U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

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

Name of Principal: Mrs. Karen Snyder

Official School Name: Montgomery Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
120 Penn Street
Montgomery, PA 17752-1144

County: Lycoming State School Code Number*: 3039

Telephone: (570) 547-1608 Fax: (570) 547-6055

Web site/URL: www.montasd.org E-mail: ksnyder@montasd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mrs. Daphne Ross

District Name: Montgomery Area Tel: (570) 547-1608

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Bonnie Taylor

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it 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.*
Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of 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.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.

6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:

2	Elementary schools
1	Middle schools
	Junior high schools
1	High schools
	Other
4	**TOTAL**

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 9987

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 12050

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [ ] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [X] Rural

4. 11 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

   ___ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	29	25	54	**7**			0
K	23	29	52	**8**			0
1	29	23	52	**9**			0
2	23	32	55	**10**			0
3	16	17	33	**11**			0
4	20	36	56	**12**			0
5	23	21	44	**Other**			0
6			0				
		TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL					346

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

____	% American Indian or Alaska Native
1	% Asian
2	% Black or African American
3	% Hispanic or Latino
____	% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
94	% White
____	% Two or more races
100	**% Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 14 %

This rate is 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.	26
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	22
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	48
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	346
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.139
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	13.873

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0
Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 40 %

Total number students who qualify: 139

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 free and reduced-price school meals 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: 12 %

Total Number of Students Served: 40

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

0	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	2	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	16	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	17	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
5	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	20	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	6	0
Paraprofessionals	10	0
Support staff	6	0
Total number	43	0

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 **17 :1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	95%	96%	95%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	**100**	%

PART III - SUMMARY

The Montgomery Elementary School is located in scenic Lycoming County in north central Pennsylvania and is the heartbeat of the rural town of Montgomery. Servicing roughly 350 students from Pre-K through fifth grade, our professional learning communities, combined with a data driven school culture, work to raise achievement levels of all students. The professional learning communities meet weekly to discuss curriculum, share resources and plan strategies for individual student results. This commitment to individualized student achievement is echoed in the Mission Statement which is to create and maintain an environment that ensures that every member of the school community reaches a high level of academic achievement as determined by state and national standards, becomes independent learners, acquires respect for self and others, and attains the skills necessary to become successful in a global economy. The Montgomery Elementary School is committed to a comprehensive system of support to assure this outcome.

As you enter the Montgomery Elementary School, the level of pride and accomplishment is evident. The school is well maintained and has a safe environment with current technology appropriate to a wide range of curricular and extracurricular activities. The learning atmosphere, which is exciting, stimulating and success oriented, affords students the opportunity to learn at high levels. “Rigor, Relevance, Relationships: Whatever it Takes”, is the school motto.

The school climate fosters respect; students feel free to accept and express ideas without fear of prejudice. Adults are compassionate, competent, committed, consistent, considerate and enabled. Open communication exists between students and adults through mentoring, the mastering of standards and the fostering of positive relationships. Students are civic minded and participate in multiple community service activities throughout the school year, including an enormous student run Veteran’s Day celebration, where in 2008, 75 veterans attended the celebration.

Parents take an active role in their child’s education and participate in school sponsored activities. An extremely active Parent Teacher Organization supports supplemental programs such as related arts, literacy opportunities, and real world experiences. Further, the entire community embraces involvement in the educational development of all students. The parents and other members of the community demonstrate respect for education through their availability to, and support for, all members of the school population. The emphasis of the community to support our students toward higher levels of learning is significant based on the demographics of our district. In 2008, fifty percent of the graduating seniors reported that they were the first in their families to attend post secondary education. The School Data Direct website reports 2,253 households in the district for 2008 with 78.2% adults with at least a high school diploma and 12.7% with at least a bachelor’s degree. The median household income for the district is between $30,000 and $40,000 and the free and reduced lunch rate for Montgomery Elementary school is 40%. The community as a whole considers the school as the central focus of their town, understands the value of quality education and supports the board of school directors in allocating resources to promote the success of all students.

The high emphasis on student achievement, combined with multiple interventions through an organized RTI process has proven successful for the Montgomery Elementary School. In 2001, the school received the coveted “Governor’s Award” for outstanding achievement. This award was given to only 11 schools out of approximately 3,000 statewide. In 2003 the elementary principal was recognized by the prestigious Milken Foundation with the Milken Educator Award for furthering excellence in education. In 2004 the school was identified by Standard and Poor’s School Evaluation Services as having “beat the odds,” meaning that the school has above average Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) scores, average or above-average PSSA participation rates and average or above-average levels of low-income students. Finally, 2006 brought the Montgomery Elementary School the award of Excellence in Education by the Wright Group for above average levels of mathematics achievement.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The Montgomery Elementary School participates in the mandatory state testing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for third, fourth and fifth grades. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards based criterion referenced assessment used to measure a student's performance in relationship to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading and Mathematics. Students are grouped into four categories based on their test results. These categories include: Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. Advanced scores indicate an in-depth understanding and an exemplary display of skills based on the standards. Proficient level scores indicate satisfactory academic performance. Basic indicates a partial understanding and limited display and the Below Basic level reflects little understanding and a minimal display of skills. Additional information regarding the PSSA and performance levels can be found at: http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t.

The percentage of students scoring Advanced combined with the percentage scoring Proficient is used to determine a school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in regard to the benchmarks defined by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The NCLB benchmarks for 2007-2008 were 56% in Mathematics and 63% in Reading. School and District AYP status can be found at the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Academic Achievement Report website at http://www.paayp.com/.

The Montgomery Elementary School has seen significant gains in PSSA scores over the last five years. The 2008 school-wide results reported on the PDE website show 92% of our students proficient or advanced in Reading and 95% in Mathematics, with 100% of the students tested. This represents an 11% increase from the previous year in Reading and a 5% increase in Mathematics. We are especially proud of our increase in Reading scores, with 59% of our 5th grade students proficient or advanced in 2004 increasing to 90% proficient or advanced in 2008. Our Economically Disadvantaged subgroup of students continues to "beat the odds" with their overall proficiency in Reading in 2008 being 93% and Mathematics at 93%.

The Montgomery Elementary School has sustained high Mathematics scores over the last five years, with Reading continuing to be the lower of the two assessed areas. Reading scores will continue to be a focus in the school-wide goal setting as the state averages are opposite in this specific data analysis, with the AYP benchmarks being seven percentage points higher in Reading than in Math. The RTI process will focus on tiered interventions to provide individualized instruction and remediation based on the PA Reading Standards. In addition, we have identified a discrepancy in the number of students scoring in the advanced range in Reading compared to Mathematics. In 2008, 50% of all third grade students scored in the advanced range in Mathematics compared to 25% in Reading. Eighty percent of the fourth grade students scored advanced in Mathematics with 54% in Reading. Fifth grade saw 82% advanced in Math and 39% advanced in Reading. The school-wide goal of increasing the number of students scoring in the advanced range will continue with a particular focus in reading. In addition, utilizing the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS) to further disaggregate our data, we discovered that our students who score consistently in the advanced range make smaller gains over a year's time than students scoring in the other performance levels. This information tells us that we must continue to differentiate instruction in order to challenge all students to their highest potential, including those in the most advanced ranges.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

An important key to our high levels of student performance in the Montgomery Elementary School is the development of a data-driven culture throughout the entire school. We have invested much time in professional development training focusing on analyzing data for the purpose of individualizing instruction for each child as well as to diagnose curriculum and instructional strengths and weaknesses.

An observable practice that can be witnessed on a daily basis in every classroom is the collection of formative assessment data. This takes the form of curriculum based assessments such as literature responses, teacher made tests/quizzes, constructed response math prompts, *Everyday Mathematics* unit tests, phonemic awareness/phonics assessments, science journal responses and running records. Data gathered from a variety of assessments are used to make decisions regarding whether a student has met the standards in a particular content area based on PA standards criteria. Standards-based report cards are used to communicate each child's performance in the PA math, reading, writing and science standards and anchor assessments to parents, students, and the community.

Our Response to Intervention (RTI) model is also driven by quality data collection utilizing DIBELS, 4Sight, Local Comprehension Assessments and Cold Writing Prompt Assessments. All students in our school undergo a universal screening during the first week of school. Students on Tier 1 are then assessed using these formative tools quarterly. Students on Tier 2 and Tier 3 are assessed on a monthly basis. This data, in conjunction with the formative classroom data, is used to make decisions regarding each child's individualized educational program.

Our entire school works as a team to diagnose curriculum and instructional strengths and weaknesses. All standardized test data (PSSA and SAT 10) as well as formative assessment data is analyzed to determine necessary instructional improvements and possible curriculum changes. Consistent instructional goals are established at the building level during our August professional development days. These goals in turn become the grade level goals, as well as the individual teacher goals. This year, based on PSSA data and formative assessment data, our entire school's focus is on improving style and content elaboration in writing and improving comprehension skills through analyzing poetry. We are all aiming for the same target with the end goal being increased student achievement. Professional learning communities, made up of grade level teams and support staff, meet every Friday afternoon to score student work, analyze data, plan for individual student instruction and evaluate instructional strategies. Building Based Achievement Teams consisting of a representative from each grade level, special education teachers, Title teachers and Related Arts teachers meet two times a month to further analyze data and ensure consistency among all grade levels with regard to instructional strategies.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

We believe strongly that active parent involvement is critical to maximize the academic success of each child. Home-school communication is vital. Our standards-based report cards enable parents to get a thorough understanding of their child's specific strengths and weaknesses in all content areas. This communication tool gives parents the information they need to support their child at home. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled each semester to help parents understand their child's progress toward meeting the standards, to offer suggestions for reinforcement of skills at home and to celebrate academic accomplishments. The Montgomery Elementary School consistently has a parent/teacher conference attendance rate of 95% and above. We invite parents into the classrooms during the instructional day to model strategies that could be utilized at home to improve student understanding and performance.

We introduce our standards based curriculum and assessment system very early in our student's career through our full-day Pre-K program. The teachers meet with Pre-K parents regularly in order to review research and best practices for parents in supporting their child's education. At the same time, the Pre-K standardized report card is reviewed and parents are educated on the importance of the PA Early Learning Standards.

We have developed a true standards-based culture, which is evidenced by students engaging in conversations about rubrics and standard setting work. Teachers communicate to students on a regular basis regarding their performance. You can walk into any of our kindergarten classrooms and these young learners will be able to tell you if their writing "meets the standard."

Positive communication with the community is necessary to celebrate the successes of our students and to promote the importance of quality education. At the beginning of the school year, the principal reports the PSSA scores to the Montgomery Area School District Board of Education. Press releases to the local newspapers highlight our school, and test scores are included in the District newsletter and District website. Our community takes much pride in the academic reputation of our school and boasts to surrounding communities about our high expectations and academic rigor.

4. **Sharing Success:**

The Montgomery Elementary School serves as a model for scientifically research-based programs and instructional strategies across Lycoming and surrounding counties. It is not uncommon to have visitors from other school districts and universities observing Montgomery teachers and programs. We have served as an observation site for full-day kindergarten, guided reading, literature circles/book clubs, *Everyday Mathematics*, and effective standards-based best practices. The faculty and students take much pride in these visitations as they get to share best practices with other colleagues while creating a professional learning network.

We freely share our standards-based report cards with any interested school district or university. Our extremely high test scores in math have prompted many districts to adopt the *Everyday Mathematics* program. Montgomery Elementary teachers have provided training to approximately 15 regional districts to support their implementation of this math program. Quality data collection and using data to guide instruction is always at the core of the training. This key component to any program is the piece that can not be purchased.

Local universities seek placements for their student teachers at Montgomery Elementary because of its quality academic reputation. These new professionals to the field of education get to experience a child-centered environment with the theme of "Whatever it Takes" at its core. They get to see first hand the impact that a standards-based, data driven system can have on individual student progress.

The faculty at Montgomery Elementary spends much time collaborating and sharing successful instructional strategies during professional development days and during daily and weekly teaming time. There is a collegial spirit, which enables our school to function as a team and develop an outstanding, cohesive educational program from Pre-K to fifth grade.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Students at the Montgomery Elementary School benefit from exemplary research-based programs and instructional strategies aligned to the Pennsylvania State Standards.

Our rigorous language arts program is based on the balanced literacy philosophy. *Fundations* (Wilson) provides our primary learners with a strong foundation in phonemic awareness and explicit, systematic phonics instruction. *Sitton Spelling* immerses our students in a direct, explicit and spiraled spelling curriculum which has its primary goal of creating "forever spellers." Transferring spelling skills to daily writing is the core philosophy of this program. Guided reading, literature circles/bookclubs, shared reading, and interactive reading utilizing leveled books and authentic literature are also at the heart of this literacy rich curriculum. Writing across all curriculum areas and integrating literacy concepts throughout all content areas are key components in creating independent, critical readers.

Everyday Mathematics is a rigorous, spiraled and comprehensive Pre-K through fifth grade curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. This Pennsylvania standards aligned curriculum is distinguished by it hands-on approach to learning, real-life problem solving applications, balance between whole class and self-directed learning and facilitation of school/family cooperation.

Montgomery Elementary has adopted *Science and Technology for Children* (STC) and *Full Option Science Systems* (FOSS) units to address the PA science standards. Students PreK-5 explore the areas of Physical, Earth, Biological and Technological sciences through a hands-on, inquiry-based teaching and learning approach, which emphasizes the scientific method. Teachers utilize science notebooks to reinforce reading comprehension and writing skills.

The social studies curriculum is integrated into the language arts curriculum by using fiction and non-fiction authentic literature, which incorporate social studies themes. Fourth grade students explore Pennsylvania history in great detail. Map skills are integrated into the *Everyday Mathematics* curriculum.

In music, Kindergarten through 5th grade students participate in a wide variety of learning activities emphasizing rhythm and tonal competence through instrumental, vocal and rhythmic movement modalities in a spiraling curriculum. Learning objectives are aligned with state and national standards for music education. Students in upper grades make use of technology in the areas of music history, music analysis and composition. An opportunity for group choral participation is provided through an open member 5th grade chorus, which performs throughout the year in school and community events.

The art curriculum combines alignment with the National Visual Arts standards and a discipline-based art education approach (studying art production, art history, art appreciation, and art aesthetics). Art lessons are structured so that they involve all of the skills in Bloom's Taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analyze, synthesis, and evaluation). Technology is integrated into the curriculum, and through an interdisciplinary approach, art class connects to language arts, math, social studies, science, music and theatre disciplines.

The physical education program is designed to help develop strength, endurance, flexibility, agility and lifelong wellness through the teaching of low organized games, movement activities, dance, manipulative activities, cooperative activities, sports, reading activities, Presidential Fitness, and health. Jump Rope for Heart, Fine Arts Night and the Fitness Challenge are also activities that are designed to get parents involved in their child's physical well-being.

The curriculum and instructional strategies at the Montgomery Elementary School are continually monitored by the use of formative and summative assessment data to ensure that the needs of each child are being met.

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

Montgomery Elementary School's reading curriculum is largely based on the findings of the National Reading Panel (Teaching Children to Read: An Evidenced-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction, 2000). Our reading program incorporates instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, text comprehension and self-monitoring. Guided reading, literature circles/book clubs, interactive reading and shared reading are all strategies used to build fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills (basic understanding and analysis and interpretation of literature). An explicit phonics program (*Fundations*) and spelling program (*Sitton Spelling*) immerse children in word attack skills necessary for fluency in reading and writing.

Literacy instruction is incorporated and assessed in all content areas. Montgomery teachers collect specific data on fluency progress as well as comprehension skills (main idea, summarizing, vocabulary, inferencing, literary devices, literary elements, connections, fact/opinion, and organization of non-fiction text). These text comprehension skills are aligned to the PA reading assessment anchors. Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers who self monitor their understanding of text.

Using leveled books and authentic literature in a variety of genres allows teachers to individualize and tailor instruction to meet the needs of all levels of readers. The RTI model allows us to provide more support to Tier 2 and Tier 3 students through Reading Recovery and Title I. A differentiated time schedule allows students needing reading support to gain more time and practice with decoding and comprehension skills.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

The Montgomery faculty embraces the philosophy of the *Everyday Mathematics* Program, a research-based curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. This program's goal is to build a strong conceptual understanding of mathematics through hands-on experiences and real world problem solving. The application of mathematical concepts in everyday situations is at the core of this program. Students acquire skills in number concepts and operations, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability, patterns, sequences, functions, and algebraic concepts through a rigorous and spiraled curriculum aligned to the Pennsylvana State Standards.

Individualization is inherent within this program as it utilizes techniques to meet the needs and learning styles of a wide range of learners. *Everyday Mathematics* allows students to explore a variety of algorithms and encourages them to use the ones that are most successful for them. All lessons in this program provide suggestions for remediation and enrichment.

A unique quality of this program is the spiraled curriculum. Mastery is not required before the introduction of new topics. *Everyday Mathematics* relies on the concept of distributed practice. Skills appear multiple times and in different formats throughout a course of study.

Balanced instruction is a characteristic of *Everyday Mathematics*. Learning is conducted in whole group, small group and individualized settings. Children often work in partners and small groups to solve mathematical problems and share their thoughts, while the teacher takes on the role of facilitator. Discussion is very important to this program as students are asked to explain their problem solving strategies.

Working collaboratively, real world problem solving and extended levels of thinking are all necessary skills to be globally competitive as articulated in our district's mission statement.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

Montgomery Elementary utilizes quality core curriculums and effective instructional practices supported by research on improving student achievement for all students. Inherent in a standards-aligned, data driven system like ours is proactive differentiation to meet the needs of a variety of learners. Even on Tier 1 of the Response to Intervention Model, accommodations are made on a daily basis. Guided reading with leveled books, partner reading, small flexible grouping, tiered assignments, graphic organizers, and varied teaching modalities are just some examples of techniques to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Some young learners on Tier 2 and Tier 3 need even more support and supplemental learning plans. Teachers utilize scientifically researched-based interventions such as Reading Recovery, Read Naturally, Fast ForWord, and Soar to Success to accelerate learning. Many of our students simply need more time and practice with skills. A differentiated time schedule has been established at the Montgomery Elementary School to allow students extra time to master skills in a small group or one-on-one setting.

The Montgomery faculty has undergone a paradigm shift from the belief that only a student with an IEP could get curriculum modifications to a solid belief system in which any student is afforded the right to necessary accommodations to be successful. The underlying philosophy of "Whatever it Takes" guides teachers to form individual learning plans for all students.

It is important to note that our advanced learners are also in need of differentiation. Our *Everyday Mathematics* program, inquiry-based science curriculum (FOSS & STC) and non-traditional reading program offer many avenues to enrich and extend instruction. In addition, a recently established enrichment course (for any fifth grade student on the distinguished honor roll) extends learning experiences to promote high levels of academic growth.

A data driven culture, effective teaching strategies, a standards aligned system, quality core curriculums, differentiation, and scientifically research-based interventions combine to ensure that each child meets his/her full learning potential.

5. **Professional Development:**

The Montgomery Elementary Professional Staff is engaged in continuous study of educational research to learn how to prevent failure and how to provide effective interventions for each student's success. Through building level goal setting that leads to individual professional development goals and strategies, our teachers utilize the Montgomery Area School District Professional Standards for teachers as a tool for evaluation of their yearly learning plans. The professional contract includes ten professional development days built into the regular school year. This allows for ongoing review of individual student data and collaborative scoring of student work. Teaming is central to the success of Montgomery's collaborative culture focused on teaching and learning. These professional learning communities have transformed the school culture from an individual teacher growth model to an organizational growth model. The grade level teams learn from one another, creating a shared vision for continuous improvement. The building principal is a member of each team, working together with teachers to review data and identify strengths and weaknesses in areas of student and staff learning. This process allows for all additional workshops and trainings needed by staff to center on the professional development goals for the year. The professional learning communities research and report to colleagues on articles and share information gained at workshops or conferences aimed at improving overall student learning.

The professional learning communities meet to plan and monitor curriculum and to determine the knowledge and skills that students should have acquired at specific times based on the PA Standards. They determine which assessments to use in order to gauge whether all students have successfully mastered the skills necessary as reported on the standardized report cards, and regularly collaborate on local formative

assessments to be used across grade levels. Data is disaggregated by the teams in order to monitor trends of scores for the entire school but also to focus more closely on student subgroups needing additional support. Finally, through ongoing supervision by the building principal, data is collected throughout the school year on individual teacher growth based on their professional goals for the year. This information is the source for the final yearly evaluation of each professional employee.

6. **School Leadership:**

The leadership structure of the Montgomery Elementary School begins with its principal and her commitment to high-quality, school based professional learning and collaborative work that affects all teachers virtually every day. This collaborative learning focus deepens the understandings, transforms beliefs and assumptions to support new practices, and provides continuous goal-focused actions that keep improvements on track.

All policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on improving student achievement. The relentless focus of the principal on the mission, vision, values and goals of the school have built the foundation for high functioning professional learning communities.

The quality of relationships among the adults in the school is a factor in the success of the students. High levels of trust exist between all staff, allowing for respectful and honest exchanges of views, and a shared commitment to goals. Teachers are enthusiastic about their work. Their productive interactions with building leadership, peers, and parents deepen everyone's understanding of the content they teach, broaden the range of instructional strategies they bring to their classrooms, and improve relationships with students.

The sense of ownership and commitment of all stakeholders is evident in the daily operations of the Montgomery Elementary School. The principal is involved in all aspects of the learning environment, however decisions regarding curriculum, assessment and student learning involve the professional learning communities. Examples are evidenced in the grade level standardized report cards and their alignment to the PA academic standards as well as the formative and summative assessments of the school.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	94	96	92	94	64
Advanced	49	50	74	70	25
Number of students tested	49	46	49	49	56
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	90	90	100	94	
Advanced	45	53	72	56	
Number of students tested	20	19	14	16	
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

2003-2004 3rd grade PSSA scores were reported in quartiles rather than by performance category.

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	98	83	84	88	48
Advanced	25	18	43	43	16
Number of students tested	49	46	49	49	56
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	95	74	79	75	
Advanced	30	21	29	25	
Number of students tested	20	19	14	16	
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

2003-2004 school year reporting for grade 3 PSSA was in quartiles not by performance levels.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	96	94	90		
Advanced	79	78	70		
Number of students tested	47	45	49		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	88	100	80		
Advanced	63	80	50		
Number of students tested	16	15	20		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

4th grade was not tested by the Commonwealth prior to 2006.

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	90	94	88		
Advanced	53	64	47		
Number of students tested	47	45	49		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	88	87	70		
Advanced	38	54	30		
Number of students tested	16	15	20		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

4th grade was not tested by the Commonwealth prior to 2006.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	93	81	91	98	85
Advanced	82	63	72	67	64
Number of students tested	44	51	63	51	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	100	69	91	100	75
Advanced	75	58	68	47	50
Number of students tested	16	19	22	17	24
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2008 Publisher: Commonwealth of PA

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	90	69	67	81	59
Advanced	41	20	13	20	25
Number of students tested	44	51	63	51	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	94	58	64	65	46
Advanced	38	11	9	6	13
Number of students tested	16	19	22	17	24
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes: