

# 2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

## U.S. Department of Education

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply) [ ] Elementary [ ] Middle [X] High [ ] K-12 [ ] Charter

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

Official School Name: Virgil I. Grissom High School  
it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address: 7901 Bailey Cove Road, Huntsville, AL 35802-3399

County: Madison State School Code Number\*011466

Telephone (256) 428-8000 Fax (256) 428-8001

Web site/URL: http://www.hsv.k12.al.us/schools/high/ghs E-mail: tdrake@hsv.k12.al.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. Ann Roy Moore  
Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Huntsville City Schools Telephone: (256) 428-6800 ext.6810

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. Doug Martinson

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.

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

## **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 grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2006-2007 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 2001 and has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

**PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

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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:     28 Elementary schools  
   14 Middle schools  
   0 Junior high schools  
   7 High schools  
   4 Other  
  
   53 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:     \$7,976.93  
  
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,973.06

**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. 7 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
     NA 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				8			
1				9	298	277	575
2				10	259	239	498
3				11	256	214	470
4				12	225	253	478
5				Other			
6							
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>2021</b>



10. Students receiving special education services: 8%  
153 Total Number of Students Served

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

<u>6</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>26</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>112</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>	
	<b><u>Full-time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>
Administrator(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>        </u>
Classroom teachers	<u>111</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>8</u>	<u>        </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>        </u>
Support staff	<u>36</u>	<u>        </u>
Total number	<u>169</u>	<u>2</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

13.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	95%		
Daily teacher attendance	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%
Teacher turnover rate	6%	7%	7%	4%	2%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)*	0%	0%	1%	**	**
Student drop-off rate (high school)*	26%	22%	27%	**	**

\*The discrepancy between drop-out and drop-off rates is largely due to the transient nature of government and military employment, which affects many of our families. Students also transfer to competing private schools, parochial schools and home-school options.

\*\*Denotes further data not available from state department.

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2006 are doing as of September 2007.

Graduating class size	<u>437</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>70%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>22%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>2.8%</u>
Found employment	<u>2%</u>
Military service	<u>2%</u>
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>.23%</u>
Unknown	<u>1%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>100%</u>

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Virgil I. Grissom High School is a large public high school, serving roughly 2000 students in grades 9-12, located in Huntsville, Alabama. Huntsville is nationally known as “the Rocket City”, due to the presence of NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center, and the US Army’s Redstone Arsenal. This technologically advanced community creates an unusual set of expectations for a public school. Since its inception in 1969, Grissom has served as a hub for its suburban community, and has established a tradition of excellence. We are challenged with a unique mission in educating our students, which includes preparation of those students for responsible participation as citizens of a global, technologically linked society. To that end, we have consistently sought to emphasize the necessary skills of verbal and written communication, technological competence, mathematic understanding, scientific application and an appreciation of our culture and history. Our success shows in the outstanding achievements of our students, for example, 10% of our current Senior class has been recognized by the National Merit program. (44 National Merit Semifinalists, Commended or Achievement scholars for 2007). We are proud to be one of the few schools to have attained 100% passing status of Adequate Yearly Progress Goals under the standards of the No Child Left Behind Act for each of the past three years.

Grissom High School exemplifies the possibility of high achievement in a challenging setting. Faced with the endemic public school problems of limited funding, restrictive physical environment, aging facilities, diverse student population with the full range of achievement abilities and special needs, changing demographics, and the ongoing need to meet NCLB standards, Grissom shows how a cooperative and committed faculty with high standards and expectations, backed by supportive administrators, can achieve outstanding results with those resources available to them.

Our unique situation requires that we use a variety of innovative techniques to maintain the high standards we have traditionally kept. Technological resources are creatively used in all disciplines. Proactive remediation is directed towards both classroom success and meeting the standards of the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE), helping to maintain our over 98% passing rate. The average student is also well-served, resulting in a much higher percentage of college bound (and college-ready) students than is typical for our neighboring school districts, the state or the region. 90% of our graduates go on to post-secondary schools. Students may choose from 102 academic course offerings, including 20 Advanced Placement classes, as well as 92 elective classes reflecting our dedication to a diverse curriculum, including classes in Business, Technology, ROTC, the Fine Arts and the Performing Arts.

Grissom’s drive for success is accented by our community outreach programs, ranging from business support of our Distributive Education program, partnerships with UAH, NASA, Toyota and with local technology firms, to our fine arts and sports booster clubs. Note also our Counselor’s program of study skills classes, our student-based Peer Mentoring program, and other supplemental tutoring activities conducted by academic honoraries.

Appropriate to our stakeholder’s expectations, and to meet our mission of providing a relevant technological education, we have expanded our computer lab program, now hosting dedicated labs for reading and math, in addition to our general purpose computer lab, our computer based business education and multimedia labs and our open computers in the Media Center. We also maintain Huntsville’s premier Distance Learning facility, and students gain hands-on experience in our Television media lab.

Finally, perhaps the most impressive aspect of Grissom High School is that it is a school where students want to learn, teachers want to teach, and the administration and the community support both of those

goals. By approaching school as a place where academic success is expected, the necessary motivation is already in place. By maintaining a setting where success is the norm, rather than the exception, those students who make up our at-risk and special-needs populations are more readily identified and served earlier, and we feel more successfully. It is said that “a rising tide lifts all boats.” At Grissom, we feel that a continuously high tide allows all to find the best route to success.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

The State of Alabama Board of Education determined that a statewide test was needed to measure the skills of our students as they progress toward high school graduation. The Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE) was established as the standard for all students in the state. The test consists of five sections including Mathematics, Reading, Language, Social Studies, and Science. Students are required to pass all 5 sections of this test in order to meet graduation requirements. The test is written on an 11<sup>th</sup> grade level and measures skills embodied in the state core curriculum content standards. For example, students must take a minimum of Algebra I and Geometry courses in order to graduate. The Mathematics sub-test is made up of competencies for both these subjects. Scores for each subtest are reported for the individual student as a “Pass” or “Fail”. The “Pass” score varies by test and is normed at various intervals. Students who “fail” a subtest receive a score report detailing specific competencies and mastery or non-mastery of each concept.

Grissom students have consistently performed exceedingly well on this test and have traditionally been highly successful when compared to state standards, particularly in the Mathematics, Reading, and Language sub-sections.

The State percentage of 11th grade students meeting or exceeding the standards is approximately 85%. Grissom students who both meet and exceed the State standards make up 98% of our students tested. In any comparison, our students consistently surpass statewide performance standards and demonstrate commendable results.

Within subgroups, 98% of the white population and 100% of the Asian/Pacific Islander population meet and exceed state standards. The black population of Grissom meeting and exceeding state standards is 90%. (This statistic includes only 20 students tested compared with 398 white and 35 Asian/Pacific Islander students.) Although there is a small discrepancy between the performance of black and white students within the school, the black population scores still far exceed the state average in this area, where 67% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students meet or exceed state standards for reading, and 66% meet or exceed those standards for math. The percentage of Special Education students at Grissom who meet and exceed state standards is 71%. Again, while this is lower than the white and Asian/Pacific Islander percentage, it is much higher than the state percentage (33%) for this subgroup. Information regarding Alabama’s state assessment program can be found at <http://www.alsde.edu/html>.

### 2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment data provides evidence of student proficiency and achievement in the core curriculum. This information can be used to effectively guide student’s selection of courses and to individualize instruction which best supports academic success for each student. An informal reading assessment *Learning 100 Placement* measures each student’s reading level using national grade-level norms. This enables a proactive approach to instruction and helps us to place students reading below level into the reading lab for intervention and remediation. Each student receives an individualized program of instruction, with standard and electronic resources which allow the student to proceed at his/her own pace to achieve the competencies required for reading success in high school.

The math department uses the Orleans-Hannah prognosis tests to place incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the correct math courses. Prognosis test scores and middle school report card grades are combined to yield a raw score which is converted into a nationally normed percentile and used to place students in the appropriate

class. This system, developed by the Grissom math department, has been so successful that it has been adopted by all other high schools in our district. Before graduation, students are tested again with the mathematics section of the Alabama High School Graduation Exam. Our students do exceptionally well on the exam. Students not passing the exam are remediated during class, through math lab, and individual tutoring sessions before and after school. This helps most of these students reach a passing score before the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

The analysis of assessment results also helps us to guide students in the development of a four-year plan to support postsecondary goals for continuing education and career planning. Guidance counselors help students review and revise this plan each year. Assessment data is also used to guide instruction and focus on areas in which students are non-proficient. This helps us decide what, when, and how to best teach in support of student academic success.

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

Assessment data and other indicators of student performance are reported to the educational community on a regular basis in a number of ways. Students and parents have daily online access to grades for assignments, course averages, and attendance data. All students are issued progress reports at the midpoint of each grading period. Parents receive report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period. Administrators, teachers, and counselors are highly visible and accessible to parents and students. They confer with parents via email and telephone, as well as in person. Faculty voicemail and email addresses are published in the PTSA newsletter and on the school website. PTSA meets quarterly, including a fall Open House and spring registration program, and publishes an informative newsletter. On Parenting Day, the counselors present a program to explain assessment data and answer parents' questions.

The School Report Card is mailed to parents and provides a detailed summary of student academic performance, including assessment data. It is available on the state website, <http://www.alsde.edu/Accountability/preAccountability.asp>. Additional copies of the School Report Card are given to visitors in the school office.

School board meetings including the superintendent's report are open to the public and are televised. Press releases assist the local media in reporting school, district, and state assessment results to the community.

An evening Senior Awards program and televised graduation ceremony provide a public forum to honor the achievements of each graduating class. In 2006, our seniors earned 421 scholarships totaling in excess of 14.5 million dollars.

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

Grissom High School has long been recognized as a leader and model for public schools due to its long history of academic excellence and student achievement. As a result, we are often asked to collaborate with other schools, exchanging ideas and best practices. Our innovative and performance-proven plans for identifying and remediating at-risk students have been presented by our counselors at state level meetings of the Alabama Counseling Association (ALCA). These same counselors conduct open study-skills sessions, imparting our philosophy and methods to many others. Our administrators and lead teachers are often sought to serve on evaluation and accreditation committees for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the Business and Industry accreditation program of the Alabama State Department of Education (BIC), and the Mu Alpha Theta National Convention.

Our Principal has put his extensive service to use in making presentations to professional groups, and has been asked to serve as President of the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP), and has served as District 8 representative for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). He has also been honored by the Council of Leaders of Alabama Schools (CLAS) for his long dedication to academic excellence.

Our teachers contribute to the success of our neighbors by conducting workshops, in-service activities and cooperative meetings, including presentations at regional and national organizations, including the American Regions Math League (ARML), and the National Science Teachers Association.

In the spirit that sharing success requires the communication of that success, we have an open relationship with the local print and broadcast media. The stories they convey detail our methods and their results. Recent examples include a front-page profile (as well as TV coverage) of one of our Seniors who earned perfect scores on both the ACT and SAT, and a profile of Grissom students involved in public service programs benefiting our local hospital foundation.

In a cooperative venture with Toyota, Grissom established a state of the art Distance Learning Lab, allowing our Advanced Placement European History class to be shared with students at other schools. In partnership with UAH, Grissom has hosted visiting faculty from Kazakhstan, Japan and Uzbekistan, who wished to see how a successful American school functions. Grissom's Math Team created, wrote and launched an international math competition now attended by over 250 schools from around the globe.

# PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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## 1. Curriculum:

The curriculum of Grissom High School is guided by our mission statement: *...to prepare students for responsible participation as citizens in a global technological society by providing all students opportunities to achieve their highest academic, social and creative potential...*

With this as our guide, our curriculum follows the Alabama State Department of Education Curriculum, which is a traditional high school curriculum following a 4 x 4 model (four years of study in each of the four core areas – Math, English, Science, and Social Studies). Within that framework, we offer a broad variety of courses to allow students to choose an individualized path of appropriate classes. Our seven-period school day allows for a diverse mix of experiential choices while meeting curriculum mandates.

A full range of Advanced Level, Honors, and Advanced Placement courses offer motivated students an opportunity to challenge themselves, and to earn college credit. AP courses are offered in all core disciplines, the foreign languages and the fine arts. In addition, students who advance beyond the level of courses offered at Grissom may earn further class credits by taking college classes through a partnership arrangement with the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

The mission of enabling students for a life as responsible citizens requires that they have an understanding of our history and culture. Our Social Studies Department provides for this with a range of courses addressing all facets of personal, social, national and international development. Required courses include one year of World History and two years of American History, then one half-year each of U. S. Government and Economics. The department offers Advanced Placement courses in American History, European History, U. S. Government, Comparative Political Systems, Psychology, Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. Electives offered include Sociology, and Psychology I and II.

As a cornerstone of a relevant technological education, a key part of our mission, our Mathematics department offers a hierarchy of interrelated courses with all students required to take four years of mathematics. The typical course sequence begins with Algebra I or Unified Geometry and progresses through Algebra II/Trigonometry and Pre-Calculus or Calculus. For more advanced students, there is a range of challenging courses, from Math Seminar, Algebra III/Statistics, two levels of AP Computer Science, to Advanced Placement AB or BC Calculus. Students who have advanced beyond the classes offered on site may take college level courses through a partnership arrangement with the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Our students succeed in math competitions on local, state and national levels, and our above average ACT and SAT scores are witness to the dedication of our faculty in imparting their discipline to all students.

Our Foreign Language Department offers sequential classes in French, German, Latin and Spanish. AP Spanish is offered for the Senior year. Recognizing that an important part of our mission is preparation for success in a global society, and that this success requires an understanding of and respect for other cultures, the emphasis in the foreign language curriculum aims not only for mastery of spoken and written language. Specific knowledge about the native speakers of these languages, and their cultures is an integral part of each course. Fourth year students offer outreach classes in area Elementary schools, and foreign language clubs and honoraries help to celebrate and showcase the language skills of these talented students.

The Special Education Department services over 150 students that are eligible for classification under IDEA. Services include, but are not limited to, self-contained classes and laboratories, learning disabilities classes, language disabilities classes, and social skills classes. We offer an array of life skills classes aimed at meeting our mission of preparing students for responsible participation in a modern society. Appropriate services are determined annually through the IEP process, and communication with parents is key to the success of our program. The heart of our Special Education program is the team-

teaching of mainstreamed classes, where a certified special education teacher teams with the regular classroom teacher to cooperatively teach required subjects. These inclusion classes are taught in all core subjects and at all grade levels. Students may additionally receive a period of structured support during a study skills class, to assist with their study in inclusion classes. Our approach to Special Education results in a significant number of our Special Education students meeting the requirements for a standard diploma, and a high rate of success on the AHSGE.

Grissom students are offered unparalleled options with our extensive Fine Arts and Performing Arts Curriculum. The Music Department features a wide choice of performing ensembles in Band (Concert, Stage, Jazz, Marching, Instrumental Ensemble) and Choir with five different chorus classes, as well as Musicianship classes. As an adjunct to Physical Education, our Dance classes offer four levels of dance instruction. Our Performing Arts department, in conjunction with our Drama classes, has presented a major musical each year since 1992, this year's production being *Oklahoma!* Our Fine Arts curriculum includes nine different levels of graphic arts, as well as AP Studio Art and Art History. The artwork of these talented students hangs in our main office, and decorates our library, media center and hallways. It is also publicly displayed during the civic arts festival, *Panoply*.

## **2b. English (Secondary):**

Combining our mission's call for communication skills and cultural understanding, our English curriculum takes a multi-faceted approach to serving the needs of our students. Our English Department follows a mandated sequential advancement of four years of English.. All four years are offered at both a standard and advanced (honors) level, and enrichment electives allow for the exploration of topics, techniques and styles that may interest motivated students.

English 9 is an introductory composition course. Students are introduced to formal expository writing and an emphasis is placed on the development of creative thought. Literary genres including the short story, novel, drama, essay and poetry are explored, and students are introduced to Shakespeare. In the sophomore year, the students are introduced to the works of early American writers (prior to 1900). The development of writing skills remains a high priority for students, and there is a required research paper. The English 11 class continues the exploration of American literature, focusing on writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Emphasis is on the expansion of earlier skill sets, including speaking, reading, writing and the correct use of grammar. Senior English classes concentrate on British literature, with an emphasis on interpretation and understanding, with all English 12 classes having the requirement of a properly researched term paper as a condition for graduation. The previous skills learned are honed and directed towards mature use in our modern world.

Advanced Placement courses are also available in Literature and Composition and Language and Composition. In addition, electives are offered in Classical and Contemporary Literature, and in Bible as Literature classes. Interested students may pursue the performance areas of the Language Arts through Journalism (with our award winning newspaper, *The Imprint*), Debate, Drama, creative writing (with our Literary Magazine, SEED), and publications, (with our yearbook, *Invictus*).

Our English Department uses the *Learning 100* placement tests, and the AHSGE to identify students performing below the required proficiency goal in reading or writing. The Reading Lab offers students individualized instruction for remediation of deficiencies in language skills. While instruction in writing is provided in all language arts courses, the Reading Lab permits directed remediation at the students individual need level. These students are further screened via a consortium with the University of Alabama and the University of Wyoming, which uses a standardized test to more accurately assess the student's reading capabilities. This approach allows for a more individualized type and rate of instruction, and has helped to ensure our 99% passing rate on the reading and language portions of the AHSGE.

### **3. Science:**

The Science Department of Grissom High is committed to providing the best possible scientific education to all students, preparing them for responsible citizenship and lifelong learning. Knowledge and skills acquired through the study of science increase each student's likelihood of reaching his/her highest academic, professional, social, and creative potential. Science skills are life skills. Everyone benefits when they can apply the scientific method to problematic situations or use thinking and reasoning skills to make practical decisions each day. Students with a solid background in biology become proactive medical consumers, taking better care of themselves and their families. Students learn to think critically when they discuss bioethical controversies such as evolution or stem cell research.

The science curriculum matches students with courses that are developmentally appropriate and relevant to the students' career interests. A minimum of four lab-based science courses are required for graduation and begin with biology as the entry level course which prepares students for success on the Alabama graduation exam. We encourage all students to select challenging courses and provide them with the support to be successful. From inclusion to AP classes, our students gain hands-on experience in the lab, through special projects and field investigations. We offer regular and Honors Biology, Chemistry II, (Organic Chemistry), Human Anatomy, Physiology, AP Biology, AP Chemistry and AP Physics B. In addition, we are the only high school in our district teaching calculus-based AP Physics C. Teachers model the skills they teach and help students to research, write, and publish. A \$10,000 grant from the Toyota Tapestry program helped students conduct research on the endangered Alabama cave shrimp.

The Science Club competes successfully in Science Olympiad, Chem Bowl, and Physics competitions. NASA engineers mentor a successful Robotics team. Grissom students placed first in state Astro Bowl competition, and were invited to witness a space shuttle launch. Such activities are costly in terms of time and effort, but the payoff is priceless. Students develop a passion for science, and many continue their postsecondary education to prepare them to join the next generation of science professionals.

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

Multiple instructional strategies are employed to best serve the learning needs and modalities of *all* Grissom students. Teachers implement research-based, best practice instructional strategies which challenge students, promote meaningful engagement with course content, and assist students in learning how to learn. Students are encouraged to think critically, to use inquiry and develop problem-solving skills which link knowledge acquisition with an enhanced ability to learn. The best strategies motivate students to reflect, evaluate, and engage in positive academic risk-taking behaviors as a means to improvement in learning.

Instructional technology is a powerful tool for improving student learning. Opportunities to utilize the latest technologies essential to video production or multimedia design are exciting to students. Grissom students from at-risk to AP find technology-based instruction interesting, and as a result spend more time on task, remain engaged and attentive. At-risk students develop a sense of personal satisfaction and newfound confidence in the ability to learn. A computer lab, reading lab, distance learning lab, and video production set enhance instruction. Library media specialists provide instruction in searching the Internet and the Alabama Virtual Library. Interactive virtual field trips and information streaming are integrated into the curriculum and provide a new twist to instruction. Students are typically flexible, even fearless, in their ability to quickly grasp new technology and its applications. In this regard, the student may become the instructor.

Instruction is designed to be flexible and respond to students' aptitude and interests while teachers guide students to address and achieve course objectives. Students are taught to assemble portfolios to showcase their best work and learn organization. Counselors provide instruction in study skills. Supplemental teaching is available for students in regular and accelerated classes. Instruction is individualized to

address specific needs and help students fulfill their academic potential. In many areas teachers assist students to learn by doing: projects, presentations, science and food labs, student-directed plays, athletic competitions, and the publication of a student magazine, yearbook, and award-winning school newspaper.

## **5. Professional Development:**

During the school year, professional development opportunities are planned and coordinated through Grissom's School Improvement Team. The overall goal of professional development is to provide teachers with knowledge and skills that improve student learning. In addition to a school plan, administrators and teachers annually review and/or revise their goals for professional development as a component of PEPE, the Professional Education Personnel Evaluation Program of Alabama. Planning for professional development began with a school-wide review of Grissom's beliefs and mission statements and of recent educational research related to expectations for student learning and emerging instructional strategies. A needs assessment survey was conducted to determine areas of strength and areas in need of improvement relative to student performance and instructional effectiveness.

The results of the faculty surveys revealed an awareness of opportunities for continuous improvement. Professional development objectives directed the selection of related activities and plans for implementation as well as assessment.

Current professional learning activities target 1) reading strategies that benefit all students, but are especially directed toward students not reading at grade level and/or not passing the reading section of the AHSGE (graduation exam), and 2) provide explicit strategies for assisting English language learners by providing support in the regular classroom.

Grissom teachers also engage in a number of professional development opportunities as they return to graduate school seeking additional certifications or advanced degrees. The school district provides further professional development opportunities through summer workshops coordinated by the Alabama Regional In-service Center. Course work covered topics such as integrating technology into the classroom, improving and updating content knowledge, and dealing with other parameters of student performance such as motivation. District and Title II funds paid for teachers to attend professional conferences and engage in summer work adding course offerings, revising curriculum descriptions, and writing pacing guides for the delivery of instruction.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST

Subject: Reading      Grade 11  
 Test: Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Edition/Publication Year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition/1999 (Test is republished each year.)

Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	98	98	97	99*	98*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	47	52	44	**	**
Number of students tested	458	452	**	409	436
Percent of total students tested	99	99	**	**	**
Number of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
Percent of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. White</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	98	98	96	99*	99*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	47	51	44	**	**
Number of students tested	398	396	**	362	370
<b>2. Asian/Pacific Islander</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	100	92	97	100*	93*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	51	68	66	**	**
Number of students tested	35	37	**	28	28
<b>3. Black</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	90	100	100	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	30	50	9	**	**
Number of students tested	20	10	**	11	13
<b>4. Special Education</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	71	73	62	83*	73*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	0	0	10	**	**
Number of students tested	28	15	**	18	11
<b>5. Free/Reduced Meals</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	95	91	**	**	**
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	21	32	**	**	**
Number of students tested	19	22	**	**	**

\*Students "Meeting" State Standards.

\*\*Denotes further data not available from state department.

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST

Subject: Mathematics      Grade 11  
 Test: Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Edition/Publication Year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition/1999 (Test is republished each year.)

Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	97	97	95	98*	97*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	48	46	46	**	**
Number of students tested	447	445	**	410	437
Percent of total students tested	96	98	**	**	**
Number of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
Percent of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. White</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	97	97	95	98*	97*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	48	43	45	**	**
Number of students tested	388	392	**	363	372
<b>2. Asian/Pacific Islander</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	100	100	96	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	71	85	72	**	**
Number of students tested	34	34	**	28	28
<b>3. Black</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	90	90	100	82*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	35	35	18	**	**
Number of students tested	20	20	**	11	13
<b>4. Special Education</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	61	47	**	78*	73*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	0	0	**	0	0
Number of students tested	28	15	**	18	11
<b>5. Free/Reduced Meals</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	89	100	**	**	**
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	26	41	**	**	**
Number of students tested	19	22	**	**	**

\*Students "Meeting" State Standards

\*\*Denotes further data not available from state department.

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST

Subject: Reading Grade 12

Test: Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Edition/Publication Year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition/1999; (Test is republished is each).

Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	99*	99*	99	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	47	**	**
Number of students tested	436	375	**	432	432
Percent of total students tested	**	**	**	**	**
Number of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
Percent of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. White</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	99	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	48	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	377	363
<b>2. Asian/Pacific Islander</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	100	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	60	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	27	27
<b>3. Black</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	15	15
<b>4. Special Education</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	12	17

\*Students "Meeting" State Standards.

\*\*Denotes further data not available from state department.

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST

Subject: Mathematics      Grade 12  
 Test: Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Edition/Publication Year: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition/1999; (Test is republished each year.)

Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	99*	99*	100	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	45	**	**
Number of students tested	429	375	**	433	433
Percent of total students tested	**	**	**	**	**
Number of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
Percent of students alternatively assessed	**	**	**	**	**
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. White</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	100	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	43	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	378	364
<b>2. Asian/Pacific Islander</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	100	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	77	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	27	27
<b>3. Black</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	**	**
Number of students tested	**	**	**	27	27
<b>4. Special Education</b>					
% "Passing" plus "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	100*	100*
% "Passing Advanced Level" State Standards	**	**	**	12	17
Number of students tested	**	**	**	**	**

\*Students "Meeting" the State Standards.

\*\*Denotes further data not available from state department.