

**Revised 3/24/05**

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

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*U.S. Department of Education*

**Cover Sheet**

Type of School:  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12

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

Official School Name Highlands Elementary  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5505 Doncaster Way  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Edina MN 55436-2017  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)  
County Hennepin School Code Number\* 273

Telephone ( 952 ) 848-4500 Fax ( 952 ) 848-4501

Website/URL www.edina.k12.mn.us/highlands E-mail pethodne@edina.k12.mn.us

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

District Name Edina Public Schools Tel. ( 952 ) 848-3900

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. Tim Walsh  
(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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

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## **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.
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

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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  
   0   Junior high schools  
   1   High schools  
   0   Other  
   9   TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:      \$8381.00   
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:      \$8111.00

**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.  12  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	43	32	75	8			
1	35	44	79	9			
2	44	54	98	10			
3	50	40	90	11			
4	34	46	80	12			
5	43	35	78	Other			
6							
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>500</b>

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

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 91                | % White                          |
| 2                 | % Black or African American      |
| 1                 | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| 5                 | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| 1                 | % 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: 8 %

(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.	23
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	16
<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	500
<b>(5)</b>	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	1
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1 %  
7 Total Number Limited English Proficient  
 Number of languages represented: 4  
 Specify languages: /French, Japanese, Russian, Tibetan

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %

Total number students who qualify: 14

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: 11 %  
54 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>7</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>26</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Mental Retardation	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>    </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
	<u>2</u> EBD

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

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>46</u>	<u>24</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 23:1

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	96 %	96 %	96 %	96 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	97 %	97 %	98 %	93 %
Teacher turnover rate	5 %	15 %	15 %	5 %	35 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	%	%	%	%	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Highlands Elementary School is a school for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students with an enrollment of 500 students. It is part of the Edina Public Schools. Edina is a suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota. There are nine schools that make up the Edina Public Schools, including six elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school.

Most students at Highlands begin in our kindergarten program. After kindergarten students at Highlands continue in one of the two programs offered at Highlands. The Discovery Program offers single grade classes in a looping model. In our looping model, students stay with the same teacher and class in first and second grade. In third grade they have a different teacher and different classmates and they stay together for third and fourth grade. Students have a different teacher and classmates in fifth grade. The Continuous Progress Program is a district alternative program. In the Continuous Progress Program students learn in multi-age classrooms and they have two teachers over the five year period.

Highlands offers many opportunities for parents to be involved. Parents can be involved directly in classrooms and they can also work on activities of the Highlands PTA and the Highlands Site Council. The PTA helps with enriching the school in many ways. They also assist in our communication efforts by publishing a weekly newsletter that is sent to parents. The research on parent involvement and achievement is well documented

The Highlands Site Council helps govern Highlands Elementary School. The Site Council is made up of parents and staff. The Site Council has worked with the school community to develop a mission statement. The statement is:

The mission of the Highlands Elementary School Community is to educate and nurture each child in a safe, cooperative, and innovative environment.

The Highlands Site Council has developed a strategic plan for Highlands. It focuses on continuing to infuse technology in the curriculum, promoting and maintaining a respectful environment and for teachers to continue to learn about differentiation so that the needs of each child can be met.

In order to achieve our mission we have designed a learning environment that is based on education research. Our goal is an environment that is safe and nurturing and academically challenging for our students. We have combined a number of different programs, research and ideas to develop our practice. Research on the learning and the brain is central to our educational program. We use the Integrated Thematic Instruction model developed by Susan Kovalik to help develop our learning environment and teaching practices. Eric Jensen's work on applying brain research in the classroom has also been valuable in the design of our learning environment.

Students at Highlands have many opportunities to learn at nature centers and environmental camps. Nature centers and environmental camps offer students experiential learning that we can not provide in a classroom setting.

Cooperative learning is well researched and is documented as an effective educational strategy. We have worked extensively with David and Roger Johnson from the University of Minnesota. The Johnsons use Highlands as a model school to demonstrate how cooperative learning should be implemented in a school. Cooperative learning helps students to learn to work together and to know that they are valued at Highlands. Cooperative learning is the foundation for the learning environment at Highlands.

At Highlands Elementary students study a rich curriculum which includes reading/language arts, math, science, social studies, Spanish, physical education, art and music. We use a variety of approaches to meet the individual needs of students. Differentiation in the classrooms is an important first step. We also have gifted education, special education and intervention programs to help meet the needs of students. We are continuously working to improve the learning environment at Highlands.

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

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### **1. Assessment Results in Reading**

Assessment provides the staff at Highlands with information about the progress of our students. The State of Minnesota sets performance levels for schools and students in Minnesota. Students are assessed with the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Information about the assessment program in Minnesota can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education website at:

[http://education.state.mn.us/html/mde\\_home.htm](http://education.state.mn.us/html/mde_home.htm)

The students at Highlands take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in grades three and five. In grade 3 students take a reading test and a math test. In grade 5 students take a reading, math and writing test. The tests are scored and students are placed in one of five levels. Levels 1 and 2 are not passing levels. Levels 3, 4 and 5 are considered to be passing levels.

The State of Minnesota combines the scores of students in levels 3, 4 and 5 to show the percent of students that achieve a passing score. Comparing the percent of students in Minnesota who pass and the percent of students at Highlands who pass is a good indication of the achievement of students at Highlands Elementary. The results from the 2004 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments are as follows:

Grade 3 Reading	Percent passing in Minnesota: 70	Percent Passing at Highlands: 95
Grade 3 Math	Percent passing in Minnesota: 73	Percent Passing at Highlands: 93
Grade 5 Reading	Percent passing in Minnesota: 74	Percent Passing at Highlands: 95
Grade 5 Math	Percent passing in Minnesota: 77	Percent Passing at Highlands: 96
Grade 5 Writing	Percent passing in Minnesota: 78	Percent Passing at Highlands: 94

Looking at the information shows that the percent of students passing in the various tests in Minnesota is between 70% and 78%. The percent of Highlands students passing the tests is between 93% and 96%.

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments have seven different strands in reading. The Highlands percentages on these strands are as follows: Grade 3 reading: Literary Passages - 90; Information/Practical Passages - 86; Main Idea - 92; Information Processing - 90; Inference -83; Compare/Contrast – 77 and Analysis – 87. The Compare/Contrast strand is the lowest, but is jumps to 86% in 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading so students are making progress.

The grade 5 reading scores are: Literary Passages - 91; Information/Practical Passages - 90; Main Idea - 92; Information Processing - 91; Inference - 90; Compare/Contrast 86 and Analysis - 93. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores show improvement in every strand when compared to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scores. The only strand not showing improvement is Main Idea which is at 92 in each year.

Math assessments are also analyzed by strands on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. The 3rd grade math strand scores at Highlands are: Shape, Space & Measurement – 85; Problem Solving – 83; Procedures & Concepts – 86; Number Sense – 85; and Data Categorization – 82.

The 5th grade math strand scores at Highlands are: Shape, Space & Measurement -85; Problem Solving – 85; Procedures & Concepts – 87; Number Sense – 85; and Data Categorization – 88. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade math scores show improvement in three of the five strands with the scores in the other two strands being the same.

The No Child Left Behind legislation identifies categories of students in schools and assessment results are shown for each of these groups. The groups include: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black, White, Limited English Proficient, Special Education, Free and Reduced Priced Meals and a category of all students.

Each year when the results of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments are released, the Highlands Site Council examines the results to see what we can learn about our school. We always examine the different subgroups to see if we can identify disparities among subgroups. We did not find discrepancies when we examined the results this year. The only groups that have enough students to be considered valid are the group of All Students and White Students.

## **2. How the School Uses Assessment Data**

At Highlands assessment data is an important tool for school improvement. We use assessment data on the classroom and school level.

In the classroom we use assessments regularly to gauge the progress of students. We use a variety of classroom reading assessments to help us understand the reading skills and vocabulary development of our students. In math we also use assessments to measure student learning on math facts skills and concepts. Teachers use the information they gain from assessments to flexibly group students for instruction. Last August the Edina Public Schools did an in-service for teachers on how to use assessment information to identify student needs and how to use instruction effectively to address the needs of students.

On the school level the Highlands Site Council creates a School Improvement Plan each year. The Highlands Site Council is made up of parents and staff. Every August the Highlands Site Council meets to review recent data that we have collected on Highlands. Our data sources

include state tests like the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments as well as district tests like the Achievement Level Tests and the Cognitive Ability Tests.

We also review survey data from students, parents and staff. The survey data is collected each year. The data provides us with school satisfaction levels for each group. The information on the survey includes a variety of topics, but generally they fall into either satisfaction with student learning or school climate at Highlands Elementary.

We combine all of this data to get a picture of where we are as a school and to develop a School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plan consists of measurable objectives that become our goals for the school year.

This process is a cycle that happens each year. We collect assessment data and survey information, analyze the information, create a plan, review our results by looking at the new data collected and continue the process. The result is improved school performance.

### **3. How the School Communicates Student Performance**

At Highlands Elementary we believe that communicating our school performance is important. Each year we develop a School Information Report. The report contains assessment data and survey information. The assessment information includes state tests like the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments and district tests like the Achievement Level Tests and the Cognitive Ability Tests. The report also contains survey results from yearly school satisfaction surveys which collect information from students, parents and staff at Highlands. We publish this report on our website so that it is available for anyone who is interested in reading about Highlands Elementary.

The Edina Public Schools communicates information about school performance to the community of Edina in using a variety of methods. The Sun, a community newspaper, is a good vehicle for communication to the community. The school district maintains a website for communication and also uses direct mailings to residents of Edina to communicate information about school and district performance and student activities.

We communicate individual student performance on these tests to parents. The scores we communicate include the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment, the Achievement Level Tests, and the Cognitive Ability Tests. These scores are mailed directly to the parents of each child.

Communicating assessment information to parents is important. We use a variety of tools to keep parents informed about the performance of our school. Our school website: [www.edina.k12.mn.us/highlands](http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/highlands) and our weekly newsletter are two important methods. Parent-teacher conferences are also an effective way to communicate our school performance.

Communicating assessment information to students is also important. We want students to be proud that they attend Highlands Elementary and that Highlands is a successful school. It is also important for students to know that they are learning. Challenge and feedback are critical elements in student learning. We provide feedback to students in many different ways. Teachers give students feedback on their learning and their work. Peers are also a valuable source of feedback for students. We teach students how to give constructive feedback to other students.

We also want students to develop self assessment skills. One way we accomplish this is by providing students with rubrics that clearly outline expectations for the quality of work.

#### **4. How the School Has Shared and Will Continue to Share its Successes with Other Schools**

At Highlands Elementary we believe that it is important for us to share our successes and expertise with others. We share with other schools in a variety of ways. We share our successes with people studying to become teachers and administrators. We also share our successes with teachers and parents and in other school districts around the state and the world.

We have a great partnership with the University of Minnesota. We have student teachers and practicum students from the University of Minnesota every year. We have had this partnership for the past 15 years. We have also had two administrative interns do internships at Highlands as part of the work needed to be licensed as a principal in Minnesota. Our teachers and administrators are active in training teachers. Every year we conduct cooperative learning training sessions for new teachers in our school district.

We are known in Minnesota as a school that has expertise in multi-age learning and in the use of looping. Each year we have several visits from teachers, administrators and parents from other schools who want to learn more about our educational programs. We always accommodate these requests and we feel it is our obligation to give back to the educational community.

David and Roger Johnson are professors at the University of Minnesota. They are known internationally for their work on Cooperative learning. They use Highlands Elementary as a model school and they often conduct research on cooperative learning at Highlands Elementary. We often have visitors from other countries. We recently had two educators from New Zealand visit our school.

We have formed a partnership with Edina High School. The staff at Edina High School wants to work with us so that our Professional Learning Community model can be shared with the teachers at Edina High School. The Professional Learning Community model is a way for teachers to work together to improve their skills. It is an effective model for school improvement. We are committed to sharing our successes with other schools and we are happy to be able to work with the staff at Edina High School.

We have always been committed to sharing our successes and expertise with others and this is a belief that will not change.

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

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### **1. The School's Curriculum**

At Highlands Elementary, students study a rich and rigorous curriculum which is based on the high standards set by the State of Minnesota and by the Edina Public Schools which are even more rigorous. The standards of the Edina Public Schools are based on their mission which is: The mission of the Edina Public Schools, working in partnership with the family and the community, is to educate individuals to be responsible, lifelong learners who possess the skills, knowledge, creativity, sense of self-worth, and ethical values necessary to survive and flourish in a rapidly changing, culturally diverse, global society.

Reading – At Highlands Elementary School we use an integrated language arts model. Our integrated language arts program enables students to communicate effectively. Speaking, listening, thinking, reading and writing are interrelated processes that are taught in an integrated manner, however the uniqueness of each is addressed. The language arts program fosters the ability to express thoughts and feelings in written and oral form as well as the ability to comprehend what is read and heard.

Math – The mission of the mathematics curriculum is to instill in each student the skills, reasoning and appreciation of mathematics as an integral part of our everyday life by providing a wide variety of opportunities that require creative problem solving, the use of mathematical tools and communication.

Science – Our science program is designed to help students learn scientific information as well as concepts and processes that apply to science. Students learn about physical science, earth science, life science, earth/space science and the scientific process. Topics of study include: plants, animals, motion, weather, insects, liquids & solids, the human body, sound, food & nutrition, magnetism and electricity, environments and microorganisms.

Social Studies - The purpose of social studies is to prepare youth for their role as informed citizens committed to democratic values in an increasingly diverse nation. Students in the Edina Public Schools study a variety of topic in social studies including: Citizenship, Current Events, Map Skills, Cultural Traditions, Land and People, Transportation and Communication, Communities, Families and Neighborhoods.

Art – The art program at Highlands provides students with experience in a variety of art mediums. Students work in painting, drawing, clay sculpture and weaving. Students also learn about art history and the importance of art in cultures.

Music – The goals of the music program at Highlands include understanding, performance and appreciation of music. Students learn to sing in tune, sing with mood, tone and tempo, to match tones and play instruments. In addition students learn to move to music, work cooperatively and participate.

Health – The Health program in the Edina Public Schools is based on the belief that: Physical and mental well being are essential for a healthy community. Our prevention-based program begins with establishing healthy behaviors and a positive life style. The curriculum includes units of study on: Social/Emotional Health, Growth & Development, Personal Health, Nutrition, Safety, Disease Prevention, Chemical Health and Family Life.

Physical Education – The physical education program at Highlands focuses on lifelong physical activities and the importance of fitness throughout life.

Spanish – The Spanish program at Highlands Elementary is exploratory in nature. Students learn to speak, read and write Spanish and they also learn about Spanish culture.

Although the Edina Public Schools establishes a curriculum for each of these areas of study, teachers and administrators at Highlands Elementary can determine the instructional delivery systems and strategies used to help students learn. We have chosen strategies which help us achieve our mission which is: The mission of the Highlands Elementary School Community is to educate and nurture each child in a safe, cooperative, and innovative environment. The two most important instructional delivery models for us are cooperative learning and Integrated Thematic Instruction.

## **2. The School's Reading Curriculum**

At Highlands we use the Harcourt reading series as the core of what we teach. We also use a variety of other materials to help students learn to read. Highlands Elementary is part of the Edina Public Schools. The Harcourt reading series is used throughout the Edina Public Schools and was chosen by a district committee. The committee studied best practices in reading instruction and visited other schools with successful reading programs. After considering different approaches to reading the committee chose the Harcourt series. Harcourt was chosen because it fits in well with the language arts program that the Edina Public Schools uses.

At Highlands Elementary School we use an integrated language arts model. Our integrated language arts program enables students to communicate effectively. Speaking, listening, thinking, reading and writing are interrelated processes that are taught in an integrated manner, however the uniqueness of each is addressed. The language arts program fosters the ability to express thoughts and feelings in written and oral form as well as the ability to comprehend what is read and heard.

Although Harcourt is the base of the reading program for the Edina Public Schools, we use a variety of other reading materials to supplement the Harcourt Brace reading series. We have a library of leveled reading books. We assess students with various reading assessments and then we use books at their level to help students learn to read. The research is clear that reading instruction must be done with the students reading level in mind. Students will not effectively learn if the books they are reading are too easy or too hard.

Our cooperative learning model allows students to work together to read and build reading skills. Because we teach thematically, the materials the students read are often related to science and social studies units they are studying. This allows students to apply their reading skills in a meaningful way. Since the reading is meaningful, comprehension is improved.

## **3. Description of One Other Curriculum Area of the School's Choice**

Highlands Elementary is part of the Edina Public Schools. The Edina Public Schools has used standards set by the State of Minnesota to develop a rigorous math curriculum. Our district math department has developed a mission statement for the math program.

The mission of the mathematics curriculum is to instill in each student the skills, reasoning and appreciation of mathematics as an integral part of our everyday life by providing a wide variety of opportunities that require creative problem solving, the use of mathematical tools and communication.

At Highlands Elementary we use the Every Day Math series which was developed at the University of Chicago as our math series. The Every Day Math series is used throughout the Edina Public Schools and was chosen by a district committee. The committee studied best practices in math instruction and visited other schools with successful math programs. After considering different approaches to math the committee chose the Every Day Math series because it helps us achieve our mission, it is effective and it provides students with essential math skills.

We use a variety of other math materials and manipulatives to supplement the Every Day Math series. As a district we feel that the series does a great job of teaching students how to think flexibly about math. We have developed a series of assessments for computation skills that include benchmarks of what facts students should master in each grade.

Topics of study in our mathematics curriculum include essential skills like: Number Sense and Numeration; Data Investigation; Shape, Space and Measurement; Discrete Mathematics; Patterns, Relationships, and Functions; Randomness and Uncertainty and Computation Skills and Estimation Skills.

The math scores of students at Highlands Elementary and in the Edina Public Schools are consistently higher than state averages.

#### **4. Different Instructional Methods the School Uses to Improve Student Learning**

We use a variety of different instructional methods at Highlands Elementary. Two of the most important are cooperative learning and the Integrated Thematic Instruction model.

Cooperative learning helps us establish a learning environment where students work together and are involved. Students learn to work together and to help other students. There is over 100 years of research on the effectiveness of cooperative learning. At Highlands Elementary we have worked closely with David and Roger Johnson. The Johnsons are professors at the University of Minnesota and the cooperative learning model they have developed is used in many different countries. The Johnsons use Highlands Elementary as a model school to show people how their cooperative learning model should be implemented in an elementary school. We have also had training on Dr. Spencer Kagan's model of cooperative learning.

Another important instructional method is Integrated Thematic Instruction. Integrated Thematic Instruction model is a comprehensive model for implementing brain research in the school setting. Every year scientists are learning more about the biology of the brain and how it learns. We have gained a great deal of information about the brain and how it learns in the last 15 years. It is important for educators to understand how the brain is designed to take in and retain information. It is our job as educators to use this information to help students master and retain information and concepts.

At Highlands Elementary we use these two programs, because in combination they allow us to achieve our mission. Our mission is: The mission of the Highlands Elementary School Community is to educate and nurture each child in a safe, cooperative, and innovative environment. Both cooperative learning and Integrated Thematic Instruction address the education of children in a nurturing, safe, cooperative and innovative environment.

## **5. The School's Professional Development Program**

Professional Development is an important part of any successful school. Professional development is a partnership between the Edina Public Schools and Highlands. The Edina Public Schools sets aside five staff development days a year. Professional development activities are shared by the school district and Highlands. Activities are determined by the district strategic plan and the Highlands School Improvement Plan. This year the training by the Edina Public Schools has included training in how to use reading assessments to determine student needs, using effective reading interventions based on student needs and using formative assessments to determine student progress.

At Highlands Elementary we feel that professional development requires more time and an ongoing nature. To meet these needs we have staff development at Highlands on three Wednesday mornings a month before school. In addition we schedule summer training sessions for our staff. These are generally 2 or 3 day sessions. In the last few years these sessions have been on Integrated Thematic Instruction, Spencer Kagan's cooperative learning structures and the Six Traits of Writing.

In a professional learning community it is important for teachers to work together and learn together. It is important for teachers to develop common understandings and language about learning.

Our staff has also identified a number of books that we have all agreed to read so that we will have some common understandings about cooperative learning, brain research, thematic teaching, the development of a school community, conflict resolution and restitution.

In addition Highlands teachers often attend week long training sessions on various topics. Last summer we sent 9 staff members to a five day training on Integrated Thematic Instruction. In previous summers Highlands teachers have attended sessions on Orton-Gillingham reading strategies and Cooperative Learning training by David and Roger Johnson.

Professional development is critical to an effective school. All of the professional development we do at Highlands has an impact on student achievement.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## HIGHLANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Report of Results on State Criterion-Referenced Assessments

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: I Publisher: Minnesota Department of Education

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	April	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	100.00	97.50	97.67	89.13	98.83
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	95.00	88.75	86.04	73.91	89.53
% At or Above Level 4	88.75	80.00	67.44	60.87	67.44
% At or Above Level 5	45.00	36.25	20.93	14.13	27.91
Number of students tested	80	80	86	92	86
Percent of total students tested	96.4%	97.6%	96.7%	95.8%	98.9%
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Percent of students alternatively assessed	.025%	N/A	.012%	N/A	N/A
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	88.24	87.52	83.88	84.04	82.18
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	73.25	72.56	66.76	67.14	61.55
% At or Above Level 4	60.36	55.85	48.77	49.01	44.61
% At or Above Level 5	23.45	17.31	16.17	16.15	11.52

No AYP subgroup (race/ethnicity, special education, ELL or SES) data are reported due to state requirements for minimum group size to provide statistical stability and student confidentiality

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: I Publisher: Minnesota Department of Education

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	April	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	100.00	94.25	97.70	96.97	98.92
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	95.45	81.61	91.95	92.42	90.22
% At or Above Level 4	89.77	70.12	81.61	89.39	77.18
% At or Above Level 5	64.77	43.68	42.53	39.39	40.22
Number of students tested	88	87	87	66	92
Percent of total students tested	97.8%	97.8%	92.6%	98.7%	97.9%
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent of students alternatively assessed	.011%	.011%	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					

% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	90.77	90.40	89.52	88.87	85.51
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	75.51	76.80	74.77	73.75	66.86
% At or Above Level 4	64.33	63.92	64.01	62.86	51.77
% At or Above Level 5	30.19	25.18	25.38	24.08	15.93

No AYP subgroup (race/ethnicity, special education, ELL or SES) data are reported due to state requirements for minimum group size to provide statistical stability and student confidentiality

**Subject: Mathematics    Grade: 3    Test: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment**

**Edition/Publication Year: I    Publisher: Minnesota Department of Education**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	April	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	98.75	98.75	97.69	95.35	98.79
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	92.50	87.50	81.60	80.23	92.77
% At or Above Level 4	81.25	72.50	65.51	62.79	69.88
% At or Above Level 5	28.75	21.25	13.79	20.93	15.66
Number of students tested	80	80	87	86	83
Percent of total students tested	97.6%	97.6%	96.7%	97.9%	95.5%
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Percent of students alternatively assessed	.038%	N/A	.011%	N/A	N/A
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	92.38	92.40	90.41	90.47	89.51
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	70.48	71.51	65.08	65.51	64.66
% At or Above Level 4	55.31	56.32	47.94	52.66	46.39
% At or Above Level 5	14.92	13.81	11.02	13.62	8.96

No AYP subgroup (race/ethnicity, special education, ELL or SES) data are reported due to state requirements for minimum group size to provide statistical stability and student confidentiality

**Subject: Mathematics    Grade: 5    Test: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment**

**Edition/Publication Year: I    Publisher: Minnesota Department of Education**

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month	March	April	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	100.00	97.73	97.73	98.56	100.00
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	96.43	84.09	88.64	91.31	86.37
% At or Above Level 4	91.67	75.00	71.59	73.92	76.14
% At or Above Level 5	52.38	38.64	26.14	26.09	35.23
Number of students tested	84	88	88	69	88
Percent of total students tested	96.7%	98.9%	92.6%	94.7%	97.9%
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/A

Percent of students alternatively assessed	.024%	.011%	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Level 1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% At or Above Level 2	95.06	91.65	89.78	88.84	86.49
% At or Above Level 3 (Proficient)	74.29	74.85	70.24	67.33	61.68
% At or Above Level 4	58.99	60.13	52.72	50.56	45.60
% At or Above Level 5	18.48	17.56	14.02	13.14	12.34

No AYP subgroup (race/ethnicity, special education, ELL or SES) data are reported due to state requirements for minimum group size to provide statistical stability and student confidentiality

**HIGHLANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**Report of Results Referenced Against National Norms**

Subject: Reading    Grade: 2    Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002    Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_\_ Scaled scores X Percentiles \_\_\_\_\_

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	196	198	195	196
Number of students tested	88	80	75	89
Percent of total students tested	98%	93%	96%	97%
	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	186.6	186.6	186.6	186.6
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	16.24	16.24	16.24	16.24

Subject: Mathematics    Grade: 2    Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002    Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_\_ Scaled scores X Percentiles \_\_\_\_\_

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	196	198	195	194
Number of students tested	88	80	74	89
Percent of total students tested	98%	93%	95%	97%
	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	188.2	188.2	188.2	188.2
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	12.52	12.52	12.52	12.52

Subject: Reading    Grade: 3    Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002    Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs\_\_\_\_ Scaled scores X Percentiles\_\_\_\_

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	211	208	209	203
Number of students tested	82	64	90	94
Percent of total students tested	100%	76%	99%	99%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	197.2	197.2	197.2	197.2
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	15.73	15.73	15.73	15.73

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs\_\_\_\_ Scaled scores X Percentiles\_\_\_\_

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	211	210	210	208
Number of students tested	82	80	88	94
Percent of total students tested	100%	95%	97%	99%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	199.7	199.7	199.7	199.7
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	13.09	13.09	13.09	13.09

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs\_\_\_\_ Scaled scores X Percentiles\_\_\_\_

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	216	216	212	217
Number of students tested	75	81	86	88
Percent of total students tested	99%	83%	99%	99%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	204.3	204.3	204.3	204.3
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	15.52	15.52	15.52	15.52

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	222	222	217	220
Number of students tested	75	82	86	89
Percent of total students tested	99%	84%	99%	100%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	208.6	208.6	208.6	208.6
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	14.23	14.23	14.23	14.23

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	223	218	223	223
Number of students tested	88	86	92	74
Percent of total students tested	98%	97%	100%	100%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	210.3	210.3	210.3	210.3
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	15.37	15.37	15.37	15.37

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Northwest Achievement Levels Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: Northwest Evaluation Association

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	February	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
Total Score	234	230	230	227
Number of students tested	88	85	92	74
Percent of total students tested	98%	96%	100%	100%

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>	216.4	216.4	216.4	216.4
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	15.57	15.57	15.57	15.57