

***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) [X] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 114 West Lexington  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Gorman State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 76454-0008

County Eastland County

Telephone (254) 734-3171 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL <https://www.gormanisd.net/> E-mail [mwinter@gormanisd.net](mailto:mwinter@gormanisd.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\* Mr. Mike Winter E-mail [mwinter@gormanisd.net](mailto:mwinter@gormanisd.net)  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Gorman Independent School District Tel. (254) 734-3171

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 Mr. Eldon Straw  
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
1 Middle/Junior high schools  
1 High schools  
0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	10
K	16
1	14
2	13
3	19
4	20
5	13
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	105

\*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
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 46 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 51 % White
  - 1 % 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: 16%

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

Due to the low socio-economic status of the majority of our families, Maxfield elementary has an elevated mobility rate due to parents who move in and out of the district to reside with family until they find employment elsewhere. Once employment is found, parents tend to transfers their children to the district where they work because they cannot afford commuting.

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	118
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.16
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

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

Spanish, Nepali

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9 %  
9 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 77 %

Total number students who qualify: 81

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 19 %  
Total number of students served 20

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>4</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 10 %  
Total number of students served: 11

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

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.	9
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
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 12:1

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	95%	96%	96%	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.

The mission of Gorman ISD is to provide the best educational program to meet the individual needs of all students, assuring them the opportunity to become responsible, productive citizens.

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

<https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=417&code=FB#legalTabContent>

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

Maxfield Elementary is a public school.

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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The Maxfield Elementary campus vision is "All children can learn, but not all children learn the same way. Children learn best in safe, caring, and motivational environments and classrooms. Children learn best when they actively participate in the process of learning. Children deserve access to quality curriculum and technology taught by high quality teachers. The education of all children is the responsibility of the family, the community, and the school district."

Gorman ISD is geographically located in a rural farming and ranching community with a population of under a thousand residents. Gorman ISD has a genuine small-town feel; most families know one another, and their children attend Maxfield Elementary together. As well, many of the teachers at Maxfield are community residents and civically involved in local organizations and events. The philosophy of "it takes a village to raise a child" holds true for Maxfield Elementary and its families, as there is a familial atmosphere amongst teachers, staff, and students. Our current enrollment is 108 students with a population of mostly economically disadvantaged which allows us the opportunity to be a Title I campus. Being a Title I campus has given us the opportunity to provide resources and staff members for our students which has played a vital role in the success of our campus and students.

Staff at Maxfield Elementary use a variety of strategies to encourage, challenge and develop all students to reach their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. We believe in motivating students by celebrating their successes. At the end of each grading period, we recognize students for their hard work at a school-wide assembly. Our campus mascot is the panther; students receive Panther Bucks every six weeks for individual successes and exceeding expectations. Students may redeem their Panther Bucks at the end of the six weeks at a school store provided by the PTO (parent-teacher organization) to purchase items such as footballs, notepads, lunch with the principal, pencils, and small toys. The PTO also provides funds for field trips, rewards, and experiences throughout the year, such as holiday celebrations and support of academic events. Another way that we have celebrated student success this year is through earning a reward period with a jump house. Students can earn the privilege of participating through recognition of attendance, honor roll, or other special academic honors. To help students reach their full potential and develop leadership skills, we have also involved our students in fourth and fifth grade in the student council. These students have daily responsibilities on the campus, including assisting with morning announcements, leading the pledge of allegiance, and raising of the flags.

Maxfield Elementary provides a variety of programs and utilizes innovative techniques for our rural community. This contributes to our campus's uniqueness. We have implemented new curriculums in both reading and math for our academic areas of focus. The innovative and updated math curriculum includes stem challenges. The reading curriculum incorporates the science of reading. Both programs are evidence-based and support students' fundamental skills to encourage lifelong learners. Our local stakeholders are an essential part of our educational community. A local volunteer provides one of our most successful programs that promotes character skills to all grade levels with singing, role-play, and fun activities. The program reinforces positive skills and through a fun and interactive weekly activities. Another program that has been beneficial and highly utilized by our students is our Ben Carson Reading Room. Dr. Ben Carson is a proud supporter of our campus and provides a room for all our students to read in a relaxing and fun environment. We are fortunate to have weekly volunteers from our community share their time in the reading room. These volunteers monitor the reading room and share their love of reading and the arts with our students. One volunteer is a concert violinist who often shares about her travels and music career during her volunteer time. Another volunteer is an author who shares stories. Other volunteers love to read stories to our younger students. Our school serves a large population of students with low socioeconomic status. This limits parents' funds for their children's education and often limits the educational background needed to support their children. Parents are encouraged to join our campus in various ways, such as volunteering, participating in class parties, family nights, and the PTO.

Our campus is unique because administrators, faculty, and staff work diligently to communicate and establish positive relationships with our parents, students, and co-workers, which ultimately will foster and encourage student achievement. There is a genuine love within our campus, students, and families and our

staff devotes time and effort to establishing these relationships that positively affect our school's culture. We attribute our success as a campus to the relationships and confidence that exists with our Board of Trustees, administration, faculty and learning community stakeholders.

## **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:**

The Reading/English Language Arts (ELAR) department on our campus held vertical alignment meetings with the Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade teachers. The purpose of the meetings was to conduct conversations to align instruction between the grade levels in order to effectively prevent learning loss after the COVID-19 pandemic break. The results of these meetings led to the adoption of a reading curriculum that provides evidence-based phonics instruction. A representative from the company came to our district and provided training to support our teachers in facilitating phonics instruction. The addition of this curriculum provided tools to promote high-quality foundational literacy skills to our students. Because our ELAR teachers are using this program with fidelity, we have filled the gaps created during the pandemic and created strength in our reading data that surpasses the state averages. Our kindergarten through third grade classrooms are using this program in whole-group instruction.

Our fourth and fifth grade ELAR classes use the program to help fill phonics deficiency gaps. In addition to the newly-adopted curriculum, all grade levels use a state-adopted curriculum supporting the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Depending on each classroom's age group and specific student needs, this curriculum is delivered through whole-group or small-group instruction, and learning centers.

All ELAR teachers also use a vertically aligned YAG (Year At Glance) scope and sequence document that ensures that all grade-level TEKS are covered by the school year's end. The YAG provides that each teacher is teaching the required TEKS with the expected rigor and ensures that no standard is missed and instructional gaps are not unintentionally created. In addition, it has allowed teachers to better understand their students' expected knowledge base upon entering a new school year. The use of the YAG and conversations during departmental meetings has shed light on areas of weakness and strength in our planning, allowing the teachers to provide high-quality instruction.

The English Language Arts and Reading department also implemented new technology into the classroom. Daily assignments and assessments via technology platforms allow our students to prepare for state testing and the transition of expectations to the modern-day workplace. The platform has enabled teachers to create differentiated assignments to meet individual student needs. Typing assignments, projects, tests, and study guides are available online and used routinely in instruction. The use of technology in the classroom has also increased the amount of time students are actively on task. The interactive nature of the assignments and platforms facilitates student attention and engagement. For example, the third grade classroom uses a technology program for bell ringers and exit tickets to have concrete data to guide instruction.

The ELAR department has also implemented a campus-wide testing program to provide consistent data for planning instruction. Each grade level administers a beginning, middle, and end-of-year diagnostic test. The diagnostic data has allowed the teachers to track student progress and enabled staff to have stable and compatible data that provides a clear picture of the student's learning path over several years. This assessment platform shows gaps, strengths, and weaknesses in achievement and growth.

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

Maxfield Elementary has adopted a campus-wide math curriculum utilized in kindergarten through fifth grade. This curriculum provides students with multiple learning opportunities that address the needs of all learning styles. The math curriculum provides the classroom teachers with numerous lessons and additional supplemental resources per grade level. Teachers are provided with a selection of math materials that can be used to differentiate instruction for individual student needs. Resources are intentionally designed to spiral information for our students throughout the entire year. The repetition, review and spiraling of math content has been beneficial to students on all learning levels.

To address the specific needs of our struggling learners, teachers have access to additional components in the curriculum, such as an "Intervention" tab. Under this tab, teachers can find lessons scaffolded for their students who need help to master the on-grade level standards. These lessons include manipulatives that can be printed and used to supplement the students' learning. The manipulatives help reinforce skills and help to create a highly engaging environment for all learners. Additional intervention resources include games to help students review and practice skills learned earlier in the year. The increased level of participation with this new curriculum has led to a higher level of math proficiency for our students because they are more fully engaged through each lesson.

Accelerated learners are supported by components found within the curriculum, such as an "Acceleration" option. Under this tab, teachers can find lessons that engage students in higher-order thinking concepts and some cross-curricular components. These lessons connect to real-world situations as well. Another included feature enables students to create their own math lessons, allowing their creative side to shine. The math department strives to push all our students to reach individual goals and to achieve annual growth and progress; the components of this curriculum have genuinely allowed us to challenge our gifted students.

Technology is incorporated in math instruction through the use of supplemental resources and has become a highly effective tool in the classroom. The technology components focus on each student's individual needs. For example, the curriculum includes a diagnostic assessment that allows teachers to become more specific in planning for student learning. The data from the diagnostic assessment also supports the teacher in identifying specific TEKS and skills that each student needs to develop and suggests an accompanying curriculum activity. These tools have increased teacher proficiency in differentiating lessons for all students.

In addition to the diagnostic assessments, the campus uses curriculum-based assessments to determine student mastery of the content that has been taught during each six weeks. Data from this assessment allows teachers to plan for reteach opportunities. During weekly PLC meetings, the math department teachers utilize data from these multiple testing systems to track student progress and to monitor students' needs. These systems identify students' strengths and weaknesses. The data gained through these progress monitoring systems is an effective tool to navigate through individual students' needs regarding intervention or extensions of the curricular standards that have been taught.

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

Maxfield Elementary realizes the importance of real-world, hands-on learning opportunities and differentiated instruction in science. In today's world, engineering and math have become prominent in the job industry and we have a curriculum that provides students with skills needed to meet these needs. Inquiry-based lessons aligned to the TEKS allow students to engage in constructive and concise units of instruction that overlap and develop reasoning skills. Students collect and organize qualitative and quantitative data with precision and accuracy through engaging in STEM investigations and experiments. Teachers and students collaborate to use the data to mimic real-world scientists. Students generate tables, charts, and graphs to organize and represent the data collected. Students answer probing questions about the data and its patterns to demonstrate an understanding of the concept.

Independent projects and reports are completed to promote family involvement and extend the learning of various concepts. The science department is working to develop cross-curricular connections. Vocabulary and reading content skills are reinforced and enriched through books and expository texts extending the science concepts. Technology is utilized through interaction with virtual labs, readers, and videos in stations and group instruction. Supplemental software programs are also used independently by students to review and reinforce the skills taught for each TEKS. Writing and illustration opportunities are incorporated into each unit of study as appropriate for each grade level. Open-ended and essay questions are included on all assessments at higher grade levels. Each unit of study begins with a pre-assessment to determine prior knowledge of concepts and vocabulary. A short progress monitoring assessment is administered midway through the unit to check for understanding. Teachers also conduct daily demonstrations of learning through aggressive monitoring during independent practice and with exit tickets. A formative assessment is shown after each unit, followed by specific feedback to each student and the tracking of student progress.

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

Teachers meet the required Social Studies standards using a state adopted curriculum that includes an online and printed newspaper with colorful illustrations and film clips that give the students an insight into historical events. Teachers present students with numerous experiences to connect with historical, civic, community, and global standards. During instruction, students read articles at their grade level and complete learning activities that deepen their understanding of the lesson material. The TEKS are explicitly taught to challenge and drive the students through teamwork and self-directed learning. Technology resources allow the students to tap into the current events happening worldwide and provide relevance to learning. Teachers intentionally present questions regarding History in a variety of ways for the students to answer. Teachers include both short-answer and multiple-choice questions to check for understanding. These curricular resources also provide teachers with on-grade-level vocabulary words and games aligned with the TEKS. Students learn about communities and cultures near and far. The majority of students in Gorman ISD have not had the opportunity to travel and visit many of the places in Texas with historical significance, much less places across our country and the world. This adds to the significant role that Social Studies instruction plays on our campus. In order to provide multiple opportunities for students to learn about and relate to history, teachers purposefully integrate Reading Language Arts and Social Studies content to create cross-curricular connections for students. Teachers have also determined that critical thinking skills will be the focus of studying history in all grades. Students critically examine primary and secondary sources, using inquiry and sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, and corroborating. These skills and learning opportunities lead students toward the ability to discern and make informed decisions. It is our ultimate goal at Maxfield to prepare our students to be productive citizens in our community and the world.

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

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

The Pre-Kindergarten curriculum includes a campus-adopted curriculum with a technology component. The Kindergarten Readiness launchpad is organized in strands. The instructional vocabulary strand focuses on phonological and phonemic awareness. These are introduced through playful instruction, using vocabulary and images familiar to most young children. The phonological awareness strand focuses on blending, segmenting, and manipulating words in a sentence, compound words, multisyllabic words, and onset-rime. This strand also focuses on rhyming. The phonemic awareness strand is the understanding that spoken words are made of individual speech sounds, or phonemes, that can be combined in different sequences to create new words. Alphabet knowledge is the understanding that spoken words are composed of individual sounds and that printed letters represent those sounds. This skill is critical to their future reading success. The concepts of print strand encompass letters, words, and sentences in isolation and within the corresponding text. Pre-Kindergarten also uses a progress monitoring platform to gather student data. The platform provides beginning, middle, and end-of-year testing to gather data to help meet their individual needs. In addition, it provides reports for teachers and parents to monitor each child's progress. This report helps to determine the at-risk students, students requiring monitoring and students who are on track and need more challenging assignments. Our curriculum is provided by the same company that does our progress monitoring. This curriculum includes scope and sequence for 35 weeks of instruction and 10 Theme Guides. This program is helpful because it covers all core curriculums and provides daily playful and purposeful experiences across the whole group, small group, and center time. The different lessons address all students, including the special needs population and English Language Learners. Technology is incorporated to reinforce letter knowledge, sounds, and math skills ranging from number counting, shapes, and patterns, to basic facts.

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

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

The Fine Arts music program is extended to 4th and 5th-grade students which prepares our students for a well-rounded education. Students use various means of technology as they learn how to read and play music, such as metronomes and tuners. Technology is used to expose students to music professionals playing and conducting to give students a comprehensive range of experiences they would not otherwise have in a district our size. Students also work on solos through an internet-based platform to help them play their instruments independently with the piano as an accompaniment. In addition to learning to play instruments, students are trained to sight read, designed to help them understand pitch concepts.

Music provides solid cross-curricular connections for students. For example, students understand the relationship between music and science while measuring sound waves. Students learn foreign languages through music notations in Italian. For example, *prestissimo* (fast), and *adagio* (slow). Another cross-curricular connection is in math because time signatures deal with fractions.

Although enrolling 4th-grade students into a music class is frequently controversial, our program has succeeded, including our 4th-grade students. Starting these students on instruments at an early age gives students time to perfect the craft and develop a love for music.

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

Our physical education program aims to give individuals basic knowledge of maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle. Physical education introduces students to different aspects of team-oriented and individual physical activities that foster life-long fitness wellness. The students will learn team-building skills, game strategies, fundamentals, equipment manipulation, and the rules of several physical activities. Our elementary physical education teacher has a unique opportunity to foster physical skill and social skill development while the students are having a lot of fun. The class format for our physical education classes is conducted as follows: Warm-Up (5-10 minutes), Learning Targets (2-5 minutes), Main Activity (15 minutes), Formative Assessment (1-2 minutes) for a total time of 30 minutes.

During this time, students participate in various games in the classroom in large and small groups. Through games, students can learn physical skills that will help them succeed in sports, fitness, and general health in their future years. Furthermore, games that require teamwork, strategy, and cooperation allow students to practice social skills and decision-making. Our campus administers a fitness assessment for students in April to measure fitness growth. The test measures aerobic capacity, muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, and body composition and gives students and parents a baseline of students' physical fitness levels.

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

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

Technology is incorporated into the classroom during whole group and individualized instruction. Our campus utilizes supplemental technological resources such as math practice, interactive practices, and other skill-based programs. We utilize multiple testing systems to track student progress and monitor students' needs. In addition, technology allows teachers to navigate the information and decide which students need intervention or extension activities. Our campus also uses technology for writing assistance and to teach valuable technology skills to our students. Programs to teach students appropriate keyboarding skills, word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software, are prepared to help students achieve educational success. The computer lab is also open for online testing and classroom lessons. All grade levels, Kindergarten through the Fifth Grade have a designated computer lab and a library/ media room schedule. Each class alternates between computer lab and library media room time every other day, resulting in a plan of two days a week for each category. The purpose of the Library/Media room is to check out books and do online testing if needed. The purpose and goal of the computer lab are to help reinforce what the students are learning in their other subject areas, which consist of but are not limited to mathematics, reading, writing, and language arts.

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

Other programs that we are incorporating on our campus are SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) activities. A few examples of our implementation include a slide show presented in grades Pre-K through 5th grade every morning that provides a word of the day and a small activity that shows how to incorporate that word into their daily lives. Words like fairness, responsibility, trust, and diligence are highlighted and discussed with students. We also have a community member that provides character traits twice a week with songs, stories, and role-playing activities for our whole campus. Children participate in a puppet show that teaches the weekly lesson. Examples of topics highlighted are being honest, obeying parents, and being a good friend. Once a week, a team of leaders from an outside organization comes to our campus to speak. The guest speakers share leadership skills, advice, and interactive activities that help students effectively say no to drug use and overcome peer pressure. After the presentation from these speakers, students participate in activities and group discussions to reinforce the skill or trait that is learned. Puppet shows, songs, role playing and coloring activities for lower grade levels are all used as a follow-up to these weekly lessons.

## **3. Academic Supports**

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

Academic supports are utilized to meet the needs of students who show gaps through assessment data. Areas of concern are pinpointed at beginning, middle, and end of the year testing sessions. After each testing session, teachers and MTSS (multi-tier support system) specialists meet to discuss each student. Students' specific scores are used to identify students for further assistance during WIN (What I Need) time, flex time, or the MTSS program pull-out. Also, any students who show signs of problems, regardless of testing outcomes, are discussed. The best placement for WIN time is then discussed and implemented. WIN time is used daily in each grade. Students then work in small groups in the classroom or are pulled out by support staff to remediate particular skill deficit areas. Multiple learning platforms supplement the regular reading curriculum and differentiate instruction for all students. Because of the four-day school week, the Friday flex time brings in struggling students for additional instruction. On a flex day, teaching is personalized for each student, depending on specific needs. This provides students instant feedback and opportunities to build their understanding.

During MTSS pull-out time for math and reading, an alternative curriculum is used to teach grade-level concepts and any concepts missed in previous grades. MTSS uses constant monitoring through skills checklists, worksheets, observations, etc., to show growth or if changes need to be made. Student confidence is built through repetition and reinforcement strategies. Teaching student's strategies helps develop their confidence to succeed. Each student is evaluated for progress during teacher conferences three times per year. This evaluation will determine if students remain in MTSS or are further tested for services. By working with students on their level, at their speed, we strive to have a solid foundation built that will scaffold their future success.

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

At Maxfield Elementary, our goal is to address the diverse needs of all students including our gifted learners and students performing above grade level. Our gifted and talented coordinator and administrator are trained with 30 hours of nature and need and receive a six-hour update annually. This allows both to be abreast of new developments. Our district procedures are that all students are eligible to be referred for testing students by a parent or a teacher for a gifted and talented program. Students in special populations will be given the same opportunities to be recommended for the gifted and talented program. Students in kindergarten will all have a prescreening test for academic referrer if they show in the 90% above grade level. After the initial referral, students are then tested to determine if they meet the program qualifications. The campus offers a pull out program which provides identified students the opportunity to work with peers who also excel in specific learning areas. Our program is designed to foster students' ability to think critically and to excel in their specific areas of talent. Students will participate in the curriculum and complete at least one curriculum task or project-based learning experience over the school year. These projects are designed so that students can think beyond the traditional classroom environment. Examples of projects that have been

used in previous years include creating a breakout session (escape room) and conducting research on areas of student interests. Students have also designed and built tiny houses, shoes, and roller coasters. Students have been given the opportunity to work on the campus newspaper and participate in fun experiments like getting a class to fit through a notecard. We even have students who have participated in projects that spanned several years which involved the students in building a computer and learning basic coding.

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

Maxfield Elementary is staffed with two full-time Special Education teachers. One teacher and two certified aides service the students within the Life Skills/Self-Contained classroom and accompany them to their general education classes. One teacher and one certified aide service the resource students. Special education services include teacher collaboration, individualized accommodations, support for mainstream students, resource services, and services provided to students who need a modified curriculum and instruction. Homebound services will be provided for special education students when needed. The local educational cooperative offers additional services (e.g., speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy) not provided by the district.

Students go through a referral process before receiving services. A child is referred for evaluation when a faculty member or parent suspects a child has a disability. The following documentation is collected from previous years, current formative testing, MTSS (response to intervention) records, and classroom information. A diagnostician reviews documentation in the referral packet and conducts the appropriate evaluations to determine if the student requires specially designed instruction or does not qualify for services. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee members go over current educational data, make recommendations for instructional arrangements or changes, update student goals, and review accommodations and support at least annually.

General and special education teachers work closely together to provide instruction that is still rigorous while using modifications and accommodations. In addition, special education students take formative assessments alongside their peers at least three times per school year.

Special education teachers participate in training on best teaching practices, documentation of student progress, and writing appropriate student goals. Students with special needs are offered the same services and activities as their peers. Special education students also participate in field trips specific to students with special needs.

Communication with families is ongoing through formal and informal teacher conferences, interim progress reports, report cards, and IEP progress reports.

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

Maxfield Elementary follows the guidelines required by Texas Education Code and Texas Administrative Code to ensure adequate services for Emergent Bilingual students. Our goal is for our Emergent Bilingual students to become proficient in English regarding listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains through integrating second language acquisition methods addressing the English Language Proficiency Standards in our ESL program. Maxfield Elementary monitors the ESL program to help students identified as Emergent Bilingual through English instruction by an ESL-certified teacher knowledgeable of second language acquisition progress. Currently, we have less than 10 students who qualify as ESL students. Each student is supported in the general education classroom with teacher assistance, English/Spanish dictionaries, resource folders with content support for them to access daily. Flipbooks, graphic organizers, and online computer programs are effective tools students use to help build the gap with language and communication skills. MTSS is offered for students needing assistance and support to bridge educational gaps. A priority/requirement for Maxfield Elementary is for all ELAR teachers to be ESL-certified to assist Emergent Bilingual students in their academic progress. Each year, an evaluation is conducted to review staffing credentials and the annual process of students' language acquisition and education gaps. Our Title III representative makes a crucial effort to communicate effectively with parents of Emergent Bilingual students to advocate by providing parent, family, and community engagement opportunities. Maxfield

Elementary recognizes students' first language as a cultural asset in helping teachers design culturally responsive teaching and learning. Families are encouraged to value their first language as an asset to build literacy skills for family engagement. Teachers assist students in integrating literacy skills to make connections with content. The LPAC (Limited Partner Advisory Committee) keeps track of Emergent Bilingual progress toward the attainment of second language acquisition, student assessments, or any academic need that needs to be communicated with parents regarding progress.

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

Maxfield elementary has few students who fall into this category, however, tutorials are available to all special populations during the regular school day and before or after school. Students are invited to attend Flex Fridays for two hours to work in small groups with teachers to receive additional, targeted assistance to help bridge educational gaps. House Bill 4545 requires this for students who have not met STAAR.

We do provide a literacy committee that makes early identification of dyslexia or related reading disorders. The literacy committee includes knowledgeable professionals about the reading process, dyslexia characteristics, dyslexia instruction, assessment administration, and the interpretation of the collected data. The campus administers early reading instruments in kindergarten, first and second grades. Students are determined to be at risk for dyslexia and reading difficulties based on reading instrument results determined by the literacy team and dyslexia teacher. In that case, the student's parents are notified. Currently, an accelerated, intensive scientifically based reading program that appropriately addresses students' reading difficulties is implemented individually or in small groups by persons knowledgeable about the reading process and dyslexia and dyslexia instruction. Any parent or guardian may refer students to be tested for dyslexia or related disorders. The ARD committee then determines the student's instructional needs for reading, and if appropriately met within special education, the Individualized Education Program must include appropriate dyslexia instruction. This process ensures students are provided with an individualized instructional program that includes simultaneous, multisensory, systematic, cumulative, explicit, and diagnostic teaching to automaticity, synthetic, and analytic instruction. The literacy team assesses routine monitoring of students with reading disabilities with quantitative and qualitative data or evidence to support student progress and achievement.

Gorman ISD provides identification, intervention, and support to all students classified as at-risk for dyslexia or any reading disability at the earliest and appropriate time to bridge learning gaps in the literacy community.

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

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

Throughout the year, students are recognized in many ways for their success and growth, even if the development is minimal. For example, students who met growth goals on our campus's middle-of-the-year assessment were given a glow dance party. They enjoyed having the opportunity to reflect on all they have accomplished in an exciting and fun way with their peers. Creating a positive school climate has many facets. Students are welcomed at the door with smiling faces and good morning greetings from a staff member each morning. The principal also stops by the classrooms with encouraging words for the day. Teachers and paraprofessionals are building a positive environment by getting to know the students and building relationships with them. Teachers use students' interest in creating lesson plans to create excitement and support. We celebrate students with several activities throughout the year. A few of those activities are honor roll and attendance awards, positive office referrals, growth parties, and daily success recognition. A fun example is how students get to ring the bell for making a 100 on a math quiz. We also like to bring in volunteers to show our students the different ways to succeed after high school. This approach to career readiness has created relevancy for our students. Examples include local farmers, authors, and virtual field trips to expose our students to the available opportunities. We celebrate students every month with a student of the month based on positive actions we observe. It doesn't always necessarily have to be just academics. We involve our families by having family nights, game days, "Come Read with Me" nights, and parties that allow students to show off their activities and progress. Teachers use data trackers and data walls that encourage students to take ownership of their learning and empower them to be more successful. The science curriculum in the upper grades provided hands-on learning through stem activities that the students seemed to enjoy. Panther Bucks have been very successful in encouraging our students. Students are awarded Panther Bucks for good behavior, attendance, and honor rolls. Students can use these bucks to purchase items from the parent and teacher organization store. Having purposefully personal relationships with parents, encouraging each child through kind words tempered with reasonable expectations, and celebrating their growth no matter how small has created a positive atmosphere. The students are taught in small groups where they are comfortable giving responses, and positive reinforcements are given to encourage learning.

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

Creating partnerships with parents and community members is essential in preparing students for success and reaching school improvement goals. Communication with parents has been opened through multiple communication channels including scholarly communication apps and approved social media. Messages are posted and sent to parent's multiple times a week, ensuring teachers make parent contacts no less than two times a week. Schedule information, lunch options, upcoming events and activities, and other opportunities within the community are shared with the families. In addition, a monthly newsletter notifying parents and community stakeholders about upcoming events, essential information, videos of connecting with their children at home, and other activity ideas is sent out via email. A partnership with community members who volunteer to read to our students in the Ben Carson Reading Room provides students interaction with the community members who celebrate reading. Parents are encouraged to share concerns, ideas, and other information with the principal during the monthly "Coffee with the Principal." The campus has worked to build a strong relationship with the parents who comprise the Parent Teacher Organization. This group of parents is frequently involved in all the happenings on campus, primarily through their support in providing awards to celebrate students who have shown academic achievement every six weeks. In addition, the PTO often indicates their support for the teachers and staff by providing luncheons, gifts, and treats during the school year. Another partnership is when individuals from the community begin fundraising to purchase all school supplies for all the students on the elementary campus. This school supplies community initiative has relieved parents of the stress of providing items and materials their children need to begin the school year. Our campus also partners with the local police departments to promote safety. Several local businesses also partner with our school by providing support to our teachers and students. Our local Farm Bureau Insurance agent has worked to build a solid relationship with the teachers and staff of their campus and frequently brings treats for the team. This agent and his office also support our students by providing awards for top

readers to help promote reading. Our local family practitioner also volunteers weekly on our campus to promote the value of learning and build relationships that will positively affect our students and their families. When strong relationships are created and maintained, it provides opportunities to meet the needs of students and staff to promote significant opportunities for success.

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

Teachers are valued and supported on our campus. During these PLC meetings, the teachers discuss positive moments that week and areas of needed improvement. The principal addresses any teacher needs and requests to the superintendent. During our data meetings, data showed an area of weakness in reading, and it was decided staff needed more support to help students learn to read. Therefore, we implemented a new curriculum. As the year progressed, we noticed during our PLC and data meetings our reading was not improving, so we reached out for more support. A representative from the company came to our campus and gave us a better understanding of the curriculum. A reading specialist from our service center also came to our campus. During the meeting with the reading specialist, we focused on data and incorporating stations into each classroom. Our service center has helped to implement effective lesson plans, evaluate student data, create effective and rigorous assessments, and identify teachable moments in observations. Teacher support goes further than work-related issues, and our campus is a supportive tribe that supports each other spiritually. Our school makes it easy for our teachers to improve themselves and gather new knowledge. The district has created a financial incentive of two yearly bonuses to help create an environment for teachers to feel more valued and supported. This support helps show teachers and staff that they are appreciated and an essential asset to the educational community.

In addition to money, the administrative team is working to provide time on professional development days to collaborate with peers to create growth. If we are optimistic and love what we do, students will feed off of that positivity and be positive too. We have a climate of mutual respect. We are cheered on to do our best, not only for our students but also for our professional development. If we do not know how to navigate a student, parent, technical issue, or another issue, we have the support of our team. Leadership leads by example, and has proven time and time again they are an integral part of the team. One teacher feels she has grown so much as a teacher while working on our campus that she cannot imagine going anywhere else. She verbalized that this opportunity and peace might not follow her if she was to transfer campuses or districts.

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

Maxfield Elementary is a rural campus with a single campus administrator. The principal serves the multifaceted roles of instructional leader, disciplinarian, and a mentor to staff and students. She fulfills the responsibilities of a campus leader with the support from the district superintendent. Together, they have established a collaborative leadership style with a foundation built upon establishing trust and building relationships with stakeholders.

The leadership philosophy at the campus is an open and honest collaboration between the staff and administration. In her role as an instructional leader, the campus principal serves as an instructional coach for her staff. Through her participation in the Texas Instructional Leadership program for the past three years, she has developed her skills to provide intentional coaching and support to her staff. She prioritizes time in the classrooms for observations and providing both written and verbal feedback to teachers surrounding instructional practices and classroom management. In addition, she has designated time to review lesson plans and provide coaching to teachers to ensure that they are meeting the rigor and content required in the standards. Through PLC meetings, the campus principal has trained teachers on the resources available for instruction and how to read data reports. The campus principal works diligently to establish an open and safe place for teachers to have input in campus decisions. The campus principal's relationships with teachers and auxiliary staff have enabled them to collaborate to disaggregate student data gathered from predetermined data collection processes to determine the best direction for data-driven instruction. Additionally, collaborative teacher groups on the campus have worked as a cohesive team to implement the new math, science, and reading curriculum. This collective leadership style has allowed campus administration and teachers to develop meaningful relationships that have helped shape the culture of the campus and its direction as well.

In addition, the campus principal utilizes monthly meetings with parent groups that allow them to honestly, openly, and respectfully share any concerns or questions they may have concerning the campus. The collaborative efforts with parents have improved campus and community relationships by allowing an open dialogue between the campus and the community. Rather than approaching the campus with mistrust or suspicion, parents know they are welcome and their thoughts and opinions are valued. This collaborative leadership style has created a culture shift on the campus from isolation to teamwork and cooperation. Parents and teachers can now work as a group, ultimately increasing student achievement.

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

Campus educators promote equality and inclusion within the classrooms and school by recognizing the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, families, and staff. In addition, educators strive to support and resist any preconceptions and cultural disunity.

Maxfield Elementary aims to nurture inclusion within the campus and classrooms to help celebrate the diversity of its students and their community. Our campus diligently encourages positive behavior to help reduce and extinguish racial and cultural prejudices. The campus incorporates multiple opportunities where diversity is encouraged to help support students from various backgrounds to help develop a sense of belonging.

Our teachers have worked to include culturally diverse topics into daily curricula and activities. Teachers are very conscious of the cultural backgrounds of the novels, and stories chosen for discussion. Teachers highlight and celebrate literature from many different backgrounds and cultures. Our social studies and ELAR teachers also incorporate celebrations of culture into their lessons. They were learning and celebrating many cultures' customs, festivals, foods, art, and architecture. Our campus did a Christmas Around the World celebration for our Christmas assembly. Each grade level chose a different country to research, celebrate and then perform a song or play from that country. Australia, Israel, and Mexico were a few of the countries highlighted in our program. Our students in the 2nd-5th grade are reading a book that celebrates a third grader of an ethnicity different from most of our student population. Reading this book has reinforced to our students that 3rd graders everywhere are talented and unique regardless of where they live or their ethnic background. Our students realize there is a striking sameness even among differences. One class adopted a theme song last year that highlighted people from three different cultures, who spoke other languages, coming together to sing of peace. The song became a valuable lesson for students to understand the impact of positive cultural diversity.

This campus encourages diversity and cultural awareness through its visitor programs. A volunteer visits the school every week and encourages students that they have the power to choose between right and wrong without letting their diverse backgrounds hinder their success. Other volunteer programs and the utilization of Red Ribbon Week help motivate their students to make appropriate, healthy, and acceptable choices that can affect their lives long term.

Maxfield Elementary is a Title 1 school district where students come from all cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and strive to ensure equity across the campus.

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

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Maxfield Elementary ensures student success and has become influential in facilitating this success by implementing weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. PLC meeting topics foster a growth mindset through targeted professional development, student data analysis, and collaboration opportunities. The targeted professional development was focused on better lesson plans, reading curriculum and math curriculum. Staff was provided with a better understanding of how to implement the resources provided. However, for our students to be successful, there is a deliberate focus on each student's growth and possibility. Teachers and administrators diligently analyze all students' weaknesses, strengths, and development. Students take a beginning, middle, and end-of-the-year test. Baseline data is developed for each student. During the weekly PLC meetings, this data is evaluated from different angles. For example, the teachers evaluate students' overall class data to identify class wide standards or areas of weakness. In addition to class wide data, the data is also used to identify individual weaknesses and strengths of students. The data is then used to support our students' individual growth plans.

Once the data is collected, assessed, and discussed during the meetings, Maxfield Elementary takes the following steps to ensure students' academic needs are met and student plans are implemented. In step one, teachers and staff use the data to direct the focus of Response to Intervention (RTI) planning, small group instruction, and the depth of rigor in lesson planning. For step two, the PLC meetings allow the teachers and teams to find deficiencies in vertical alignment that must be addressed. By disaggregating data in coordination with evaluating the TEKS covered in each grade level, academic instruction is enhanced for all students. Another aspect of the weekly PLC that has created excellence within our campus is the support it provides teachers. In the past, teachers have felt alone in the planning and evaluating process. Due to campus size, there is often only one grade-level teacher. The organized PLC meetings have created and provided a community where teachers can come together and discuss strengths and weaknesses of our campus and plans of action with their peers. These brainstorming sessions have helped to support teachers, so they do not feel alone in their challenges in the classroom. Another way the PLC supports teachers is by giving teachers a safe space to ask for help or share concerns. Our staff is committed to high-quality, individual instruction, and the supportive caring atmosphere helps to drive our academic excellence.