

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. Denise May

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

Official School Name Big Springs Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3301 W. Campbell Rd.

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

Garland

City

Texas

State

75044-8142

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Dallas

State School Code Number* 057916133

Telephone (469) 593-8100

Fax (469) 593-8114

Web site/URL http://www.risd.org/Schools/schools.as E-mail denise.may@risd.org

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. David Simmons

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

District Name Richardson ISD

Tel. (469) 593-0000

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. Luke Davis

(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

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: _____ 41 Elementary schools
 _____ 0 Middle schools
 _____ 8 Junior High Schools
 _____ 4 High schools
 _____ 2 Other
 _____ 55 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____ 6639
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____ 9269

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. _____ 2 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 _____ 11 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	37	25	62	8			0
1	35	36	71	9			0
2	31	32	63	10			0
3	32	30	62	11			0
4	41	48	89	12			0
5	50	32	82	Other			0
6	51	33	84				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							513

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 2 | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 8 | % Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 19 | % Black or African American |
| 21 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| 50 | % 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 19 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	50
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	55
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	105
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	555
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.19
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	19

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 15 %
- | | |
|----|---|
| 78 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|----|---|
- Number of languages represented 16

Specify languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, German, Amhric, Arabic, Cantonese, Dutch/Flemish, Ethiopic, Finnish, Mandarin, Tagalog (Philipino), Swahili, Taiwanese, Tigrinya, Urdu

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals 28 %

Total number students who qualify: 145

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: 13 %
68 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>0</u>	Autism	<u>0</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deafness	<u>6</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deaf-Blindnes	<u>11</u>	Specific Learning Disabilit
<u>3</u>	Emotional Disturbanc	<u>23</u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>0</u>	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>24</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>28</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialist	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>
Support Staff	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>48</u>	<u>6</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of 18 : 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 %	97 %
Daily teacher attendance	94 %	93 %	94 %	94 %	94 %
Teacher turnover rate	14 %	14 %	24 %	23 %	18 %
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

Big Springs Elementary was recently compared to an extended family, a place where not only are students known by staff and community, but where their families have raised generations of students. This description is a recurring theme expressed by faculty and parents who have been fortunate to experience Big Springs.

Although located in Garland, Texas, Big Springs is one of forty-one elementary schools in the Richardson Independent School District (RISD). When the school opened in 1978, the enrollment of 435 students made it the largest elementary school in the district. The road in front of the school was only two lanes and was surrounded by homes as well as pastures. By 1991, as the move to the suburbs became more evident, enrollment swelled to over 760. Over the last decade families have seen the road expand to six lanes, have witnessed the traffic jam every day during arrival and dismissal hours, and have watched the neighborhood fill with homes and small businesses. Enrollment has stabilized in the low five-hundreds.

During the first twenty years, the school's population was primarily comprised of Anglo students. The subsequent decade began to see changes, bringing the diversity that makes Big Springs a reflection of the real world around us. Seventeen languages are spoken by Big Springs families and the demographic picture has evolved to 50% Anglo, 21% Hispanic, 19% African American, 7.8 % Asian, and 1.6% American Indian. Twenty-eight percent of our students are considered economically disadvantaged with fifteen percent limited English proficient. In spite of these changes, the expectation for academic excellence has been maintained, as demonstrated by the rating of Exemplary granted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) based on state testing standards and last year's student performance. Student accomplishments were also recognized by TEA with Gold Performance acknowledgements as follows: Commended on Writing, Mathematics, and Science and Comparable Improvement in Reading and Mathematics.

This past year brought two additional recognitions to Big Springs. On October 30, 2007 the school was officially named to the Texas Business and Education Coalition's (TBEC) Honor Roll. The honor roll schools not only have a high percentage of students meeting the state's standards on all tests, they also have the highest percentage of students performing at the state's most rigorous standard, Commended, in every subject. Big Springs was also included on Texas Monthly Magazine's list of the top public schools in Texas. <http://www.texasmonthly.com/2007-12-01/feature6.php>

Big Springs is fortunate to have wonderful parental support and involvement. Third generations can be found among our students. Parents and grandparents are active in the local PTA and contribute thousands of volunteer hours every year. In addition to helping with extra-curricular activities, fundraising, weekly homeroom support to each teacher, and mentoring, parents are very visible on any given day when they drop by to enjoy lunch with their child or attend a 'Celebrations!' assembly for student recognition.

Like all elementary schools in RISD, our student body is comprised of kindergarten through sixth grade. In addition to at least three sections of each grade level, Big Springs is home to a class of kindergarten students with special needs who require early interventions. One other program serves students in grades one through six with developmental challenges. These students participate in mainstream classes on some level and enjoy being a member of the Big Springs family, giving yet another opportunity for our students to embrace students with a wide variety of skills and challenges.

Staff members at Big Springs have been trained in Tribes, a whole school program that promotes community building and team work. Faculty members model collaboration and problem-solving for students and guide them toward self-responsible behavior and cooperative learning. This approach is yet another indication of the value placed on reaching the whole child by not only instructing them academically but preparing them for life. Children are welcomed and every attempt is made to meet their needs at whatever level.

Student assessment is a necessary aspect of the educational experience. At Big Springs, assessment is the natural culmination of solid instruction to determine adjustments in teaching in order to better serve the students. In addition to state-mandated tests, students at Big Springs are periodically assessed through other instruments such as district-developed benchmarks, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early

Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA), and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). All of these tools provide relevant data to monitor student progress throughout the year and also play a significant role in student success as teachers make decisions about instructional planning.

The following statement clearly expresses the mission of Big Springs Elementary: 'Believing all students have unique and valuable talents, the Big Springs community will provide a positive and supportive educational environment to produce successful and responsible life-long learners.' The staff, parents and students at Big Springs are truly a community bound together by a common goal. To quote a long-time staff member, 'My heart lives here.'

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

Each spring semester Texas public schools administer a criterion-referenced test called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). This assessment measures student success and proficiency of the statewide curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The state of Texas accountability system ensures the TEKS are taught in every classroom across Texas. In addition, the Federal No Child Left Behind Act mandates that all children receive rigorous academic instruction. Students in third grade must meet the TAKS reading standard set by the state of Texas in order to be promoted to fourth grade. Students in fifth grade must meet the TAKS reading and mathematics standard set by the state of Texas in order to be promoted to sixth grade.

Each school receives an accountability rating based on the assessment results. Campuses set goals to receive an exemplary rating, the highest rating given by the Texas Education Agency. To receive an exemplary rating, the state requires that ninety percent of students meet the set passing score. Due to the continuing diversity of the student population at Big Springs Elementary we are proud to have received the exemplary rating for the 2006-2007 school year. We continue to deliver academic instruction based on the needs of the students and strive to maintain our exemplary rating.

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) assessments measure student performance in the areas of reading at third through sixth grade, in writing at fourth grade, in mathematics at third through sixth grade, and in science at fifth grade. The Campus Accountability Report provides data on all students in grades third through sixth which is then disaggregated for several subpopulations, including African American, Hispanic, Asian, Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, and Limited English Proficient. Big Springs Elementary students scored at ninety percent passing or higher in the areas of reading and mathematics in third through sixth grade, writing in fourth grade, and science in fifth grade. For the 2007 TAKS administration one hundred percent of third and sixth graders passed the reading portion of the TAKS test and one hundred percent of the fifth and sixth graders passed the math portion of the TAKS test. Students in subpopulations received similar results on the reading and mathematics portions of the TAKS tests.

For the 2006-2007 school year, students in special education who received Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) instruction based on their individual educational plans had the opportunity to take a State Developed Alternative Assessment known as SDAA II. The decision for a student to take SDAA II was made by the Annual Review and Dismissal committee, consisting of the principal, the special education teacher(s), the general education teacher, the counselor, and the parents. One hundred percent of the students who took SDAA II for reading in third through sixth grade, mathematics in third through sixth grade, and writing for fourth grade scored at or above expectations.

The state recognizes those students who achieve ninety percent or higher on the TAKS tests as Commended performers. Big Springs teachers plan instruction for all students in an effort to help them succeed academically and aim for higher commended rates each year. On the mathematics portion of the 2007 TAKS test fifty-five percent of all students in third through sixth grade achieved Commended Performance status. Sixty-three percent of the fifth grade students achieved Commended Performance status on the science portion of the 2007 TAKS test.

An explanation of the Texas performance standards can be found at:
www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/index.html

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Big Springs teachers recognize the value of using assessment results to better understand our students and to meet their academic needs. Various forms of assessments including TAKS, fluency assessments, district benchmarks, and teacher observations are used to guide instruction and ensure student success.

Ongoing assessment helps teachers understand students' strengths and weaknesses to drive instruction and make individualized plans. Big Springs uses a research-based reading assessment, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), for kindergarten through sixth grade to identify students who need reading intervention. Teachers use the results to place students in a 3 Tier Reading Model. Students in Tiers 2 and 3 receive additional reading intervention and they are progress monitored on a regular basis.

Big Springs students in kindergarten through second grades receive solid instruction in reading as their foundation for future academic success. Teachers at this level rely highly on the DIBELS results and using the Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA) to monitor students' reading levels and comprehension. Students in grades second through sixth take the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) at least four times each year to identify students with a Lexile book level. This allows teachers to match students with an independent and instructional reading level and also measures student growth throughout the year, with particular attention to fluency and comprehension.

District benchmarks and TAKS data are analyzed to determine which TEKS need to be re-taught. Kindergarten, first and second graders take district benchmarks in math. Third through sixth graders take district benchmarks in reading, math, and science. Using the results, teachers plan interventions, identify objectives that need to be further instruction, plan tutorials, and hold student/teacher conferences. TAKS data is carefully analyzed to assess progress at grades third through sixth.

Using assessment results is an essential tool to document progress through pre-assessment, ongoing progress monitoring, and evaluating mastery at the end of the year. Big Springs teachers have generated a tracking sheet called the 'Greensheet.' The Greensheet allows them to show and compare personal student data as well as all school assessment results. Campus administrators and instructional specialists monitor this student data as well, using the information for decisions regarding intervention groups, tutoring, and Saturday School sessions.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Big Springs Elementary is a partnership of students, parents and staff members. By definition this implies a relationship of cooperation and collaboration toward a mutual goal. Our communication provides parents with the information they need to be able to support their children and the teachers.

The foundation begins with 'Under Construction,' a tradition for the last five years. After receiving written notification of the child's class assignment, families drop by to meet the teacher personally one evening before classes begin. This brief and informal face-to-face opportunity is much appreciated by parents and helpful in minimizing anxiety for children on the first day of school.

'Meet the Teacher Night' is usually held within the first two weeks of school. On this occasion, parents are given an overview of grade level expectations, homework policies, contact information, ways to help children at home, and the chance to sign up for volunteering during the school year. Other communication tools include monthly teacher newsletters, progress reports, PTA communications (including an electronic listserve), the school marquee, the principal's Bobcat Happenings newsletter, and the school website at <http://www.risd.org/schools/bse/index.htm>

Ongoing communication is critical throughout the year. All students have a 'Friday Folder' which serves as the tool for transporting information home to parents on a weekly basis. In addition, every Big Springs student in grades two through six has a student planner for communicating daily homework assignments, work habits/behavior, and any reminders to parents. Parents and teachers also communicate regularly via email, phone calls, and parent-teacher conferences.

An overview of school assessment results is shared with all parents when the School Report Card is sent home mid-year, as required by Texas legislation and the Texas Education Agency. This report provides information concerning student performance as well as information concerning expenditures, average class size, and student/teacher ratios. The Local School Council, a site-based committee involved in the shared decision-making process, also discusses the School Report Card and assists in communicating the school's successes to the community.

4. Sharing Success:

Richardson ISD provides various opportunities to promote partnerships among its schools. Big Springs teachers and administrators attend meetings and planning sessions allowing for the exchange of ideas. The Campus Reading Specialist participates in regular planning meetings at which she shares the successes and challenges that Big Springs faces. The Instructional Leadership Team attends a district-wide Summer Leadership Conference to brainstorm and reflect on successes from the previous school year. This conference guides planning for the upcoming school year. Immediately upon returning from summer vacation the last two years, all elementary principals have gathered for team building and have been assigned to Tribes (see reference to this model in Part III-Summary). This effort to build collaboration and team has been well-received by the administrators and indicates the support they experience from central administration.

Throughout the year campus administrators participate in monthly meetings as well as being divided into three cluster groups. These groups represent a cross-section of the diverse schools across the district and provide an opportunity to share successes as well as concerns. At the campus level, grade level meetings are held minimally once a week and vertical teaming is also supported and encouraged. This is particularly helpful for intermediate teachers who are departmentalized for instructional purposes.

Big Springs professional staff members have been called upon to serve as leaders of professional development over the years. At the beginning of this school year, first grade teachers showcased their classrooms as 'Model Classrooms' during district-wide new teacher training days. Other classroom teachers have presented ideas and strategies at district-wide math and reading planning sessions. This year two of our highest performing teachers advanced to specialist positions at other schools within our district, reflecting our district's desire to share successes among all its campuses. In collaboration with universities and Richardson ISD high schools, Big Springs welcomes teacher interns and student teachers. These high school and college students are able to observe and learn teaching strategies from highly qualified staff members. Big Springs teachers delight in contributing to future educators' development.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the foundation of the Big Springs Elementary curriculum. Students receive a well-rounded education with solid instruction in reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, art, music and physical education. In addition to the TEKS outlined by the state of Texas, Richardson ISD supports all grade levels and content areas by providing a scope and sequence, calendar timelines, and lessons through an online curriculum planner.

Three years ago Richardson ISD implemented a district-wide core reading program. Big Springs joined this initiative, knowing the benefits of research-based instruction. The program has been largely responsible for the continued success of all students across the district and emphasizes phonemic awareness, vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, literary analysis, and reading across the curriculum. Students in Kindergarten through third grade receive at least one hundred and twenty minutes daily in Reading and Language Arts while students in fourth through sixth receive ninety minutes.

In Math and Science, students participate in hands-on learning activities to build a concrete foundation and move them toward applying their learning. A strong emphasis is placed on problem solving and using higher level thinking skills. These programs allow students to participate in many hands on experiments from life, earth, and physical science and work through the experiments using the scientific method. During experiments students work in small groups and record their observations, data results, and conclusions in their science notebooks. At the end of each experiment students are allowed time to generate their own questions which may be used for future classroom investigations, science fair projects, or invention convention projects.

Social Studies curriculum is integrated into language arts instruction. The objectives move students from an immediate understanding of their community to a more global perspective of world history and culture. At Big Springs, the social studies content is enhanced by Junior Achievement, a program that allows business community members to bring a real-world view into the classrooms.

In order to provide the best possible educational experience for our students, our district ensures that every child receives a balanced curriculum. Elementary students receive structured Physical Education classes as well as music and art. Students at Big Springs are privileged to receive their instruction from gifted and experienced teachers in all of these areas. Art class includes basket weaving, ceramics, painting, and sketching; physical education promotes Jump Rope for the Heart and a lifetime of fitness; music explores children's talents for singing, dancing and performing as a grade level for PTA meetings. As an extra bonus sixth graders have the unique opportunity to participate in band or orchestra as well as choir and handbells.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Following the National Reading Panel's research (2000), the 3-Tier model (University of Texas system/Texas Education Agency, 2005) and the Richardson school district's adoption of the Houghton Mifflin Reading program, Big Springs Elementary aligns the five components of reading in daily core, strategic and intensive reading instruction.

Differentiated instruction at Big Springs Elementary is driven by recurring assessment tools such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA), Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and our district's benchmark assessments. The Big Springs teachers commit to student success by offering after school tutoring and Saturday School for students in third through sixth grade. Again, groups and lessons are very skills specific as to needs reflected in testing data. Various leveled readers and the 'Time for Kids Exploring Nonfiction' series, available in our school's Literacy Library, tie in additional practice of reading strategies in all content areas. In addition, each curriculum area has an Action Team made up of teachers and paraprofessionals. Therefore, the Reading Team's assignment is the task of planning and organizing activities to enhance proficiency in reading at all grade levels. Some of the Reading Action Team's activities include Reading under the Stars night, interactive bulletin boards in hallways and TAKS reading parent education night.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Big Springs Elementary mathematics instruction, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), develops skills in all areas of math including: numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and special reasoning; measurement; probability and statistics; and problem solving. In compliance with district-wide initiatives, Big Springs teachers designate a 90 minute block per day to math instruction. Lessons at all grade levels provide opportunity for direct instruction, guided and independent practice, and problem solving. Lessons include both large and small group instruction, and teachers regularly conference with students individually to discuss math progress and set goals about learning. Classes are regularly engaged in hands-on learning through the use of math manipulatives. Students in the primary grades might use ten frames or Unifix Cubes to model the concept of subtraction, while older students might use calculators to find equivalent ratios. Learning is not just a pencil and paper experience for Big Springs Elementary students.

A variety of resources are used at Big Springs to support and encourage math instruction. Teachers access the district's on-line curriculum site to enhance their lesson planning. This site contains a pacing calendar per unit, lesson ideas, district-developed assessments in English and Spanish, and links to other district recommended resources. Big Springs uses a school wide problem-solving model: Understand, Plan, Solve, and Check. Students of all grade levels use this model to apply various problem-solving strategies to word problems.

Connecting math concepts to life is a crucial part of math instruction at Big Springs. Interactive hallway activities are used during transitional times of the day to provide students the opportunity to connect their classroom learning to real life situations. An example of this was January's display of thermometers featuring various temperatures and higher level thinking questions pertaining to the thermometers. Literature and technology are used during math instruction to help students develop an understanding of math's integral role in all areas of learning.

4. Instructional Methods:

At Big Springs Elementary, we believe that consistency in instructional methods from class to class and grade level to grade level is crucial. Most instructional methods in place are provided to our teachers from district curriculum directors via the e-learn system 'Blackboard.' Blackboard gives us the framework and timeline to direct our lessons through the use of pacing calendars and TAKS historical perspectives. Our curriculum Action Teams are formed vertically so that each grade level is represented in developing instructional strategies for school-wide implementation.

Within each content area building wide instructional methods are in place. The Houghton-Mifflin Reading program encourages the use of focus walls in each language arts classroom. The focus wall is a reference for students in spelling, vocabulary, theme skill and genre. Flexible reading groups meet daily with monitoring through regular informal reading assessments. Writer's workshop takes students through the process of subject ideas, revision, editing and publishing.

The Science curriculum at Big Springs Elementary is based on three inquiry-based science programs: the Full Option Science System (FOSS) in kindergarten through fifth grade, Great Explorations in math and Science (GEMS) and Diversity of Life (DOL) in sixth grade. Teachers and students collaborate together on their classroom and real life experiences to further their notebooking observations. In addition to the hands-on curriculum, Richardson ISD has a planetarium which all students in third through sixth grade visit once a year to enhance their space science grade level curriculum. All students in kindergarten through sixth grade visit the Richardson ISD Environmental Center to have more experience with Earth and Life Science. Sixth grade students attend Sky Ranch, a three day camp experience, each year to focus on Earth, Space, and Life Sciences.

Big Springs Elementary students analyze mathematical problems using the UPS check method which promotes metacognition. Math word walls are displayed in classrooms and children have access to many kinds of manipulatives. Throughout the school a visitor would expect to see hallway activities to engage students even while waiting in line for lunch or transitioning to another class.

5. Professional Development:

Professional development for all professional staff members drives instructional improvement at Big Springs. At the beginning of the school year, teachers create an Individualized Professional Development plan, allowing self-reflection to determine professional development opportunities that best fit each teacher's needs. The plan requires teachers to set their own goals for professional growth, which are then shared with

their administrator. The plan is a framework and is flexible to change as student data and teacher needs are identified throughout the school year.

Richardson ISD has a minimum hourly requirement for professional development hours each year. However, the majority of all Big Springs staff members, professional and paraprofessional, far exceed this minimum. The Instructional Leadership Team addresses school wide professional development through the planning and implementation of professional development for all staff. These sessions might include team building, data analysis, goal setting, progress monitoring, or modeling of teacher strategies. Big Springs teachers so value their time spent in professional development courses that they return to campus and share their newly acquired ideas or strategies with other staff members. An emphasis on support and growth among teachers is evident through the mentoring of new teachers and vertical team planning within curriculum areas. Ideas are shared and learning is enhanced through on-going feedback and collaboration. Big Springs' commitment to professional development directly impacts student learning and exemplifies the continuous quest for life-long learning.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 3 Test Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
 Edition/Publication Year most recent 20 Publisher Texas Education Agency

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	99	93	96	67	94
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	54	46	38	0	39
Number of students tested	80	80	71	62	82
Percent of total students tested	92	93	91	87	89
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	4	2	7
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	9	5	3	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	94	87	89		92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%A Commended Performance	13	27	11		15
Number of students tested	16	30	19		13
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	94	76			
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	18	18			
Number of students tested	17	17			
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	97	100		98
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	67	63	50		61
Number of students tested	48	38			46
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	95	82	0	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	55	35	36	0	7
Number of students tested	11	20	11	0	14

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	89	88	89	83	94
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	34	24	39	38	33
Number of students tested	73	68	66	90	69
Percent of total students tested	91	89	86	94	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	7	5	4	6
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	9	6	4	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	83		85	69	81
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	13		15	6	13
Number of students tested	23		13	16	16
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	70		73	73	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	40		27	9	17
Number of students tested	10		11	11	12
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	92	98	97	89	98
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	38	29	51	60	38
Number of students tested	39	42		47	42
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Standard	89		90	75	
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	16		20	0	
Number of students tested	19		10	16	

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	95	97	98	88	86
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	37	48	45	38	28
Number of students tested	62	69	84	72	76
Percent of total students tested	87	85	90	92	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	6	9	5	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	7	10	6	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	71	87	94	73	71
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	14	13	11	18	0
Number of students tested	7	15	18	22	17
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard		90		82	
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance		30		27	
Number of students tested		10		11	
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	100	100	93	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	53	60	65	50	37
Number of students tested	40	35		40	49
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard		100	100	73	67
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance		23	19	9	8
Number of students tested		13	16	11	12

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	98	93	96	93
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	79	56	60	46	27
Number of students tested	71	84	72	80	70
Percent of total students tested	89	89	92	94	86
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	10	6	2	9
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	11	8	2	11
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	92	79	88	76
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	50	8	43	35	18
Number of students tested	16	12	14	17	17
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard			85		75
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance			38		17
Number of students tested			13		12
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	100	100	96	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	88	71	72	55	34
Number of students tested	33	48		53	38
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	93	82	100	85
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	67	47	27	33	8
Number of students tested	18	15	11	12	13

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	94	86	90	98	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	56	26	49	36	26
Number of students tested	81	78	72	64	86
Percent of total students tested	93	91	92	90	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	8	4	1	6
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	9	5	1	7
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	78	63	89	93	71
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	28	15	17	7	14
Number of students tested	18	27	18	15	14
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	82	64	73		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	24	21	9		
Number of students tested	17	14	11		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	98	95	95	100	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	71	34	65	44	35
Number of students tested	48	38		41	49
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	92	81	82		81
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	33	5	27		0
Number of students tested	12	21	11		16

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	96	97	96	85	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	46	58	48	27	27
Number of students tested	72	69	67	92	70
Percent of total students tested	90	91	87	96	91
Number of students alternatively assessed	7	7	4	3	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	9	9	5	3	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	91		93	63	81
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	23		29	6	13
Number of students tested	22		14	16	16
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	80		83	55	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	20		25	0	23
Number of students tested	10		12	11	13
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	100	100	92	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	55	71	63	41	26
Number of students tested	38	42		49	42
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	95		100	81	
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	26		10	6	
Number of students tested	19		10	16	

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	98	99	99	92	95
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	68	65	64	51	25
Number of students tested	62	71	85	71	76
Percent of total students tested	87	88	91	91	90
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	5	8	5	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	6	9	6	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard		100	94	77	94
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance		41	44	36	18
Number of students tested		17	18	22	17
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard				91	
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance				36	
Number of students tested				11	
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	100	100	95	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	78	71	78	59	31
Number of students tested	40	35		39	49
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard		93	94	82	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance		43	44	27	17
Number of students tested		14	16	11	12

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	98	97	96	90
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	79	64	75	60	17
Number of students tested	71	86	73	81	72
Percent of total students tested	89	91	94	95	89
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	6	2	8
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	9	8	2	10
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	92	93	100	84
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	63	42	36	44	16
Number of students tested	16	12	14	18	19
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard			92		85
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance			38		0
Number of students tested			13		13
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	100		98	95
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	85	80		67	18
Number of students tested	34	49		54	38
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
%At or Above Met Standard	100	93	91	92	86
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
%At Commended Performance	67	40	55	58	7
Number of students tested	18	15	11	12	14