

Revised 03/16/05

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. Sharon Foret Cagle
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 2050 Pine Log Road
(If address is P.O Box, also include street address)

Aiken South Carolina 29803-5731
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
Aiken 0201016
County School Code Number*

Telephone (803) 641-2740 Fax (803) 641-2526

Web site/URL <http://www.aiken.k12.sc.us/schools/aikenel/> E-mail scagle@aiken.k12.sc.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. Linda B. Eldridge
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Consolidated School District of Aiken County Tel. (803) 641-2428

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 Dr. John B. Bradley
(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 _____

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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.

[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>59</u> | % White |
| <u>37</u> | % Black or African American |
| <u>2</u> | % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>2</u> | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u><1</u> | % 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: 23%

(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.	88
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	85
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	173
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	743
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.23
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	23

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: <1%
4 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 3
 Specify languages: Chinese, Spanish, Polish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45%

Total number students who qualify: 390

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.

Part III – SUMMARY

Aiken Elementary has a long history of providing the school children of Aiken, South Carolina (pop. 25,000) with educational excellence. The school began in 1890 as a private institution, later becoming a public school serving all grades. In April 1986, the present school building was completed.

The school serves a diverse population of 881 students in grades K-5. The racial composition of the school is 59 % Caucasian, 37% African-American, 2% Hispanic and 1% Asian. With 45% of the students receiving free or reduced lunches, Aiken Elementary is a targeted-assisted Title I school. The socioeconomic level ranges from below poverty (13.8%) to affluent. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, 100 children chose to leave their zoned school to attend Aiken Elementary. The school was one of only four elementary schools in Aiken County to meet all standards set forth in NCLB.

Whether privileged or poor, no child is left behind at Aiken Elementary. Our mission is to provide all students with a challenging, innovative, standards-based curriculum in a safe environment with the support of our parents and the community. Student success is promoted through a set of core beliefs with student learning as the primary focus for all decisions. We believe that all children have the ability to achieve. We respect and value each student's worth and diversity. An educational partnership is formed with the school, community, parents and students.

Academic excellence is achieved through instruction that is based on state curriculum standards and individualized to meet the needs of each student. Assessment data reviewed by our staff and parents is used to create a challenging learning program. Conferences are held with all parents to share information about student progress toward academic goals. Students experiencing academic difficulty are referred to the Student Support Team where strategies are developed to promote success.

Teachers use a variety of instructional methods, including cooperative learning groups, learning centers and technology, to accommodate individual learning styles and interests. Through advanced technologies and guided instruction, students create standards-based projects that allow authentic assessments. Advanced learners in grades 3-5 participate in the gifted and talented program and Math Olympiad. An after school tutorial program is provided to children needing additional instruction.

Literacy is promoted at the school through Reading Recovery, Great Leaps and reading intervention programs. A well-equipped science lab prepares students to compete in regional and state science fairs. Fine arts are elevated to a higher level each year as more of our students enter and place in the state-sponsored "Reflections" program. Musical talents are shared in the community through performances by the choir. Accelerated Reader and Math Superstars programs are supported by our PTA. Service learning activities support character development and citizenship. An active Student Council promotes leadership skills in upper elementary students and sponsors a program for at-risk kindergarten students called Book Buddies. Wee Deliver, an in-school postal service, and Looney Tunes Bank, an in-school savings account program, teach practical life skills. Character development is coordinated with the community through the Citizenship and Children Program. Children learn a monthly character trait on the student-produced school television program, "Choo Choo Chat."

Through our teacher/student/parent/community partnership, Aiken Elementary continues to strive for academic excellence. We seek to meet the needs of our children, who comprise a diverse student body, to ensure that each child is prepared academically for the 21st century.

Part IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Meaning of Assessment Results

The South Carolina-criterion referenced Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) is used as a basis for assessment of English/language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. PACT, a standards-based test, was set forth by the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA) and is a rigorous evaluation of students' skills in these subject areas based on state curriculum standards.

Students receive scores based on their progress toward mastering state standards. There are four levels of achievement: advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. A student scores advanced for very high test scores that indicate the student has exceeded expectations and is well prepared to work at the next grade level. A proficient score indicates the student is well prepared to work at the next grade level and has met expectations. Under the requirements of No Child Left Behind, a score of proficient is the overall goal for every student. A student scores basic for having met the standards. The student is considered to be minimally prepared, but can still be promoted to the next grade level. A below basic score indicates that the student did not meet the standards and must have an academic assistance plan determining progress and interventions for the next grade level. At Aiken Elementary, after school academic assistance (Jump Club) is offered to those students scoring below basic. Parents of all students are provided a copy of their child's assessment results at a fall conference and are given recommendations for improvement.

All PACT tests include multiple-choice and constructed-response items. The English/language arts tests (ELA) require a lengthy written response to a given topic or prompt. Reading/literature, writing and research are the strands tested for ELA. Three performance levels are reported for the ELA test – overall ELA, reading and writing. The ELA is a two-day test. Number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability are the strands tested for mathematics.

All students, including students with disabilities and students with English as a Second Language (ESL), participate in the PACT assessment. Accommodations/modifications are made according to Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Aiken Elementary's PACT scores for all grades tested have exceeded the district and state scores in all subtests for the last five years. This has resulted in the school meeting 21 of the 21 objectives required to make Adequate Yearly Progress, as outlined in the No Child Left Behind legislation.

Aiken Elementary demonstrates some disparity in scores between racial and socio-economic subgroups with fewer African-American and subsidized meal students scoring Proficient and Advanced (see chart). However, Aiken Elementary did demonstrate adequate yearly progress toward decreasing the achievement difference and was one of only four elementary schools in the Aiken County School District to demonstrate such progress. Aiken Elementary has received a report card rating of Excellent for the past four years and earned the state's Palmetto Gold Award for outstanding academic achievement.

Further information on the state assessment process may be found at the Web site www.myschools.com.

2. Use of Assessment Data

The goals of assessment include meeting the needs and increasing the learning of each student. Assessing student progress requires a combination of strategies and assessment results that have important implications for instruction. Teachers and administrators at Aiken Elementary identify effective strategies that can be shared and implemented by other members of the faculty. By the time students arrive for the first day of school, teachers have met extensively with each other and administrators to examine PACT and Terra Nova results. Testing data is used in the decision-making process, which includes assessing the current/future needs of the students, deciding what to change, determining if goals are met, identifying root causes of problems, aligning instruction to standards and targeting appropriate interventions to promote improvement.

Each teacher, along with the principal, determines areas of strengths and weaknesses in his/her own teaching practices. Instruction is adjusted based on assessment results. This test data analysis is used to help plan professional development and allocation of instructional funds.

Common planning times within each grade level allow teachers to collaborate on assessment data and tailor interventions that make a difference for individual students, small groups and the whole class. Professional development is provided for the staff each Wednesday, allowing for the sharing of successful strategies, professional readings and research on the most effective research-based “Best Practices.” The focus of these sessions centers on school improvement.

Students are identified for the after-school tutorial program, enrichment program and small-group instruction based on the previous year’s PACT assessment, Terra Nova and current year benchmark tests. Student progress is analyzed and reviewed continuously throughout the year. Everyone on the Aiken Elementary School team is positioned to facilitate the work of the classroom teacher to meet the needs and increase the learning of every student.

3. Communication of Student Performance

The foundation for good parent, teacher and community relationships is frequent and open communication. Before school starts in August, students and parents come to Aiken Elementary to meet their prospective teachers. Agendas are given to students to assist them with assignments and to facilitate communication between parents and teachers. Parents are advised of upcoming events via a school calendar and PTA newsletter. Other forms of communication are provided by the school’s quarterly newspaper and the school, district and state Web sites.

Teachers communicate with parents and students on a daily basis through graded papers, notes in the agenda and weekly progress reports. Interim reports are sent home midway through each quarter with a formal report card generated every nine weeks. In the fall, a conference day is scheduled to meet with each parent. At this conference, parents receive a state test score report, current class grades and the state/district curriculum standards. The goal is to meet with 100% of the parents. Home visits are held on a case-by-case basis.

Parents and the community receive a copy of the annual school report card, a document issued by the state Department of Education that provides parents with the school’s grade. Schools receive an absolute rating, an improvement rating and an indicator of adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. The report card includes the school’s PACT scores by grade and among subgroups. It also provides a detailed school profile with information on attendance, retention rates, teacher qualifications and expenditures, as well as survey results from parents, students and teachers on home/school relations and the learning environment. Performance is reported by grade and school and is compared to district and state results. PACT scores are communicated to the community through the newspapers. PACT performance results are communicated by the principal to the parents at Open House in August and presented to the School Improvement Council, in the annual school summary report and to the school board. The end of the year progress is highlighted with award ceremonies that parents are invited to attend. For the past four years, Aiken Elementary has received a report card rating of Excellent, the highest rating a school can receive. For two years, Aiken Elementary has met 21 of 21 objectives for adequate yearly progress (AYP).

We believe it is essential to elicit the support and involvement of parents and the community through a strong communication system that supports student learning and high academic achievement.

4. Sharing Successes

Aiken Elementary is a school that is centered on teamwork and focuses on continued success for all. Realizing that it takes a cooperative partnership to educate a child, Aiken Elementary has teachers and staff that are dedicated and committed to excellence and a district that supports our mission. Over the

past four years our school has been recognized for outstanding academic achievement and has received the Palmetto Gold Award from the state Department of Education. Aiken Elementary has been selected as a recipient of the Palmetto's Finest Award given by the South Carolina Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals. Redbook Magazine has named Aiken Elementary as one of "America's Best Schools" and the state Department of Education recognized our school as a Red Carpet School for providing a warm, inviting, positive environment and offering opportunities for parents and community members to play an integral role in the life of our school. The state Department of Education also recognized Aiken Elementary for "Best Practices in the Media Center" and a training film for South Carolina ETV was filmed on site.

Teachers and administrators have had various opportunities to share knowledge they have developed through their work. In addition to receiving state and national recognition, Aiken Elementary has opened its doors to other teachers and schools in the district and state. The school has hosted many professional development workshops and recertification classes with our own teachers and staff presenting and sharing best practices. Teachers and administrators from all over the district and state have come to Aiken Elementary to observe quality standards-based instruction and meet with teachers to discuss ideas and academic programs. Last year, the school shared its instructional programs on an international level when a delegation of educators from Russia visited to learn about educational practices in the United States.

Aiken Elementary has talented faculty and staff who are outstanding in their field. Teachers are routinely involved in sharing their knowledge and skills. In three of the past five years, an Aiken Elementary teacher has been selected as the Aiken County Distinguished Teacher of Reading by the Aiken Council of the International Reading Association. Aiken Elementary's art teacher was one of 20 national finalists in the 2004 Barbie Arts Teacher of the Year Search. A first grade teacher was nominated for the Disney Teacher Hand Award, which honors creativity in teaching. In addition to receiving many such honors, Aiken Elementary staff members participate in a variety of local, district, and state-wide training programs and conferences. Three teachers have taught or are currently teaching graduate and undergraduate level courses through the district and in conjunction with a local college campus. Many teachers and administrators have made presentations at local, district and state workshops and conferences on standards-based instruction, technology integration, Thinking Maps, integrating manipulatives into mathematics, inclusion in the primary classroom and modifications for special needs children. Our teachers serve as mentors for area college students and other teachers on a school, district and state level. We are very proud of all our accomplishments and look forward to sharing our success stories with other schools across the state and nation.

PART V- CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. School Curriculum

No Child Left Behind has been a powerful stimulus at Aiken Elementary as faculty, staff and parents work cooperatively to achieve our school mission of providing a challenging, innovative, standards-based curriculum for children with a diverse range of needs. Each student's worth and diversity are considered and respected in the planning of instruction. A variety of research-based instructional strategies are incorporated to accommodate differences in learning styles, interests and needs. Teachers have high expectations for all students as they strive for mastery of local, state and national standards.

The language arts program links literature and language together to form an integrated whole for effective reading and writing. Our language arts program offers diversity and challenge, stresses critical and creative thinking, and offers opportunities for students to be actively engaged in learning. After assessing and targeting goals, teachers design instruction that includes self-selected reading, guided reading, shared and teacher directed reading, word study and writing. A variety of strategies are used to

enhance reading such as whole-group, small-group, paired and individual instruction. Recognizing diversity in learning styles, teachers form flexible groups to target specific skills and comprehension strategies. Teachers use writing lessons to focus on content and development, organization, voice and conventions.

Math instruction provides a balance of computational and procedural skills, conceptual understanding and problem solving. Various classroom activities accommodate the different learning styles of students as they develop their mathematical skills. A variety of strategies are used to implement the spiraling mathematics program including hands-on activities, direct instruction, cooperative groups, use of visuals and models and real-world problem solving.

Based on state and national standards, Science instruction includes the process of scientific inquiry in every lesson and includes hands-on investigations. The history and nature of science along with the work of scientists are featured in the lessons. Teachers provide more depth to lessons with trade books, technology, field experiences and a weekly science lab session. Students experience the scientific method through classroom investigations and participation in the annual science fair.

The school's Social Studies curriculum addresses state standards by incorporating the concepts of citizenship, history, economics and geography. Diversity is celebrated through multi-cultural week. Citizenship is reinforced through our character education program. Other school-wide activities, such as Geography Day, Veteran's Day Salute, Red Ribbon Week, Career Week and American Education Week, enhance the Social Studies curriculum. Students are afforded the opportunity to make a difference in the community through service learning projects.

Aiken Elementary's exemplary related arts program, which includes physical education, music and art, is also standards-based. In addition to experiences requiring teamwork such as volleyball, soccer and floor hockey, the physical education program includes in-line skating and dance to promote cardiovascular fitness, and gymnastics to promote muscle strength and flexibility. The music program is rich in song, dance, keyboarding, instruments, history and cultural awareness. Many students participate in the Aiken Elementary Choir. The success of the art program is manifest in students' creations that are displayed in the school and community. Reflections, a competition in literature, music, visual arts and photography, is supported by the school's art and music programs.

Technology is integrated throughout the curriculum. Effective and strategic use of technology is utilized wherever it offers advantages over other instructional means. Students design, write and produce a daily newscast using video and sound equipment, the Internet and the school weather station. Our Computer-Assisted Instruction Lab allows students to work on specific skills at their own level and to advance at their own pace. In addition to technology instruction during a weekly media class, teachers also use PowerPoint, WebQuests and word processing in their classrooms. With computers linked to the Internet in every classroom, as well as in the media center, our students are being prepared for the world of technology outside of school.

2. Reading Curriculum

Aiken Elementary teachers believe that reading is the foundation for all other subject areas and children learn best when they are actively engaged in reading instruction. Our school's reading curriculum was chosen based on *Reading First*, a scientifically researched program that has standards and accountability at its foundation. Expectations are clear, as are strategies for monitoring student progress. Students are actively engaged in a variety of reading-based activities which connect to the five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension. Leveled resources help every child master grade-level reading skills. Flexible grouping of students is a technique that responds to individual needs as new skills are introduced. Teachers support students by offering explicit instruction planned to improve student performance.

The program addresses the South Carolina ELA Standards, which include reading/literature, listening, speaking, writing and research through the use of self-selected reading, teachers reading aloud,

word studies, guided reading and writing. Students learn to love literature and are exposed to a variety of literature by various authors as their teachers read aloud to them. Baskets of books outside classroom doors allow early-arriving students to start their day reading good books. During Sustained Silent Reading, students choose books to read from extensive classroom libraries.

Teachers instruct both the whole group and small, leveled groups to address specific skills and comprehension strategies. Students read with their teachers, increasing their fluency and understanding. Literature circles enhance learning by providing opportunities for stimulating group discussions of story elements. Unit Tests and challenging teacher-made tests are given, and the progress of each student is monitored by teachers and administrators targeting areas needing further instruction or re-teaching. STAR Reading, a computerized assessment program, provides additional diagnostic data. Students participate in the Accelerated Reader program. The Great Leaps Program, Reading Recovery in grade one, and reading intervention in grades 2-4 provide identified students with additional individual and small group support for reading improvement. Writing is taught through mini-lessons integrated throughout our reading program. Two teachers on staff offer monthly “Best Practices in Reading” in-services presenting valuable tools for professional development. Books purchased and read staff-wide include Mem Fox’s *Radical Reflections* and *Reading Magic*. Both focus on improving instructional reading practices. As a faculty we believe there is no greater legacy we can leave with children than to ensure their ability to read.

3. Mathematics Curriculum

At Aiken Elementary, students learn mathematics by direct instruction, hands-on experiences, step-by-step models that build conceptual understanding, and ample practice that requires the use of problem-solving skills and strategies. Through a spiraling curriculum, mathematical content is introduced in kindergarten and is carried through each grade, building on previous knowledge. An emphasis is placed on problem solving and critical thinking. Varied learning styles and levels are commonplace in any math classroom. As a result, teachers plan lessons in regular instruction, as well as remediation, and enrichment. Manipulatives are used in math lessons to enhance the concepts. Teachers in grades 3-5 use a Math CD Rom Intervention program allowing students to go to the media center once a week to practice skills being taught in the classroom. The computer tracks their progress and allows extra practice for mastery. Reading and writing play an integral part in day-to-day math lessons. Teachers use literature to supplement lessons, and students write in response to math questions. Instructional strategies are chosen from among the best practices defined by research.

The Math Superstar program, sponsored by the PTA, is offered school-wide as a way to challenge students and move them to a higher level of thinking. The Math Olympiad Team is another way students are enriched and challenged. Students in this activity compete in periodic national quizzes. The math curriculum encourages a strong partnership between home and school with family involvement activities. Family letters including tips to assist students, as well as family games, supplement the math program. Families are given information about a Web site to accompany the math textbook. In addition to this, many teachers share other math Web sites for use at home. A family math night is held annually, when parents and children attend and play math games, read math literature and participate in a variety of math-related activities. Math night is always well attended. We believe our math program prepares students for an ever-changing and advancing society, enabling them to be successful worldwide.

4. Instructional Methodologies

At Aiken Elementary teachers continuously analyze and evaluate the needs of every student in order to design and provide an instructional program that will reach each student. Learning styles and test data (pre- and post-, standardized and teacher-made) are used to tailor instruction to the strengths and weaknesses of each student. There is administrative support for innovative approaches and strategies.

Classroom environment, which is specifically designed to enhance learning, includes multi-level materials, flexible grouping, acceptance and celebration of diversity, print-rich materials, nurturing of risk-taking, and high expectations. Students are engaged in learning through a variety of approaches that include whole-group, small-group, paired learning, individual instruction, modeling, guiding, role-playing, hands-on, demonstration, inquiry, guest speakers, field experiences and media/technology resources. There is a strong focus on standards-based teaching with particular emphasis on Bloom's Taxonomy and the higher order skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Students organize their thoughts using Thinking Maps, eight graphic organizers proven through current brain research to enable students to link a visual pattern with a thought process. Developed by Dr. David Hyerle, Thinking Maps are used for content-specific and interdisciplinary learning, thus giving teachers a common set of tools for integrating teaching, learning and assessment. A variety of assessments are used, including standard and authentic measures. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning through maintaining a daily agenda and self evaluation. Students and parents are provided constant feedback via student agendas, interim reports, quarterly reports, newsletters, notes, phone calls, e-mails and individual conferences. Careful regard is given to pacing, mastering and re-teaching when necessary. Test data is analyzed to identify gaps in learning and to target appropriate interventions that promote improvement. There is collaboration in and among grade levels as teachers meet weekly to plan instruction. In pursuit of the best possible learning experience for the students, teachers continuously take advantage of professional development opportunities to keep abreast of the newest, research-based educational strategies. Teachers at Aiken Elementary are focused and committed as they support students in becoming independent, reflective, lifelong problem-solvers and learners.

5. Professional Development Program

Professional development activities at Aiken Elementary are designed to address the school's primary focus, student learning. Professional development is ongoing with all teachers actively participating. Teachers voluntarily use their personal time to attend the Instructional Fair in Mathematics, Science, Reading/Language Arts, and Technology at University of South Carolina Aiken and science workshops and demonstrations held at the Ruth Patrick Science Center and the Fort Discovery Science Center. Our teachers belong to numerous professional teaching organizations. They attend and make presentations at state conferences sponsored by these affiliations. Aiken Elementary is proud to have 100% participation in the Aiken Council of the International Reading Association.

Grade levels share common planning time and meet weekly to analyze test data, plan curricula and discuss professional literature. Monthly issues of "Better Teaching: Tips and Techniques to Improve Student Learning," the entire *Fish!* Series, and *Reading Magic* and *Radical Reflections* by Mem Fox are read by the entire staff. Other professional literature is available on a check-out basis. Weekly faculty meetings provide opportunities for professional development in the areas of reading, math, writing, technology and social issues that affect our students. All teachers attending seminars must share their knowledge learned with the faculty and staff at these meetings. "Best Practices in Reading" in-services are held monthly. Peer workshops are given to the faculty by other faculty members who have been trained in "Math Intervention" and "Step Up to Writing." The media specialist motivates teachers to continually keep abreast of computer technology with the "Techie Ten," a weekly 10-minute technology demonstration. Grade-level chairpersons attended seminars on poverty issues and then conducted workshops to enlighten our teachers on the home lives of some of our students. All teachers received training in the administration of Great Leaps, a supplementary one-on-one reading program designed to focus on improving reading skills for at-risk learners. The entire faculty also received intensive training in Dr. David Hyerle's visual teaching tools, Thinking Maps.

At Aiken Elementary we believe our teachers, as well as our students, should be independent, reflective, lifelong problem-solvers and learners.

Subject English/Language Arts Grade 3rd Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	95	93	93	96	82
% At or Above Proficient	76	72	67	68	59
% At Advanced	31	20	15	8	15
Number of students tested	131	127	145	142	147
Percent of students tested	100	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	<1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	89	83	76	92	57
% At or Above Proficient	58	49	37	42	25
% At Advanced	10	6	4	0	2
Number of students tested	52	47	46	53	44
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	100	99	97	98	93
% At or Above Proficient	90	85	82	83	76
% At Advanced	46	27	20	13	21
Number of students tested	77	73	94	85	96
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	89	82	74	93	58
% At or Above Proficient	52	51	33	40	27
% At Advanced	11	4	0	0	2
Number of students tested	46	51	43	45	45
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	99	100	97	97	93
% At or Above Proficient	90	86	82	81	74
% At Advanced	42	30	21	11	21
Number of students tested	85	76	99	97	102
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	86	82	80	79	74
% At or Above Proficient	56	45	42	42	40
% At Advanced	10	5	4	3	4

Subject Mathematics Grade 3rd Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	91	95	88	85	81
% At or Above Proficient	55	58	60	62	54
% At Advanced	23	31	32	37	30
Number of students tested	133	127	146	146	146
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	<1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	79	85	81	70	55
% At or Above Proficient	31	32	43	35	18
% At Advanced	4	13	4	13	5
Number of students tested	52	47	47	54	44
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	99	100	98	93	92
% At or Above Proficient	71	74	71	76	72
% At Advanced	36	38	47	49	43
Number of students tested	78	73	94	88	95
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	83	88	77	63	51
% At or Above Proficient	28	35	39	38	20
% At Advanced	4	12	7	21	4
Number of students tested	47	51	44	48	45
4. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	95	99	99	96	94
% At or Above Proficient	70	74	72	74	69
% At Advanced	33	43	43	45	42
Number of students tested	86	76	99	98	101
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	83	82	74	72	69
% At or Above Proficient	30	34	32	33	25
% At Advanced	8	12	12	16	9

Subject English/Language Arts Grade 4th Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	95	91	88	94	94
% At or Above Proficient	68	52	59	64	66
% At Advanced	13	10	9	9	11
Number of students tested	136	155	128	128	129
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	88	80	76	82	91
% At or Above Proficient	43	20	12	35	43
% At Advanced	4	0	0	3	0
Number of students tested	51	50	41	34	42
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	99	97	96	99	95
% At or Above Proficient	84	68	65	76	77
% At Advanced	20	16	7	11	16
Number of students tested	77	103	77	90	86
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	88	79	79	86	80
% At or Above Proficient	45	25	9	37	37
% At Advanced	2	2	0	0	0
Number of students tested	58	48	33	35	35
4. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	100	96	92	97	99
% At or Above Proficient	86	65	60	74	77
% At Advanced	22	14	7	12	15
Number of students tested	78	107	92	93	94
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	81	76	80	80	72
% At or Above Proficient	38	33	34	37	37
% At Advanced	3	2	2	2	4

Subject Mathematics Grade 4th Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	93	94	84	88	81
% At or Above Proficient	65	54	47	49	49
% At Advanced	36	31	22	22	20
Number of students tested	135	156	130	133	130
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	86	88	70	70	58
% At or Above Proficient	39	24	23	16	19
% At Advanced	12	0	9	3	2
Number of students tested	51	50	43	37	43
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	99	97	95	95	92
% At or Above Proficient	83	76	68	63	64
% At Advanced	49	45	48	30	29
Number of students tested	77	104	79	92	86
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	88	83	69	72	50
% At or Above Proficient	44	23	25	15	17
% At Advanced	16	4	11	3	3
Number of students tested	57	48	36	39	36
4. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	97	98	99	95	93
% At or Above Proficient	81	75	72	63	62
% At Advanced	50	43	45	30	27
Number of students tested	78	108	99	94	94
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	80	81	74	67	62
% At or Above Proficient	36	34	36	26	24
% At Advanced	14	14	15	10	8

Subject English/Language Arts Grade 5th Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	96	89	89	89	90
% At or Above Proficient	57	44	48	48	54
% At Advanced	6	3	4	4	5
Number of students tested	143	127	132	135	153
Percent of students tested	100	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1 African-American					
% At or Above Basic	85	71	91	73	78
% At or Above Proficient	23	12	30	16	20
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	39	41	33	37	41
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	100	98	96	95	94
% At or Above Proficient	70	60	67	61	66
% At Advanced	8	4	10	5	6
Number of students tested	102	79	88	97	110
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	84	72	87	69	75
% At or Above Proficient	27	8	37	17	25
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	37	36	30	35	36
4. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	100	96	96	96	94
% At or Above Proficient	67	58	64	59	62
% At Advanced	8	4	10	5	6
Number of students tested	106	91	93	100	117
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	77	68	74	73	71
% At or Above Proficient	27	21	25	27	27
% At Advanced	2	1	1	2	2

Subject Mathematics Grade 5th Test Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test

Edition/Publication Year 1999-2004 Publisher South Carolina Department of Education

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
School Scores					
% At or Above Basic	94	86	86	86	84
% At or Above Proficient	59	42	50	50	44
% At Advanced	28	18	22	22	20
Number of students tested	142	131	132	136	154
Percent of students tested	100	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	84	67	69	68	69
% At or Above Proficient	26	7	25	22	10
% At Advanced	3	0	3	5	0
Number of students tested	38	43	36	37	42
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	98	95	93	93	90
% At or Above Proficient	72	57	29	60	56
% At Advanced	38	27	40	29	27
Number of students tested	102	81	90	98	110
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	81	68	70	56	65
% At or Above Proficient	33	16	27	17	14
% At Advanced	11	0	12	3	3
Number of students tested	36	38	33	36	37
4. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	99	94	93	97	91
% At or Above Proficient	68	53	66	62	53
% At Advanced	34	26	35	29	25
Number of students tested	106	93	95	100	117
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	76	75	70	62	59
% At or Above Proficient	32	28	29	27	20
% At Advanced	14	8	11	11	8