

2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet Type of School: (Check all that apply) Elementary Middle High K-12 Charter

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

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

School Mailing Address 1000 Dave Gibson Blvd.
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Fort Mill SC 29708
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County York State School Code Number* 4604048

Telephone (803) 548-8250 Fax (803) 548-8373

Website/URL http://www.fort-mill.k12.sc.us/GHES/index.htm E-mail brewert@fort-mill.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. Keith Callicutt
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fort Mill School District Tel. (803) 548-2527

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 Mrs. Martha Kinard
(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

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 for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not 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 2006-2007 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 2001 and has not received the *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award* in the past five years.
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

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT – Fort Mill School District (York 4)

1. Number of schools in the district:

___ 5	Elementary schools
___ 3	Middle schools
___ 0	Junior high schools
___ 1	High schools
___ 1	Other (Alternative School)
___ 10	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,164

- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,759

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.
 _____ 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		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK					7			
K	62	52	114		8			
1	71	75	146		9			
2	76	80	156		10			
3	66	67	133		11			
4	71	58	129		12			
5	66	76	142		Other			
6								
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →								820

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school: 87 % White
5 % Black or African American
4 % Hispanic or Latino
3 % Asian/Pacific Islander
1 % American Indian/Alaskan Native
100% Total

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 12 %

[Mobility rate reflects 2005-2006 end of year data.]

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	60
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	26
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	86
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	704
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.122
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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

Number of languages represented: 7

Specify languages: Chinese, Vietnamese, French, Spanish, German, Amharic, Ethiopian

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

Total number students who qualify: 49

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: 10 %
85 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>8</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>7</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>20</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>47</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>2</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</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>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>40</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>19</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>81</u>	<u>8</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	97 %	95 %	97 %	96 %	97 %
Daily teacher attendance	95 %	95 %	96 %	97 %	94 %
Teacher turnover rate*	13 %	14 %	31 %	29 %	24 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Student drop-off rate (high school)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

*The following data relates to teacher turnover rate. Over 400 students and approximately one-third of

the faculty were reassigned to newly-built schools in 2001-2002. Enrollment continues to increase each year. Teachers have been added annually to accommodate rapid growth and to expand student programs in the areas of gifted education, academic assistance, special education, technology, and related arts. Some teachers have left the school due to marriage, spouse's job transfer, job advancement, retirement, or a decision to become a stay-at-home parent. Our teacher turnover rate has improved from 31% in 2003-2004 to 13% in 2005-2006.

PART III - SUMMARY

Gold Hill Elementary School opened in 1994 with 650 students in grades K-5. The school was named after an academy which was the first school in the area located on a site that was believed to contain a gold mine. Two additions have been completed, increasing school capacity to 900 students. Gold Hill is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and currently serves an enrollment of 850 students. Gold Hill's mission provides the foundation used to establish current programs. The mission is to be a learning-centered school committed to academic success for all students, maximizing their potential as life-long learners, and enabling them to become contributing members of society. The mission is carried out through our belief statements which promote 1) learning as our chief priority, 2) collaborating involving administrators, teachers, staff, and community to provide a quality education for our students, 3) differentiating instructional approaches to support student learning, 4) planning opportunities to apply learning in meaningful situations, 5) fostering creativity and excellence in a challenging environment, 6) providing a safe and supportive environment necessary for learning, and 7) putting children first in our planning and practices.

The instructional staff provides a child-centered learning environment emphasizing active student involvement while focusing on providing foundational experiences needed for successful future learning. This strategy invites students to view learning as a life-long pursuit and community service as a civic responsibility. Supporting evidence includes 100% participation of our classes in service learning activities such as Zig the Pig for families whose children have cancer, Operation Warm-Up, Ronald McDonald House, sponsoring Muscular Dystrophy and Juvenile Diabetes research, postcards for soldiers, Valentine cards for Veterans in the VA Hospital, and shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.

Continuously striving for excellence, our staff incorporates best professional practices while introducing innovative teaching strategies. Our Lead Teacher mentors teachers new to the profession and helps to plan and provide staff development and support for all teachers. The master schedule allows time for grade level teachers to meet and plan collaborative approaches and strategies to meet the needs of students. Special programs such as SOAR to Success, Accelerated Reader, Math Superstars, After School Achievers, Early AM Computer Club, Reading Recovery, Literacy Groups, Brain Boosters, and the Academically Gifted Program give students academic remediation and/or enrichment. Second grade students take a swimming and water safety course as a part of their grade level curriculum. Fitness and nutrition are included in our core curriculum with an additional opportunity for girls to join "Girls on the Run", an after school enrichment program for girls.

Throughout its history, Gold Hill has been recognized for outstanding performance in a variety of areas. In 1999, GHES received the State Exemplary Writing Award for its outstanding writing program. For the fifth year in a row, our school has earned the Palmetto Gold Award established by the South Carolina Education Accountability Act for schools performing at the highest levels of student achievement. In 2006, Gold Hill received the coveted Red Carpet School Award from the South Carolina State Department of Education for quality customer service and a family friendly environment. Gold Hill was recognized in 2005 as the York County Clean & Green School of the Year. Over 50% of our teachers currently hold Master degrees or higher, and 11 are National Board certified.

At Gold Hill the staff recognizes the importance of an environment that nurtures yet challenges a wide variety of interests and talents. Art displays and musical performances allow us opportunities to showcase student accomplishments. We believe that a rigorous, yet inclusive and integrated curriculum for all children is vital to learning. Whether in individual classrooms, in the computer or science lab, on our nature trail, experiencing our outdoor learning garden, or joining our school-wide recycling program, student performance and progress is seen not as simply the ability to perform skills and tasks in isolation but as the application of knowledge in appropriate settings. At Gold Hill there exists a sense of pride for our past and present as well as a sense of excitement for the vision of our future.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results

The South Carolina Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) is a standards-based, criterion-referenced accountability measurement of student achievement in four core academic areas – English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. PACT items are aligned with the state curriculum standards developed for each discipline. PACT ELA tests and the mathematics tests include both multiple-choice and constructed-response items. Each ELA test also includes one extended writing item. There are four levels of achievement: **Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic**. **Advanced** test scores indicate a student has exceeded expectations and is well prepared to work at the next grade level. **Proficient** test scores indicate a student is well prepared to work at the next grade level and has met expectations. Under the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, a score of **Proficient** is the overall goal for every student. A student scores **Basic** for having met the standards. This student is considered to be minimally prepared, but may still be promoted to the next grade level. A **Below Basic** score indicates that a student did not meet the standards and must have an academic assistance plan (AAP). An AAP is a tool based on data, designed to provide assistance to students to promote maximum academic progress. All Gold Hill students, including students with disabilities and those with English as a Second Language (ESOL), participate in the PACT assessment and are tested on grade level. Accommodations and/or modifications are made according to Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Further information on the state assessment process may be found at the website: <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/assessment/pact/>

Assessment data is received by the schools during the summer. Data analysis is conducted by the administration and teachers to identify areas of strength and weakness; to set goals; to revise and adjust instructional practices, resources, and materials; to plan interventions; to differentiate instruction; and to plan professional development activities. Our focus has been and will continue to be to not only decrease the Below Basic percentage in each curriculum area, but also to increase the percentage for Proficient and Advanced. Curriculum calibration, data analysis, instructional pacing, differentiating instruction, and focused staff development have resulted in significant test gains in mathematics from 2002-2006.

PACT math scores in 2002 revealed 96% of third graders scored at or above Basic with 64% of those students scoring Proficient or Advanced, compared to 2006, with 97% scoring at or above Basic and 72% scoring Proficient or Advanced. Eighty-nine percent of fourth graders scored at or above Basic, and 65% scored Proficient or Advanced in mathematics in 2002, compared to 99% scoring at or above Basic and 82% scoring Proficient or Advanced in 2006. Fifth grade mathematics scores showed a similar increase with 91% scoring at or above Basic and 51% scoring Proficient or Advanced in 2002, compared to 97% scoring at or above Basic and 67% scoring Proficient or Advanced in 2006. While mathematics scores increased for all grade levels, student performance on ELA scores has maintained high levels over the years. Gold Hill compared favorably in both mathematics and language arts to other state elementary schools with similar demographics, with mathematics score percentages actually exceeding those of similar schools in both the Advanced and Proficient scoring categories.

For the fifth year in a row, Gold Hill has earned the Palmetto Gold Award (established by the Education Accountability Act) which recognizes schools with the highest level of student achievement and the fastest rate of improvement. Gold Hill received a state report card rating of “Excellent” for the fifth year in a row while meeting all objectives for Adequate Yearly Progress as is required by the U.S. Department of Education for all existing subgroups. In 2006, our students scored in the top 1% of elementary schools in SC on PACT (based on the Absolute Index), and our scores ranked 7th out of 633 elementary schools in the state. Even though test scores at Gold Hill are among the highest in the state, the school continues to show improvement. Gold Hill was 1 of 28 elementary schools in the state that received an Excellent Absolute Rating and a Good Improvement Rating on the 2006 School Report Card. It should be noted that the Princeton Review (2001) ranked the South Carolina assessment system as one of the best (ranked 8th out of 50 states). High expectations for learning are set for all students.

2. Using Assessment Results

We view assessment not as an endpoint, but as a checkpoint to guide future instruction. Results from a variety of assessment tools are used to identify student learning needs, to plan classroom instruction, and to determine the effectiveness of instruction. Information from informal and formal assessment results helps to make decisions for staff development, instructional support, and necessary curriculum changes. Formal assessments include, but are not limited to, Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), and the South Carolina Performance Task Assessment. The results of these formal assessments are stored electronically in TestView, a software program that houses student test scores and demographic information for easy accessibility and tracking purposes. Teachers use TestView to monitor student progress over time and clearly communicate meaningful assessment data to parents. Additionally, teachers utilize data from these instruments to identify students who may qualify for special programs such as the Gifted and Talented Program, Academic Assistance in reading and/or math, After-School Achievers, Early AM Computer Club, Reading Recovery, and literacy groups. Other assessments such as Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), South Carolina Readiness Assessment Portfolio Initiative (SCRAPI), and Standardized Test for Assessment Reading (STAR) help to determine continuous student progress, placements in flexible groups, text selection, and individual plans for instruction. After reviewing assessment results, teachers can access DesCartes Frameworks, which pinpoints students' instructional and independent levels within each curriculum strand in language arts, reading, and mathematics. Identified areas of strengths and weaknesses are targeted for focus in the regular classroom, gifted classes, the After-School Achievers, the Early AM Computer Club, and academic assistance. Teachers also use results from multiple intelligence tests and interest inventories to create student project choices that are appropriate for differentiated instruction. Grade level teachers have common daily planning time that allows for grade level collaboration to meet the needs of students, in addition to monthly cross grade level vertical content team meetings which facilitate planning across the kindergarten through fifth grade levels.

3. Communicating Assessment Results

Gold Hill's strengths are rooted in the dedicated participation and support of our parents and community. Through Meet the Teacher night, Open House, our school newsletter, PTA meetings, PTA newsletters, class websites, school website, and district website, our school communicates to students, parents, and others information about our policies, programs, and services, as well as student performance. Our staff is committed to the continued improvement of our students and our school as evident in our annual state report card results. For the past five years Gold Hill has received an absolute rating of excellent, in addition to meeting nine out of nine objectives for Adequate Yearly Progress under No Child Left Behind. This annual state report card issued by the SCDE provides parents with our school's grade. This annual school report card includes PACT scores, a detailed school profile with information on attendance, retention rates, teacher qualifications, expenditures, and survey results from parents, students, and teachers on home/school relations and the learning environment.

Communicating progress of our students is a high priority in our school. All students are given an agenda that includes important information for families as well as provides teachers and parents a method of daily communication. Parents are encouraged to respond to students' weekly folder of graded work sent home in addition to monthly newsletters, weekly bulletins, individual notes home, and student report cards. Phone calls and parent-teacher conferences are on-going. Employing available technology applications, our teachers also communicate with parents through e-mails, school and classroom websites, and e-mail progress reports with *Integrate Pro*, our grade book software. For students needing more frequent feedback, teachers provide daily communication between parent and teacher. Students attending our After School Achievers tutorial program, targeting reading and math skills, take home a two-way communication progress report after each session. Achievements in math and reading are highlighted in hallway displays featuring student progress in the Accelerated Reading program and the Math Super Stars program.

4. Sharing Successes

Gold Hill Elementary is a school that focuses on teamwork and collaboration to promote learning and success as we work in cooperative partnership to educate children. Our school has been recognized for outstanding academic achievement and has received the Palmetto Gold Award from the South Carolina Department of Education for five consecutive years. In addition, our school is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is a recipient of the Red Carpet School Award, was selected as the 2005 York County Clean and Green School of the Year, and had our outdoor learning garden featured on HGTV. CN2 television and local newspapers have covered such activities as our Salute to Veterans, Hero's Day, our National Anthem/Patriotism ceremony, and our efforts to help Hurricane Katrina victims.

Our successes have been shared within our school, our district, and with other schools in our area. We have been contacted by schools in our area seeking information about our reading, writing, and science programs as well as our collaborative team approach. Educators have observed in our classrooms and attended workshops and courses offered by our teachers and administrators. Staff members play an active role in sharing successes in their own classes. Mini-sessions for colleagues are conducted periodically in our school to allow teachers an opportunity to share best practices and expertise. In addition, teachers are involved with mentoring and collaborating with local high school students enrolled in the Teacher Cadet Program and college student interns preparing to become future educators. Several teachers and our administrators facilitate best practices courses or workshops for area educators in the areas of reading, math, and technology. For new teachers in our district, workshops are conducted on classroom management and parent conferencing. Training is offered for substitute teachers to help them be more successful in our classrooms. School-level workshops and activities are conducted for parents and community members such as Family Writing and Family Math Nights, Focus on Study Skills, Literacy Tips, Getting Your Child Ready for Kindergarten, and Understanding Student Assessment.

Teachers share information through the use of newsletters and/or class websites. Monthly school newsletters, "What's Buzzin'", are sent home and posted on our website. The PTA publishes a monthly newsletter, "The Bee Line", with information about our school and special events. Our school website has information about important dates, special programs and events, classroom activities, and school accomplishments and needs.

We maintain an open door/open communication philosophy at GHES. We strive to keep all of our school staff, parents, and community members informed about activities, events, programs, and school improvement initiatives. Feedback and suggestions are solicited and appreciated.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum

No Child Left Behind and the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998 provide a foundation for a state wide curriculum based on research and recommendations for national content standards. South Carolina content standards provide a framework for educators and parents to work cooperatively to provide a rigorous, relevant, innovative, standards-based curriculum. In 2002, The Princeton Review ranked South Carolina's standards as the third most difficult in the nation. South Carolina requires that our school's curriculum include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, and health and safety. Gold Hill Elementary School is a learning-centered school committed to academic success for all students, maximizing their potential as life-long learners, and enabling them to become contributing members of society. Teachers use the curriculum standards as they plan, modify, and adapt to provide developmentally appropriate instruction in all content areas. Some of our current goals include the implementation of our standards-based instruction, the integration of technology across the curriculum, and an emphasis on good character attributes for character education. The instructional program emphasizes active student involvement in the learning process while focusing on providing learning experiences which will give these students the foundation needed for successful learning at the next educational level and prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century. The instructional staff concentrates on providing a child-centered learning environment, enabling all children to learn concepts, acquire the knowledge and develop the attitudes needed to become contributing responsible citizens. While actively engaged in the learning process, children learn to take responsibility for their own learning. This independent learning enables them to see learning as a lifelong goal. This ability will be crucial to cope with the rapid changes already evident in the work force of this generation and those to follow.

The main emphasis of our Language Arts program is a balanced literacy approach with the integration of reading and writing in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers work to help all students be successful and meet individual student needs, identified through various individual assessments and standardized test scores (PACT and MAP). Nationally recognized children's authors visit our school and share their writing craft with students and faculty. With a constant focus on curriculum standards, our priority continues to be creating lifelong learners.

GHEs mathematic curriculum is based on the development of mathematical concepts of number sense, spatial relationships, problem solving strategies, and integration of mathematics within all content areas. Teachers collaborate using the district pacing guide which enables them to plan instruction in a timely manner. Math Superstars is a supplemental program, run by parent volunteers, which increases the development of higher order thinking skills.

Science and Social Studies curriculums are driven by the state standards. Teachers supplement the core curriculum with district science kits, textbooks, web-based research using our mobile lab, and field trips to Barrier Island, Camp Thunderbird, Brattonsville, the State House, and Exchange City. Students in the primary grades participate in various field trips which provide opportunities for hands-on experiences. Veteran's Day, Red Ribbon Week and the GHEs Character Education Program allow many opportunities for our students to make a difference in the community by participating in community service learning projects. Students value the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons in second grade and learn more water safety skills.

Gold Hill Elementary has a wide variety of related arts which include art, music, physical education, Spanish, and technology. As a result of the enthusiastic teaching team, our students have many opportunities to participate in musicals, dramas, art shows, and physical competitions. For example, our Spring Carnival, "Groovin' at Gold Hill Elementary" brought teachers, students, and parents together to focus on our related arts programs. Our Chorus Club received rave reviews after dinner theaters and musical productions "Return of the Glass Slipper" and "The Best Little Theatre in Town."

2. Reading

The Language Arts curriculum at Gold Hill Elementary is based on the standards of learning established by the state of South Carolina. Instruction implements the standards utilizing a balanced literacy model as outlined by our district's Balanced Literacy Handbook. This handbook was written by representatives from each elementary school in the district to provide a consistent model of instruction founded on research-based best practices in English/Language Arts. Teachers creating the Balanced Literacy Handbook intensively studied alphabets, including phonemics awareness instruction and phonics instruction, fluency, comprehension with an emphasis on vocabulary instruction and text comprehension instruction. Graduate course work has been provided to share best practices in reading and Six Traits writing instruction. Our teachers work collaboratively at the grade level and across grade levels (through our English Language Arts committee) to construct long range plans that include all the standards. Each grade level team develops short range plans to address the standards using the components of balanced literacy: read aloud, shared reading and writing, guided reading and writing, and independent reading and writing. Reading and writing are very closely connected at Gold Hill. Student and teacher generated writing is often employed as authentic text.

Literacy achievement is assessed by teacher-made tests, observation checklists, DRA, student and teacher developed rubrics, single and double entry journals used for responding to literature as well as to activities in independent learning centers, individual conferencing, collaborative group self-monitoring, Compass Learning computer assessments, Accelerated Reader, Standardized Test for Assessment Reading (STAR), MAP and PACT.

Our school has several programs to assist students with special needs. We have four resource teachers serving in self-contained and inclusion classes, grades K-5. We have one part-time ESOL instructor and two speech therapists. We have one Reading Recovery teacher. We have a reading specialist who works with students in grades 2-5 using an intervention program called SOAR to Success. We have paraprofessionals who are assigned to classrooms to assist students with reading challenges. Our media specialist and her assistant are partners on the literacy team and provide support to both students and teachers in many ways including text selection, literature study and research direction. Our related arts teachers integrate reading and writing in P.E., music, art and Spanish. Our guidance counselors frequently use read-alouds, and written and oral expression in their work with students. This school wide effort results in students' realization of the real world connections to literacy.

3. Mathematics

The math curriculum for Gold Hill Elementary is based on the South Carolina Mathematics Standards. The Silver Burdett Ginn textbook is used in grades K-5. In addition to the textbook, teachers supplement their math program by using Terrific Six, problem solving, computer programs, CPS devices, Smart Boards, games, centers, and manipulatives to enhance their lessons. They also have access to a school-wide math lab, a media center which houses a collection of mathematical literature, district and school level staff development, as well as grade level and cross grade level collaboration.

Students at GHES learn mathematics by direct instruction, modeling that builds conceptual understanding, hands-on experiences, repeated practice that requires the use of problem solving skills and strategies, and lastly the ability to apply their math knowledge to the real world.

As teachers instruct their classrooms, they are faced with a wide range of academic levels and learning styles. In order to challenge each student, teachers utilize the results from informal testing, PACT scores, and MAP findings to create differentiated learning groups.

A tutorial program before and after school is provided to extend math instruction for any student needing additional help. The Math Super Star program, sponsored by the PTA, is offered school-wide as a way to challenge students and encourage higher level thinking.

Parents are kept informed through newsletters, the school web page, teacher web pages, e-mails, conferences, and are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom. PTA meetings, Math Family Night, and brown bag lunches provide opportunities for parents to learn math strategies in order to help their child at home. At GHES we strive to provide a balanced math program where students experience success, relate math to the real world, and love learning.

4. Instructional Methods

Gold Hill Elementary is a professional learning community. Our faculty has been involved in reading professional literature and attending seminars featuring the latest studies and research on student learning. Two main focuses have been brain research and differentiated instruction. We work collaboratively to determine how student assessment and data such as teacher-made tests, textbook assessments, PACT, MAP, STAR and Compass Learning drive instruction. We accommodate diverse learning styles by providing a variety of instructional methods. Instructional methods include whole and small group, inquiry (Foss Science kits), research (Big 6 model), collaborative learning groups, readers' theater, drama and literature circles. Technology-delivered instruction is interwoven within units of learning via the use of streamline videos, PowerPoint presentations and SmartBoards. Students attend technology classes with a certified teacher in a computer lab as a part of the related arts rotation. Two additional computer labs allow teachers to sign up to have additional class time to use computers. In order to reach multiple learning styles, classroom and related arts teachers incorporate technology, drama, art, and music, kinesthetic, verbal and auditory experiences. Resource teachers and the reading and math specialists pull out students for remediation or remain in the classroom to co-teach depending on the needs of the students. Two math and reading paraprofessionals work under the direction of classroom teachers and the reading and math specialists to provide additional instructional support for students. Special education students are mainstreamed as much as possible for instruction. Before and after school tutorial is provided for students who did not meet the SC standards of learning. Three full time teachers work to challenge students that have been identified by state guidelines for the Gifted/Talented program. A school wide assistance team, chaired by the guidance counselor, meets weekly as a forum for teachers to address concerns about individual students who are not currently meeting standards to brainstorm additional teaching and learning strategies. Gold Hill Elementary administrators, faculty, staff, volunteers, and parents work collaboratively to ensure progress and support for every student, maintaining our focus on our commitment to help all students become lifelong learners.

5. Professional Development

Student achievement is the top priority at Gold Hill. The school operates as a professional learning community focusing on student progress with intentional, planned professional growth for administrators, faculty and staff. Professional development is aligned with goals of the school and district improvement plans. Through the utilization of local, state, and national workshops and conferences, Gold Hill provides many opportunities for professional development for administrators and teachers.

With technology in the forefront as a tool for professional growth, our teachers integrate technology into classroom instruction and communicate on an ongoing basis through e-mail and websites. Eleven classrooms currently have SmartBoards. By 2009, our school goal is to equip every classroom with a SmartBoard. Staff development has been provided for teachers on using Streaming Videos, TestView, analyzing and using data obtained from MAP, and other assessment sources.

In addition to attending conferences and workshops, teachers are enrolled in a variety of courses for professional growth. Over fifty percent of our certified educators have a Masters Degree or above. Eleven teachers are National Board Certified Teachers. Our teachers teach each other through a colleague mentoring program, observing in other classes, and by offering a variety of mini-sessions to share best practices. This allows many opportunities for instructional dialogue, reflection, and growth. As a group, professional books have been selected to meet team and school goals. School-wide our faculty has read The Total Teacher and What Great Teachers Do Differently. Teachers engage in grade level and vertical planning to discuss instructional and assessment approaches to better meet the needs of the students and to review academic concerns. Currently, there is dialogue and data analysis related to student achievement information received from common assessments, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) results, and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. Teachers plan differentiated instruction and flexible student groups based on assessment data. Collaborative team meetings are devoted to discussions about state standards, monitoring and pacing of the curriculum, and analyzing assessment data to drive instructional planning. The end result is continued implementation of best practices and increased student performance and success.

PART VII – ASSESSMENT RESULT

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **3** Test **Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

Math 3 rd Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	97	99	100	100	96
% At or Above Proficient	72	71	60	62	64
% At Advanced	43	30	29	34	21
Number of students tested	122	109	90	92	91
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	96	99	100	100	96
% At or Above Proficient	72	68	63	63	63
% At Advanced	45	31	30	36	21
Number of students tested	110	98	83	89	88
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	83	91	100	100	77
% At or Above Proficient	56	55	67	25	41
% At Advanced	33	36	42	8	12
Number of students tested	18	11	12	12	17

Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards

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

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

ELA 3 rd Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	97	100	99	97	94
% At or Above Proficient	83	92	86	81	75
% At Advanced	21	26	39	25	9
Number of students tested	120	109	88	91	90
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	97	100	100	97	94
% At or Above Proficient	84	91	88	83	74
% At Advanced	23	25	32	26	8
Number of students tested	109	98	81	88	88
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	88	100	100	91	82
% At or Above Proficient	63	73	90	64	71
% At Advanced	13	0	30	0	0
Number of students tested	16	11	10	11	17

Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **4** Test **Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

Math 4th Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	99	96	98	99	89
% At or Above Proficient	82	71	70	57	65
% At Advanced	46	33	31	29	26
Number of students tested	131	104	110	101	104
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	98	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	99	96	98	99	91
% At or Above Proficient	84	73	70	61	66
% At Advanced	46	35	31	30	27
Number of students tested	113	95	105	92	100
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	*	*	*	93	*
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	*	36	*
% At Advanced	*	*	*	7	*
Number of students tested	*	*	*	14	*

* Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards

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

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

ELA 4th Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	99	95	98	89	97
% At or Above Proficient	81	58	62	54	61
% At Advanced	10	6	8	4	6
Number of students tested	132	101	110	101	103
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	98	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	99	95	98	81	97
% At or Above Proficient	82	60	62	52	62
% At Advanced	11	7	9	4	6
Number of students tested	114	92	105	92	100
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	*	*	*	50	*
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	*	14	*
% At Advanced	*	*	*	0	*
Number of students tested	*	*	*	14	*

* Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **5** Test **Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

Math 5th Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	97	93	92	88	91
% At or Above Proficient	67	53	51	46	51
% At Advanced	37	27	22	21	20
Number of students tested	108	118	111	104	105
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	98	93	92	88	94
% At or Above Proficient	72	54	55	48	52
% At Advanced	40	28	23	22	20
Number of students tested	97	110	101	99	98
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	*	*	80	*	*
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	30	*	*
% At Advanced	*	*	0	*	*
Number of students tested	*	*	10	*	*

* Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards

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

Edition/Publication Year **2002-2006** Publisher **South Carolina Department of Education**

ELA 5th Grade	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	96	93	91	96	96
% At or Above Proficient	59	62	57	41	56
% At Advanced	9	6	4	2	3
Number of students tested	106	118	107	104	105
Percent of students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. White					
% At or Above Basic	96	93	92	96	98
% At or Above Proficient	60	61	59	43	58
% At Advanced	8	6	4	2	3
Number of students tested	95	110	97	99	98
2. Disabled					
% At or Above Basic	*	*	*	*	*
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	*	*	*
% At Advanced	*	*	*	*	*
Number of students tested	*	*	*	*	*

* Subgroups – The information is not disseminated for groups of less than 10. The subgroups are white and disabled.

Basic – Meets state standards

Proficient and Advanced – Exceeds state standards