studies content includes not only history, but civics, economics, geography, analysis of evidence (both primary and secondary), and identifying causes and effects of events and developments. Students use relevant evidence to create and support arguments, place events in chronological order, and compare changes in events and developments over time.

All teachers continue their use of a variety of high-yield instructional strategies and the above mentioned collective commitments when implementing the social studies curriculum. Many teachers often utilize foldables to help students organize information, making it easier for students to grasp social studies concepts, theories, facts, opinions, questions, research, and ideas while also allowing for student creativity in what and how they display this information. This subject area also lends itself well to the use of Socratic seminars and questioning, especially in the upper grade levels.

Students use learning targets and clarity maps to self-assess their knowledge. While formative assessment is used throughout the unit to ensure understanding, many teachers choose to also empower students by giving them a choice in how to show their knowledge on final unit projects. There is no benchmark or state assessment at the elementary level on the subject of social studies.

**1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:**

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

Neely offers a half-day Traditional Kinder-Prep program that is academically focussed and utilizes the same curriculum found on the rest of the campus. All curriculum is aligned with the Arizona Department of Education Early Learning Standards. Traditional Kinder-Prep incorporates the Spalding phonograms and curriculum, math curriculum, STEAM activities, Unplugged computer coding, and Learning Without Tears. Beyond academics, the program is designed to acclimate children to being students and incorporates fine motor skill development, communication, and respect for others to prepare students to be successful in our rigorous traditional kindergarten program.

In order to attend, students must be four years of age by August 31st of the school year. Admission to the program follows the same guidelines as all other students. Classes are taught by a certified teacher with a classroom assistant and have a maximum capacity of 20 students.

Students who attend Neely's Kinder-Prep are well-prepared for kindergarten. They understand the workings of a classroom and have a head-start on academics with prior knowledge of letters, numbers, phonograms, basic writing skills, and how to socialize with other students. The 2022-2023 school year is only Kinder-Prep's second year on our campus, so little data outside of teacher input is available on the statistical impact on school readiness and success in the primary grades.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

**2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)**

Both visual arts and performing arts utilize Arizona State Standards to create, present, respond to, and connect with the arts. Curriculum maps provide guidance for teacher instructional planning to include collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking within learning experiences. Currently students attend art classes every other week and music class weekly. Beginning next year, however, students will attend art weekly.

In art, students are guided by learning goals and targets, pushing them to maintain a growth mindset as they work on their artwork. Throughout the year, student artwork is displayed in the Art to Remember online show, at Evening of the Arts and Culture, on school bulletin boards, at an Art Trading Station, and at the annual District Art Show. Additionally, students can participate in weekly Art Smarts questions, sketchbook challenges, and the annual yearbook cover contest. The culminating project for each student is a portfolio of their work throughout the year.

Music classes integrate a wide range of music and movement activities that help to develop fine and gross motor skills while building relationships and cultivating teamwork through activities. Students build self-confidence through practice and perform as a grade level at least once per year. Fifth and sixth grade students also have the option of joining band or orchestra as their music elective. These students perform several times throughout the year.

## **2b. Physical education/health/nutrition**

Neely students attend Physical Education (P.E.) class weekly. All lessons are aligned to meet the Arizona Physical Education Standards and contain a warm-up, fitness development activity, lesson focus, and game. Warm-up activities are used to physiologically prepare students for activity. Fitness development activities promote health-related fitness and encourage lifetime physical activity. The lesson focus is based upon the state standards and objectives. Students monitor and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness and apply movement concepts and basic mechanics of skill performances while learning and refining motor skills. All of this culminates with students being exposed to a wide variety of developmentally appropriate team sports, activities, and exercises in order for students to experience a wide range of choices for lifetime physical fitness for an active lifestyle. In addition, P.E. allows students to demonstrate empathy, understanding, and respect for the numerous differences exhibited by people in an activity setting.

Beyond the P.E. class, Neely also hosts monthly fun runs during lunch, an annual field day, and participates in Jump Rope for Heart to raise money for the National Heart Association.

## **2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)**

## **2d. Technology/library/media**

The library is the hub of our school and is open all day for students to check out books, even when our librarian is teaching a class. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade attend library classes weekly, sometimes twice based on a rotating Wednesday schedule. Students in fifth and sixth grade alternate between library and technology classes every other week. Mrs. Fairchild, our librarian, is the technology coordinator for our school and works closely with our Technology Integration Educator (TIE), Mrs. Krueger.

Technology is utilized among all grade levels. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive BenQ board and all students have access to ChromeBooks. Students utilize Google applications for collaboration and work production. Our TIE works with teachers to integrate technology into a variety of lessons.

Technology specials are held every other week. These classes help students develop skills such as typing, sequencing, critical thinking, problem solving and experimentation. Primary students begin with Code-a-pillars as an introduction to coding. Older students use Hour of Code to practice blocky coding, then

transition into being able to program the school's Ozobots. Finally, students learn scratch coding and are able to program Dashes to compete with each other in the Dash Olympics.

## **2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share**

Neely fosters a love of reading using the Renaissance Accelerated Reader program. Students read and take comprehension quizzes on books with independent reading levels within their zone of proximal development. Students are expected to read for thirty minutes each night and are celebrated for their achievements in earning certifications. This led to students checking out 70,023 library books during the 2021-2022 school year, far exceeding any other elementary school in the district.

Neely is a part of the National Elementary Honors Society, participates in Battle of the Books, has a Debate Club, and participates in an annual Spelling Bee. Each grade level offers a Homework or Tutoring Club two times each week after school for student support. A variety of enrichment activities such as art, STEAM, keyboarding, chess, and much more are also offered by Gilbert Public School Community Education Department.

In addition to these we also offer a wide variety of non-academic clubs which all perform a minimum of two service projects each year. These clubs include Student Council, Walk, Jog, Run Club, Student Ambassadors, and Garden Club. Neely has hosted food drives, coin drives for childhood cancer organizations, and a stuffed animal drive for hospitalized children.

## **3. Academic Supports**

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

Students performing below grade level are identified through benchmark testing performed throughout the year, common formative assessments, and through the MTSS process. All student data is kept on a digital data wall for teachers and support staff to easily review and analyze. When a student appears to be performing below grade level, teachers begin intervening in a variety of ways and tracking student progress. Students generally receive individualized or small group instruction during intervention blocks, preferential seating, and extended time if needed. Assignments and assessments are often adapted for individual students to show their learning.

Thirty-minute intervention blocks are built into the master schedule during both math and English language arts classes at every grade level for this exact purpose. This time is meant to be used for individual and/or small group targeted instruction to focus on student academic needs based upon benchmark and formative assessment. Data is collected from these interventions and reviewed by the team regularly to determine if further classroom interventions are needed or if the student should be referred to the MTSS process to explore interventions outside of the classroom, such as meeting with the Reading Specialist, Social Worker, or if an evaluation for Special Education services is in order.

Teachers ensure parental involvement by regularly communicating with parents on their child's progress and obtaining permission for any interventions or testing. These students are also highly encouraged to take advantage of our homework or tutoring clubs that meet twice a week after school.

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

Many Neely students perform above grade level. These students fall into two categories: high-achieving and gifted. High-achieving students are identified with district benchmarks, state testing, and formative assessment. Gifted students are identified using the COGAT test, which evaluates students' qualitative, quantitative, non-verbal skills. These two groups are serviced in different ways.

High-achieving students performing above grade level are serviced with enrichment activities within their homeroom classes. This takes place during designated intervention times during math and English language arts classes. These activities can be aligned to any subject area and often involve a choice board to choose

from. The Accelerated Reader program also allows for this enrichment by identifying a student's reading grade equivalency and providing a higher zone of proximal development for that student to read from. Many of these students also take advantage of opportunities to mentor students in younger grades.

Gifted students are addressed below in 3e as they make up 24% of our student population.

### **3c. Students with disabilities:**

Students with disabilities are identified through standardized testing performed by a School Psychologist, the Resource Teacher, and/or the Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP). These results are then reviewed as a team along with parents to make a determination if a student qualifies for Special Education services.

Students who qualify for Special Education are then placed on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which are serviced by either Mrs. Brown, our resource teacher, or Mrs. Hall, our SLP. Student goals are identified on each IEP, and quarterly reports generated on student progress. Students serviced in the resource setting receive individualized instruction. Mrs. Brown works with grade-level teachers to identify grade level content to work on with students tailored to their individual level of ability. Mrs. Hall works with students individually or in small groups based on shared intervention needs. She regularly communicates with classroom teachers regarding student needs and accommodations. If goals are met, either new goals are created based on the student's continued need, or the IEP is dismissed. IEPs are reviewed annually and students are retested every three years to maintain current data.

In addition to educational disabilities, many students meet with our school social worker, Miss Beverly to address social and emotional needs. These students may or may not be identified as Special Education students.

### **3d. English Language Learners:**

### **3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:**

The Neely staff includes a total of eight teachers who have earned their gifted endorsements, with two others currently working on theirs to address the needs of the 24% of our student population that qualify as gifted. Two of these teachers have full-time gifted classrooms, servicing students from several grade levels throughout the day. This allows our campus to provide different services than those that you will find at any other school in the district. Kindergarten and first grade service students in a cluster model, but from second through sixth grades, students leave their homeroom classrooms to attend gifted classes taught by gifted endorsed teachers either within their grade level or in one of the full-time gifted classrooms. All gifted teachers collaborate to ensure consistency among classes. All students are given the option to enroll in gifted math and/or gifted English language arts class no matter which area they qualify in.

Our sixth grade offers an enriched science and social studies class as well. While not considered a "gifted" class, grade-level curriculum is enriched to support gifted qualifiers with a focus on servicing non-verbal qualifiers when planning and instructing.

All gifted classes do more than teach a curriculum; they enrich it. Students are challenged in their thinking and discussions. Math students have projects due quarterly such as making a math game, tracking fake stock investments, and a ratio project where they take an object and, using a calculated scale factor, reproduce the item at a much larger or smaller scale. Language arts students hold Socratic seminars in which they have a formal discussion on open-ended questions that sharpen their critical thinking skills. Teachers also address the social emotional needs of their students, as many of them struggle in this area.

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

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

Expectations on the Neely campus are high in terms of academics and behavior. Academic rigor and expectations are made clear to incoming students and their families along with the expectation of parental involvement. Teachers regularly communicate with families regarding student progress and student achievement is celebrated both in the classroom and school-wide with Star Performers each Friday.

At the beginning of the year, Mrs. Greene, our school's principal, and Miss Beverly, our school's social worker, meet with every class to review school rules and expectations. At this time, Miss Beverly introduces herself, her role as a social worker at the school, and explains how students can meet with her.

Mrs. Greene's daily announcements include quotes incorporating the seven pillars of character traits. She signs off stating, "Be kind with your words and kind with your actions." Miss Beverly helps teachers implement the district's social emotional learning program called Second Step. This program is taught two times a month throughout the year.

Beyond curriculum, Miss Beverly hosts Red Ribbon Week to raise awareness about the use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol, and hosts Kindness Week to reiterate the importance of being kind to others, making good choices and showing good character.

Positive behavior and kindness are celebrated on Neely's campus. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. We have a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) team that promotes good character with Knights Illuminating Character (KIC) tickets. Students who are "caught" demonstrating good character are given a KIC. Once a student collects four KICs, they trade them in for a reward such as having their name on the school's marquee, their picture posted on the KIC board in the main hallway, saying the Pledge of Allegiance on the morning announcements, or wearing a hat for a day.

All of these programs are implemented with fidelity across all grade levels and special areas, supporting students' behavioral, academic, social emotional and mental health and attribute to our positive school culture and emphasis on school values.

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

Neely is a second home to our students and staff. Our positive school climate makes a lasting impact on our students and families. The staff genuinely cares about each child as an individual. Former students often return to visit teachers and volunteer in classrooms, at events, or through Eagle Scout projects. The Neely community fosters a culture of belonging that extends beyond students' elementary career. We believe the best way to support relationships between family and community members is to provide information nights and work in conjunction with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and community partners.

All incoming parents are invited to an orientation prior to the beginning of the school year. Curriculum Night allows parents to visit their child's classroom while teachers cover the curriculum that will be implemented throughout the year as well as classroom and grading procedures and expectations. Spalding Night invites parents to learn more about the program, how it's implemented in the classroom, and how to support their child at home.

Our PTO also holds many events throughout the year with the dual purpose of raising funds for the school and bringing the community together. They host a "Teacher Reveal" prior to the start of the school year, Spooktacular, a free event held the Friday evening prior to Halloween hosted by student clubs, teachers, staff, and volunteers, two Kids' Night Out events, which allow students to come to school on a Friday evening for a variety of fun activities, the Sweetheart Dance, a father/relative/daughter event, Mothers and Sons night with activities such as laser tag or dodgeball, and the annual Spring Carnival.



Several clubs partner with non-profit businesses, coming together to hold food drives for Matthew's Crossing, a local food bank, shoe drives for Project Sleep Tight, and coin drives benefitting Lily's Pad, an organization dedicated to children affected by immuno-compromising diseases, started by a Neely family.

Programs are also in place to support those students whose families are in need. Neely partners with Walmart for back to school supplies, Matthew's Crossing for weekend food bags, and our Giving Tree during the holidays all provide support to our families in need.

Pioneer Landscaping provides resources and money to our Garden Club and school. While the local Sonic attends several PTO events, bringing games for students to play, a prize wheel, and selling bottled water the proceeds from which are donated to the school.

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

Teachers are the heart and soul of Neely. While administrative expectations are high, most teachers go above and beyond those expectations for their students. These efforts are recognized, supported, and appreciated by administrators. Both Mrs. Greene, principal, and Mrs. Mayfield, assistant principal, have open-door policies when it comes to their staff, and both are extremely supportive of staff members on personal and professional levels.

Neely's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) is created each year by the CIP team which consists of both administrators, the instructional coach, one primary teacher, and one intermediate teacher. The CIP consists of three goals: one in the area of math, one in the area of English Language Arts, and one of the school's choosing. The CIP team analyzes data along with teacher feedback to draft each goal, action items to achieve that goal, and a list of evidence and artifacts to verify progress in meeting each goal. Once drafted, the CIP is shared with all staff and the site council for feedback. Once all stakeholder feedback is compiled and adjustments made if necessary, the team works collaboratively with two other schools within the district for feedback before being shared with the District. The goals set forth in the CIP are utilized to formulate an Integrated Action Plan and Professional Development Plan. The Integrated Action Plan is also a collaboration with teachers to outline steps to be taken to ensure progress towards the school's goals. The Professional Development Plan is created by the principal with input from staff outlining professional development days throughout the year. Both relate directly to the goals in the CIP and aim to assist teachers in reaching those goals. For instance, this year, in order to work towards our goal of improving the PLC process, we have several training sessions on navigating the District's online platform and extrapolating relevant data in order to drive instruction. This in turn will lead to identifying the bottom 10% of students for targeted instruction to achieve both proficiency goals. In addition to this, we are implementing the District's Instructional Framework which outlines effective lesson design, implementation, and reflection. All of these professional development opportunities will directly support the school's goals.

In addition, many teachers are encouraged to take advantage of other professional development opportunities including endorsements and advanced degrees.

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

The implementation of Neely's Mission and Vision is grounded in the administration's dedication to putting students first. All decisions are based on the needs of our students, and both administrators hold the staff accountable for their part in reaching the goals that have been set forth.

Neely is led by an administrative team, leadership team, and site council. The school's administrators are the Principal and Assistant Principal. The leadership team consists of teachers who apply for their position and are selected by the administration. Positions include coordinators of student and teacher success, community relations, student support, continuous improvement plan, testing, and technology. Most leadership team members oversee subcommittees with whom they meet once per month. Every teacher is on at least one committee. This structure ensures that all teachers have a voice on decision-making, as the leadership team member serves as their representative. Discussions are always held when making decisions with the goal of

always doing what is in the best interest of students.

The site council consists of the administrators, leadership team, parents, and community members and meets once per month. The current budget and goings-on of the school are always discussed and members are asked for their input on current happenings and any future decisions to be made.

As instructional leaders, both the Principal and Assistant Principal, consider themselves coaches for the teachers. Their primary goal in terms of being instructional leaders is to ensure that policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on student achievement. During evaluations and regular walk-throughs for example, they point out areas of strength and weakness, and offer suggestions to implement within the classroom. They model instructional practices during meetings and provide honest feedback on evaluations. Every effort is made to support the staff.

Teachers are also supported during weekly Personal Learning Communities (PLCs). Teachers work together to analyze data, create SMART goals, and work together to determine instruction, intervention, and enrichment to strengthen pedagogy. These goals and any new data are reflected upon weekly and adjustments made in order to support each individual learner. Administrators, the academic coach, and reading specialist all check in with each PLC team in order to offer support weekly.

By collaborating with teachers, staff, parents, and community members, Neely ensures that decision-making is a shared process with significant input to be sure all decisions are for the good of the school as a whole.

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

The Neely staff persistently works to deliver quality instruction and support to each and every child, viewing them as a whole individual. Teachers take the time to get to know students and families and each other on a personal level in order to understand each individual's personal needs and backgrounds. We often refer to ourselves as the "Neely Family" and treat each other as such.

For those families with socio-economic needs, our social worker acts as a liaison. She connects families with community resources, organizes back to school supplies for students, picks up weekly food bags from Matthew's Crossing for students to take home over the weekend and breaks, and heads up our Giving Tree during the holidays. She also regularly checks in with these students to build relationships and check on their social and emotional well-being.

Second Step, a social emotional curriculum, is taught at all grade levels. In conjunction to this, our Behavioral Health Team, consisting of the administration team, social worker, health assistant, and school psychologist work to identify any other students with social emotional needs to support. This team also makes up our Crisis Intervention Team, should they be needed. The school social worker meets regularly with some students, and offers one-time meetings as well to all students.

The Neely community prides itself on our welcoming, respectful, supportive environment. The Six Pillars of Character are referenced daily on announcements. Students are rewarded when "caught" showing good character with Knights Illuminating Character tickets. Students and teachers alike foster a community of kindness and support, lifting up others when they are down, and celebrating each other's victories.

Our school population is quite culturally diverse. Students and families are welcome to share their culture in classrooms during celebrations such as kindergarten's Holidays Around the World and during our Evening of the Arts and Culture. Students and families share in cultural traditions and learn from one another, celebrating our diversity and sharing in the joys of these traditions.

There is a shared expectation of respect and support for others that permeates our campus.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE**

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The most instrumental aspect to our school's success is our practice of the traditional model which cultivates our culture, environment, and expectations.

Our traditional model goes beyond students seated in rows facing forward, utilizing a direct instruction approach, a structured progression of curriculum, and a focus on academic achievement. The dedication of the Neely staff is unparalleled. Neely teachers are passionate about what they do and confident in their ability to do it. A collective teacher efficacy, shared commitment to show growth in all students, and high expectations of all stakeholders are the driving force behind Neely's success. Student learning is not viewed as an individual teacher's responsibility, but a shared responsibility among the community. All staff believe that every student is "their" student. The staff genuinely cares about each student, their families, and the community at large.

Neely's culture and values are demonstrated daily by all staff. We commonly refer to each other as the "Neely Family" and treat each other as such. From the moment anyone arrives on campus, they are greeted with a smile and welcomed to campus. The day begins with teachers greeting students at drive through, from the buses, in the cafeteria, and on the playground. Teachers individually greet students as they arrive in class often with a hug, high five, fist bump, or even a special handshake. Visitors throughout the day are welcomed by our friendly front office staff. When walking the hallways throughout the day, students, staff, and visitors alike are greeted with a smile and hello by everyone they encounter. It is not uncommon for students to hug staff members when they see them. Teachers and staff work to connect with all stakeholders, creating a foundation upon which relationships are formed.

Positive behavior, kindness, and academic achievement are celebrated on Neely's campus. Students are recognized on daily announcements, in our weekly newsletter, with certificates, rewards, and prizes, and personally by the administration for displaying good character and academic achievements. Reinforcing and rewarding good character in addition to academic achievement among students attributes to our positive school culture and emphasizes school values.

Neely incorporates high expectations for students, teachers and staff, parents, and administrators. The high expectations maintained by administration and staff create an environment in which students thrive. This is supported by a March of 2022 satisfaction survey given to students in which 93% of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "My school motivates me to do my best." In the same survey, 97% of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "My principal has high expectations for my learning." Students are aware of the high expectations Neely staff uphold, and feel supported and celebrated in their achievements.

Families and community partners also play a key role in the Neely culture and community. Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) holds many events throughout the year with the dual purpose of raising funds for the school and bringing the community together.