

***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 [ ] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 250 Smithville Church Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Warner Robins State GA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 31088-7802

County Houston County

Telephone (478) 953-0415 Fax (478) 953-0425

Web site/URL https://qres.hcbe.net E-mail amanda.miliner@hcbe.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. Mark Scott E-mail mark.scott@hcbe.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Houston County School District Tel. (478) 988-6200

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. Helen Hughes  
(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):
- 23 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
8 Middle/Junior high schools  
5 High schools  
0 K-12 schools
- 36 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	58
K	110
1	86
2	92
3	89
4	106
5	98
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	639

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 26 % Black or African American
  - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 49 % White
  - 9 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 11%

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	36
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	32
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	68
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	626
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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

Arabic, German, Gujarati, Spanish, Vietnamese, Urdu, and Sindhi

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %  
35 Total number ELL

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

Total number students who qualify: 328

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 17 %  
Total number of students served 110

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>17</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>23</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>29</u> Developmental Delay	<u>23</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 7 %  
Total number of students served: 42

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 1

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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	34
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 19:1

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%	95%	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 ☒

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.

Our mission is to be a community where we grow together and love learning. Our vision is to produce students who believe in themselves, achieve their goals, and succeed as life-long learners.

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

[qres.hcbe.net/qresdocumentsandforms](https://qres.hcbe.net/qresdocumentsandforms)

The nondiscrimination policy is located on the link provided above in the Quail Run handbook.

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

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Our school has been referred to as the Chick-fil-A of Houston County Schools. We pride ourselves in customer service and providing a safe and loving environment for our students, families, and staff. When someone walks into our building, they are welcomed with a warm smile and a, “How can I help you?” attitude. Our staff has a servant mindset where we are eager to ensure all stakeholders are made to feel valued, seen, and heard. In addition, we believe in families having an unforgettable experience where they feel connected as Quail Run Cubs from the beginning to the end of their journey here with us. Once a cub, always a cub.

Our student demographic consists of a diverse population of socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, and disabilities. That diversity includes a sizable amount of students that receive free or reduced lunch as well as a small population of students who are migrant or homeless. Our students with disabilities are served in an inclusive environment per their IEP. However, we do have classrooms for students with severe and profound intellectual disabilities and three other classrooms supporting Prekindergarten and kindergarten students with significant delays. Moreover, our student population represents seven languages spoken besides English. For nonverbal students, our staff uses various sign-language techniques and visual cues, and we have one student who communicates through eye-gazing technology. Finally, we have a large population of Gifted and Talented learners who are served by a teacher with specific credentials to support higher level thinking skills.

To help our students build community within a cohesive culture, we use a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). For example, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) help create schoolwide expectations, rewards, and celebrations. All classrooms have a matrix with the learning environment expectations. In addition, our staff uses a flow chart to guide their decision making when students fail to meet the PBIS standards. To reward our students for meeting the PBIS expectations, we distribute cub cash that can be redeemed at our Cub Club. The Cub Club is a school store that has items from candy to scooters. We recently celebrated two students that spent five hundred dollars in cub cash to purchase smart watches. Additionally, we incentivize appropriate behavior with quarterly schoolwide positive behavior celebrations.

Some of our students need additional behavior supports to succeed because they lack in self-regulation and coping skills. Therefore, we have several schoolwide initiatives to help support the whole child. First, our students Prekindergarten through fifth grade participate in a social and emotional learning curriculum called Second Step. This Tier 1 curriculum helps all students learn proactive strategies for managing emotions and problem solving. One of our most successful programs for students identified as at-risk, through our universal behavior screener, is our mentoring initiative. This program connects these students with a mentor and advocate that can provide breaks and positive words of encouragement when needed. Each mentee checks in with his or her mentor each morning as well as checks out with him or her at the end of the day. We realize some students still need brain breaks and opportunities to cool down. To help provide these supports, we have both a sensory room and a Cub Hub. The sensory room contains different tools to help the students deescalate and return to class. Our Cub Hub is another space that offers emotional regulation tools and a plethora of calming strategies.

Once our students are able to learn how to manage their emotions, we find that they are more prepared to thrive academically. Our master schedule is created to ensure all students receive quality Tier 1 instruction in all content areas, a separate Tier 2 instructional block, and Tier 3 intervention time. When we notice a student has a skill deficit, we respond with interventions and supports. On the other hand, when the data shows a student has mastered the standards, we provide opportunities for enrichment and extension.

During grade level planning times, teams collaborate as professional learning communities (PLC) to create a viable and guaranteed curriculum based on essential standards. The administration team attends each meeting to provide support and guidance. To ensure our teams are functioning at high levels, we provide professional development on the PLC process. Each week, the team meets to create and analyze common formative assessments to inform their instruction and determine remediation and enrichment action plans. These strategies produce positive results. Our MAP data continues to show how our students’ growth and



achievement exceeds the national norms in all grade levels. Our Georgia Milestones Assessment data also shows continuous improvement in sub-populations.

We are proud of all the behavior and academic supports our students receive. More importantly, we are proud of the success our students experience as a result of our faculty and staff's commitment to the mission and vision of Quail Run.

## **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:**

As a public school in the state of Georgia, teachers at Quail Run Elementary teach from the Georgia Standards of Excellence, and we make it a priority for the language and the rigor of the standard to drive our instruction. All grade levels K-5 have selected specific standards for Reading/ELA that they believe are essential for students to learn and master as part of a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Teachers at Quail Run collaborate with their grade level teams to monitor student progress towards mastery of those standards, recording proficiency levels throughout curricular units. Our district has provided a reading, phonics, and language curriculum called the Fountas and Pinnell classroom. The Fountas and Pinnell literacy classroom is made up of several components, and those pieces are the primary resources used for tier one reading instruction and are the vehicle by which we teach the content standards. The components of this curriculum are guided reading, interactive read-aloud, shared reading, phonics and word study, book clubs, mini-lessons, and independent reading.

Our teachers follow district-provided pacing guides to ensure fluidity across the components. The guided reading component is used daily for small group, leveled reading instruction. Using this resource allows teachers to provide differentiated instruction to meet students where they are and provide specific and timely feedback. It also helps teachers to ensure that students have strategies in place to comprehend within the text, beyond the text, and about the text. In addition, our teachers use the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessment system to formally assess students' reading levels. The BAS kits provide leveled running records and a fiction and a nonfiction text for each guided reading level that can be assessed. Teachers formally assess students' reading level three times per year to monitor progress as they check for appropriate accuracy, fluency, and comprehension on leveled text. Teachers can also informally assess students between the formal testing windows to check for progress throughout the year.

When teachers have evidence, either formal or informal, that a student has progressed to a higher reading level, the teacher will make the necessary changes to the student's group and text level. The student's performance on the running record assessment is documented, and notations are made to guide the teacher's next steps with that particular student. In addition to assessing reading level, teachers administer common formative assessments to assess students' mastery of essential ELA standards and skills. All teachers give the same common formative assessments, and the data is analyzed together to monitor instructional effectiveness with the teaching of the ELA content standards. In addition to utilizing Fountas and Pinnell classroom components, monitoring student progress on essential ELA skills and standards, and creating and administering common formative assessments for reading and language arts, teachers also participate in professional learning opportunities related to developing teacher pedagogy and increasing competency as teachers of reading. This school year, we have implemented Heggerty phonemic awareness lessons across many grade levels as a result of some of our reading and research about childhood reading development.

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

Within the Georgia Performance Standards, our math curriculum includes performance-based tasks that challenge our students to become well-rounded mathematicians. The teachers start their lesson with a mini-lesson and then continue to work with the students in small groups. The mini lesson includes explicit instruction with visual cues, modeling, and hands-on learning. While the teacher is working with a small group, the other students may be working on an instructional math program, applying their skills to an activity from the mini-lesson, or working within a math station. Our goal is for students to have a strong number sense, fluent computation abilities, mental math capabilities, and become critical thinking problem solvers.

To improve our students' ability to compute problems fluently, our school uses a software program called Reflex. This program allows the students to work at their own level while meeting certain benchmarks. In

addition, our students use the iReady math software program, because it allows teachers to assign lessons aligning to the Georgia Performance Standards. At the beginning of the year, the students take an iReady diagnostic assessment to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each student. After the assessment, the students have programmed lessons to help them improve in their own struggling areas. Therefore, the students have two learning pathways through iReady. One pathway is created by the teacher with specifically assigned lessons, and the other pathway is based on the student's diagnostic data.

To help foster mental math abilities, our teachers have “number talks” with the students each day. This activity allows the students to solve various problems without using a pencil. After the problem is shown on the board, the students complete the problem mentally. Then the students discuss their problem solving and compare their thinking with their peers. This allows the students to contemplate other ways of solving a problem while giving them an opportunity to share their own thinking.

Our teachers meet once a week to create common formative assessments (CFAs) that include questions requiring higher order thinking skills. The CFAs allow the teachers to teach with the end in mind. The teachers plan collaboratively and create assessments using the county test bank and pacing guide. In addition, the teachers work together to analyze the data to determine next steps. The next steps may include a specific strategy group, or it may require a reteaching on the math skill. Finally, the teachers meet vertically to ensure the level of rigor within their instruction and assessments is consistent with the progression of skills needed for the next grade level.

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

Our county does an exceptional job of preparing and supporting our teachers within the Science Georgia Standards of Excellence. The county's pacing guide includes resources, sample performance task ideas, and assessments to help support the teacher's instruction. Each unit includes 3-Dimensional Science which teaches students core concepts, scientist and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts. The science and engineering practices help the students know what to do during the scientific process. The teachers use the practices to help the students become more independent scientific thinkers. The seven crosscutting concepts teach the students how to think and inquire like scientists. For example, understanding patterns, a crosscutting concept, can help students during an inquiry lesson.

Each lesson challenges the students to think critically, problem solve, and ask questions about different phenomena. The lessons start with a mini lesson that is followed by an opportunity for the students to apply the knowledge learned. The teachers create a student-centered learning environment with hands-on learning opportunities. Our fifth-grade students recently tried to create series and parallel circuits and compared cells under a microscope. Our third-grade students analyzed different rocks and minerals by using different scientific tools. Finally, our kindergarten students were able to celebrate the end of their lifecycle unit by investigating and observing the lifecycle of live baby chicks. Our teachers achieve scientific literacy through Rodger Bybee's Five E's of Inquiry (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate). Each lesson breaks down the Five E's to ensure the teachers are able to engage the students on each level.

Finally, the teachers meet collaboratively to discuss lessons including hands-on opportunities and experiments. The county also provides monthly meetings where each grade can collaborate with other teachers across the county. During the meetings, the teachers are shown different strategies and resources to help their students become better scientific thinkers.

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

As a public school in the state of Georgia, our teachers at Quail Run Elementary School teach and assess all the Georgia Standards of Excellence for Social Studies instruction. These standards cover a wide range of concepts which fall under the categories of historical understandings, geographic understandings, government/civic understandings, and economic understandings. Students at QRES explore topics ranging from civil rights to early exploration to geography of our state and nation plus so much more. Teachers at Quail Run Elementary utilize district-provided resources to teach the appropriate grade level standards. These resources consist of classroom library materials, TCM (Teacher Created Materials) magazines, and

print and online access to Social Studies Weekly magazines. Teachers also implement DBQ (Document Based Questions) inquiry lessons as students have opportunities to study both primary and secondary sources.

In addition to using these resources and district-provided pacing guides, teachers at our school design fun and engaging lessons to enhance Social Studies learning. One example is an economics unit specially designed to teach and assess third graders' understanding of economic standards. Third grade students participate each year in a project-based learning experience called Market Place. They become entrepreneurs as they learn all about an economic society where goods and services are produced and consumed, and they even get to participate in a field trip where they can set up their business for community members to come and purchase items.

Our teacher teams collaborate to unpack and break apart the Social Studies standards to create and administer appropriate classroom assessments which match the language and the rigor embedded in the standard. This teaching and learning cycle allows our teachers to monitor students' understanding of the Social Studies content so that we can ensure students are prepared for their future educational journey with foundational Social Studies learning.

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

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

Quail Run Elementary School houses two GA Lottery funded general education pre-K programs. These programs follow Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning Bright from the Start guidelines. All students who reside in our school zone and turn four on or before August 1st are eligible for this pre-K program. Each classroom holds twenty-two students and two teachers; a certified Georgia educator and a paraprofessional. Pre-K is an exciting place to visit at QRES. Parts of the day for these students include phonemic awareness, large group literacy, read-aloud, music and movement through dancing, singing, and recess, naptime, centers (dramatic play, art, Science, Writing, etc.) and teacher-led small group instruction. The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards drive the classroom instruction, and teachers document individual student progress using the Work Sampling Online platform.

At QRES, we feel strongly that students who attend our pre-K program are more accustomed to the school environment and ready for Kindergarten. The socialization and life skills that are developed during this time are critical to early childhood development and school readiness. Starting school early also allows teachers and school administrators to intervene sooner when we see certain academic, social, or behavioral needs. We are able to provide any necessary interventions at the tier two or tier three level during the pre-K year that give the Kindergarten teachers a head start.

In addition to general education pre-K, QRES houses one self-contained special education pre-K class for 3 and 4 year olds. This is a half day program with a morning and an afternoon group. Students are working on life skills and socialization through play and circle time. Each child has personalized goals through his or her IEP, and those goals are worked on and monitored.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

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

All students in Kindergarten through fifth grade are able to experience art and music instruction through our specials class rotation. The students are exposed to the full range of state standards for music and the visual arts. Through the visual arts instruction, our students learn how to organize their thoughts, emotions, and learning visually and tangibly.

Our art and music teachers do a wonderful job of enhancing and reinforcing grade level standards through cross curricular vocabulary and concept lessons. In addition, both teachers provide lessons where the students learn about different cultures and countries. For example, the art teacher recently taught the third-grade students how to weave. She introduced the concept by reading a book based in South America. The students learned why weaving is a useful skill while also enjoying a powerful read-aloud. Art has helped our students become creative problem solvers while also helping them become more proficient within their fine motor skills. Each year our students participate in the County Art Show and submit art pieces in various state and national competitions. Our school also has a clay club, where students learn the art behind creating pottery, and Chorus. We were very excited to have numerous students selected as part of the Honor Chorus for the county. Overall, we are very pleased with the experiences our students are afforded through our visual arts and music program.

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

Quail Run considers health and physical education fundamental pieces for each student's educational experience. Our health education program provides students the knowledge and skills needed to foster a healthy way of life by teaching physical fitness skills and techniques while also focusing on the importance of making healthy choices. Our P.E. program recently finished the Jump Rope for Heart Campaign. This campaign encouraged students to learn how to make healthy meal choices, how to identify the signs of a stroke, and how to keep the heart healthy with physically activity. To assess our first through fifth grade students' physical fitness, our county uses the Fitness Gram. The Fitness Gram is a scientifically researched measurement tool, shared with parents, to assess each student's current health measures.

Our P.E. department also teaches safety measures within transportation. The students learn how to correctly evacuate a bus in case of emergency. Students learn how to ride on the bus safely and practice various drills to ensure they understand bus safety. Finally, as part of our health curriculum, our kindergartener through fifth grader students learn about the dangers of using alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and other drugs.

Finally, our P.E. program gives awards to students based on their effort and participation. Students are also awarded for various events during our school-wide Field Day.

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

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

In accordance with our 1:1 county initiative, all students are issued a device. Pre-K and kindergarten students receive a tablet and students in first through fifth grades are issued a laptop. Students use the devices for classroom lessons, remediation, and enrichment purposes. At the beginning of each school year, all students complete a series of internet safety lessons. Depending on the grade level, these lessons cover media balance and well-being, privacy and security, digital footprint and identity, relationships and communication, cyberbullying, and news and media literacy.

Kindergarten through 5th grade students visit the media center as a class every week. The media specialist shares read alouds and book talks in conjunction with our state and county book competitions, holidays and monthly observances, national book awards, and special literary celebrations. Students also have daily opportunities to independently visit the media center for new books.

Our schoolwide reading program involves monthly challenge boards with a variety of categories that change each month. Categories are designed to (a) build a student's reading community by involving family, friends, and trusted adults in their book selection and sharing, (b) celebrate the current season, including any and all holidays, and (c) expand students' familiarity with the library collection.

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

One curriculum program we are proud to share is our new teacher induction program. We assign mentors to each new teacher and provide professional development for the mentees each month. We review the state evaluation standards to help guide the ten areas of their performance. For example, we had our intervention teachers present different differentiating strategies to help support all learners. They modeled how to analyze data to inform instruction. We also had one of the administrators review how to handle crucial conversations with parents and peers. As part of the new teacher program, we encourage the teachers to observe at least two peers in the building. Then we ask the teachers to complete a reflection form on the observation and share their findings with their mentor. These are just a few examples of how we support our teachers that have less than three years of teaching experience. We believe in this program's ability to retain teachers while also helping them become more effective in their practice.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

Quail Run uses the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework to support students who are performing below grade level. The school master schedule allots time for a student to receive tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3 instruction at different times. This schedule ensures students needing remediation do not miss strong tier 1 instruction. Target Time is a school-wide remediation/enrichment block used to provide tier 2 interventions based on common formative assessment data. Grade level teams alternate bi-weekly between math and reading remediation, grouping students based on their CFA data. Students who receive intense intervention on tier 3 meet at least three times per week with an Early Intervention Program teacher or in a small group with their classroom teacher to participate in targeted interventions to support growth on skill deficits in reading and/or math. Teachers meet monthly with the counselor and admin team to discuss intervention data and make decisions about next steps.

Additionally, Quail Run has a task force dedicated to exploring the achievement levels of various subpopulations. This group of teachers and administrators look at assessment data for trends that might help our school better support our students' diverse needs. We noticed from our 2019 College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) data reported by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) that our economically disadvantaged students were scoring more than ten points from the general population. During a task force meeting, we analyzed the data further and realized many of our ED students had attended more than five schools in the past few years. Therefore, we started to implement a mentoring program to help the students connect with at least one adult in the building and provide the student with some consistency outside of the classroom.

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

Students performing above grade level have opportunities to extend their learning. Students who are identified as gifted learners or high achievers are part of the Gifted and Talented Program (GTE). Gifted-endorsed teachers challenge GTE students with deeper content knowledge, scenarios requiring critical thinking skills, and higher-order-thinking questioning. These students explore their multiple intelligences and learning modalities to become more self-aware learners.

Our teachers recognize that being identified as a gifted learner does not necessarily mean that a student is gifted in all academic areas, and we recognize that students without the gifted label can still excel in various content areas. Common formative assessments provide teachers with standard-mastery data. When students have mastered a standard and need extension opportunities, they receive these opportunities during Target Time, a 40-minute block each morning for enrichment and remediation. These target time groups include all students in the grade level, and the enrichment group can include students who are not part of the GTE program. This inclusive approach to extension opportunities promotes academic achievement and self-esteem.

There are additional opportunities for students who are performing above grade level to shine. QRES has an academic bowl team for 5th grade students. This extracurricular activity challenges the brightest students to go deeper into their knowledge of content standards and beyond. Academic bowl team members compete at

the district level with opportunities to advance to region and state competitions. Gifted orators are invited to participate in the county-wide oratorical contest. Fifth grade students write speeches on a given topic and one student from Quail Run advances to the county-wide competition. Talented spellers participate in the annual spelling bee. Fourth and fifth grade students participate in the school-wide bee, and the winner advances to the district level competition. Overall, we work hard to push our GTE learners to think out-of-the-box and take risks.

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

Quail Run supports various students with disabilities and 504 plans. Our special education team includes three interrelated teachers, four self-contained special education teachers, and two speech pathologists.

The latest CCRPI data showed how our students with disabilities were scoring approximately 30 points below the school population. When analyzing the data, we realized many of our students needed more support and resources to help them regulate their emotions, because their emotions were impeding their academic success. We created a sensory room equipped with various sensory resources for students who may be overstimulated. The sensory room provides a space for students to self-soothe using comforting objects such as fidgets, low lighting, and a soft-play playground. Additionally, the school counseling department created a central location in the school called the Cub Hub where staff members can bring students who need to decompress. The Cub Hub is equipped with various tools such as calming strategies, deep breathing exercises, positive affirmations, grounding techniques, social stories, and social-emotional learning resources. The Cub Hub provides a space for students to reset and return to class. Classroom teachers have calm down corners equipped with objects to help students self-soothe and reset. Teachers use Zones of Regulation to help students identify how they are feeling. This tool helps teachers guide students to ways they can manage their emotions and return to a state where they are ready to learn.

In addition, our special education teachers work hard to progress monitor each student's IEP goals and provide supports as needed. The special education team meets annually with parents to discuss each student's IEP and make appropriate revisions.

Teachers meet monthly with the school counselor, assistant principal, and principal to discuss academic and behavioral concerns that could indicate a disability. The school psychologist, program specialist, and counselor collaborate weekly to ensure that students with disabilities are quickly identified, and the appropriate supports are provided in a timely manner.

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

Our school has approximately 35 English as a Second Language (ESOL) students. These students are given a language screener when they enter the Houston County School District, or testing results from their previous county is used. The data from those screeners help formulate a plan to see what services and/ or interventions each student would benefit from. All ESOL students receive one segment of language support daily that is provided by the ESOL teacher. This content area segment is based on the needs of the students in each grade level and the level of support needed. Additional support is provided to our level one language learners during our daily Target Time. These students are pulled by the ESOL teacher and are provided with intense vocabulary instruction through the support of GrapeSEED, an instructional program that exposes language learners to the English language in an engaging and meaningful way. Another support is the school-wide iReady monthly diagnostic that places all English Learners (ELs) on their individual level in Reading and Math. These lessons support academic growth and vocabulary acquisition. In January of each year, EL students are given the ACCESS test in four sections: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. These test results show each EL's language proficiency level in the four domains. This data is used to evaluate whether the EL needs to move to monitoring and not active status, and the level of support they need in daily classroom instruction. The ACCESS scores and data collected from grades and other classroom assessments guide the decision for testing accommodations in the yearly Testing Participation Committee (TPC). These accommodations include the use of a word-to-word dictionary, small group, passages and/ or questions read aloud, explain or paraphrase directions, extended time, and frequent breaks.

If accommodations are agreed upon by the committee, the EL receives those accommodations during all class and statewide assessments for that school year.

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

As a military community, we understand the challenges that our military children face. Along with other teachers with military backgrounds, we created a club to honor and support students with immediate family members that serve in the military. In the Military Kids Club we focus on celebrating the unique experiences that encompass the military life. We focus on the resiliency of the students, the impact the families have on the community, and celebrate and honor the sacrifices made by the family. We also plan special events during the Month of the Military Child including a breakfast celebrating these families and students. One of our club meetings involved a “travel day” where students shared experiences from all the various places they have been stationed. Another meeting included a demonstration from the K9 unit at Robins Air Force Base and how the unit contributes to the safety of the community. We will continue to highlight the exceptionalities and provide support for these students.

Cubs to Men is a school mentoring program for young men at Quail Run Elementary. The Cubs to Men mission is to prepare, educate, and inspire young men to be successful in life. Our vision is to positively impact young men to become productive citizens in their communities. Cubs to Men core values include integrity, respect, kindness, courage, honesty, determination, service, teamwork, emotional intelligence, and responsibility. The Cubs to Men mentoring program is dedicated to developing young men into outstanding students, friends, siblings, sons, fathers, and citizens through the Core Values. Trust is built by respecting, listening, and showing kindness to all members. A sense of belonging will be nurtured for all stakeholders.

4-H at Quail Run helps to develop students who are empowered, confident, hard-working, determined, responsible and compassionate. We want our student to see a world beyond themselves, providing life-long skills to succeed in college, career, and beyond.



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

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

Quail Run Elementary strives to promote a positive learning environment using our PAWS Up expectations. PAWS stands for Practice Safety, Act Responsibly, Work Together, and Show Respect. This is the second year of implementation of PBIS at Quail Run, and all grade levels are excited about earning rewards for following the PAWS Up expectations. Students earn Cub Cash which they can spend biweekly at the Cub Club store. Prizes range from small candy to smart watches and scooters. Students who have no office referrals also get to participate in quarterly PBIS celebrations. This year students have enjoyed a tailgate party, Polar Express day, and a St. Patrick's Day celebration as rewards for positive behavior.

On Mondays during Target Time, teachers review the PAWS expectations, or they teach a Second Step lesson. Second Step is our social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum that teaches students skills such as conflict resolution and empathy. Dedicating Monday mornings to SEL has had a positive impact on student behavior. Students and teachers use the language of Second Step and the PAWS expectations throughout the day to reinforce the concepts taught during SEL.

As an additional layer of support, the PBIS team examines behavior trends and designs special learning opportunities to address behavior concerns. Sometimes the learning opportunity takes the form of a school-wide Zoom meeting with the principal where the principal explores a concept and then proposes a challenge. In December the focus was a Hands Are Not for Hitting campaign because our discipline data indicated a need in that area. Students were recognized on the announcements and on a bulletin board for using their hands for good instead of for hurting others. In February we challenged all classes to complete the Respect Challenge choice board which gave each class numerous opportunities to learn about and display respect to others. When each class completed the choice board, all the students earned prizes and extra recess. Various other supports for students have come out of examining discipline data. A bus driver training meeting and special bus Cub Cash, sub folders that include positive language to use with students and special sub Cub Cash, and the Cub Connection mentor/ check in-check out program were all born from needs found in data.

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

Supporting our students to close academic and social emotional gaps often requires additional resources and support. We partnered with various businesses and organizations to help our students grow in all areas. For example, our school data task force recognized how some of our students were needing social and emotional support, in addition to our Second Step Curriculum, because their lack of confidence was impeding their academic progress. We partnered with a local insurance business to mentor and work with these students each week. All the students noticeably became more confident and showed growth on their winter universal screener assessment. The mentorship provided an opportunity for the students to feel valued while also giving them an opportunity to improve in struggling areas.

We also partnered with multiple churches to help serve our students who live in humble means. One church consistently provided food for our weekend snack bags and graciously volunteered to help pack the bags each week. This community partnerships helped provide the basic needs our students needed to thrive academically. Each Friday, the students receive bags containing nonperishable foods to ensure they have food that will last throughout the weekend. We realized a hungry child cannot fully reach their potential when they are lacking the sustenance to focus in the classroom. Another church sponsored twenty families for Christmas. Each family was given presents for all the children who lived in the home. This partnership does not directly impact academics; however, it's important because it allowed the students to share in the excitement of the season like their peers.

In addition, we like to invite community members to our school for special programs and events. During our Open House, we invited the local fire department to come and share about fire safety. We also invited a local dentist office to teach about proper oral hygiene. Our school's Partner's Club, a club that supports special needs students, had a community member come and teach the students about wheelchair sports. The

students were allowed to sit in the wheelchair and participate in a wheelchair basketball game. This experience helped foster empathy and understanding for students and community members with physical disabilities. During Read Across America Week, we invited local community members to read to our students. Our students observed how reading is vital and enjoyable in all fields and professions.

Our community partnerships helped our school more effectively serve our students. With community support, we have created opportunities for our students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

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

At Quail Run Elementary School, we believe that teachers are our most valuable resource which can impact student achievement and growth, and they must feel adequately trained and prepared to take on all of the many tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. This is one reason why we take such good care of our new and induction level teachers by assigning them a mentor and formally meeting with them quarterly. We assist those teachers with scheduling peer observations so that they can learn from more experienced educators. We also make sure to train new teachers on all of the curriculum resources they are expected to use. This especially includes our Fountas and Pinnell literacy classroom components and knowing how to conduct a formal running record to assess a child's reading level.

In addition to supporting new teachers, administrators make it a priority to retain our amazing, highly-qualified staff. We attend grade level professional learning team meetings to offer support and guidance in the PLC process as well as lead teachers through the process of analyzing achievement data. We look at this data through multiple lenses; school-wide, grade level, and the individual student. We assist teachers with understanding various data reports and knowing how to use the achievement data in a timely and effective way that has a positive impact on student growth.

At QRES, we believe in the importance of supporting each teacher's professional journey as they learn and grow in their craft. One way that we do this is through utilizing book studies for professional development. We let teachers guide us in choosing instructional topics to study as we lean into their expressed classroom needs as well as what the most current student data reveals. This school year, we had multiple teachers express a need for an increased competency with phonics instruction. Our achievement data supported this need as well. Because of this, we decided to narrow in on phonics instruction for our book study. All teachers were provided with a copy of Wiley Blevins' book *Phonics A to Z*, and teacher leaders have been presenting information and leading discussions on assigned reading.

When teachers come to our administrative staff with a request for software or an instructional resource, we do our best to make it work. We know that if teachers feel supported and have the resources they need, we are putting them in a position to be successful. That success translates into a healthy and professional school culture.

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

Our philosophy on leadership is grounded in the idea of building capacity through collective responsibility. We believe collaboration is the driving force to our decision making and problem solving. To help move our students academically, our administrators meet with the grade levels weekly during their Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings. During the PLT, the teachers create common formative assessment (CFA) and analyze data to determine next steps for remediation and enrichment. The teachers determine how they will group the students for Target Time which is an academic opportunity time for forty minutes each day. Each PLC is led by a teacher who serves on the school's Guiding Coalition. The Guiding Coalition meets with the administrators each month to discuss next steps for the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process. In addition, the intervention team and administrators meet with each grade level monthly to review intervention data while also revising and creating academic and behavior plans as needed.

To support our students emotionally and socially, our administrators meet with the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team monthly. The team looks at the behavior data to determine if additional teaching is needed for the schoolwide behavior expectations. For example, after looking at the

behavior data, the team decided the students needed to review the behavior matrix regarding being respectful. The teachers were asked to reteach the respect lessons to their homeroom classes to help reinforce the schoolwide expectations. Also, the team realized mentorship was needed for students who had multiple behavior referrals. The team assigned a mentor for each student and created a check-in, check-out system of accountability to help track the progress of each student's behavior.

We found the marriage of building leadership with teacher leadership helped our school serve and support the students more effectively. Our leaders lead with a servant mentality where we honor our teachers and work hard to serve them in all areas. We believe our teachers need to know they are appreciated and supported. Each month we recognize a Teacher and Support Professional. This award continues to celebrate the great work of our employees.

Our mission is to be a community where we grow together and love learning; therefore, our leaders live the mission and lead by example. We strive to learn more so we can grow as leaders. We work hard to build a community of support and collaboration, because when we work together, we can create learning environments where our students enjoy learning and excel academically.

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

We are thankful to have a diverse student population that represents seven languages outside of English. Our English as a Second Language (ESOL) Program, specifically assesses our students' English proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking according to the WIDA standards. The student's WIDA score helps the teacher identify the strengths and weaknesses of each ESOL student while differentiating the lessons to meet their needs. We recently hosted a parent night for our ESOL parents on the topic of anxiety. During our parent nights, we have interpreters present to guarantee parents can fully participate in the experience.

We also have a large population of students with exceptionalities. Our school has three interrelated teachers and two speech teachers that serve our students in an inclusive and self-contained environment. Additional supports include three Occupational Therapists and behavior specialists who support our school from the county. One of the county Autism teachers comes to our school once a week to help improve the social skills of our students with Autism. In addition to our interrelated student population, we have one transition Prekindergarten class, two Transition Kindergarten classes, and one Severe and Profound class. To help build empathy towards those students with special needs, our students in fourth and fifth grade join the Partner's Club. The students in this club serve as mentors and guides for our students with special needs. The Partner's Club spreads awareness on the importance of everyone accepting and appreciating the differences of others.

In addition, we have a large population of Gifted and Talented Students (GTE). Each student identified as GTE, is served by a teacher with the GTE certification. In addition, those students are placed in classrooms where they can be challenged by like-minded students. Our goal at Quail Run Elementary is to help all students embrace their weaknesses while embellishing on their strengths. We use assessment and behavior data to help us ensure ALL students are growing as learners and as individuals.

Finally, our school has a diverse population of ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, and family dynamics. We encourage tolerance and kindness through our character word of the week celebration, Positive Behaviors and Supports expectations, and Second Step social and emotional learning curriculum. In addition, each teacher does interactive read alouds with books that are culturally diverse. We believe true culturally responsive teaching must be modeled and explicitly taught. Our students learn through social stories and real-life examples, how it is okay to be different, and more importantly, that is what makes us special.

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

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So many different qualities make Quail Run Elementary a successful school, but ONE word to sum it all up is culture. QRES radiates a positive school culture that you can almost feel as you walk through the front doors. From the front office staff to the custodians to the teachers, students, and administrators, all staff members exude happiness and joy because this is such an amazing place to work. We greet everyone who walks into our building with a smile and excellent customer service.

Part of what makes our culture so special is the “all means all” attitude when it comes to serving students and helping them become successful people. We truly want students to be able to live out our vision statement and find life-long learning success. We want them to be better versions of themselves from when they started here to when they graduate fifth grade and move into the rest of their educational journey. This trait gives our school an excellent reputation in the community, and parents have such positive things to say about us because of how well we care for and love their children. Sometimes this “all means all” mentality involves a sacrifice on the part of the teacher or administrator. It might mean stepping in to assist a special needs student, giving up our lunch break to eat and play games with a student who needs a break from the classroom, or working with some students from across the hall to master a certain math skill during our planning or our dismissal time. We tell teachers all the time that these kids are not yours or mine, rather they are ours. We simply do what is best for students, all the time, whatever it takes.

Our culture here is also one that is family oriented. Our staff members may not be blood, but we treat everyone who works here as if they are a part of our family. This might look like a baby shower or a wedding shower, a co-worker who writes last minute lesson plans for a sick teacher friend or sending flowers for lost loved ones or other major life events. We are teachers, paraprofessionals, office workers, counselors, administrators, lunchroom workers, custodians, and med techs, but mostly we are family. That ability to see everyone for the person they are and to value them as wives, husbands, moms, grandmothers, etc. makes our school the best place to serve others while making a difference.