

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

Official School Name J. W. Shepard Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1000 Wilson Dr.  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Plano Texas 75075-8565  
City State Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Collin State School Code Number\* 043910108

Telephone (469) 752-3100 Fax (469) 752-3101

Web site/URL http://k-12.pisd.edu/Schools/shepard/d E-mail mary.spickler@pisd.edu

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent Dr. Doug Otto  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Plano ISD Tel. (469) 752-8100

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.

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Duncan Webb  
(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.

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

*\*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: \_\_\_\_\_ 43 Elementary schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 12 Middle schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High Schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 8 High schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 Other  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 68 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 8926  
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 8349

### 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 are  
 Rural
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 4 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 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	41	27	68	8			0
1	34	32	66	9			0
2	40	40	80	10			0
3	47	37	84	11			0
4	39	36	75	12			0
5	40	47	87	Other			0
6			0				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							<b>460</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 0  | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 12 | % Asian or Pacific Islander        |
| 6  | % Black or African American        |
| 9  | % Hispanic or Latino               |
| 73 | % 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	8
<b>( 2 )</b>	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	25
<b>( 3 )</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	33
<b>( 4 )</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	459
<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: 6 %
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 28 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|----|---|

Number of languages represented 13

Specify languages: Arabic, Armenian, Bahasa Indonesian, German, Hindi, Korean, Kurdish, Mandarin, Russian, Shona, Spanish, Teluga, Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals 14 %

Total number students who qualify: 63

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:  $\frac{12}{57}$  %  
 Total Number of Students Serve

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>5</u>	Autism	<u>0</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deafness	<u>4</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deaf-Blindnes	<u>18</u>	Specific Learning Disabilit
<u>10</u>	Emotional Disturbanc	<u>39</u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>1</u>	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</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>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>24</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialist	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Support Staff	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>50</u>	<u>3</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of 19 : 1 students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1

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

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	97 %	97 %	97 %	97 %	98 %
Daily teacher attendance	95 %	94 %	94 %	94 %	95 %
Teacher turnover rate	8 %	3 %	8 %	0 %	0 %
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

## PART III - SUMMARY

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At Shepard we believe! We believe high expectations are essential. We believe everyone is more successful when they feel a part of the school community and when they feel safe. We believe we learn best when we are shown our success. We believe mistakes are part of the learning process. We believe invitations to join the learning are more successful than demands. We believe working together everyone can achieve more. At Shepard we believe and these beliefs shape us.

The Shepard Community puts our beliefs into actions. Believing high expectations are essential for student success, teachers frequently talk to students about quality work and setting goals. Parent information nights are held at the beginning of the year to provide grade level expectations and tell them how they can help. At curriculum nights hosted by vertical teams students and parents have fun working together while parents learn curriculum expectations. Student progress is closely monitored and assistance provided through after school tutoring and parent assistance in the classroom. By understanding that invitations to learning are more successful than demands, teachers and students both enjoy learning at Shepard. Investigations are common occurrences, as well as choices and centers. Teachers differentiate in many ways so that students get what they need they become successful, which increases their motivation to learn.

Knowing that everyone is more successful when they feel safe and a part of the school community, we have school-wide rules that are reviewed at welcome back assemblies, and taught and reviewed regularly in every classroom. We have a little fun, make everyone feel a part of the school, and review our expectations. Staff needs this also, so we connect each month at staff meetings with little activities, or bigger events like bowling with turkeys or snowman games. Student Safety Patrol assists with student arrival, helping children safely out of cars and welcoming them at the same time. We focus on specific citizenship traits and recognize students in a Citizen of the Month Ceremony.

Nothing breeds success like success, so students and staff are frequently involved in celebrating successes. Along with that we recognize that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. Students earn FISH tickets when they succeed at something. The staff has a stuffed fish given to honor an accomplishment or particular kindness shown. Students receive certificates for excellence in all subject areas at the end of the year in grade level and all-school assemblies. We celebrate goals students have met by sending the principal up on the roof, or dressing her up as the Patriotic Principal. Community Circles are a means of both celebrating and helping students work through mistakes. Discipline problems are handled with Problem Solving Sheets that help students learn from mistakes. The over-riding attitude is that mistakes happen, we learn and move on, and really celebrate our successes.

Finally, our entire community understands that by working together everyone achieves more. Shepard has a very involved PTA that partner with us to provide materials and parental support in the classrooms. Community members are mentors and Literacy Links volunteers. Our teachers are involved in vertical teams and grade level teams for planning appropriate curriculum. Cooperative learning is common in classrooms. Students in upper grades partner with lower grade students to serve as reading and science buddies. All teachers assist with tutoring, not just the classroom teachers.

Acting on our beliefs, we support our mission to create a welcoming and nurturing environment where parents and school staff partner together to ensure student success and enjoyment of learning. Visitors instantly recognize that this is a friendly, comfortable place to be. That is why we have substitutes that sub only here, retirees that come back to volunteer, and students who grow up and move back into our neighborhood so their children can go to school here.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

In accordance with state statutes, all elementary public schools in Texas are evaluated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) according to the academic performance of its students in grades 3-5. Each spring, students in grades 3-5 take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), a battery of exams measuring student understanding of concepts and skills in mathematics, reading, writing, and science. Special education students unable to take TAKS are required to take an alternative assessment, the State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA) or TAKS-ALT for severely handicapped children. Student results are compared to state criterion standards to determine the level of achievement that may be credited to a campus. Both aggregate (for all students) and disaggregate (among different ethnic groups, special education, and low socio-economic populations) results are evaluated. The state legislature determines the standard for passing each of the subject exams. Research by NWEA has documented the Texas exams for elementary students as among the most demanding exams in the nation.

For the past two years, Shepard Elementary has received the highest campus rating (Exemplary) issued by the state's education agency for student academic performance. This level of award is an improvement over the previous two years' rating of "Recognized", the state's second highest rating for a campus. Since the implementation of the state's most rigorous exams (TAKS), over 90% of tested students (and all eligible subgroups) have met the state's performance standards in reading, mathematics, and writing. Shepard Elementary has received special recognition from the state agency for its superior levels of academic performance in all tested subjects. In Texas, a campus is awarded "Commended" for a minimum number of students answering over 90% of the test items correctly. When compared to the state's average during each of the past five years, Shepard has had more students achieving "Commended" status than the state or region. This level of performance indicates that students at Shepard receive an exceptional education in the core academic areas. Our special education population has met these same high standards on the SDAA. One hundred percent of those students tested on the SDAA met their projected levels of achievement as set by each child's Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee.

Although Shepard Elementary does not have significant numbers in ethnic or low socioeconomic subgroups, the campus experiences spurts of growth in these populations. To maintain the campus' high level of overall achievement, it is necessary for these smaller numbered subgroups to perform sufficiently on the state exams to meet proficiency standards.

District-wide, Kindergarten through fifth grade students take the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test, a computerized achievement test in mathematics and reading, adding language and science in gr. 3-5. This customized measure of assessment is designed to continually adjust during administration, to accurately monitor growth over time, and/or can be used as an indicator towards students' success on state standards. The COGAT (Cognitive Aptitude Test) is administered to all third and fifth grade students. This standardized assessment gives teachers and parents a snapshot of student potential for academic achievement. These scores, along with other diagnostic assessments, provide the necessary tools to place students in appropriate programs and instructional settings. The RPTE (Reading Proficiency Tests in English) is administered to Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in grades three through five and provides a statewide, standardized measure of how well these students are learning to read in English. One hundred percent of our students demonstrated a high level of proficiency as measured on this assessment instrument.

In addition to performing well above district and state standards, Shepard Elementary has performed above the standards set forth for meeting the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as described in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The attendance rates of all groups are greater than 95% and the exam participation rate (100%) and exam performance rates (>95%) for all students and student subgroups have been above the AYP standards since the initiation of NCLB.

More information regarding the Texas assessment and accountability systems can be found at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/index.html> (assessment) and <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/accountability.html> (accountability).

### 2. Using Assessment Results:

Shepard Elementary teachers use assessment data to propel student learning and school performance. Teachers track student growth through district-developed diagnostic tests, which are administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. With the additional data gained from state-required Texas Assessment Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), Cognitive Abilities Test, Texas Primary Reading Inventory, and

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), teachers diagnose each student's strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing, science, and math. In the past two years, the state has increased the difficulty of its testing, raising the standards for all students. Our teachers were involved in professional development for assistance in interpreting these new expectations. Participants gained a deeper understanding of complex state objectives (TEKS) and how to apply them in the classroom.

The data from diagnostic and state testing is entered into the district's online reporting system which generates reports that track student progress, identify academic needs, analyze campus achievement, and profile campus demographics. Teachers use these data to direct instruction, write goals for Individual Education Plans, devise individual and group lesson plans, and target areas for growth. In addition, this data identifies students who are candidates for PAR (Plano Accelerated Reading), and AIM (Accelerated Instruction in Math), instructional programs designed to remediate and further close the achievement gap for all students. This information is also used in CARE (Campus Assessment, Review, and Evaluation) meetings to plan accommodations for students or determine the need for referrals to ESL (English as a Second Language), special education, dyslexia instruction, language development, or other district programs.

Teachers continually meet in subject area groups to vertically align curriculum and instruction based on current student performance. Team meetings occur weekly allowing teachers to analyze data and adjust goals. General and special education teams collaborate and support each other in co-teaching and tutoring. Team meetings, general-to-special education collaborations, co-teaching, and tutoring are all methods used to analyze data, adjust goals, and support student learning. As a result, Shepard Elementary has increased its state test scores to earn the state's highest rating for student performance.

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

Shepard staff continually strives to keep students and parents informed. Grade level parent information nights are held at the beginning of each year to provide parents information about the expectations for the year, explaining curriculum and assessments. Parent conferences for all students are held after the first 9 weeks, and then as teacher and parent request to keep parents informed of student progress.

Feedback to students is provided regularly through discussion of daily work and reviewing content tests. Portfolio reporting is used in kindergarten, first, and second grades. Students in third, fourth, and fifth grades receive report cards each nine weeks. Parents are notified with progress reports when their child's grades significantly drop or if the grades are at risk of falling below passing standards.

Individualized standardized test results are sent to parents, and teachers and/or counselor assist with score interpretation through individual parent meetings. School-wide results in a campus report card are sent home in a letter and posted on our website each year. The results are shared at our annual public School Based Improvement Committee meeting. The SBIC, composed of community representatives, parents, teachers, and administrator meet at least 3 times a year to analyze the data, review instructional plans, and set campus goals. Campus accountability results are published in local newspapers, posted on the district and school websites, shared in PTA meetings, explained in Chats with the Principal, and included in school newsletters. This open communication with our community contributes to our success.

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

Sharing ideas and best practices is sound educational practice that benefits everyone involved. In house, teachers share successes at every team meeting as they discuss their week. We begin every leadership team meeting with celebrations. Every monthly staff meeting has time devoted to celebrations or sharing of ideas. The principal provides incentives to teachers to visit other classrooms. Student successes are shared on bulletin boards in the hallways and on morning announcements.

Our district offers avenues for campus-to-campus communication through curriculum meetings of grade level team leaders, summer Train the Trainer sessions, and vertical team meetings. Our teachers have invited others within the district at the same grade level to share ideas. Shepard's literacy specialist has been asked to train new teachers in best reading practices, as well as to help write a program for our special education students.

Each year the Plano ISD Education Foundation awards grants to teachers. Teachers at Shepard have received several grants to enhance our writing, math and science programs. These grants are published for teachers district-wide to review and get ideas from. The principal initiated a once-a-month meeting with the other schools that feed into our middle school to discuss what is working in our schools, with the goal of ultimately helping our middle school.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

The curriculum taught at Shepard Elementary is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and skills (TEKS) and aligned with the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS.) The curriculum is available to staff on-line, allowing for easy access and refinement. Horizontal teaming ensures consistency in materials, instructional strategies, and targeting of necessary skills. Vertical teaming provides clearly articulated curriculum expectations, consistency within the campus, and the opportunity to look at curriculum as a whole. Teachers utilize various grouping and teaching strategies to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum in a way that best meets their needs. Critical thinking is emphasized across all subjects. Our vertical teams in language arts, math and integrated (science/social studies/health) have worked collaboratively to assist teachers with using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide, and in providing consistency in teaching graphic organizers to all students.

Our language arts program uses a balanced approach to literacy instruction that includes reading, writing, listening and speaking. We have made efforts to combine the best theory and learning strategies to match the learning styles of individual students. Teachers integrate phonics into reading and writing instruction, emphasizing that words on paper make sense. The goal is for all students to read and write at their potential, and teachers provide varying levels of support through shared, guided and independent instruction. Listening and speaking are a natural part of learning, and students are encouraged to use these areas to help build their skills in reading and writing.

Our mathematics curriculum provides opportunities for students to value mathematics and to become confident in their ability to solve problems. The curriculum is based on TEKS and aligned with the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM.) It is designed to build basic understanding in numbers, operations and quantitative reasoning patterns, relationships and algebraic thinking geometry and spatial reasoning measurement and probability and statistics. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking.

Social studies, science and health are integrated into an active, challenging and student-centered curriculum. The powerful components of this curriculum are the six over-arching concepts that connect the ideas K-12. Students have access to website links, video clips, power-point presentations, field trips, hands-on materials, and literature that support the objectives. Again, students are expected to think critically.

All students participate in physical education, art and music. The physical education curriculum emphasizes fitness for life through. Our music program, based on the Kodaly method, has students learning to read music, becoming confident in using their voice, and enjoying singing folk music and playing singing games. Our visual arts program is based on Discipline Based Art Education which focuses on art production, aesthetics, art history and art criticism. Our students learn about the elements and principals of design, and create works of their own based on concepts taught. In music, art and P.E., the teachers relate instruction to what students are learning in core subjects as well.

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

Shepard Elementary uses a balanced literacy approach to reading and language arts instruction. Our integrated program connects all aspects of phonics, word study, vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, spelling and writing in meaningful context. We believe our approach combines the best in theory and learning practices to ensure student success. Classrooms are print-rich environments that provide opportunities for students to engage in various genres of books, periodicals, letters, charts, related to current learning, etc.

Students learn to approach the reading task expecting meaning, and use phonological, syntactical, and semantic clues in decoding as tools. Teachers use a read-aloud selection to introduce a literary focus. Word study is done with word walls, word sorts, spelling study and looking at words in context. All students receive guided reading instruction. Our community has supported this instruction by providing a leveled reading library. Guided reading instruction happens in small group with material at the students' instructional level. Reading skills are modeled with thinking out loud and specific comprehension strategies taught, as agreed upon through vertical teaming. Student discussion and rereading is an integral part of reaching deeper understanding. Writing instruction is coordinated with reading so readers begin to think as authors. Writing is modeled, often doing a shared writing piece before the students are guided through independent writing.

Through on-going assessments some students are identified to receive targeted instruction. This instruction may be provided by the classroom teacher, ESL teacher, literacy/dyslexia specialist, or special education teacher depending on the student's needs. All teachers use reflective teaching practices to continually assess student progress through observing, evaluating, and planning instruction. They create a climate that promotes a love of reading and writing that will nurture lifelong learning.

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

Shepard's mathematics curriculum provides a spiraling scope and sequence of instruction which utilizes multiple resources. The main areas of focus for instruction include number and operations, geometry, measurement, patterns and algebraic thinking, probability and statistics, and problem solving. Teachers and students have access to textbooks, numerous math resource books, computer programs, manipulatives, and calculators to facilitate development of conceptual understanding. As a result, the math classroom is an engaging environment where students discuss and write about mathematics, create products, solve meaningful problems, use technology, ask questions and find solutions.

Our teachers provide a safe classroom environment which provides students with experiences that relate mathematics to the real world. Problem solving experiences are the focus of the mathematics program. They incorporate technology at all levels where appropriate through computer programs, websites, calculators, and Power Point presentations. Teachers provide practical settings for practicing concepts taught in large and small groups. They provide a classroom atmosphere that encourages multiple solution strategies along with their explanations, as evidenced in the use of cognitively guided instruction, multiple step problems, and review boxes. Students develop competency in basic skills by practicing skills embedded in problem solving and practical application. Teachers provide opportunities for conceptual development through the use of concrete materials. Communicating mathematical thinking is stressed, both verbally in classroom and small group discussions, as well as in writing.

All in all, Shepard's mathematics curriculum provides students with a connected, coherent, and consistent math experience. This allows them to acquire an ever expanding body of mathematical knowledge and partake in multiple ways of thinking. Thus, Shepard students have a solid foundation in mathematics that prepares them well for their future, both in the math classroom, and in their journey through life.

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

Shepard uses a variety of instructional methods to improve student learning. Computers in the classroom provide students access to technology in all subjects. A variety of programs provide information, skill practice, and tools to present their learning. Classroom teachers and specialists collaborate to provide optimal learning in whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. Grouping is flexible within each classroom to adjust instruction as the students make progress. Teachers utilize strategies that promote critical thinking and encourage students to ask questions as they assimilate new knowledge. Through journaling, cooperative group activities, and large and small group discussions, students communicate their learning to others, making their own learning more solid.

In social studies and science our students research using Big Six, an information problem-solving method that requires students to brainstorm, think critically, use a variety of resources for gathering information, and produce quality products that demonstrate mastery of learning objectives. Students are taught to use graphic organizers in every subject that help them organize information by comparing, showing linear flow, part to whole/whole to part, or main ideas and details. In all subjects students are taught to think critically about what they read.

In math teachers use Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) to determine the developmental level of student thinking in order to guide them to the next level. Students learn there are multiple ways to solve problems and develop confidence to tackle any type of problem. Hands-on experiential learning is used in both math and science. Teachers and students use objects and models to help students grasp complex and abstract ideas. Students are given many opportunities to talk and write about what they are learning because we know this helps them retain the information better.

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

The Shepard staff understands that lifelong learning is essential for teachers. The world our students will grow up in is not the world our staff grew up in, and we must be prepared for instructing them in new ways to meet the demands of their world. We are fortunate to have a district that requires and plans for 30 hours of professional development each year. The curriculum specialists, principal, leadership team, and vertical teams collaborate and plan our professional development during specified days. The professional learning is based on district and campus goals, which are directly related to identified student needs. In addition, professional development is planned for our monthly staff meetings and monthly vertical team meetings. Professional development is presented by outside consultants, district curriculum staff, teachers and campus administrator. It happens in whole group as well as small group sessions. Shepard staff has also taken advantage of the district's master's degree program, offered upon completion of two years of service in the district.

Grade level teams have common planning time to discuss student needs, develop consistent teaching strategies, and brainstorm solutions to needs discovered in assessment data. We have a differentiation team consisting of our literacy and gifted education specialists who deliver ongoing training in effective differentiation strategies, as well as specific reading/language arts and gifted strategies. Teachers have the opportunity to attend a variety of workshops by outside presenters. Recently teachers have attended workshops/conferences about writing, positive behavior support, CGI, gifted education, physical education, and working with challenging students.

Student learning has been positively impacted by our professional learning. Teachers are more consistently using best-practice strategies that most strongly influence student growth. Our vertical teams make decisions on behalf of students that are directly applied in the classrooms. Everyone on staff feels accountable for every child's learning, every day. We have to be open to learning ourselves to make that happen.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 3 Test Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year 2002-2007 Publisher Texas Education Agency

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standard	100	93	99	100	99
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	56	55	50	53	46
Number of students tested	66	73	82	77	85
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3	4	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	4	5	1	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standard	100	93	99	100	99
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	56	55	50	53	46
Number of students tested	66	73	82	77	85
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3	4	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	4	5	1	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	93	92	89	100	99
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	48	41	40	48	25
Number of students tested	67	74	83	77	87
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.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	87	86	93	99	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	34	33	48	26	28
Number of students tested	71	90	92	90	80
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	4	9	12	13
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	4	10	13	13
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	87	91	94	93	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	40	42	50	34	38
Number of students tested	71	90	92	90	103
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	9	14	13
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	10	16	13
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr	Mar/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	100	98	92	97	97
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	42	51	50	52	32
Number of students tested	77	90	81	106	92
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	10	9	18	23
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	11	11	17	25
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	100	100	94	95	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	61	74	57	44	31
Number of students tested	82	89	81	105	92
Percent of total students tested	98	99	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	11	14	17	21
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	12	16	16	23
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr	Feb/Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Met Standards	95	99	94	95	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	61	74	57	44	31
Number of students tested	82	89	81	105	92
Percent of total students tested	98	99	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	11	14	17	21
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	12	16	16	23
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
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					