

**2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

*U.S. Department of Education*

**Cover Sheet**

Type of School:  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12

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

Official School Name Willow Primary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1110 Veerman Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Pekin Illinois 61554-2442  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Tazewell School Code Number 53-090-108-02 2012

Telephone ( 309 ) 477-4716 Fax ( 309 ) 477-4765

Website/URL <http://www.pekin.net/pekin108/schools/willow/index.shtml> E-mail [kbauernfeind@pekin.net](mailto:kbauernfeind@pekin.net)

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

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

Name of Superintendent Dr. Donald White  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pekin Public Schools District #108 Tel. ( 309 ) 477-4740

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

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

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Richard Root  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

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

## **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 of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or 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 2004-2005 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
  - 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

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All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district:       6   Elementary schools  
   2   Middle schools  
   2   Junior high schools  
   \_\_\_\_\_ High schools  
   1   Other (Preschool Family Education Center)
- 11  TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:      \$6660
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:  \$8482

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city  
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area  
 Suburban  
 Small city or town in a rural area  
 Rural
4.  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				7			
K	39	39	78	8			
1	58	28	86	9			
2	39	45	84	10			
3	36	24	60	11			
4				12			
5				Other			
6							
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>308</b>

[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>95</u>         | % White                          |
| <u>2</u>          | % Black or African American      |
| <u>1</u>          | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| <u>2</u>          | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <u>0</u>          | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100% Total</b> |                                  |

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: 13 %

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	17
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	22
<b>(3)</b>	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	39
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	295
<b>(5)</b>	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.132
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13.2

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 2 %  
5 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 3

Specify languages: Vietnamese  
 Thai  
 Albanian, Gheg (Kosovo/Macedonia)

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 55 %

Total number students who qualify: 169

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: 23 %  
70 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>    </u> Autism	<u>    </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>  5  </u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>  30  </u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>    </u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>  16  </u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>    </u> Hearing Impairment	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>  16  </u> Mental Retardation	<u>    </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>    </u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>  3  </u> Developmental Delay

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

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>  1  </u>	<u>    </u>
Classroom teachers	<u>  15  </u>	<u>    </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>  5  </u>	<u>  2  </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>  4  </u>	<u>  1  </u>
Support staff	<u>  2  </u>	<u>    </u>
Total number	<u>  27  </u>	<u>  3  </u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 21:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Daily student attendance	95 %	94 %	94 %	95 %	95 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	97 %	95 %	95 %	94 %
Teacher turnover rate	14 %	4 %	15 %	11 %	11 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Student drop-off rate (high school)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## **PART III SUMMARY**

Willow Primary School is located in the city of Pekin, Illinois, in central Illinois near Peoria. Willow is one of six primary schools in the Pekin Public School District. District #108 is an elementary district with 11 schools serving 3800 students in our community of 34,000. Our school is a learning community where staff and students are focused on continuous improvement, quality, teamwork and a can do attitude. Our motto is T.E.A.M. Willow: Targeting Excellence A Must.

Willow Primary School is the home of the Can Do Kids; we have a little over 300 students in kindergarten through third grades. Our special programs include special education instructional classes and resource service, speech therapy, Reading Recovery, Title I, Learning Center and enrichment opportunities. Currently our school is 55% low income, as defined by our free/reduced meal eligibility. We typically average between 45-50% which is slightly higher than our district average.

The mission of Willow School is to be a learning community where individual needs are met, students achieve their potential, and challenging experiences are provided in a nurturing and safe environment. Our mission and vision statements were developed collaboratively by our staff. We begin each school year by revisiting both our mission and vision and committing ourselves to continual improvement. Classroom mission statements are found in many rooms along with individual goals and class goals.

There is a strong emphasis on excellence and continuous improvement at Willow School. Willow School was recognized during the 2001-2002 school year by the Illinois State Board of Education for being a high performing, high poverty school. As our school improvement model, we use the PDSA process of Plan, Do, Study Act. We analyze our assessment data as a whole school and at each individual grade level. We develop an improvement theory and formulate an action plan. As the year goes on, we study our results and make adjustments to our plan, as needed. Our focus on improvement is an ongoing cycle throughout the year and from year to year.

Our curriculum is standards based with a strong emphasis on literacy. Our assessments focus on the district learning outcomes, which are based on the Illinois Learning Standards. Results are reported to parents on I Can Do It forms which include district outcomes for each grade. At Willow, we focus on meeting needs of individual children and helping them achieve their potential. We use assessment data to measure student progress and provide students with additional instruction on areas of deficiency. We also work hard to provide challenge for those students who have mastered the outcomes. We have high expectations at Willow and encourage our students to achieve their potential by fostering a Can Do attitude. Students chart their progress and set individual goals. Improvements are celebrated and students have a strong sense of how they are doing and what they need to work on.

Family involvement is a priority at Willow School. We have an active PTA organization that plans Family Nights and special events throughout the year. Willow has a strong volunteer program; parents and community members are frequently in classrooms helping with small group activities and class projects. Teachers work hard to strengthen the partnership between home and school. Teachers communicate regularly with parents and frequently send home activities to extend learning at home. Parent surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with our school.

Teamwork is evident throughout our school. Teachers work together on school improvement teams and cross-graded curriculum projects. For example, second grade classes do literacy activities each week with their kindergarten buddies and third graders listen to first graders read. We have high expectations for student behavior. All students are encouraged to get along and cooperate through the I-Care curriculum. The I-Care philosophy focuses on treating each other with respect, solving problems peacefully and caring about other's feelings. We believe that Willow Primary School is a true learning community, a great place to learn and work.

## **MISSION STATEMENT of WILLOW SCHOOL**

At Willow Primary School, we will meet individual needs, help students achieve their potential, and provide challenging experiences in a nurturing, safe and respectful environment.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Effective schools are learning communities which include staff, parents, students, and community members working together so that every child has the opportunity to succeed. Effective schools share common beliefs and support each other in their efforts to improve student achievement. To achieve the mission of Willow Primary School, all members of our learning community share a vision which provides us with direction and focus. Effective schools combine the following core elements to enhance the learning experience:

#### **Curriculum**

- The curriculum taught in each class is aligned with state and district goals.
- Instruction is focused on a core curriculum of essential skills leading to higher order thinking skills.
- Each student's unique needs and abilities are nurtured.
- Learners are actively engaged in challenging experiences.
- Extended learning experiences are provided for students who have mastered the core curriculum.
- Resources are available for students who require additional services.
- Learning activities are based on strategies that are proven to be best practices.
- Progress is evaluated often and various assessment tools guide the next steps of learning.
- Learning is enhanced through the use of technology.
- New materials are acquired to expand the use of technology.

#### **Assessment**

- Student progress is measured frequently through a variety of tools that measure mastery.
- Student progress is communicated clearly and frequently to students and parents.
- Students learn to use self-assessment to measure progress and to become motivated to improve.
- Teachers explore new methods of assessment, including the use of technology.

#### **Climate**

- Teaching and learning are improved in a safe, respectful and inviting environment.
- Students are provided clear expectations with consistent, fair consequences.
- The learning environment nurtures each student's unique needs and abilities.
- All members of the Learning Community are treated with dignity and respect in accordance with the I-Care program.
- The staff models the qualities and expectations that we hope to instill in our students.
- The facility is maintained and improvements are made.
- Student-centered activities are provided for learning beyond the traditional school day and year.
- Students are encouraged to develop a Can Do attitude.
- Resources are provided to support the needs of the staff and students.

#### **Collaboration & Communication**

- Enhanced learning and teaching take place through collaboration.
- The shared decision-making process is monitored and supported by the Willow Instructional Leadership Team and all staff.
- Student progress is clearly and frequently communicated to the learning community.
- Parents and the community are actively involved,
- Several methods are used to effectively communicate with the learning community.
- Technology is used to increase communication throughout the learning community.

### **Staff Development**

- School improvement and student achievement are the focus of staff development activities.
- Staff members participate in continuous training in order to improve instruction.
- Time is provided for team planning and sharing of best practices.
- Training and development activities are designed by staff.
- The staff works together to achieve professional growth.
- Continuous growth is encouraged through meaningful feedback, self-reflection, peer coaching, and team goal setting.

## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

### **ASSESSMENT DATA**

Students at Willow Primary School participate in local and state assessments. Third graders at Willow participate in the state assessment, the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, (ISAT) in reading, math and writing. The test is given each year, typically in early March. This rigorous assessment measures the extent to which Illinois students are meeting the Illinois Learning Standards, beginning with third grade. All of Willow's third graders take the test, including those students with disabilities. Additional information about the state assessment system can be found at [www.isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm)

All Illinois students are expected to perform at grade level, or meet expectations, as determined by individual student performance on the ISAT test. Scores are reported on four levels: Academic Warning, Below Expectations, Meets Expectations and Exceeds Expectations. Assessment data is reported for individual students, schools as a whole, districts and the state as a whole. In addition, data is reported for subgroups within the school, district and state.

At Willow, our goal has been to continually increase the number of students who perform at or above grade level, or meet or exceed state standards, and decrease the number who are perform below grade level, or score below expectations or receive an academic warning. Willow's ISAT results in reading have continued to improve steadily over a five year period of time, going from 62% meet or exceed state standards in 1999-2000 to 91% meet or exceed in 2003-2004, which is a 29% increase. During the same time period the state scores in reading have increased 3%, from 62% meet or exceed in 1999-2000 to 65% in 2003-2004.

Willow's ISAT math scores also show a continued improvement during the last five years. In 1999-2000 82% of our students had a meets or exceeds score; in 2003-2004, 98% of our students had a meets or exceeds score in math. Over a five year time period, Willow's math scores increased by 16%. The state scores increased in math over the same time period as well; however, the state increase was 10%.

For the past four years, the state of Illinois has reported data on the ISAT for subgroups. In addition to targeting overall improvements on the ISAT, at Willow we also targeted decreasing the achievement gap for low income students. At Willow about half of our students are low income; our numbers range from 45%-55% each year. Over a four year period of time, our scores showed an improvement for low income students and Willow's achievement gap has narrowed. A noticeable improvement is seen in the number of low income students who perform above grade level in reading; they exceed state standards. In 1999-2000, 18% of our low income students received an exceeds on the ISAT reading test, and in 2003-2004, 40% of our low income students received an exceeds, which is a 22% increase. Similar improvements have been made in math; more of our low income students are performing above grade level. In 1999-2000, 26% of our low income students received an exceeds on the ISAT math, and in 2003-2004, 65% of our low income students received an exceeds, a 39% increase. We have seen improvements for our students with disabilities as well.

Although only third graders at Willow are given the state assessment, we work hard at all grades to prepare our students in reading, math and writing. In addition to the state assessment, all Willow students participate in school and district assessments. At Willow, we use a variety of assessment tools aligned to the district curriculum and the state standards. We periodically assess our students and use the information to help us plan for instruction. Our district assessment program, the SAI (Standards Assessment Instruction) is designed to identify what students know and provide guidance to the teacher in planning for instruction.

## **USE OF ASSESSMENT DATA TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Our school improvement process is strongly data focused. The PDSA process, Plan Do Study Act, guides our efforts to use data to improve student performance. Our school improvement team leads the staff in activities to analyze the state assessment data from the third grade ISAT results. We look at data for the current year and data over time to determine trends. We identify areas where our students did not perform well and then target those areas in our instruction, particularly in second and third grade. In addressing our targets, we identify possible causes and determine an improvement theory. We develop an action plan to make changes in our instruction, in order to improve our results. We make efforts to align our instructional targets across the grades so our students perform at grade level and are prepared to meet standards on the state assessments.

In addition to ISAT data, we use District #108's S.A.I. (Standards Assessment Instruction) data for all grades, K-3. The district has identified specific learner outcomes for each grade which are closely aligned with state standards. Students are given a pretest three times a year which gives us baseline data for each assessment cycle. We utilize the PDSA process to study those results and then develop instructional programs based on what the students need to know. Teachers work with whole groups and individuals to set short term improvement goals. In addition to the SAI data, teachers at each grade use other assessments to identify what students know and where the focus of instruction needs to be. At the end of each cycle, individual students are assessed with an I Can Do It report that shows the students' growth and mastery of each outcome. Short term goals are then analyzed and planning for the next cycle begins.

Throughout the year the Willow staff has five school improvement inservices, which are specifically devoted to studying assessment results and planning for instruction. During the year, we focus on data collected during each cycle. We study the data and use it to set short term goals and to guide our instruction. At the end of the year, we analyze the data for the year and use it to plan for continuous improvement. We assess the progress on our targets; we then standardize what was successful and develop a new plan to improve results on targets we didn't meet.

## **COMMUNICATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Student performance is communicated to parents, students and community in a variety of ways. Our ISAT assessment data is reported to parents and community on the Illinois State Board of Education School Report Card, which is published for each school in Illinois. Copies are distributed and the school report card is also on our school website and the district website. State assessment results are reported by the local media and data is published in area newspapers for Willow and other schools in our area.

For our ongoing schoolwide assessments, results are reported to students and parents regularly. Students and teachers meet together to discuss results and set goals. Teachers work with students to set both class goals and individual goals. Goal progress is charted by individual students and for whole groups. Teachers frequently conference with individual students about goal progress. At the end of each cycle, teachers meet with students to assess their performance and complete each student's I CAN DO IT report. I CAN DO IT reports are shared with parents at conferences during the year. Progress on individual and class goals are also shared with parents and visitors.

## **SHARING SUCCESS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS**

Our school culture reflects teamwork and a strong desire to work together. Our staff has always been open to sharing ideas with others. A number of years ago, Willow was affiliated with the Illinois Network of Accelerated Schools. We often hosted visitors to our school and welcomed the opportunity to share our ideas and practices. In 2001 Willow was named by the Illinois State Board of Education as a “high performing, high poverty school.” As a result, we frequently have visitors and requests for information. We have hosted visitors from within our district and around the state. Our teachers find an exchange of ideas with colleagues to be very beneficial. We are dedicated to continuous improvement; we are eager to share our successes and are always looking for new ideas.

Our teachers have shared ideas with colleagues in our district at district grade level meetings and on district committees. Ideas have been shared with colleagues in Illinois and around the country as staff members have presented a variety of workshops at national conferences, including the Koalaty Kid Conference and the Consortium for Educational Change. Willow teachers are enthusiastic about their teaching and enjoy sharing with others.

Our district has a Professional Development School partnership with Illinois State University. As part of that partnership, interns from ISU are working in our district and school. Those interns are participants in our school improvement process. We regularly share with these interns what we believe to be best practices.

At Willow, visitors can learn about our successes not only from our staff, but also from our students. Students learn to use self-assessment to measure progress. Students focus on their own improvement by setting goals and charting their progress. Students are eager to share this information with our visitors. Visitors are often amazed how a first grader can explain not only what he is working on but he can also explain his progress by sharing his data notebook.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

At Willow Primary School the curriculum taught in each class is aligned with state and district goals. The district’s SAI initiative, Standards, Assessment, Instruction, was developed by a district team of teachers, including staff from Willow School. Each curricular area has outcomes aligned to state standards. The primary instructional goal is for students to achieve mastery of outcomes at each curricular area. Instruction is focused on essential skills leading to higher order thinking skills. Learners are actively engaged in challenging experiences. Teaching and learning activities across the curriculum are based on strategies that are proven to be best practices. The staff at Willow strives to help all students achieve these outcomes by addressing their individual needs and learning styles. Progress is evaluated often and various assessment tools guide the next steps of learning. Extended learning experiences are provided for students who have mastered the core curriculum. Resources are available for students who require additional services.

Being a primary school of kindergarten through third graders, the language arts curriculum is the main focus of instruction in our school. Literacy is interwoven throughout all other curricular areas. Teachers provide multiple learning opportunities throughout each day for guided and shared reading. Comprehension, vocabulary development, and fluency are stressed. Instruction in the writing process begins in kindergarten and is integrated throughout the day in all curricular areas. Teachers utilize a basal reading series along with a variety of other instructional tools in order to meet the needs of their students.

Math is another strong focus area at Willow. Our standards based outcomes stress problem-solving and critical thinking, along with essential skills. The social studies and science curriculum is also based on identified outcomes. Key elements are identified at each grade level. Students work to achieve mastery

of the core elements of each discipline. A strong focus for our students is on learning about the environment and the world. Learning about other cultures is also stressed. Technology skills are developed in each classroom, with activities that support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Students have multiple opportunities for expression through art and drama along with written expression. Students have music instruction and physical education; both curricula have district outcomes, based on state learning standards.

At Willow School teaching and learning occur in a safe, respectful and inviting learning environment. Developing and maintaining a nurturing atmosphere at our school is a key element of our mission. We utilize the I-Care program which focuses on respect, caring for others' feelings and solving disputes in a peaceful manner. Our staff tries to model the qualities and expectations we hope to instill in our students. A Can Do attitude is fostered among our children. We encourage continuous improvement and celebrate successes.

### **WILLOW SCHOOL'S READING CURRICULUM**

Reading is the strongest area of focus at Willow School. After analyzing our assessment results, we have targeted improving reading achievement as our school improvement goal for the past two years. Our district outcomes, based on state standards are the framework for instruction. Our reading program provides a balance between literature and skills. As a primary school, many of our students are emergent readers. While working with children to increase their reading strategies, fluency and vocabulary, we also provide opportunities for them to experience the success needed to develop a love of reading. In our district we utilize the MacMillan/McGrawHill Spotlight on Literacy series as our basal text. Willow teachers in all grades supplement the basal with a variety of other reading materials and trade books.

Willow teachers work hard to differentiate reading instruction and address individual needs. At each grade level, teachers use a variety of methods to assess each student in reading. Assessment results are then used to guide instruction, targeting what students need. Teachers use flexible grouping to teach and reinforce essential skills during guided reading instruction. Small group instruction is provided at each grade level. Classroom teachers, Title I reading specialists and the special education resource teacher all collaborate to deliver reading instruction. Students who are the farthest behind receive more intensive instruction in smaller groups. Individual progress is monitored at all levels using a variety of assessment tools. Teachers meet regularly to analyze the assessment data in order to determine students' needs and develop appropriate interventions. In addition, Willow School has the Reading Recovery program as an additional intervention to help accelerate the progress of first graders who struggle in reading.

### **WILLOW SCHOOL'S WRITING CURRICULUM**

Willow's school improvement goal focused on writing for two years. Improving student achievement in writing was selected as a school goal, based on Willow students' performance in writing on the ISAT test. In 2001-2002 only 45% of our students met or exceeded state standards in writing. To improve our students' performance, the Willow staff began a study of writing instruction. Teachers began to explore best practices, such as writer's workshop. Staff members studied the rubrics for writing assessment provided by the Illinois State Board of Education. Staff members also participated in a district training to learn to assess student writing using rubrics. Willow teachers developed a plan for writing instruction at each grade level. Assessments were given at each grade level to use as a baseline. Student writing samples were analyzed and deficiencies were targeted for instruction. After instruction, additional samples were collected and analyzed for improvement. Teachers conferenced with students regarding their writing and helped students set goals for improvement.

Data was collected at each grade level throughout the year and analyzed at school improvement inservices during the year. Teachers met periodically to review student writing samples and plan for targeted instruction. At the end of the first year, we revisited our plan and made adjustments. During the second year of our focus on writing, we began to standardize our writing instruction from kindergarten through

third grade. Our ISAT writing scores rose dramatically: 84% of our students met or exceeded state standards in 2002-2003. Although last year we began to focus on reading, our teachers continued with our schoolwide writing instruction plan. We maintained our high level of achievement on the 2003-2004 ISAT writing test; 91% of our students met or exceeded state standards in writing.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

Teachers at Willow use a variety of instructional methods to meet individual needs, help students achieve their potential, and provide challenging experiences. Teachers utilize assessment data to determine what each child knows and then plan for instruction. Teachers and students work together to set goals and chart improvement. Students keep track of their progress using data notebooks. Charting their progress helps motivate them to continuously improve. Willow teachers utilize Quality Tools, such as Lotus diagrams which help children stay engaged. Small group instruction is prevalent at Willow. Learning activities are designed to meet individual needs. Teachers often utilize volunteers to help with small group learning activities. Centers are found in most classrooms where students have the opportunity to experience hands-on activities that promote individual learning. Cooperative learning activities are found in most classrooms; students work together and help each other. Cross graded learning activities are often found at Willow School. Second graders work each week with their kindergarten buddies and help each other develop reading skills. Third graders volunteer to listen to first graders read. Students are often involved in projects where knowledge gained is demonstrated and shared with other students. Each grade level team at Willow works closely together to plan meaningful instructional activities for their students.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development at Willow School is strongly focused on our school improvement goal. Continuous improvement in student achievement is at the center of our ongoing professional development. We utilize the PDSA process, (Plan Do Study Act), as our model for school improvement planning; all staff are involved in the school improvement process. The principal and the school improvement team lead out the process. In the planning phase, our assessment results are analyzed and short term goals are set. An improvement theory is developed and an action plan is created and implemented schoolwide. Grade level teams of teachers meet regularly to plan for instruction. Teachers share resources and materials as they work together to improve instruction based on assessment results. We have five school improvement inservices a year; each is focused on our school improvement goal. Additionally, grade level teams meet each month to plan together and explore new instructional strategies targeting our school goal. Progress on the action plan is reviewed regularly by the grade level team and also by the school improvement team. As part of the PDSA cycle, results are analyzed at the end of each assessment cycle and adjustments are made as needed in our action plan. At the end of the year, the entire process is scrutinized and the plan is standardized or adjusted as needed, depending on results.

Each year we allocate money in our budget for development activities outside of school. Teachers identify training needs as part of our action plan. Teachers seek opportunities to learn additional best practices related to our school improvement goal by attending workshops or taking classes related to our improvement goal. In addition, District #108 has strong staff development support for both nontenured and tenured teachers. Teachers write improvement goals each year as part of the teacher evaluation process. These goals are aligned with school improvement goals.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## PERFORMANCE ON STATE TESTS

### ILLINOIS STANDARDS ACHIEVEMENT TEST in READING (Numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.)

Willow Primary School	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	March	March	March	Feb.
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	97%	94%	98%	87%
Percentage at or above Meets State Expectations	91%	74%	69%	82%	62%
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	50%	29%	30%	31%	25%
Number of students tested	65	64	58	99	67
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Low Income					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	92%	92%	100%	*
Percentage at or above Meet State Expectations	80%	70%	54%	77%	*
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	40%	22%	19%	18%	*
Number of students tested	20	28	27	40	*
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
2. Not Low Income					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	100%	96%	96%	*
Percentage at or above Meets State Expectations	96%	77%	83%	85%	*
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	55%	34%	40%	39%	*
Number of Students Tested	45	36	31	59	*
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	93%	92%	94%	93%	94%
Percentage at or above Meets State Expectations	65%	62%	63%	62%	62%
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	23%	22%	19%	19%	21%

\*Subgroup data for low income students was not reported by the Illinois State Board of Education during the 2000 testing year.

#### ISAT Performance Levels

**Academic Warning:** Student work demonstrates limited knowledge and skills in the subject. Because of major gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills ineffectively.

**Below Standards:** Student work demonstrates basic knowledge and skills in the subject. However, because of gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills in limited ways.

**Meets Standards:** Student work demonstrates proficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Students effectively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems.

**Exceeds Standards:** Student work demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills in the subject. Students creatively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems and evaluate the results.

#### PERFORMANCE ON STATE TESTS

**ILLINOIS STANDARDS ACHIEVEMENT TEST in MATH** (Numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.)

<b>Willow Primary School</b>	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	March	March	March	Feb
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	96%	97%	98%	89%
Percentage at or above Meet State Expectations	98%	91%	69%	88%	82%
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	67%	48%	33%	40%	32%
Number of students tested	65	64	58	99	66
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Low Income					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	96%	92%	97%	*
Percentage at or above Meet State Expectations	100%	89%	48%	80%	*
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	65%	41%	15%	26%	*
Number of students tested	20	28	27	40	*
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
2. Not Low Income					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	100%	95%	100%	95%	*
Percentage at or above Meet State Expectations	98%	92%	87%	85%	*
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	68%	53%	48%	40%	*
Number of Students Tested	45	36	31	59	*
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	*
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
Percentage at or above Academic Warning	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage at or above Below State Expectations	93%	93%	93%	92%	90%
Percentage at or above Meet State Expectations	79%	76%	74%	74%	69%
Percentage at or above Exceeds State Expectations	33%	31%	30%	28%	23%

\*Subgroup data was not reported for low income students by the Illinois State Board of Education during the 1999-2000 testing year.

**ISAT Performance Levels**

**Academic Warning:** Student work demonstrates limited knowledge and skills in the subject. Because of major gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills ineffectively.

**Below Standards:** Student work demonstrates basic knowledge and skills in the subject. However, because of gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills in limited ways.

**Meets Standards:** Student work demonstrates proficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Students effectively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems.

**Exceeds Standards:** Student work demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills in the subject. Students creatively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems and evaluate the results.