



## Cleburne County Elementary School

### Heflin, AL

"Learning and emotional support always starts at home."

#### **Describe the most successful activity your school has initiated to strengthen ties to your community.**

Cleburne County Elementary is an important part of the Heflin community. It isn't just one activity that strengthens our ties to our community. Teachers and staff take part in community sponsored events. We encourage students and parents to get involved. Community leaders visit our school every year and share important information with our students and staff. Local churches provide food and clothes for our students. They also help encourage teachers by serving a delicious meal for them right before school begins each year. Local business leaders help us get clothes and other needs for our students. We share what is going on in our school through social media and a website. We want everyone to know the great things that are going on in our school. We help our community and our community helps us. Together we learn and grow.

#### **Describe your school culture and explain changes you've taken to improve it.**

Classroom environment and student achievement go hand in hand. Cleburne Elementary makes sure that our students physical needs are met. We serve three meals each day to our students. Coats and shoes are provided for students who need them by a local business leader. A local church sends home bags of food for the weekend to those who need it. A business in a neighboring town donates bread to our students to take home. We learn Seven Habits for Healthy and Happy living. Each year we learn and review these habits. Teachers and staff model good citizenship each day. Our students know that they are loved and safe. We set high expectations for all students. We show our students they have value and something important to say. We encourage students to serve and help others. We celebrate successes and encourage pushing through when things get tough. It is all about developing the whole student.

#### **Describe how data is used to improve student achievement and inform decision making.**

Our principal collects data each week to study and review trends. Teachers meet with the principal in data meetings by grade to review data and make suggestions for next steps. A plan is put into place for remediation or acceleration. If data indicates a need for professional development, that is provided for the teachers. Book studies are used to improve classroom instruction as well. Grade level teams meet each week to review plans and make suggestions for activities to improve achievement. Our instructional specialist model lessons for teachers when needed.

#### **Describe the program or initiative that has had the greatest positive effect on student achievement, including closing achievement or opportunity gaps, if applicable.**

Grade level meetings and data meetings have made a big impact on instruction in our school. Teachers are encouraged to meet and share ideas. Teachers can model lessons for other teachers in their team. The instructional specialist is there to support teachers and teams. Data meetings help close gaps and improve student achievement by seeing what is working and what isn't. It helps teachers decide what to do next. It also helps them organize student information so that remediation

is more effective. Teachers feel supported and know where they can get help. Teachers also know where each student needs extra support. It helps insure that all students get the support they need.

**Explain how ESEA federal funds are used to support your improvement efforts.**

Our ESEA federal funds are used to help us achieve our goal of developing higher order thinking skills, leadership abilities, shared values, scholarship, equality, and unity in all of our students. Using federal funds, we are able to provide our students with chrome books, ipads, smart screens, and other technology. The funds are also used to purchase software for those devices. Books are purchased for our library and classrooms. Materials that will help our students in all subject areas are provided for teachers and students. We use some of our funds to take whole school field trips. Our students often do not leave our town, so we take them to neighboring towns to provide cultural experiences for them. Teachers use some of the funds for professional development so that classroom instruction will improve.

**Describe your philosophy of school change or improvement.**

School change and improvement is a community effort. It takes a team working together to make real improvement happen and last. Learning and emotional support always starts at home. Parents are their children's first and best teachers. The teachers and staff at our school must work together to support students while they are here as well as at home. We must be here to help parents and students. Students must come to school ready to learn. They must do their job and make learning a priority. Community involvement is a must to provide our students and parents with what they need to be successful. It takes all of us working together to make school improvement a reality.

**Identify the critical professional development activities you use to improve teaching and student learning.**

There are many critical professional development activities that we use to improve teaching and student learning. Cleburne County Elementary is an AMSTI (Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative) School. Our teachers have also had additive, multiplicative, and fractional o-gap training. Many of our teachers participate in Literacy professional development such as LETRS. Teachers participate in book studies in areas like phonics, best practices, and math.

**Describe specific programs in place to ensure that families are involved in the success of your school and students.**

Teachers schedule meeting with parents to keep them informed about the needs of their children. Teachers use messaging, phone calls, weekly folders and notes to inform parents of the academic, social, and emotional progress of their children. Parents can contact teachers any time to discuss concerns and needs that they have. Daily folders are sent home with homework and activities to practice at home. Facebook and a system wide app is used to keep parents informed of what is happening at school.

**What is the single most important factor in the success of your school that others could replicate?**

Cleburne County Elementary creates and maintains a positive learning environment and works to build positive relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. Teachers use formative assessments and data to drive instruction. Our school provides intervention, remediation, enrichment, and learning supports based on each student's needs. Our teachers unpack standards so that they teach what is expected of them and a bridge or connection is made to the next grade.

**What are your school's top two goals for the next year?**

Our school's goal for the next year is to develop readers in grades kindergarten through third grade so that students can read fluently and comprehend what they read. Another important goal is to help students improve math skills in all areas-fluency, fractions, geometry, word problems, and measurement.

## Stats

### CATEGORY 1 SELECTED IN 2020

Grades: pre k - 4

School Setting: rural

Town Population: 3,434

Student Enrollment: 313

Student Demographics:

Black/African American: 9%

White/Caucasian: 89%

Hispanic: 1%

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0%

Asian: 0%

Native American: 1%

Other: 0%

Teacher/Student Ratio: 1:18

% Reduced Lunch: 64%

% ELL Learners: 0%

Founded: 1960

PRINCIPAL:

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