

# 2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Public  Private

**Cover Sheet**

Type of School (Check all that apply)  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  
 Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Patricia C. Brehm

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

Official School Name Waters Edge Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 21601 Shorewind Drive

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Boca Raton

Florida

33428-4820

City

State

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Palm Beach

State School Code Number\* 500031

Telephone (561) 852-2400

Fax (561) 852-2450

Web site/URL www.edline.net/pages/Waters\_Edge\_E E-mail brehmp@palmbeach.K12.fl.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature

Name of Superintendent Dr. Arthur C. Johnson

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Palm Beach County School District

Tel. (561) 434-8000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. William Graham

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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 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 2007-2008 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have 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 2002 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 OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.
6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
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. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

### DISTRICT (Question 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:            104 Elementary schools  
    33 Middle schools  
    0 Junior High Schools  
    23 High schools  
    25 Other  
    185 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:            7344  
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:   8424

### 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 are  
 Suburban  
 Small city or town in a rural area  
 Rural
4. 8 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
Pre K			0	7			0
K	62	61	123	8			0
1	67	59	126	9			0
2	57	68	125	10			0
3	79	65	144	11			0
4	87	65	152	12			0
5	107	85	192	Other			0
6			0				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							<b>862</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 1  | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 5  | % Asian or Pacific Islander        |
| 3  | % Black or African American        |
| 12 | % Hispanic or Latino               |
| 79 | % White                            |

**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 7 %

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

<b>( 1 )</b>	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	27
<b>( 2 )</b>	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	32
<b>( 3 )</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	59
<b>( 4 )</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	862
<b>( 5 )</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
<b>( 6 )</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 4 %
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 35 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|----|---|

Number of languages represented: 8

Specify languages: Urdu, Spanish, Creole, Portugese, Chinese, Farci, Polish, Lebanese

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

Total number students who qualify: 60

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:  $\frac{10}{87}$  %  
 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>0</u>	Autism	<u>0</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deafness	<u>2</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deaf-Blindness	<u>9</u>	Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u>	Emotional Disturbance	<u>61</u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>0</u>	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>14</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>46</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>11</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Support Staff	<u>18</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>81</u>	<u>5</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  $\frac{19}{1}$  : 1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. 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 in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	96 %	96 %	96 %	97 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	96 %	96 %	96 %	96 %
Teacher turnover rate	15 %	18 %	3 %	5 %	5 %
Student drop out rate (middle/high)	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school)	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Please provide all explanations below

The teacher transfer rate in 02-03 and 03-04 was 5%. During that 2 year period of time, 5 of the 6 teachers moved out of state and 1 transferred to another school.

In 04-05, (transfer rate 3%), 1 teacher moved out of state and 1 transferred to a school

closer to her home.

In 05-06, (transfer rate 18%), 4 teachers moved out of state, 1 was non-renewed and 6 transferred to another school. In years past, very few instructional openings occurred in other schools, but with the Class Size Reduction Amendment in the state of Florida, additional class units were formed in all schools throughout the county. This allowed more teachers to seek employment closer to home. A school closer to home was necessary for some due to the increasing cost of fuel and for medical reasons.

In 06-07, (transfer rate 15%), 3 teachers moved out of state, 2 resigned (career change and motherhood), and 4 transferred to their neighborhood schools for the reasons cited above.


## PART III - SUMMARY

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Waters Edge Elementary School opened in April 1996 in suburban Boca Raton with approximately 475 students. In 2001, a full time cluster site for gifted education was added. The student enrollment grew to 1197 during the 2004 -2005 school year. Waters Edge has been rated an 'A' school each year since the Florida Department of Education implemented its A+ program for school accountability in 1999. During the 2006-2007 school year, Waters Edge earned a total of 715 points on the Florida School grading system. This was the highest score in Palm Beach County. The score was comprised of proficiency points in Reading and Mathematics for grades 3-5, grade 5 Science and grade 4 Writing, as well as learning gains in Reading and Mathematics and learning gains among the students ranked in the lowest 25%. Waters Edge has met the federal guidelines for AYP in compliance with the No Child Left Behind legislation. 100% of all eligible students were tested with the percentage of all subgroups improving. In FY2007, the faculty was awarded by the state a 'pay for performance' bonus based on its outstanding scores - particularly the learning gains. The mission of Waters Edge Elementary School is to provide all students with an innovative, challenging, and stimulating environment that encourages a lifelong commitment to learning. The faculty, staff, students and parents provide various opportunities to meet that mission. There are after school enrichment clubs (Explorers' Clubs) such as drama, gymnastics, karate, cooking, sports, Lego, Scrabble, etc. The School Age Child Care program has 300 students enrolled each afternoon. The program also provides enrichment opportunities, as well as homework assistance, arts and crafts, physical activities and opportunities for entertainment and relaxation. Waters Edge also sponsors a Summer Camp for approximately 60 students. Waters Edge has received the state of Florida 5 Star Award since 2000. The award is presented to schools with high percentages of volunteers, family involvement, business partnerships, student community service and school advisory council. We are accredited with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and have received grants through Golden Bell (arts integration in the curriculum) and Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful. The Parent Teacher Association is one of the finest in the county with 100% membership among faculty and parents. It has been awarded the distinction of the PTA of the Year in '05-'06 and in '06-'07. Over the past five years the PTA has received numerous awards and recognitions such as the Family Involvement Award in '01-'02 and '04-'05, the Sweetheart Award in '02-'03, the History Book Award in '04-'05, Newsletter Award in '04-'05, and the Show and Tell Award in '06-'07. Most importantly, the community models for our students the value of giving to the less fortunate. Annually, the children raise money for the St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, contribute back to school supplies to an adopted school in Palm Beach County, provide over 300 holiday gifts to needy children, and participate in Jump Rope for Heart, Relay for Life, Beach Clean-Ups and Walk-a-Thons. The school is rich in technology. Most classrooms are equipped with document cameras to enhance instruction. The school has two computer labs, a science resource teacher, Reading Counts program, on-line student assessments (Princeton Review), classroom web pages and communication with parents via Edline and email. Professional development opportunities are provided for teachers to continually expand their knowledge of technology and improve their instructional strategies through the use of technology. Students are given many opportunities to improve their technological skills with the daily, in-house TV production WOWL, computer teacher and demonstrations using power point and research opportunities. Our tech ambassador program coaches teachers and provides a valuable resource for all.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test is administered each spring to elementary students in grades 3-5. There are 5 achievement levels with level 3 and above indicating grade level proficiency, therefore meeting or exceeding the state standards. Schools are graded based on FCAT results. The FCAT is scored numerically with the possibility of earning 800 points. Four hundred points are allocated for the percent of students reaching proficiency. The remaining four hundred points are allocated for learning gains among 4th and 5th grade students in reading and mathematics and also learning gains among the lowest 25% of the students based on the previous year's FCAT score. Learning gains are earned when a student moves to a higher level or whose developmental score increases by a set numerical value. The gains indicate a year's growth in a year's time. The School Accountability Report for Waters Edge indicates that 97% of the students met the high standards of proficiency in reading, 96% met the high standards of proficiency in mathematics, 99% met the high standards in writing, and 82% in science. 86% of the students made learning gains in reading, 77% made learning gains in mathematics, 94% of the lowest 25% made learning gains in reading and 84% of the lowest 25% made learning gains in mathematics. These percentages equaled 715 points 'the highest score in Palm Beach County!' What is remarkable about the results is that 100% of the students were tested and our students with learning disabilities were included in the percent of students making learning gains. It is a phenomenal achievement for 94% of our lowest performing students to make learning gains in reading. Many of these students are students with disabilities.

Waters Edge Elementary School met federal Adequate Yearly Progress under No Child Left Behind. The School Accountability Report indicated that 100% of the 39 criteria were satisfied for the school grade and all subgroups met the reading, math and writing criteria for No Child Left Behind. The School Accountability Report can be found at the following website: <http://www.fldoe.org>.

School scores indicate that all subgroups are achieving greater proficiency in reading and math. Looking at the reading proficiency growth rate over 5 years indicates grade 3 students increased from 91%-93%, grade 4 increased from 87%-94%, grade 5 increased from 89%-96% and our Exceptional Student Education students in grades 4 and 5 increased from 50%-73% and 87% respectively. Math proficiency in grade 3 increased from 91%-98%, grade 4 increased from 85%-95% and grade 5 increased from 80%-89%.

Note: Third grade reading scores on the FCAT showed a spike in 2006. The Florida Department of Education noticed an inconsistency in the placement of 'anchor items'. If they are not consistent, the new test is either easier or harder than it was for the previous year. It was determined that the 2006 third grade FCAT test was easier than previous tests and easier than the 2007 FCAT. The test itself, the scoring, the technical aspects of the test, and the psychometric properties of the test were all fine. The only issue was the equating issue and the third grade was the only grade impacted on the 2006 FCAT. FDOE recalculated the third grade FCAT scores in reading based on the new equating. This decision made the 2006 baseline of student achievement for third grade students lower than the original baseline posted when school grades were released. This did not impact school grades for 2006; however, FDOE did use the newly calculated baseline data to determine gains and school grades for 2007.

\* The Hispanic subgroup scores indicate a decline in proficiency over time. The reason is there was no ESOL program at our school in FY 03, 04, and 05. Our ESOL students attended school at a nearby cluster site. When the program was implemented at Waters Edge in FY 2006, the ESOL students' scores were included in the Hispanic profile. Therefore only the inflated (spiked) FY 06 score and the 07 scores represent a score from the same sample population.

### 2. Using Assessment Results

We disaggregate test data and monitor student assessments throughout the year. Frequent analysis of assessment data drives our instructional program. Teachers are given color-coded data warehouse reports which indicate students' performance areas as 'above, at, or below' grade level standards. These clusters indicate how the teacher should group her students for

instruction and indicate what areas are strengths and weaknesses compared to other classes on the same grade level and at other schools in the district. The diagnostic tests administered in September and November are monitored by the administration and students' progress in each cluster area is tracked. All grade levels are committed to focus academic instruction in the identified areas of concern. Teachers have access to the Educational Data Warehouse and can monitor students' progress from their own computers. All data is inputted and a complete profile of each child, class, grade, and school can be populated. Data can be filtered to show the lowest 25% of students and is color coded to indicate students' in the lowest 25% by subject. Collaboration among teams supports effective instructional strategies, monitors adequate instructional pacing, and allows for dialogue of best practices. Learning Team Meetings (LTMs) are dedicated to reviewing and analyzing data from diagnostic tests, Scholastic Reading Inventory assessments and classroom unit tests. Analysis of data identifies students who will be offered additional tutorial opportunities after school and administered mini assessments (Princeton Review) which target specific benchmarks to master. Last year, data analysis in December, indicated an ESE subgroup of students not on target to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP). Teachers regrouped their students for specific skill instruction and systematically monitored their progress. The final state assessment results indicated that the 'at-risk' group met AYP. 78% of ESE students were proficient in math and 76% were proficient in reading in grades 3-5. Identified areas for remediation are identified in the annual School Improvement Plan and effective instructional strategies are indicated for future improvement. Professional development is also based on the identified areas of concern. Teachers use their class data to write Individual Professional Development Plans and Accomplished Educator's Assessment plans. In summary, assessment not only drives instruction, but also provides data for our goal setting, evaluation and professional development!

### **3. Communicating Assessment Results**

The State of Florida sends individual student data FCAT reports to be distributed to the students who have been assessed. Teachers conference with their students and often work with students to create individual goals and growth objectives based on FCAT data. Mid-trimester reports are sent home to parents which indicate student grades and requests for conferences. Scholastic Reading Inventory lexile levels are shared with parents when appropriate and Progress Monitoring Plans are written for all students whose scores from daily work and/or assessments indicate below grade level proficiency. School accountability data, No Child Left Behind and the school district Gold Report are reviewed at monthly School Advisory Council meetings. Appropriate data is reported on grade level Curriculum Nights and FCAT Parent Focus Nights. Articles about our assessment data also appear in the Explorers' Journal, a monthly newspaper distributed to the parents and community. Edline, a school and individual class website, is also used to communicate assessment data when appropriate. Students meeting high levels of proficiency receive certificates from the Florida Department of Education and school awards are presented to students who achieve Principal's Honor Roll or Academic Honor Roll status. One key to monitoring student performance is to identify academic concerns early, communicate effectively to parents, establish instructional interventions and discuss student's progress at School Based Team meetings and Learning Team Meetings. State assessment results should not be a surprise to students, parents or teachers! If teachers are teaching according to the standards, monitoring student progress and providing appropriate interventions, assessment results should be right on target.

### **4. Sharing Success:**

Waters Edge has been successful in many curricular areas and with many student populations. Often it is difficult to pinpoint the strategies that we used to create those successes. However, instructional strategies that are shared with the area superintendent are often then shared at principals' meetings. The school district provides many opportunities for principals and administrators to interact with one another and share instructional best practices. A spirit of camaraderie exists among the elementary school principals and each is eager to share with the other principals through informal discussions or presentations. Our school demographics are not the same as all other schools in the very diverse county. What works for the students and staff at Waters Edge may not work elsewhere. We keep our state assessments low keyed and believe that if we do our job daily and do it well by addressing the Sunshine State Standards, we will receive positive results on the state assessment. Principals are involved in annual goal setting sessions. Effective strategies and monitoring plans are discussed with our area superintendent. Feedback is presented and results shared. Our supplemental academic instructor (SAI) is involved in many staff development opportunities throughout the district. This is also an avenue for sharing her best practices with other resource teachers in the school district. By providing

opportunities for staff to attend professional development outside of the school, additional opportunities for networking and collaboration exist.

## **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

The curriculum reflects the high standards set forth by national and state standards, as well as driven by the individual needs of the students. All standard curriculum students must meet the criteria identified in the district's student progression plan for promotion to the next grade level. Appropriate accommodations are provided for exceptional students. Instructional emphasis is on high level thinking skills and an application of facts, skills, and concepts. A major area of focus in the curriculum is an awareness of the complexity levels of instructional content, presentation and assessment. Teachers carefully select resources that meet the state standards and benchmarks.

We implement a research based balanced literacy program. Teachers develop literacy skills through read alouds, guided, shared and independent reading activities. Grade level anthologies provide target areas for whole group instruction focusing on specific reading strategies to develop greater fluency and comprehension. Guided reading instruction allows the teacher to focus on a small homogeneous group of students and carefully monitor their oral reading and skill development. Constant monitoring of student progress allows assessment to drive instruction.

A balanced literacy program includes reading, writing, speaking, presenting and viewing. This curriculum focuses on students using language to communicate effectively for various purposes with a variety of audiences. The writing process and targeted language skills are taught daily and allow students to become accomplished authors across all curriculum areas. We also focus on oral reading with daily QuickReads used to track fluency rate and progress.

A rigorous and challenging science curriculum focuses on an integrated, inquiry based approach to scientific learning. Using scientific processing skills, reflective engagement, critical thinking, hands-on learning, and collaboration enables our student to become real-world problem solvers. Teachers facilitate learning through scientific experiments and demonstrations. Technology allows teachers to incorporate brief scientific video clips into their presentations to provide for visual stimulus and interactive learning opportunities.

The mathematics curriculum focuses on developing critical thinking and problem solving skills. Basic facts and concepts are first taught at the concrete level before advancing to the abstract level. Classrooms display charts, vocabulary, calendars and Every Day Counts math activities. The materials selected for instruction provide for remediation and/or enrichment activities. There is a focus on computational speed, as well as accuracy. Students learn to explain in written and oral form their thought processes and strategies used in solving problems. Inductive and deductive reasoning are modeled and applied to new situations. The curriculum includes AIMS (activities integrating math and science) hands-on activities, Sunshine Math - an enrichment program focusing on higher level thinking strategies, and software programs such as Riverdeep, Edmark, and Brain Pop.

Social Studies curriculum encompasses historical and cultural studies, geography, government, economics and civics. Current events, newspapers in education, and theme based units are incorporated into the curriculum and promote tolerance, understanding and good citizenship.

Visual and performing arts classes provide opportunities for creative expression through integrated activities and focused instruction. Music, art and arts integration in the core academic areas expose student to various forms of self-expression while enhancing the academic curriculum. Students sing in chorus, play Orff instruments, perform in school wide musical and drama productions, design scenery, participate in an annual art show, perform holiday songs at the mall and participate in a district wide arts endeavor - Spotlight on Musicians, whereby selected students perform at the city's Performing Arts Center with peers from other schools in the district.

### **2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**

The goal of the balanced literacy program is to instill in students a love of reading and develop the skills necessary to become lifelong readers and writers. To accomplish this goal, we implemented the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan through a research based Balanced Literacy Program. This program emphasizes the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension which correlate to the national and state standards. Research documents the benefits of utilizing a wide variety of strategies and approaches to reading instruction. Therefore, our program incorporates modeled, shared, guided and independent reading activities. Targeted skill lessons to develop fluency and increase comprehension, as well as daily skill-based small group instruction meet the needs of both struggling and advanced readers.

Frequent monitoring and assessment ensures that learners move successfully along a continuum from emergent to proficient readers. Assessment tools include Reading Running Records, DIBELS, Scholastic Reading Inventory, common assessments and diagnostic tests, as well as the state required criterion reference and norm reference tests.

Reading intervention programs are provided for at-risk learners through supplemental instructional programs and after-school tutorials. An accelerated curriculum is provided for students who demonstrate the need for challenge beyond the required curriculum.

Our goal is that students ultimately use literacy as an informational and decision-making tool, while fostering self-confidence and meeting high expectations. Our high proficiency percentage on state tests indicates that this approach was most beneficial for our student body.

### **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Our mission is to provide students with an innovative, challenging and stimulating environment that encourages a life-long commitment to learning. We utilize a hands-on, discovery method approach. Students are actively engaged in the learning process and teachers incorporate a variety of learning activities to accommodate differences in learning styles. These beliefs and policies provide the framework for our mission. The teachers set high expectations for students in science achievement. The objective is for learners to attain scientific and technological skills for future success. Students are given the opportunity to collaborate with their peers and develop problem solving skills necessary for the job market of the 21st century. Software programs, such as Science Court, provide students with an investigative format to solve science related problems. Using the principles of scientific literacy, learners develop the ability to use tools, methods, and the skills of scientific inquiry. Learners explore and use science concepts through the use of hands-on exploration, labs, performance tasks, demonstrations, experiments and research. High Touch-High Tech brings hands-on learning to the students in the areas of energy, matter, simple machines and the human body. Students participate in the annual science fair whereby they develop an hypothesis and follow procedures to prove or disprove their theory. The students are exposed to a multidisciplinary approach to learning through the infusion of math, writing, social studies, and reading in the science classroom. Critical thinking skills developed through science instruction easily translate into success in other content areas. Additional reading skills are reinforced by the use of informational text selections. Opportunities for practicing and applying reading skills, such as gathering and synthesizing information, making schematic connections, and drawing conclusions, are provided daily. Once mastered, the essential knowledge and skills provide for lifelong success - our ultimate goal!

### **4. Instructional Methods:**

Research tells us that there is no one instructional method that benefits all students. Therefore you will see a variety of methods and strategies utilized in each classroom. A teacher's major responsibility is to be sure each child is learning based on his/her learning style. For that reason, it is necessary for all teachers to use a variety of methods and monitor what works best for each student. We call it Walk it, Talk it and Chalk it! Teacher-centered approaches include demonstrations and direct instruction. In teacher-center methods, the teacher's role is to present the information so that it is learned and to direct the learning process of students. At times, this is most appropriate-when there are very

specific targets and clearly identified facts and basic skills. Learner-centered approaches include cooperative learning, discovery and inquiry learning, use of graphic organizers, K-W-L charts, learning centers and scaffolding. Each method appeals to either the visual, auditory or kinesthetic learner. In learner-centered methods, the teacher is the facilitator or guide as the learners construct their own understandings. These methods produce more active student participation, individual accountability, develop students' ability to work cooperatively and improve their social skills. The classrooms that foster active student engagement are exciting and stimulating. These are the classrooms where more learning is taking place- learning that lasts. Most of our teachers imbed many student/learner centered activities into their instructional day.

Successful methodology utilized in our classrooms also focuses on appropriate questioning format and use of higher level questions and student responses. Teachers ask few factual recall questions and ask more questions that involve analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation. This simulates the kinds of questions used on the state tests and measures the student's ability to problem solve and not just memorize information.

Our teachers incorporate whole group and small group instruction. Our School Improvement Plan recommends that flexible small groups be formed to provide direct skill instruction to students in the lowest 25% of the class. While they need to be engaged more directly with the teacher, they still are provided many opportunities for student-centered learning activities.

#### **5. Professional Development:**

Our Professional Development Team uses collected data to formulate a training agenda for the year. The needs identified in the School Improvement Plan drive the allocation of funds and prioritize the available trainings. Two years ago, we embarked on completing a missing link in our literacy staff development-fluency. Philosophically, we all understood that reading, without adequate speed and accuracy, greatly limited reading comprehension. We researched available programs and purchased a daily reading fluency program. The Professional Development Team trained the staff and additional training, discussion and tweaking occurred at bi-weekly grade level learning team meetings. The second grade teachers were engaged in a year long book study pertaining to fluency. At the end of the year major gains were made in the fluency rate of all students.

We addressed the needs of our students with disabilities by utilizing the Read, and Write Gold software program which reads text to students and models phonics, phrasing and fluency. Additional staff development focused on developing the teachers' technological skills. Teachers were given time to explore the many effective software programs available, such as Riverdeep, FCAT Explorer, Science Court and the Reading Counts assessment program. Our supplemental academic instructor received monthly training and in turn, trained our reading teachers in effective shared, guided reading and reciprocal teaching strategies. We are also building a professional library of videos and DVDs which model effective reading strategies.

Most important was the training the teachers received on differentiated instruction. Learning how to make lessons and assignments that fit the learning styles and needs of each child is challenging and necessary. Long gone is the 'one size fits all' model.

Our proficiency rate in writing was 99%. We attribute that to extensive staff development with writing gurus, Melissa Forney and Nancy Steele. The strategies and techniques our teachers gleaned from their training were immeasurable. Additionally, common planning time allows cadres of teachers work together and jointly assess each class's writing samples. They become more aware of their own instructional strengths and weaknesses. We are furthering our efforts with training in student-led conferences. Reading research, discussing findings, videotaping student-led conferences and discovering through trial and error has generated professional growth and dialogue.

Beyond training provided at the school center, many teachers participate in the Accomplished Educator's Assessment program. They set professional training goals to achieve at universities, on-line research, and school district provided staff development. Several teachers attended the Just Read Florida Literacy Conference and the Florida Educational Technology Conference in Orlando. Our weekly learning team meetings allow

teachers the time and opportunity to share best practices, read articles from professional journals and analyze data. Our faculty meetings include mini training lessons geared to benefit teachers at all grade levels. We have often commented that the best training we receive comes from our own highly qualified staff. We believe the professional development undertaken has positively impacted student achievement as evidenced in our rising test scores among all students and subgroups.

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (E) Grade 3 Test Florida FCAT

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Florida Dept. of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	93	93	88	90	91
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	66	64	68	69	56
Number of students tested	163	195	212	206	208
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	75	93	77	89	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	38	71	46	55	61
Number of students tested	16	14	13	18	13
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	69	58	60	54	65
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	37	10	28	27	36
Number of students tested	19	21	25	15	14
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

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Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	98	91	92	94	91
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	79	79	74	70	63
Number of students tested	163	195	212	206	209
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	75	100	69	83	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	51	57	62	78	69
Number of students tested	16	14	13	18	13
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	95	62	68	73	60
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	58	24	28	20	27
Number of students tested	19	21	25	15	15
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

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<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	94	86	91	89	87
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	65	67	74	64	61
Number of students tested	191	193	217	218	177
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	85	87	76	86	93
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	51	41	24	54	63
Number of students tested	13	15	17	14	15
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	73	45	72	64	50
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	20	25	36	24	22
Number of students tested	15	20	14	25	18
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

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Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	95	91	93	95	85
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	65	65	63	65	53
Number of students tested	190	193	217	218	177
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	85	80	88	86	93
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	54	40	47	50	80
Number of students tested	13	15	17	14	15
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	80	50	71	84	50
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	53	25	14	28	11
Number of students tested	15	20	14	25	18
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

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Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	96	91	87	85	89
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	73	66	61	53	55
Number of students tested	200	208	223	167	180
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	87	88	88	90	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	48	53	57	77	77
Number of students tested	19	17	16	17	17
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	87	64	53	56	50
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	29	14	10	17	0
Number of students tested	24	14	21	18	16
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	89	85	85	75	80
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	67	64	57	51	60
Number of students tested	201	207	223	167	180
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
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	79	65	81	84	82
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	58	53	38	53	53
Number of students tested	19	17	16	17	17
2. ESE					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Achievement Level 3 plus Achievement Level 4 and 5	58	46	52	28	33
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Achievement Level 4 and 5	37	31	19	11	13
Number of students tested	24	13	21	18	15
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					