U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal <u>Mrs. Rosa Alonso</u>

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

Official School Name <u>Horace Mann Elementary School</u>

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>501 East Acacia Avenue</u>

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City <u>Glendale</u>   State <u>CA</u>   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) <u>91205-2823</u>

County <u>Los Angeles County</u>

Telephone <u>(818) 246-2421</u>   Fax <u>(818) 507-6238</u>

Web site/URL <u>https://www.gusd.net/mann</u>   E-mail <u>ralonso@gusd.net</u>

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*_<u>Dr. Darneika Watson</u>_____E-mail_<u>dwatson@gusd.net</u>_____

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

District Name <u>Glendale Unified</u>   Tel. <u>(818) 241-3111</u>

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 <u>Jennifer Freemon</u>

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

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

_____Date_____

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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

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   20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   4 Middle/Junior high schools
                                            4 High schools
                                            0 K-12 schools

                                            28 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")

   [X] 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	0
K	99
1	104
2	102
3	104
4	97
5	101
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	607

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate): 6.9 % Asian
                                            1.2 % Black or African American
                                            32.1 % Hispanic or Latino
                                            0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                            58.7 % White
                                            0.7 % 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: 19%

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

    Almost all students who left our school was due to the high cost of housing in our city. We have seen a steady increase in homelessness as more families cannot afford their own home and move in with other families. Since last year, we have seen an increase in immigrants who are new to U.S. schools, especially Armenians and Russians who move into the area to live with or near family members who already reside in Glendale. Some of these families stay at our school temporarily until they find jobs and housing.

    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 *to* the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	72
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* 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)]	106
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	557
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.19
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	19

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

    Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Filipino, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 41 %

                                            246 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 76 %

            Total number students who qualify: 460

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 15 %
        Total number of students served   92|

    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.

    37 Autism   0 Multiple Disabilities

    1 Deafness   0 Orthopedic Impairment

    0 Deaf-Blindness   16 Other Health Impaired

    0 Developmental Delay   12 Specific Learning Disability

    0 Emotional Disturbance   23 Speech or Language Impairment

    1 Hearing Impairment   0 Traumatic Brain Injury

    2 Intellectual Disability   0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504:   0 %
        Total number of students served: 3

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 17

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.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	28
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	12

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   26:1

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	93%	97%	97%	96%	96%
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 ___   No X

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

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

The staff of Horace Mann Elementary will collaborate to provide research-based and highly effective instruction to ensure all students become critical thinkers and leaders. Therefore, students will develop leadership habits and become analytical readers as reflected in their ability to: 1) set goals, take ownership, and reflect on their learning, and 2) fluently read, comprehend, and analyze a variety of increasingly complex literary and informational text, including multimedia. Students' achievement will increase each year as demonstrated through evidence of proficient acquisition of the Common Core Reading standards on school, district, and state assessments.

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

https://www.gusd.net/mann

18. **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

Horace Mann Elementary is a powerful example of a school community of LEARNERS AND LEADERS that ensures every student succeeds. After being identified as a Title I Program Improvement School in 2005, we have increased achievement in both ELA and math every year, and have moved from being the lowest to one of the highest achieving schools in our district. Our focused work to improve the quality of our teaching and learning has been honored with various state awards including Distinguished School, Gold Ribbon Award, Pivotal Practice Award, School Boards Association Golden Bell for our professional learning communities, STAR Honor Roll for high achieving, high poverty, gap-closing schools, and Title I Achieving School; and with national recognition as a three-time winner of the Excellence in Urban Education Award from the National Center for Urban Schools Transformation.

Among the 20 elementary schools in Glendale Unified, Mann Elementary has the highest level of students from low SES homes (76%) and is among the most linguistically diverse with over 70% speaking another language at home, over 40% still designated as English learners, and 20% beginning English learners. While the two largest ethnicities of our students are white (61%) and Hispanic (32%), nearly all of our white students are of middle eastern heritage including Armenian, Arabic, and Russian. Our ethnically and linguistically diverse community values the strong academic preparation we provide for their children and make every effort to keep their families in our attendance boundaries as demonstrated in the number of multigenerational families who have attended Mann, and the number of students who are considered homeless (approximately 9%) because they are living with another family in our area. Many of our families are underserved in terms of social and medical services and often turn to our school for help with resources for food, shelter, legal advice, parent education, and counseling. We know we are an important source of help to our students and families.

The overarching strategy that most contributes to our students' success is keeping a strong instructional focus in a community in which we are all learners and leaders. Two key strategies that help our students develop their potential as learners and leaders are developing a growth mindset, and explicitly teaching social emotional skills that help our students take charge of their learning as leaders. Through an emphasis on growth mindset, our students know that "Bulldogs never give up," and "We always do our best." Each month, we celebrate students in each class who earn our Bulldog Mindset Award. We use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to explicitly teach the behaviors we expect from a respectful community of learners. In addition, we are implementing Franklin-Covey's Leader in Me program to teach leadership habits to empower students to take more ownership of their learning. All students reflect on their learning and behavior, set weekly goals, and track a "Wildly Important" reading goal in their Leadership Portfolios.

We are a success story of what can happen when you make "the essential" essential, and improve it until it becomes transformational. We use a strong instructional focus to guide our homegrown school improvement efforts in a community in which we are all learners and leaders. This laser-like focus is a defining characteristic and known throughout the district as "The Horace Mann Way." As a school, we live a constant cycle of learning and leading. We learn to look at our results to determine strengths and challenges, and then we lead change to target these challenges. We learn what went well and what we still need to improve, and then we lead further change by customizing next steps based on specific school needs and build upon our successes. For example, once we determined that reading comprehension was our greatest need, we knew that it was essential to improve how we teach reading. We defined what we needed to teach and how to best teach it. We worked to improve our understanding and teaching of the reading comprehension standards. We worked as grade level teams to develop common formative assessments, and to design a model lesson for each standard with a shared explicit direct instruction template. We structured this collaboration time with guidance of our Instructional Leadership Team. We learned from our data that our changes were working, but we asked, "How do we further improve?" We consulted research and found some strategies such as engagement strategies, reciprocal teaching, and QAR that would address challenges we observed in student work and classroom participation. This continuous cycle of learning from students' classroom and assessment performance, and of leading change in our teaching to improve students'

achievement in reading is the reason we have achieved exemplary academic success. We know that when we all work together as learners and leaders, we succeed together.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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

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

Since 2005, we have relentlessly improved reading achievement each year thanks to 1) our clear instructional focus on reading comprehension, and 2) the strength of our collaborative effort to improve the quality of our teaching. We have an Instructional Focus statement which affirms that our students will "become analytical readers as reflected in their ability to fluently read, comprehend and analyze a variety of increasingly complex literary and informational text, including multimedia" and which will be measured each year by increased proficiency of the California Common Core Reading Standards on school, district, and state assessments. Therefore, our curriculum is not a publisher's program; we teach the ELA standards and carefully select the materials that help us best teach the standards. For example, a 4th grade reading standard for literature is to compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics, and patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. Consequently, our teachers develop lessons for each chunk of the standard such as how do we identify themes, and how do we compare and contrast themes; and then apply these skills to collections of stories they find from our adopted text "Benchmark Advance," literature books, and online sources such as ReadWorks.

In 2006, we began shifting our instruction of reading by asking each grade to select a monthly focus standard and develop an assessment of that standard. Every grade now selects the most essential reading comprehension standards and then maps them out in five sessions. During Universal Access (UA) time, which is our protected, uninterrupted ELA block, all teachers within a grade level teach objectives derived from the monthly focus standards. We reduce class size during UA by structuring rotations to our computer labs for differentiated practice, which facilitates the teacher's ability to deliver effective small group lessons to target specific areas of misunderstanding related to the focus standard.

Every year our teachers improve how they teach the grade level focus standards by addressing the gaps they identified in students' understanding from the previous year and adding to their collection of literary and informational texts that help them clearly teach the standards. In addition, during a yearly summer retreat, our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) reviews how effectively each grade taught the standards by examining site, district, and state data; and adjusts the selection and scheduling of focus standards, and the protocols we use to guide our grade level collaboration meetings. Thus, we constantly improve the process, and steadily increase achievement.

We have two structured grade level collaboration meetings each month, which follow protocols developed by our ILT. One meeting is dedicated to developing: 1) Success Criteria of what mastery of the standard looks like, 2) a model lesson using the school's explicit, direct lesson design template, and 3) an open-ended formative assessment of the standard. Having a common lesson design allows us to build strong lesson delivery throughout the grades, and provides a format that is effective for the majority of our students, especially for our struggling students and our English learners. The second meeting is dedicated to reviewing results of a mid-point assessment. Teachers discuss common student errors, and plan whole class and small group lessons and comprehension strategies to address these needs. This continuous process of collectively developing a shared understanding of the rigor of the standard, expertly teaching it, and checking for understanding is the main reason for our high achievement.

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

The strength of our teaching in all content areas, including math is directly tied to our school's instructional focus on reading comprehension. Similar to our efforts to improve reading, we develop a shared understanding of the rigor of each math standard, map out our pacing, use the best resources that will help us teach the standards, and use a common, strong lesson design. With the adoption of the Common Core Math Standards, we knew that students' reading comprehension impacted their ability to apply mathematical practices to solve real world problems. So, we prioritized teaching both procedural and conceptual

understanding of math skills, along with developing math fact fluency. Because of our focus on teaching math standards, and not being dependent on following a math book, we were one of the few elementary schools in our district that was able to improve our students' math achievement during the few years our district used open-source materials before adopting a math textbook. Our grade level teams mapped out a pacing plan that prioritized the most critical grade level math standards which are organized into the domains of Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations in Base Ten and Fractions, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. Therefore, our math curriculum is expertly teaching the state's math standards using the best tools available, including the district adopted "enVision Math" text, grade level and teacher developed materials, and supplemental resources such as "Swun Math." Each grade level examines the standards and the adopted text, and selects the lessons and components that will enhance their instruction.

In addition, our schoolwide emphasis on strong lesson delivery to teach reading comprehension also has contributed to our strong achievement in math. While we understand the importance of students being able to reason abstractly, we also know that struggling students need clear, explicit instruction to build strong foundational, conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill, and fluency. Thus, our lessons include an objective, key vocabulary, strong teacher modeling which includes a think aloud that shows how to think through application of a skill both procedurally and conceptually, checking for understanding during structured guided practice with a gradual release to independent student practice, accountable talk with students discussing and reaching consensus about their answers, and a closure to summarize what they learned. We know using structured academic talk about solving math problems helps students learn to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. Another important reason for our students' success in math is the skillful use of assessment to inform teaching. Our teachers use frequent checks for understanding during every lesson to identify which students need additional instruction in small groups. Teachers have strengthened their use of online tools to assign practice and quizzes to provide more immediate feedback to students. They use some of the resources from our adopted program but also develop grade level assessments using Google Forms so that they can review students' responses, provide immediate feedback, and determine challenging items that need reteaching.

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

We are constantly improving our teaching of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). We have participated in staff development to learn about the integration of Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts, as well as the district adopted program, "Carolina Building Blocks of Science." Our curriculum is teaching the NGSS using the district adopted program as the main instructional tool. The program is divided into one unit per trimester, for example Energy Works, Plant and Animal Structures, and Changing Earth. Each grade maps out scientific investigations for each trimester and often search for supplemental resources to deepen students' understanding and scientific thinking, such as computer simulations of experiments, as well as videos to deepen prerequisite background knowledge and vocabulary. Each grade level collaborates to develop formative assessments to check students' understanding of disciplinary core ideas for each unit, and to strengthen their use of scientific inquiry journals/logs to observe students' development of the Science and Engineering Practices.

When we began implementation of the NGSS, each grade level selected a disciplinary core idea to connect to their monthly Reading Focus standards. So, they searched for texts about the core idea to integrate when teaching reading comprehension. For example, 3rd grade searched for informational texts related to the impacts of weather-related hazards. Thus, we help students build scientific background knowledge, while focusing on teaching reading standards and strategies to read informational text. For instance, we integrate one of our schoolwide best practices, Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) to help students as they read informational texts pertaining to grade level NGSS. With CSR, students learn before, during, and after reading strategies such as reading for "clicks and clunks," and applying "fix-up" strategies. By integrating our instructional focus on reading comprehension, we strengthen both students' reading achievement and scientific knowledge and thinking.

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

The History-Social Science Content Standards for California guides our instruction of social studies. Each grade focuses on teaching civics, history, economics, and geography as they foster students' understanding of their responsibility as citizens of their home, school, community, and country. Our teachers use the district adopted text, "TCI Social Studies Alive!," as a basic guide of the essential grade level content, but the strength of our implementation is how we integrate social studies with our instructional focus of reading comprehension. Teachers look for supplemental readings to use with our ELA focus standards, as well as apply our schoolwide best practices to teach reading comprehension as they read the social studies text. For example, our 4th grade teachers looked for supplemental social studies passages about the role of Spanish explorers in California to use while teaching the ELA focus standards of explaining events, ideas, and concepts in historical text using text evidence, and comparing firsthand and secondhand accounts of the same event. In all grades, teachers use our school's identified best practices that support our instructional focus, including reciprocal teaching, CSR, and QAR to reinforce reading comprehension strategies as they read the social studies texts. Furthermore, we deepen students' understanding of what it takes to be a responsible citizen as we help all students take on leadership roles with our implementation of Franklin-Covey's "Leader in Me" Program. In addition to unit tests, teachers often assess students' understanding of social studies concepts in research projects that are graded using rubrics, such as research reports about the states or our presidents, or in applying economic reasoning as they earn, save, and spend our school's PBIS reward system of Paw Bucks.

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

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

While teachers integrate art within other content areas, we have a designated, schoolwide time for art instruction on Fridays. During this time, we focus on teaching the visual arts standards such as generating and conceptualizing artistic ideas, and developing artistic techniques. We use the "Arts Attack" program which designates specific artistic techniques and concepts for each grade so students have specific concepts they learn each year in a continuum of learning. Students also have additional opportunities for performing arts, including chorus, cheer, orchestra, and ballet folklorico.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

All grades integrate health, nutrition, and P.E. concepts during ELA, math, science, and social studies instruction, as well as have dedicated blocks for SEL time on Fridays, and structured PE instruction. We have increased the focus on socio-emotional-physical health following students return to school after distance learning during the pandemic. Our district P.E. teacher provides 120 minutes of structured physical education instruction each week for our grade 4-5 students to teach locomotor skills, physical fitness, and sportsmanship. Our K-3 teachers teach physical education to their students, and include a dance component, often using "Go Noodle." We know that many of our students live in apartments and don't have the financial means to participate in community sports programs, so we have contracted with an agency to provide additional instruction twice a month for our primary students to build up foundations in locomotor and sports skills. We also work with our neighborhood parks and recreation department to offer an after school sports program to teach various sports such as soccer, football, and basketball and to involve groups of our upper grade students in competition with other schools.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Starting in TK, all grades develop library skills as they learn to locate books in our library during their weekly visit with our school librarian, as well as learn online research skills to locate relevant and reliable multimedia resources. Our teachers have strengthened their use of technology over the past few years, especially in response to distance learning so that students use various tools to support their learning and assessment of learning, such as Seesaw, Google Classroom, Forms, Slides and Docs, Clever, Flipgrid, and various apps to support and differentiate practice such as iReady, Reflex Math, Gizmos, and Accelerated Reader. Students now have access to all district adopted textbooks online. Our district has committed to 1 to 1 computing so that all students have access to a Chromebook to use in school and home which has expanded our ability to use technology to support teaching and learning. Consequently, we have focused more on teaching digital citizenship and use lessons from Common Sense Education. We concentrate our efforts to use technology as a means to an end; thus it is a tool to support teaching and learning in the content areas.

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

Another schoolwide strength is our English Language Development (ELD) curriculum. While our teachers do an excellent job of applying ELD strategies to integrate language teaching throughout all the content areas, such as through the use of visuals, anchor charts, cooperative learning, and pre-teaching vocabulary, we also have developed a strong designated ELD block. We created our own strategy of "Scholarly Talk" which is a structured academic routine based on the work of Dr. Kate Kinsella. Each grade level selects key academic, tier 2 words that they teach using this structure which provides a kid friendly definition, discussion of the term, modeling the correct use of the academic term in a sentence that highlights a specific grammatical pattern, and student practice and presentation following the modeled example. Students enjoy this block of time since it allows for differentiation for our various English language levels and connection to personal experiences, as they partner up and share their ideas in an academic routine that ensures their success while addressing the ELD standards.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

One reason for our academic success is our use of a multi-tier system of support. We analyze state test scores, iReady diagnostics, fluency scores, and grade level formative assessments and classwork to identify students who are not meeting reading and math standards. We prioritize our intervention efforts first where it will have the biggest impact with our youngest grades. We provide 6-week cycles of after school kindergarten reading intervention for four hours a week with two of our strongest kindergarten teachers. We use our categorical funds to hire an intervention teacher who works one-on-one with our grade 1 struggling readers. Students who are not meeting the 25th percentile in fluency are provided with one-on-one help 5-10 minutes daily using the Read Naturally program. We develop an At-Risk Academic Learning Plan (ALP) with parents, students, and teachers for students in grades 2-5 who are not meeting standards in reading and/or math. We outline how we will help the student by interventions in the classroom, extended learning, and at home. We monitor progress each trimester to see how well the student is meeting grade level standards, and teachers meet with parents at least three times a year to discuss the student's progress. Every teacher selects either a student who has an ALP or who is a struggling reader in grades TK-1 and SpEd, as a Focus Student whose work they bring to every grade level collaboration meeting to analyze and discuss with their team some possible next steps. When students are not showing progress, then we schedule a Student Success Team meeting with the parents, teacher, resource teacher, psychologist, and principal to discuss next steps.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

As we analyze our performance on state assessments, we specifically look at students who are exceeding standards and in which domains, and if we increased the number exceeding standard from the previous year. During our grade level collaboration meetings, each teacher looks at the common formative assessment of reading and writing they administer each month. Part of the protocol we use to guide our meetings is to review the work of our students who are exceeding standards. We look for patterns in what they were able to do well and an area that can be further strengthened. Teachers talk about how to differentiate assignments for these students to increase the level of rigor and to further improve their performance or expand different ways they can show their understanding, such as presenting to the class, or leading discussion groups. For example, during a recent 3rd grade collaboration meeting, the team noticed the strong elaboration a student provided in his narrative writing. They identified the effective use of description, dialog, and interesting details. However, they also identified that the student added too many details which made the plot and author's message less clear. They discussed how to help the student use a story organizer to map out the storyline and then outline relevant details. By building in time to examine the work of our high performing students, we help ourselves look for ways to improve the learning of all our students.

3c. Students with disabilities:

We are a district special education cluster school with a heavier concentration of special needs students than most other elementary schools in our district. We have three self-contained specialized academic instruction (SAI)/SpEd classes, two full time SAI Core or Resource Specialist teachers, and numerous students who receive speech services. We are careful to not identify any students for SpEd services unless we have documented previous attempts at interventions and additional supports, and the student is not showing progress. We ensure that all our SpEd students have access to the core curriculum by making sure teaching the standards is a primary focus by their teachers. While each student has an individualized education plan with specific goals, our SpEd teachers work hard to connect these goals to grade level content. At the beginning of the year our SAI Core teachers meet with each of their students' homeroom teachers to review each child's specific IEP goals and the classroom strategies and scaffolds that are best used with that student. In addition, our SpEd teachers attend all grade level collaboration meetings. As their grade level team selects a focus standard and designs a model lesson, they provide input of how they can differentiate by selecting a related objective, use a different source for modeling, or ways they can modify how students show their understanding such as through dictation, drawing, or pointing. They also bring samples of student work to discuss at each meeting which helps the rest of the team think through multiple ways to differentiate for their most struggling students.

3d. English Language Learners:

We closely examine assessment data of all our English learners. We review information about each child's primary language, English language proficiency level, date of initial program placement, initial and/or summative results from the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California, as well as performance on the iReady diagnostic and fluency assessments. Therefore, each teacher knows which students are newcomers, beginning English learners, or long-term English learners. The data helps teachers know how much scaffolding is needed by their English learners. For example, some are fluent decoders, but lack understanding of what they read, while others need foundational reading skills. During our language arts block, teachers pull small groups of students for differentiated instruction once they check for understanding. All our teachers have been trained to provide strong explicit direct instruction so they make use of important scaffolding techniques such as pre-teaching vocabulary, using anchor charts and visuals, chunking information, and clear, concise teacher modeling. As a school, we have identified best practices that provide learning strategies that help our English learners and involve them in structured discussions using reciprocal teaching or CSR, as well as partner sharing and use of sentence frames. In addition, we have a schoolwide block of time for designated ELD so that students learn specific tier 2 academic vocabulary, and specific grammar skills in the context of a structured teacher-guided discussion using our schoolwide strategy of Scholarly Talk (see ELD description above). This year, we had a large influx of newcomers with very minimal English skills, so we hired a part time intervention teacher to provide additional basic school-related language instruction. We know the strength of our instruction has helped our

English learners succeed so that 73% nearly met, met, or exceeded standards, on the state's Smarter Balanced Assessments, while others reclassified earlier in the year.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our students are proud to be Horace Mann Bulldogs. Each morning we begin with our Bulldog Team Pledge, so all students commit to being student leaders who follow "The Bulldog Way," which represents our schoolwide PBIS behavior matrix. We model for students the positive behavior we expect, including being respectful, responsible, and acting safely. We acknowledge students when they follow The Bulldog Way by awarding Paw Bucks which they use for fun incentives such as a Halloween maze, dance party, and purchasing prizes. We have a multi-tiered system of support to monitor students who have difficulty following our schoolwide expectations. Our principal, teacher specialists, and psychologist have monthly meetings to discuss how to help these students and meet with parents to suggest strategies so they can support positive behavior at home also. We have a team of counselors who work with designated students. Some students need one-on-one counseling, while others participate in either a motivation or behavior support group that meet throughout the year. We use a school database to track behavior infractions and interventions that have been suggested during parent meetings.

Also, our students know that we have high academic expectations for them and know they are supported in reaching these expectations. They know that they are part of a school which has excellent teachers and has won state and national awards. They proudly wear their school t-shirts with our school motto, "Set Goals, Do Your Best, Finish Strong." Our students know the importance of setting goals. We teach our students how to set both short-term and long-term career and college goals. They set weekly goals in their school planner and set an academic and personal "Wildly Important Goal" which they track in their Leadership Portfolios. We have a schoolwide College Day during which teachers and guest speakers talk about the importance of going to college and their experiences. We teach our students to plan steps to reach their goals, track their progress, and celebrate their successes. We plan one-on-one conferences with students, so they set individual goals, and understand the need to take charge of their learning. We stress the importance of having a growth mindset and recognize students' effort and achievement each month with our Bulldog Mindset Award, All-Star Reader Award, and Student of the Month. Thus, our students know that if they set goals, do their best, and have a growth mindset, they will succeed!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We understand that many of our parents work 1-2 jobs so attending school functions sometimes can be difficult. Yet, we prioritize communication about the progress of their children. We keep parents informed of students' progress through progress reports, detailed comments on the report card, parent conferences, monthly newsletters, and Parent Square which is an online platform which allows for school and classroom mass communications. Through our effective use of student data, we identify students who are struggling at the beginning of the year, and invite parents to come to a meeting with the teacher to collaborate and develop an academic intervention plan. Then the teacher meets with the parent mid-year and at the end of the year to discuss student's progress. We also offer monthly Coffee with the Principal meetings during which a parent education topic is presented, and the principal listens to any concerns and answers questions. Our kindergarten teachers all work together to present information to parents about how they can help their children during Tea with the Teachers. They explain kindergarten expectations and strategies parents can reinforce such as blending, segmenting, or reading high frequency words.

Since most of our families are socio-economically disadvantaged, parents often reach out to our school for help. We often direct them to resources in the community where they can find help with food, shelter, or even bills. We partner with Nordstroms to provide shoes and the Glendale Assistance League to provide school uniforms to needy families. Several businesses donate prizes for Student of the Month and Bulldog Mindset Award. The Glendale Kiwanis Club supports various projects at school. They sponsor the Kiwanis Kids so students learn about leadership and community service. They sponsor Reading is Fundamental so every student receives a free book 3 times a year to reinforce the importance of reading. They also sponsor a special end of the year award that recognizes all students who met their reading goals every month, and celebrate the top readers in each grade who receive a Top Dog Award and prize. They even donate funds to

help our ballet folklorico to purchase costumes and to help purchase food for our Open House. We look forward to further strengthening our community partnerships as we apply to become a Community School.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Horace Mann's professional culture is a significant strength. Our staff clearly knows that only a unified school effort will help our students overcome any barriers and succeed academically. We have an evident sense of purpose that focuses on doing what is best for our students and which inspires such a high level of dedication. Our staff is proud to be part of the Horace Mann team and is willing to do what it takes to help our students. We feel validated that our hard work makes a difference as we have seen a steady increase in reading and math achievement for over 15 years, and in the number of awards we have received.

We work hard to ensure that every student has access to the same high quality rigorous teaching regardless of the teacher they are assigned. We make certain this happens through the strength of our teacher collaboration. Instead of typical faculty meetings, our faculty meetings are staff development. We have banked minutes to allow for 15 1½ hour teacher collaboration meetings. During this time, we provide site-based training on our schoolwide best practices so that we polish the expertise of all our teachers, as well as follow grade level collaboration protocols to help us design a strong model lesson using an explicit, direct instruction lesson plan, develop common formative assessments, and discuss student work for the purpose of determining next steps in our instruction. Through the strength of our collaboration, we help ensure a clear understanding of grade level standards and expected rigor, as well as help new staff members assimilate to our professional culture. This collaboration results in a high level of synergy so that our grade levels often meet on their own to work on planning for other content areas. When visitors observe in our classrooms, the comment most frequently shared is the strength our school's instructional focus on reading comprehension, and the unmistakable impact of collaboration on teaching within a grade level and across the school.

4. School Leadership:

Without a doubt, Horace Mann has sustained our academic improvement for nearly two decades due to our strong school leadership. It is rare for a high poverty school with high levels of language learners to have such a strong instructional leader as their principal for so long. Yet our principal has been passionately driven to help turn around our school from lowest performing to one of the highest performing in the district. She has turned down promotional opportunities in order to continue to make a difference in the lives of our students. She has shaped the school vision and culture so that we prioritize the quality of instruction in order for all of our students to see themselves as successful learners and leaders. She has helped us stay focused on our target of teaching the standards, especially to improve students' reading comprehension, and the urgency of examining student work and data to guide our next steps. This ongoing process of looking at student data, identifying specific needs, and taking action to address those needs has helped us continue our success even with new textbook adoptions, and various district initiatives. Even during distance learning, she maintained high expectations for the quality of our online teaching and provided the support and training to teachers so that they could be successful during such a challenging time. Yet, school leadership is shared with our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) which is composed of two teachers from each grade level who volunteer to be on this important committee. Our ILT provides input on how to shape our grade level collaboration protocols, identify high-priority student needs based on the data, lead our professional learning communities, and help determine site staff development needs based on the input of their grade level peers and from classroom walk-throughs. In addition, our principal meets regularly with a support staff of two teacher specialists and school psychologist to discuss how to address the special needs of students who are struggling emotionally or academically. Each person has a specialized role to support our students in becoming successful learners and leaders, such as coordination of interventions, coordination of counseling services and parent outreach, and facilitating site-based staff development. We also are developing the strength of student leadership as we implement the Franklin-Covey Leader in Me program and students learn and practice the 8 habits of successful leaders.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

We celebrate the diversity of our school. Students are proud of their cultural heritage including their primary language.   Spanish and Armenian are the primary languages used by most of our students, however our students speak a variety of other languages such as Filipino, Arabic, Thai, and Russian. Since the majority of our staff also speak a second language, we are able to make connections and have sensitivity to students' experience learning a new language. The guiding principle that directs our culturally responsive teaching is respect. Respect is one of the three overarching behaviors we expect from everyone on campus as part of our implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). We emphasize respect towards all and respect for our rich cultural diversity. Our teachers intentionally make connections to students' experiences, customs, and perspectives throughout the content areas such as finding relevant texts to use while teaching our reading comprehension focus standards, for example when identifying the author's purpose or point of view, during Social Studies when we learn about the customs, ceremonies, traditions, and social practices of different cultures, or even in math as our teachers create word problems that connect with students such as collecting data about students' languages, or having students develop their own word problems. We dedicate a block of time every Friday for students to learn strategies to promote respect for each other, including restorative practices, community building circles, PBIS lessons, and Leader in Me lessons. All students learn about important leadership habits that foster respect for diversity and individual needs, such as "Seek first to understand, then to be understood," "Synergize," and "Find Your Voice."   Thus, all teachers guide discussions that promote students' respect and understanding for the point of view of others, and help students to use their voice to share their beliefs, perspectives, and feelings.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

A unique strength of our school is "PLC+," our customized use of professional learning communities, to enhance our schoolwide instructional focus on reading comprehension. We ensure consistency of rigor through: 1) our analysis of standards, 2) determining Success Criteria that define proficiency of our Focus Standards, 3) using common formative assessments to check for understanding of the standards, and 4) grade level collaboration meetings to a) design model lessons using a common explicit, direct lesson format, and b) review student assessments to identify next steps for teaching.

Adding to the strength of our professional learning communities is the site-based staff development we provide during our collaboration meetings. We don't depend on outside consultants; instead we plan training that address specific instructional needs as observed by our principal and leadership team during classroom walkthroughs, or to address specific student needs identified in our formal and informal assessments of student learning. We refer to educational research to identify a few schoolwide best practices that help us address specific teaching and learning needs to improve our students' reading comprehension. For example, we first worked on effective lesson delivery with clear teacher modeling and structured guided practice with explicitly defined engagement strategies to check for understanding of ALL students. We provided training and defined what "good modeling" should look like so that teachers now develop "how to do it" thinking steps that show students the cognitive processes needed to perform a standard, such as "How do I determine the author's message?" Another example is how we selected reciprocal teaching as a best practice when we observed many students, especially our Hispanic students, who were passive during class discussions. Reciprocal teaching combines four critical reading strategies and provides a structure to ensure students are actively involved in talking and co-constructing the meaning of a text. Our reading coach works closely with our principal to develop and present the customized staff development so that all teachers participate in common training that addresses specific observed needs and builds on previous site training so that it is not "one-shot" staff development. This helps us move from training to implementation which is reinforced by our principal during classroom observations and modeled by our coach. This on-going, site-specific training that complements our grade level collaboration meetings is the "+" in our PLC+. We have proven that when we learn together, we develop the collective expertise that has enabled our tremendous success.