

## 2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

### U.S. Department of Education

#### Cover Sheet

Type of School:  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12

Name of Principal Mrs. Rosemary Sheppard  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 9201 Bryant Farms Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Charlotte NC 28277-1634  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Mecklenburg School Code Number\* 600-406

Telephone (980) 343-5927 Fax (980) 343-5933

Website/URL [hawkridgeelem@cms.k12.nc.us](http://hawkridgeelem@cms.k12.nc.us) Email [r.sheppard@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:r.sheppard@cms.k12.nc.us)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. James L. Pughsley  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Tel. (980) 343-6270

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

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

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Joe I. White  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

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

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

**[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]**

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2004-2005 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. 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 the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. 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.
8. 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.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
 

<u>89</u>	Elementary schools
<u>31</u>	Middle schools
<u>NA</u>	Junior high schools
<u>17</u>	High schools
<u>11</u>	Other
<u>148</u>	TOTAL
  
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,101.00  
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,741.00

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
  - Urban or large central city
  - Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
  
4. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
NA If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
  
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>K</b>	120	108	<b>228</b>
<b>1</b>	109	88	<b>197</b>
<b>2</b>	119	89	<b>208</b>
<b>3</b>	111	97	<b>208</b>
<b>4</b>	105	85	<b>190</b>
<b>5</b>	86	87	<b>173</b>
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>			<b>1204</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- 76% White
  - 8% Black or African American
  - 5% Hispanic or Latino
  - 10% Asian/Pacific Islander
  - 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native

**100% Total**

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 4%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	21
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	13
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	976
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	0.035
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3.5

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 4%  
43 Total Number Limited English Proficient  
 Number of languages represented: 8  
 Specify languages: Chinese, French, German, Hmong, Indonesian, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6%

Total number students who qualify: 77

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 9%  
116 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>—</u> Deafness	<u>—</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>—</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>41</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>—</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>63</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>—</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>—</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>—</u> Multiple Disabilities	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>—</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>58</u>	<u>—</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>20</u>	<u>—</u>
Support staff	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>91</u>	<u>2</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 23:1
13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	96%	97%	96%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	17%	18%	12%	15%	20%

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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### **School Summary**

Hawk Ridge Elementary is located in a culturally diverse suburb of Charlotte, North Carolina. The school opened in 1999 with 543 students and has quickly expanded due to continuous growth to over 1,200 students. When we opened Hawk Ridge Elementary, our vision was to have a school based on best practices in education. The cornerstone for our success over the years has been continual focus on intentional, quality instruction. Our strong commitment to excellence and to meeting the needs of all students has been the key to our school's success despite extreme fluctuations in our student population. It is evident from our test results that teachers at Hawk Ridge are encouraged and supported in using best practices as they utilize assessment data, a variety of resources, and varied instructional strategies to teach the state curriculum standards.

Visitors at our school are quick to see evidence of our school vision—"To provide a unique and challenging learning environment that will enable students to become life-long learners and productive citizens in an ever-changing world." Teachers are considered our first learners and have enthusiastically participated in staff development opportunities to sharpen their knowledge and skills in utilizing current brain-based research, technology, cooperative learning strategies, *The Paideia Seminar*, higher-order questioning techniques, multiple intelligences, and product differentiation. Applying new learning to the classroom has resulted in students becoming active rather than passive learners. Students are observed working in cooperative learning groups, completing research on topics of their interest, utilizing technology on a daily basis, and using hands-on manipulative learning materials. Test data is routinely used to assess student performance and guide differentiation of instruction.

Another factor in our school's success has been an emphasis on creating a warm, caring environment for learning. Our focus on positive discipline and character education provides opportunities for students to develop self discipline and community responsibility. Weekly class meetings encourage students to compliment each other and problem solve together on classroom concerns. One character trait is studied each month during the school year. Information about the monthly character trait is communicated in school newsletters and on the morning news broadcasts. Our focus on character education is enhanced by our "Citizen of the Month" program. Students who exemplify the character trait of the month are nominated by their peers and are recognized as model citizens. Emphasis on the importance of daily attendance, direct instruction on organizational skills, and high standards for quality work performance contributes to an overall positive, productive learning environment for all students.

Parents are also actively involved in the success of our school program. Throughout the day, parents serve as volunteers in the classrooms to help with tutoring and administrative tasks. An active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and School Leadership Team provide opportunities for parents to be involved in school events, committee activities, and in developing school policies. Parents are provided with many opportunities to strengthen their understanding of the school's curriculum through participation in parent workshops, seminars, conferences, and general PTA meetings that are held four times during the school year. PTA fundraisers are specifically used to support the additional purchase of instructional materials, playground equipment, and enrichment programs for students. Our PTA has adopted two other schools in our district since opening in 1999 to provide financial and leadership support as needed.

With a tradition of academic success, Hawk Ridge Elementary continues to be a model school for our community. A combination of high academic standards, a dedicated and professional staff, and strong parent involvement makes our school "A Place Where Children Soar."

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### **Assessment Data Summary:**

*North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests* in reading and math are administered each year in May to elementary students in grades 3-5. Results include both individual scale scores and achievement levels for performance. There are four achievement levels in North Carolina with each level consisting of a range of scale scores that vary by subject area and grade level. Achievement levels are I (Well Below Grade Level), II (Below Grade Level), III (At Grade Level), and IV (Well Above Grade Level). Students are expected to make a year's growth for each year of schooling. North Carolina's accountability model includes a school performance component based on the percentage of students scoring "at or above grade level" (Levels III & IV). All students, regardless of whether or not they meet enrollment or pre-test criteria, are included in the performance component.

The assessment information for Hawk Ridge demonstrates continuous progress towards meeting proficiency standards for all students in grades 3-5 in both reading and math. In addition, our test results indicate that we are closing the achievement gap and sustaining performance among our subgroup populations. Our greatest academic gains have occurred at the fourth grade level for both reading and math. At this grade level, our African American students have demonstrated a 15% growth in "at or above grade level" performance for reading over the last three years. In addition, our African American students have demonstrated a 10% performance improvement in fourth grade math for the same time period. Our test data also indicates a 10% performance improvement for the number of exceptional children scoring "at or above grade level" in fourth grade reading over the last three years and a 29% improvement over the last five years. At the third grade level, our African American students have increased performance by 15% over the last three years in math. Results indicate that we have made significant progress with moving all subgroups into the highest level of performance (Level IV) in both reading and math. As evidenced by the data, our strongest growth performance for all subgroups has been in the area of reading and in particular at the fourth grade level.

Information pertaining to the state assessment program may be found at the *North Carolina Department of Public Instruction* Web site: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/reportstats.html>.

### **Use of Assessment Data:**

Assessment data is used on a routine basis by our school to understand strengths and weaknesses of students in relationship to the state curriculum standards. As a school and by individual grade levels, we analyze our end-of-year performance to determine goals and strategies that will be incorporated into our *School Improvement Plan* based on our previous year's performance. Student performance on *North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests* is also used to chart individual growth expectations for the coming year.

A combination of daily, weekly, and quarterly assessment information is used at all grade levels for student placement in flexible groups for both reading and math. Flexible groups are formed early in the school year and monitored on a continuous basis as additional assessment information is gathered. Unit pre-tests that are aligned with curriculum objectives are also consistently used with other assessment data to align instruction with specific student needs for remediation or acceleration.

As lessons are delivered within the classrooms, teachers continue to monitor student understanding of objectives through frequent use of mini-assessments and teacher-created tests. These assessments guide the teachers in adjusting the pacing of curriculum objectives and assist in planning for remediation or enrichment opportunities for students. All students in grades 3-5 participate in system-wide quarterly assessments three times per year. These assessments are aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and use a similar format to the *North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests*. Teachers analyze the results of the quarterly assessments according to performance (mastery, partial-mastery, non-mastery) on specific objectives. This analysis enables teachers to delineate data to assess the academic strengths and

weaknesses of the entire grade level, specific classrooms, and individual students. Students who demonstrate academic weaknesses are provided with additional resources by way of before or after school tutoring, small group instruction, varied instructional materials, and increased technology support.

#### **Communication on Assessment Information:**

Our school-wide data and student performance are shared with parents, students, and the community in a variety of ways. Students and parents receive a copy of the student's individual *North Carolina Assessment Report* after being tested in May. The report provides a graph to illustrate how the student is performing in relationship to his/her peers at the school, system, and state levels for both reading and math. Individual scale scores and performance levels are shared on the report. In addition, performance on individual objectives is included on the report to give parents a more detailed understanding of their child's scores.

Individual school report cards published by the *North Carolina Department of Public Instruction* are issued each fall to all parents to promote understanding of how schools are performing in relationship to one another. School report cards are linked to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Web site for parent viewing of all schools within the system. School performance is also shared through our school Web site ([www.cms.k12.nc.us/allschools/hawkridge/index.html](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/allschools/hawkridge/index.html)), Principal's newsletters, and PTA newsletters.

Parents receive weekly communication on student performance through communication folders that are sent home each Monday. Student agendas are used in grades 2-5. Students record their homework on a daily basis and parents are required to initial the agendas each evening after checking homework assignments. Parents receive curriculum updates through individual teacher Web sites, teacher newsletters, and the School Messenger system.

Parent conferences are held at the end of the first quarter for all students and throughout the year for any students on Personalized Education Plans (PEP). These plans are written collaboratively by the teacher and the students' parents and include strategies designed to promote on grade-level performance. The PEP is dynamic in nature as it is updated regularly to reflect changes in students' growth and performance. PEP conferences provide teachers with opportunities to discuss individual student progress and to share additional support strategies that parents may use at home. Quarterly assessments are reviewed individually with students through one-on-one conferences. Students are encouraged to track their quarterly progress and establish goals for improvement. Mid-quarter progress reports and quarterly report cards provide specific information to parents concerning student classroom performance.

#### **Sharing Success with Others:**

Hawk Ridge Elementary has been recognized by our school system on many occasions for the outstanding performance of our students. As a result, we have had teachers, school administrators, and central office administration to visit our school and see first hand the practices that have been put in place to support and encourage student learning. Staff members have shared information at state and regional conferences in North Carolina. Our teachers, support staff, and administrators have conducted district-wide professional development training sessions on developing and implementing sound instructional strategies. Individual staff members have served as trainers for National Board Certification and the *North Carolina Teacher Academy*. Fellow educators frequently visit our teacher Web sites as a means to learn more about our instructional strategies, curriculum, and student performance. Our recognition as a Blue Ribbon School will be shared in a variety of ways with our school community. The local news media will be informed and involved in publicizing our recognition through local television stations and newspapers. Our school will also be recognized at a Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board meeting and featured on the school system's public information news station and Web site. At the annual "Closing the Gap" state conference sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Hawk Ridge will be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School and will share successful strategies with other schools in the state. Our Blue Ribbon recognition will be a distinction that will be made on all school communications.

## PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### **Comprehensive School Curriculum:**

Hawk Ridge Elementary follows the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* for each grade level. Content areas include literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, healthful living, music, visual arts, library/media, computer skills, and physical education.

Our literacy curriculum includes objectives for reading (cognition, interpretation, critical stance, and connections), writing, and spelling. Specific comprehension skills include point of view, comparing and contrasting, author's purpose, sequencing, cause and effect, main idea and details, classifying and categorizing information, plot elements, and literary genres. Our writing program utilizes a systematic process approach to the teaching of writing: prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, and publishing. Students are taught the necessary skills for writing that include focus, organization, elaboration/style, and conventions as they prepare for the *North Carolina Writing Assessment* at fourth grade. Literacy is considered the foundation for all instruction and is integrated in all content areas throughout the day.

The five strands incorporated in our state math curriculum are: numbers and operations, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability, and algebra. A special emphasis is placed on problem solving and critical thinking skills at each level. A spiral curriculum provides opportunities for students to experience extension and reinforcement of skills as they move through the K-5 curriculum. Rigorous standards for performance and outcomes are evident as students are immersed in higher-order questioning, hands-on learning experiences, and lessons founded in multiple intelligences.

Our science curriculum utilizes a hands-on, inquiry approach. Students learn the scientific process of identifying a purpose, formulating a hypothesis, conducting investigations, collecting data, making observations, and drawing conclusions. Students explore a variety of topics at each grade level: Kindergarten- My World; First Grade- Properties, Position & Motion, Earth Materials, and Animals; Second Grade- Weather, Sound, Changes, and Plants & Animals; Third Grade- Objects in the Sky, Heat & Light, and Plants & Soil; Fourth Grade- Simple Machines, Magnetism & Electricity, Rocks & Minerals, and Animal Adaptations; and Fifth Grade- Weather, Energy, Landforms, and Ecosystems. Science days are incorporated into the instructional program to ensure that students are provided with multiple opportunities to experience hands-on learning.

Our social studies content frameworks include communities, citizenship, individual identity, government, historic perspectives, geographic relationships, economics, global connections, and technological influences on society. Broad themes include the family, community, local government, North Carolina, the United States, Canada, and Latin America. Meaningful field trip experiences to historic locations, local businesses, plays, and museums supplement and enhance the social studies content for all students. In addition, cultural arts performances during the school year help students develop an appreciation for diversity and the arts. The Junior Achievement program is a component of the K-5 social studies curriculum and is facilitated by community and parent volunteers. In accordance with *Junior Achievement of the Central Carolinas*, the purpose of this program is “to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise, business, and economics to improve the quality of their lives.”

Instructional goals and objectives for music, visual arts, library/media, computer skills, and physical education are aligned by grade level to the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*. Students receive forty minutes of direct instruction weekly from a certified teacher in each of these areas. Curriculum integration and collaboration in planning is encouraged to further enhance student learning. Students participate in a variety of activities at our school to support appreciation of the arts: Young Authors' Contest, PTA Reflections Contest, Martin Luther King Art and Essay Contest, Fifth Grade Chorus, Morning News Broadcast, Puppet Club, Story Telling Club, Digital Story Telling, student grade level performances, *Arts Teach*, Student Newspaper Club, and productions of student-written operas.

**Reading Curriculum:**

Student growth in overall reading performance at Hawk Ridge Elementary can be attributed to our systematic, direct instructional strategies for the teaching of reading. Research-based reading strategies with an emphasis in the primary grades on phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, print awareness, and alphabetical principles are taught through direct instruction. This helps to ensure that students do not “fall through the cracks” due to a lack of prior knowledge. Our focus on phonics provides students with a strong foundation and the tools they need to read fluently. Explicit instruction in comprehension skills, as well as the use of decodable books and quality literature, provides a balanced approach to reading. Comprehension strategies including teacher “think-aloud”, making connections, summarizing, drawing conclusions, and making inferences are consistently incorporated in the delivery of direct reading instruction beginning at the kindergarten level. Students benefit from the consistent approaches, horizontally by grade level and vertically as they progress from one grade level to the next. Vocabulary development is strengthened through the use of word walls, word studies, and personal dictionaries. Our reading program is further enhanced by opportunities for self-selected, independent reading in a literacy rich learning environment.

A minimum of two hours of reading instruction occurs each day. During the two-hour block, one hour of direct whole group instruction is provided in a heterogeneous group setting. Independent Work Time is built into the second hour of instruction to provide opportunities for differentiation based on students’ individual needs. During the Independent Work Time block, students are flexibly grouped across the grade level in grades 3-5 and grouped within the classroom at the K-2 level. The Independent Work Time block provides an additional opportunity for quality direct instruction on a consistent basis and allows our talent development and resource teachers to be included in the groupings. Students performing at higher levels are challenged to use talent development strategies, computer-assisted instruction, *Paideia Seminar*, research, novel studies, author studies, literature circles, and projects. Struggling students are provided opportunities to further develop fluency and comprehension skills through several direct instructional programs. Teachers incorporate additional pre-teaching and re-teaching of skills, as needed.

Literacy skills continue to be enhanced throughout the school day as students use response journals, participate in daily oral language activities, and are provided with opportunities to integrate reading and writing in all content areas. Independent reading is required of all students for a minimum of 20-30 minutes nightly based on the student’s grade level. Parents are required to document reading each night on a reading log.

**Integration of Technology:**

One of our greatest sources of pride at Hawk Ridge Elementary is our focus on technology. With our vision of preparing students for the world of tomorrow, teachers ensure that technology is integrated throughout the instructional day. A variety of instructional software is used to support and enrich students’ experiences in all curricular areas. Specific literacy and math software programs are used to differentiate instruction through the teacher’s selection of skills that address individual student’s needs. Students must demonstrate mastery at the assigned level before they are allowed to move to the next level of performance. These programs are aligned with grade-level objectives based on the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*.

Our school-wide reading incentive program, *Accelerated Reader*, provides opportunities for students to set individual reading goals. Students are encouraged to select books from a variety of genres at their instructional level and to demonstrate at least 80% mastery answering related comprehension questions. Students frequently utilize computer graphics programs to design meaningful visual organizers for project presentations, as study maps, and to effectively plan for writing. Students are encouraged to use the Internet for completing research projects and have learned how to use search engines to help with efficiency in handling the magnitude of information available on the Internet. When assigning research projects, product differentiation is encouraged. Students are observed designing *PowerPoint*

presentations, creating videos, developing spreadsheets to display data, and producing final written reports using a variety of publishing software. Morning news broadcasts that are student-produced provide opportunities for students to sharpen their communication skills in reading, public speaking, and writing as they learn how to operate the closed-circuit television system. Digital storytelling provides an additional opportunity for students to strengthen their communication skills by using a digital camera to design and produce original stories.

Resources, available on the Internet, are continuously used by teachers to plan for instruction. Through the teachers' Web sites, parents are kept informed of curriculum objectives and are provided with additional Web site links to strengthen the home-school connection and further enhance their ability to assist their children with curriculum concerns. At home, parents are encouraged to use the online version of student textbooks to reinforce concepts and skills explored in the classroom.

### **Instructional Strategies to Improve Student Learning:**

A variety of instructional strategies are implemented on a daily basis to address the needs of our Hawk Ridge Elementary students. One of our primary instructional strategies is flexible grouping of students across the grade level beginning in second grade. Students are grouped before each unit of study in math according to results of unit pre-tests. Pre-tests are aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' curriculum pacing guides. Students are also grouped across their grade level for one hour of the two-hour literacy block in grades 3-5. A variety of assessment information is used to accurately place students in these flexible groups based on their instructional needs.

Our flexible grouping strategy for reading and math provides an opportunity to maximize staff support while meeting the needs of individual children. During the math and literacy curriculum blocks, the talent development teachers, the *Exceptional Children's Program* teachers, and the Instructional Support Team co-teach with the classroom teacher to provide additional support and effectively decrease the teacher-student ratio. Our Instructional Support Team consists of one half-time teacher, two full-time teachers, and six instructional assistants. Consistent, collaborative planning by classroom teachers and support staff is ensured through a 90-minute weekly planning block at each grade level. Planning during this block is limited to discussions of curriculum and assessment data.

Long-range plans are written at the beginning of each school year and specify time frames for teaching curriculum objectives. The long-range plans not only ensure that all curriculum objectives are taught, but also encourage curriculum integration by all special area (music, art, physical education, media, and technology) teachers. Efficiency of time is essential to maximize the instructional day. The master schedule reflects blocks of time for instruction and minimizes the number of student transitions during the day. Individual teacher schedules are designed to meet time requirements established by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools for each curriculum area (reading, writing, math, science, and social studies).

School-wide initiatives based on problem-solving strategies and *Marzano's Dimensions of Thinking* have been established to enhance students' critical-thinking skills. With a focus each month on a different problem-solving strategy and *Marzano's* question stem, our students and teachers place special emphasis on daily application of these strategies. Beginning in kindergarten, students are taught how to frame questions using higher-order question stems. This strategy is particularly effective when students participate in shared reading. Parents also receive information about our strategies on the monthly parent calendar and teacher Web sites.

A variety of instructional delivery models are used on a daily basis at all grade levels to maximize student engagement and promote success with mastery of curriculum objectives. These strategies include *The Paideia Seminar*, hands-on science and math approaches, cooperative learning, writers' workshop, small group and one-on-one instruction, higher-order questioning strategies, and before and after school tutorials. Varied instructional materials that are particularly suited to address the needs for remediation and enrichment are also used on a routine basis at all grade levels.

**Staff Development:**

Because we view ourselves as “learners in an ever-changing world,” professional development has been a cornerstone of our success since opening Hawk Ridge Elementary. Our staff development plan has varied each year depending on the needs of our teachers and the analysis of our *End-of-Grade Test* data. Our focus since opening the school in 1999 has been on implementing the best practices in education.

Each year, we have had the unique challenge of continuing the learning from previous training while bringing new teachers on board. Our mentor support program could be a model for all schools. Initially licensed teachers and their assigned mentors begin meeting during the summer months and continue to meet on a monthly basis throughout the school year. These meetings provide opportunities for selected staff members to facilitate in-service on best practice topics and to continue our efforts to solidify our instructional program. Beginning teachers are continuously coached by their mentors through classroom observations and specific feedback.

Since opening our school, we have provided staff development on cooperative learning, brain-based research, team-building strategies, higher-order questioning techniques, centers, *The Paideia Seminar*, product differentiation, and Positive Discipline. We have been fortunate to fund full day training sessions with regional and national trainers at our school. Follow-up sessions with the staff further enhance these training opportunities and help to ensure that in-service practices are successfully adopted in the classroom. General staff meetings and grade-level planning sessions are used as an additional opportunity for staff development as teachers share new learning and experiences with their colleagues.

With technology being such a central component of our curriculum and instruction, in-service in this area is offered continuously throughout the year. Our technology training sessions are conducted on-site with teachers selecting workshop sessions that meet their individual needs. In-service on Web site construction, e-mail, Web-based research, instructional software programs, lesson plan design, and teacher management tools have had a direct impact on our school’s use of technology to enhance student learning and improve teacher efficiency.

Focused discussion groups also supplement our in-service program at Hawk Ridge. This year we are offering two optional book study clubs ([Teaching Matters](#) and [A Mind At a Time](#)) that meet on a monthly basis. As a staff, we are also reading the book [Bringing Words to Life](#) by Isabel L. Beck for discussion in vertical groups. Professional articles are frequently distributed and discussed on grade level teams.

Teachers are encouraged to participate in conferences and in-service opportunities outside of the school setting. The expectation is that teachers bring back the information to share with their teams and that the selected conference serve to support the School Improvement Plan. These outside opportunities for training serve to validate instructional strategies being used in the classroom and regenerate an enthusiasm for learning— the key to the continued implementation of best practices.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 3 Mathematics

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	98	100	98	98	92
% At Level IV (above grade level)	82	81	70	70	63
Number of students tested	180	243	145	138	137
Number of Valid Scores	180	243	145	138	137
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	99	99
Number of students excluded	2	2	1	2	1
Percent of students excluded	1	1	1	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	86	89	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	54	43	43	44	*
Number of students tested	13	14	7	8	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	99	100	98	98	92
% At Level IV (above grade level)	85	86	74	74	63
Number of students tested	141	189	126	118	128
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	96	98	100	100	88
% At Level IV (above grade level)	81	70	46	58	75
Number of students tested	26	40	11	12	8
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	92	98	100	90	78
% At Level IV (above grade level)	68	75	63	74	33
Number of students tested	25	40	19	19	18
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	88	94	*	*	83
% At Level IV (above grade level)	63	38	*	*	67
Number of students tested	8	16	*	*	6
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	89	89	77	74	72
State Mean Score	253	253	251	251	144

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

\*\*\* Other includes American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Multi-racial.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 3 Reading

	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	97	98	96	94	90
% At Level IV (above grade level)	79	74	79	70	66
Number of students tested	179	243	144	138	137
Number of Valid Scores	179	243	144	138	137
Percent of total students tested	98	99	98	99	99
Number of students excluded	3	2	2	2	1
Percent of students excluded	2	1	1	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	92	93	100	88	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	54	36	71	50	*
Number of students tested	13	14	7	8	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	98	100	97	96	89
% At Level IV (above grade level)	80	78	82	75	66
Number of students tested	141	189	126	118	128
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	96	95	82	75	100
% At Level IV (above grade level)	84	65	46	33	75
Number of students tested	25	40	11	12	8
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	88	95	100	90	67
% At Level IV (above grade level)	64	48	78	63	39
Number of students tested	25	40	18	19	18
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	86	81	*	*	100
% At Level IV (above grade level)	43	31	*	*	50
Number of students tested	7	16	*	*	6
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	83	83	80	76	75
State Mean Score	248	248	148	147	147

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

\*\*\* Other includes American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Multi-racial.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 4 Mathematics

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	99	100	99	100	96
% At Level IV (above grade level)	89	88	72	72	50
Number of students tested	158	210	166	147	118
Number of Valid Scores	158	210	166	147	118
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	99	99
Number of students excluded	0	0	1	1	1
Percent of students excluded	0	0	1	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	92	90	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	71	83	40	*	*
Number of students tested	13	12	10	*	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	99	100	99	100	95
% At Level IV (above grade level)	89	89	76	71	51
Number of students tested	111	176	130	134	104
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	100	100	100
% At Level IV (above grade level)	94	86	64	100	55
Number of students tested	33	22	25	10	11
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	96	100	100	100	85
% At Level IV (above grade level)	79	76	59	52	31
Number of students tested	24	25	22	21	13
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	89	86	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	63	56	29	*	*
Number of students tested	8	9	7	*	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	95	95	89	87	85
State Mean Score	259	259	257	256	153

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

\*\*\* Other includes American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Multi-racial.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 4 Reading

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	97	98	94	91	87
% At Level IV (above grade level)	69	72	59	52	46
Number of students tested	156	210	165	147	117
Number of Valid Scores	156	210	165	147	117
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	99	99
Number of students excluded	2	0	2	1	2
Percent of students excluded	1	0	1	1	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	85	83	70	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	39	58	20	*	*
Number of students tested	13	12	10	*	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	98	99	96	92	89
% At Level IV (above grade level)	72	75	63	52	48
Number of students tested	111	176	130	134	104
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	92	100	73
% At Level IV (above grade level)	69	59	52	60	18
Number of students tested	32	22	25	10	11
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	96	100	86	91	67
% At Level IV (above grade level)	44	44	43	33	25
Number of students tested	23	25	21	21	12
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	75	78	57	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	50	22	29	*	*
Number students tested	8	9	7	*	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	84	84	77	75	72
State Mean Score	252	253	151	150	150

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

\*\*\* Other includes American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Multi-racial.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 5 Mathematics

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	99	100	100	100	96
% At Level IV (above grade level)	96	95	92	97	72
Number of students tested	133	195	156	152	109
Number of Valid Scores	133	195	156	152	109
Percent of total students tested	100	98	99	99	99
Number of students excluded	0	3	2	1	0
Percent of students excluded	0	2	1	1	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	86	100	100	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	86	87	86	*	*
Number of students tested	7	15	7	*	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	100	100	96
% At Level IV (above grade level)	97	97	92	97	74
Number of students tested	108	153	136	129	96
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	100	100	100
% At Level IV (above grade level)	94	93	100	100	56
Number of students tested	18	27	12	18	9
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	100	100	67
% At Level IV (above grade level)	73	65	79	100	17
Number of students tested	15	20	14	12	6
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	100	*	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	88	75	*	*	*
Number of students tested	8	16	*	*	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	93	93	89	87	83
State Mean Score	263	262	261	260	160

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

\*\*\* Other includes American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Multi-racial.

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT DATA**  
Data Display Table for Hawk Ridge Elementary Grade 5 Reading

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	99	99	99	99	95
% At Level IV (above grade level)	80	80	72	72	60
Number of students tested	133	195	155	152	109
Number of Valid Scores	133	195	155	152	109
Percent of total students tested	100	98	98	99	99
Number of students excluded	0	3	3	1	0
Percent of students excluded	0	2	2	1	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.African-American					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	86	93	100	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	57	53	14	*	*
Number of students tested	7	15	7	*	*
2.White					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	99	99	98	96
% At Level IV (above grade level)	82	86	74	71	60
Number of students tested	108	153	136	129	96
3.Other Students ***					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	96	100	100	100
% At Level IV (above grade level)	78	63	92	72	67
Number of students tested	18	27	12	18	9
4.Exceptional Students (non-gifted)					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	95	100	92	67
% At Level IV (above grade level)	60	45	46	58	0
Number of students tested	15	20	13	12	6
5.Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Level III (on grade level)	100	94	*	*	*
% At Level IV (above grade level)	63	44	*	*	*
Number of students tested	8	16	*	*	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level III	90	89	85	83	79
State Mean Score	257	257	156	156	155

\* Data is not reported for subgroups with student counts less than 6.

\*\* For 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02 school years, counts & percents represent students who were excluded from taking the EOG for one of the following reasons: LEP status, student was assessed on the NCAAAI, NCAAP, or NCCATS (2001-02 only). For 2000-01 and 1999-00 school years, counts & percents represent students who were exempt from taking the regular EOG.

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