

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 High K-12 Charter

Name of Principal Mrs.Carolyn Albert-Garvey
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Ben. W Murch Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4810 36th Street NW
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Washington, DC 20008-4940
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County _____ State School Code Number* 287

Telephone (202) 282-0130 Fax (202) 282-0132

Web site/URL www.murchschool.org E-mail carolyn.garvey@k12.dc.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. Clifford Janey
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name District of Columbia Public Schools Tel. (202) 442-5885

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

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.

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>52</u> | % White |
| <u>32</u> | % Black or African American |
| <u>5</u> | % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>10</u> | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u>1</u> | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| 100 | Total |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 6%

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	18
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	14
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	32
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	480
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.06
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 9%
45 Total Number Limited English Proficient
 Number of languages represented: 13
 Specify languages: Vietnamese, Mandarin, Yue, French, Spanish, Albanian, Hindi, Arabic, Croatian, Dutch, Slovak, Russian, Japanese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14%
Total number students who qualify: 65

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: 8 %
39 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>2</u> Autism | <u> </u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u> </u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u> </u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>24</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u> </u> Hearing Impairment | <u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u> </u> Mental Retardation | <u> </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u> </u> Multiple Disabilities | |

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

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>22</u>	<u> </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>10</u>	<u> </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>12</u>	<u> </u>
Support staff	<u>5</u>	<u> </u>
Total number	<u>50</u>	<u> </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 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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	96 %	96%	95%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	95 %	94%	95 %	94 %
Teacher turnover rate	6%	19%	25%	25%	13%

Since becoming principal of Murch, Ms. Albert-Garvey has made intensive efforts to build a strong culture for both the students and teachers. This culture has dramatically reduced the turnover rate, and Ms. Albert-Garvey expects the turnover rate to remain steady this year.

PART III – SUMMARY

Ben W. Murch Elementary School is an urban, neighborhood, and a choice public school serving an economically and culturally diverse community. Murch has a long history of educational excellence. In its 77 year history, Murch has been nurtured by high-quality teachers and an active parent body. In 1991, Murch became the first District of Columbia Public elementary school to be accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. Murch was reaccredited in 2001, valid through 2012. The average performance level of our student population is consistently one of the highest in the school system and comparable to high performing schools in the country.

At Murch, we are working to become an even stronger and more effective community of learners and a place where both students and staff feel proud of accomplishments. Our school values the richness of our linguistic, cultural and racial diversity and holds high academic and behavioral expectations for students and staff. As a community, we further these goals by working together to establish a culture of shared beliefs and values, communicating openly with students, staff, parents, central office and the community and by providing quality instruction that is based on current research and best practices. We foster the development of lifelong learners who are confident, competent and contributing citizens of our global world.

The school's outstanding administrative and teaching staff includes new and experienced professionals who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the students and the school. The majority of the school's teachers are certified and hold advanced degrees. They continually seek to enhance their skills through participation in a full range of training and continuing education opportunities. We reach our goals for students through recruiting and supporting an extremely strong teaching staff and building a culture of partnership and inclusion between the students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Parents choose Murch because of a school-wide commitment to excellence. In the past five years our student enrollment has remained within the range of 470 to 490 students, even in a city where 20% of students have left the system. Our school represents and celebrates the diversity of the city, with students from all quadrants of Washington, D.C. Our students have a wide range of cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Currently, students from 28 different countries are enrolled at our school. While we are a neighborhood school, we welcome out-of-boundary students as space permits. Until 2002, when the District of Columbia school board introduced a lottery for out-of-boundary applications, parents would stand in line overnight to secure their child a place in the school. Since 2002, interest remains high and the school has a long waiting list every year, with at least 200 students applying from outside the boundary area yearly.

Murch teachers, administrators and parents work together in close partnership. Parent volunteers assist teachers in classrooms, accompany children on field trips, help with student productions (e.g., the Murch Talent Show), produce a weekly newsletter, and raise funds to pay for additional staffing and enhance school programs and facilities.

Murch believes in shared leadership. The Murch Development Team (MDT) is an elected body of parents, teachers, administrators and community representatives who meet throughout the year to advise the principal on matters of budget, policy and procedure. The MDT has two major functions. First, the MDT helps to prepare a detailed school plan each spring as part of the District of Columbia Public School's (DCPS) budgeting process. This School Plan seeks to identify current needs at Murch, as well as set long-term goals for achievement, teacher satisfaction and excellence, discipline and school environment. It also proposes solutions to these needs within the constraints of the DCPS budget. Second, the team is responsible for advising the principal on matters related to school operations, procedures and policies throughout the year. The guidance and advice of this team ensures that we include all voices as we jointly create a school that serves and educates all of our students to very high levels.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results

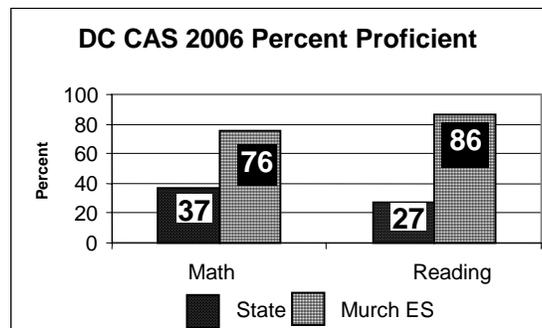
A high percentage of Murch students consistently exceed DCPS targets in reading and mathematics. Over the past four years, the percent of tested students performing at the Proficient and Advanced levels has ranged from **84% to 87%** in reading and from **76% to 92%** in mathematics. Murch has consistently scored in the top 10 percent on assessments of the schools tested in our state.

SAT-9

Year	Reading		Math	
	School % Proficient & above	State % Proficient & above	School % Proficient & above	State % Proficient & above
2004-2005	87	51	92	58
2003-2004	84	46	91	56
2002-2003	87	44	92	54

Murch Elementary School participates in the District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) assessment program, administering the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 9) every spring from 1998 to 2005 and administering the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) in 2006. In the 2005-2006 school year the District of Columbia Public Schools changed its accountability assessment. The DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) was introduced to measure progress on the new content standards that were being implemented. No statistical link was established with the previous assessment instrument, the Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition (SAT-9).

The lack of a statistical link means that results on the two tests are difficult to compare. The performance standards for the DCCAS were set by a committee of DC educators. They did not consider the standards used with the SAT9. The goal was to set rigorous standards for achievement on the DC CAS. The result of this was that the district-wide proficiency rates were substantially lower using the DC CAS standards. The decline in percent proficient at the elementary school level in the district was about 14 percentage points in reading and 32 percentage points in math. However, the percent proficient in reading at Murch dropped by only 1 percentage point and by 16 percentage points in math. Now that we have experience with the DC CAS, we have spent the year working with the new standards and assessments to help students meet these raised expectations.



Our top priorities at Murch are to ensure that every student achieves at high levels and to continue to exceed DCPS AYP targets. However, concentrated efforts must be made to close achievement gaps in reading and math between subgroups.

Gaps exist between certain subgroups:

- Reading** – 19 percentage point gap between Asian and White students
 18 percentage point gap between Black and White students
 17 percentage point gap between Hispanic and White students
 38 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled students
- Math** – 16 percentage point gap between Asian and White students
 31 percentage point gap between Black and White students
 7 percentage point gap between Hispanic and White students
 43 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled students

The staff has been investigating reasons for the gaps. As a starting point, we identified the educational history of each of our non-proficient students (how long they’ve been at Murch). Over half of our new students last year scored at the below proficiency but the following table shows that the length of time students attend Murch is directly proportionate to increased student achievement – the longer students spend at Murch, the higher their achievement scores.

Length of Time at Murch and Proficiency

Number of Years at Murch (number of students tested)	Not proficient in one or both subjects	Not proficient in math and reading	Not proficient in reading only	Not proficient in math only
0 (14)	57%	21%	7%	29%
1 (37)	59%	30%	5%	24%
2 (15)	40%	13%	7%	20%
3 (23)	22%	4%	4%	14%
4 (23)	18%	9%	0%	9%
5 (30)	16%	3%	3%	10%
6 (22)	10%	5%	0%	5%
7 (11)	9%	9%	0%	0%

Murch has implemented several strategies to close the achievement gap. For example, the Murch Home School Association funded a part-time reading resource teacher this year to provide remedial or accelerated learning programs. Free after school tutoring is available to students that score below proficiency on the benchmark assessments. Principal Albert-Garvey and the teaching staff have made closing achievement gaps a primary focus and have targeted instructional strategies to meet this crucial need. We are committed to making Murch a model school that serves every student.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The high-achieving environment at Murch is cultivated through the use of assessment data that informs the instructional practices of teachers. Teachers at Murch value the importance of measuring student proficiency towards meeting the standards. Teachers are deliberate when assessing student learning in various ways throughout the school year. From the very first day of school, teachers begin collecting assessment data as well as anecdotal data on students. This collected data reveals the individual learning styles of students as well as individual strengths and areas of growth. Teachers use this data to plan targeted interventions for every student to ensure that each student has the best opportunity to reach proficiency and beyond on all academic indicators.

At Murch, we hold data team meetings monthly that highlight our culture of collaboration between and among grade levels. During the collaborative meetings, teachers interpret the data by conducting an item-by-item analysis of assessment data. Conversations include how well the students did as a whole, what trends and patterns are revealed in the data, and how the results are different for various kinds of questions (i.e., multiple choice vs. open ended). Teachers exchange useful information about how students organize, synthesize, interpret and evaluate information. Teachers also share best practices in order to develop effective strategies for re-teaching non-mastered concepts.

In the 2006-07 school year, DCPS implemented a system of interim assessments for students in grades 3 thru 6 that is aligned with the standards and aligned with the district assessment. The assessment data offers teachers rich information on individual student proficiency levels. This assessment cycle, while new for many teachers and students in the district is considered standard operating procedure for our teachers and students at Murch.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

We maintain clear and open lines of communication with our parents and the community, as we recognize the integral role they play in our success. We have very active parents, grandparents and citizens who volunteer from the community to ensure that our students reach for the best each day at Murch. Because parents are our partners, they share an equal responsibility for the educational outcomes and experiences of our students. We have fostered a very successful relationship with our parents and community built on honest communication and feedback, respect for differences in culture and learning styles, and a sincere belief that all students can meet proficiency levels.

We communicate with parents through traditional mechanisms, district outreach, and creative in-school displays.

- At Back-to-School night, parents have a chance to speak with teachers directly about their students' learning and to hear from the principal about the school progress.
- Weekly parent/community newsletters are a dependable source of information about the school and student success at the school.
- Parent/Teacher conferences provide avenues for parents to troubleshoot with teachers around student challenges as well as to celebrate their joint successes.
- DCPS publishes assessment results through its website and through the local newspaper.
- We have created a data bulletin board in a main hallway of the school. As parents and community members visit the school each day, they are able to review assessment data by grade level.
- We have a dedicated space for a Home School Association (HSA) table also located in the main hallway of our school, where our Local School Plan, including student data, is displayed throughout the school year
- A data wall in the teachers' lounge displays the individual reading levels for students in grades K thru 6. Color-coded post-it notes with an assigned number representing each student is placed on the wall according to the student's reading level. Each advisory, teachers update the data wall by assessing the reading levels and moving students according to their progress. This visual representation gives a clear

picture of where students lie in terms of proficiency with literacy.

4. Sharing Success:

We believe that throughout the years, we have built and maintained our excellent reputation through building a learning community, with reciprocal learning relationships and opportunities. With such a growing and diverse student population, we recognize the importance of continually acquiring, maintaining and updating our repertoire of skills and strategies to effectively meet student needs. Further, we know that we have built a very successful model here at Murch, and we look for every opportunity to share our practices with other schools in the district and region to assist the entire region in educating their students at higher levels.

We extend open invitations to teachers from schools across the district to conduct classroom observations in our school, and we welcome the opportunity to share best practices with other schools. We take advantage of like opportunities to visit other schools to observe and learn best practices.

Our principal has created a culture in which each teacher is individually valued for an area of expertise that they can share with others in our school community and throughout the district. Our teachers participate in district-wide professional development initiatives. Teachers take this opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of how students learn best and implement new initiatives in the classroom. Through a reciprocal partnership with Teachers' Institute, we are implementing Columbia University's *Writer's Workshop* in our school. Teachers Institute studies student work samples to further develop their *Writer's Workshop* program model. Our teachers receive extensive professional development, rich literary materials and resources and the opportunity for our students to improve their literacy skills.

Our teachers often participate in research conducted by surrounding colleges and universities. We most recently participated in a study conducted at Georgetown University designed to measure the response of urban teachers to various educational reforms in the District. We also welcome opportunities to mentor student teachers. Student teachers are able to merge practical experiences with textbook teachings and we currently have two student teachers from American University to serving in our school.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Housed in a traditional building built in 1930, Murch Elementary School is teeming with 471 students, each bringing with them their own unique learning style. While the classic brick building, replete with a newly refurbished cupola, may look traditional on the outside, many of the methodologies used inside to teach the rigorous learning standards set forth by DCPS are in fact far from traditional. At Murch, we are constantly striving to provide our students with an education that meets all of their individual needs, both academically and socially. This year, teachers at Murch have received rigorous training in programs aimed at differentiating instruction in order to continue to deliver a challenging standards-based academic curriculum: the *Writer's Workshop* model developed by Lucy Calkins and *Math Solutions* developed by Marilyn Burns. We have also launched *Responsive Classroom*, an approach to classroom management which complements the academic curriculum by encouraging students to see their school and classroom as a community of learners made up of unique individuals each deserving respect.

Reading and writing are fundamental at Murch. Teachers use authentic literature and reading series such as Houghton Mifflin to teach reading as a thinking process. Leveled libraries can be found in every classroom to provide independent practice in fluency and comprehension. The workshop model, which includes mini lessons, phonics, word study, and shared, guided, and independent reading is being increasingly used in our classrooms. This model is also used in *Writer's Workshop* to teach our students the craft of writing in various genres: personal narrative, essays, fiction, and poetry, across all grade levels beginning in kindergarten.

The DCPS Mathematics standards are taught primarily through the innovative approach of the *Everyday Mathematics* curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Project. This spiraling curriculum is organized into six content strands: operations and computation; numeration; patterns, functions, and algebra; data and chance; measurement and geometry. Each strand is addressed at every grade level, building on and extending conceptual understanding in order to enable children to approach challenges from a firmly established foundation. Lessons provided by *Math Solutions* are used to provide students with additional opportunities to strengthen their understanding of mathematical concepts.

The new DCPS science and social studies standards were adopted in 2006. Life science, physical science, earth and space science, are taught through the inquiry method using FOSS Science kits and AIMS curriculum and materials. A well-equipped resource area contains science materials and kits available to teachers for planning and teaching hands-on science investigations. The social studies program includes instruction in each of the four areas of history, geography, economics, and government. The intermediate grades also use the *History Alive* program along with trips and curriculum materials from the local Smithsonian Museums.

In addition to the academic curriculum offered in each individual classroom, each student also attends resource classes once a week in art, music, P.E. and library. Classroom teachers are encouraged to collaborate with resource teachers to combine the standards put forth by DCPS across subjects as much as possible. This year a group of parents organized an after-school language program offering Spanish, French, Italian and Chinese to students to further supplement our curriculum.

At Murch support is provided to students who fall short of performance targets. The Student Support Team (SST) process is consistently used to identify learning strategies, interventions, and accommodations to address particular needs of non special education students. The Reading Resource program uses the Linda Mood Bell program to provide small group instruction to students to bridge gaps in reading skills. Classroom teachers work cooperatively with Special Education and ELL teachers to address the needs of the special student population.

2a. Reading:

The fundamental philosophy behind the reading curriculum at Murch is to meet each student where they are by differentiating instruction. To achieve this, teachers use a variety of approaches to reading during the literacy block. Whether teachers are using the reader's workshop approach or the Houghton Mifflin reading series, we make sure our students are reading text that is at their level. Through the use of individualized materials, including Fountas and Pinnell created reader's notebooks and a leveled library, students are able to work on reading strategies at appropriate levels.

Throughout the year, classroom teachers use the Houghton Mifflin running record and comprehension assessment to find our students' reading levels and track their progress. Each classroom teacher has a leveled library filled with authentic literature from a variety of genres. Students then "shop" for books that are at their level to use during independent reading. The Accelerated Reader program is also implemented school-wide and provides another method to assess a child's reading comprehension with a specific text.

Each day, reading instruction begins with a mini-lesson followed by independent reading and small guided reading groups. Students work on a variety of tasks during this time including corresponding with teachers and peers about the books they read. Students are coached to write letters that show an in depth analysis of the elements of a story as well as personal connections to the text. Teachers confer with students independently and in small groups to work on specific strategies and abilities. In addition to the everyday structures, our teachers also incorporate creative teaching strategies such as plays, literature circles, lunchtime reading clubs, drama, cross grade level reading buddies and sing-alongs to support our goal of developing lifelong learners.

As in any rich learning environment, each teacher uses thematic units while teaching reading. Students spend weeks studying a variety of genres including poetry, biographies, and folktales. Related reading strategies such as cause and effect, sequencing events, and main idea versus details are taught during this time. Because reading is so intertwined with writing, author studies are a crucial component to the literacy block. Students explore both the lives and works of famous authors like Roald Dahl and Mem Fox, and find trends and themes throughout their writing. Author studies teach our students to critically analyze the works of published authors and adapt the author's strategies to their own writing.

3. Additional Curriculum Area - Math:

The core of our mathematics instruction is the University of Chicago's *Everyday Math*. *Everyday Math* makes several key assumptions about mathematics instruction and learning. First, students learn better when instruction is based on real life situations. Second, students must not only understand how to complete a mathematical procedure, they must also recognize why a procedure works as it does. And finally, integrating new mathematical concepts and procedures occurs over time. To that end, *Everyday Math* instruction scaffolds most of the skills and concepts taught, returning to a concept several times over a year or throughout the years of elementary math instruction.

The skills and concepts taught through *Everyday Math* are a strong match with the math standards recently adopted by the District of Columbia. Over the course of each year, students expand and solidify their skills in the following areas: numbers and operations, patterns relationships and algebra, geometry, data analysis, statistics and probability, and measurement.

Teachers ensure the success of each of their students through a variety of instructional methods that include whole group, small group and one-on-one instruction. Students have opportunities to work individually, with a partner and in small group. Many lessons include real life experiments to both demonstrate and reinforce the skill being taught. Each unit of instruction includes games that strengthen the skills that are being taught and technology activities that expand the concepts students are learning. In order to involve families, each unit of *Everyday Math* begins with a letter to families that includes a review of the skills that will be taught, vocabulary words for the unit and activities that can be done at home that

reinforce what is being taught at school.

In addition, this year Murch teachers are being trained in the Marilyn Burns' *Math Solutions* instructional methods. This program's focus on problem solving has allowed teachers to bring a range of activities and games into the classrooms that enhance instruction.

4. Instructional Methods:

Teachers at Murch use a variety of instructional methods to improve student learning. Data from assessments is shared, analyzed and used to plan instruction. Teachers use various strategies to provide instruction designed to address diverse learning styles. Teachers consistently work to ensure that students are performing at levels where they can grow academically.

Murch uses the workshop model in both reading and writing. The workshop format of a mini-lesson, independent work, and guided small group instruction allows for students to become self-guided learners that work at their own level and pace. Each classroom has a leveled library that the teacher organizes to ensure that each student is reading a "just right" book. During *Writer's Workshop*, students are led through the writing cycle of brainstorming, drafting, revising, and publishing. Each child meets with the teacher through individual and small group conferences to address his/her specific learning needs. Students are also given opportunities to work in partnerships during this time in order to learn from and assist their peers. The workshop model allows for each child to work at a level where he/she can experience optimal success.

In other curricular areas, teachers use direct whole and small group instruction, discussion, hands-on activities, simulations, guest speakers and multi-media presentations. Teachers may group students based on ability, topic or area of interest. Instructional aides, parents and community volunteers often assist in classrooms, where they may work with small groups or as tutors. Students engage in discussions including literature circles in the upper grades. Many hands-on activities enhance the curriculum, particularly in the areas of science and mathematics. Teachers use hands-on science kits in which students conduct experiments, collect and analyze data, and determine real-life applications. Simulation activities allow students to use their academic skills to solve real-world problems. Murch's location in the nation's capital, along with its active parent body, gives students access to knowledgeable guest speakers and extensive field trip opportunities. Teachers also have access to technology tools, including 2 sets of laptop computers with wireless capabilities. Scheduling in grades 5-6, with up to 90-minute blocks, allows for in-depth examination of subject matter.

All teachers have received training in the *Responsive Classroom*. Teachers are implemented parts of this instructional approach, such as morning meeting, to build a sense of community, develop personal skills and encourage students to take risks in the learning environment.

5. Professional Development:

Professional Development has been a key focus for teachers at Murch this year. They are working to implement three new programs in order to ensure high academic achievement for all students. As previously mentioned these programs are: *Writer's Workshop*, *Math Solutions*, and *Responsive Classroom*.

Murch was one of twenty-four schools selected to participate in Teacher's Institute's *Writer's Workshop* project. In the workshop model, students learn to collect, draft, revise, and publish stories and texts. Teachers received an initial three-day training introducing them to the workshop model prior to the start of the school year. They continue to participate in monthly, half-day, grade level meetings that overview the forthcoming unit of study. On a bimonthly basis they receive on site lab training with a Teacher's Institute professional developer. This developer helps them tailor the program to the needs of their students. Another initiative, funded by our high achieving incentive money, is Marilyn Burns's *Math Solutions*

Program. Working with a trainer, our school developed an individualized plan to enrich all students' mathematical experiences through a variety of hands-on activities and instructional strategies. Every other month, we participate in a full day, grade level workshop in which teachers are trained in ways to enhance and enrich our math curriculum. This training has also increased teachers' mathematical content knowledge, assisting us in our understanding of developmentally appropriate practices.

A final initiative we've incorporated this school year is the *Responsive Classroom* approach to developing a positive school climate. This approach focuses on creating a community where each member is known, valued, and respected. This year, Murch began by implementing two components: the *Morning Meeting*, and logical consequences. In order to familiarize ourselves with the approach, teachers read *Teaching Children to Care*, *The Morning Meeting Book*, and *The First Six Weeks of School*. Throughout the first few months of school, we studied this approach in small and whole group meetings. To further support faculty and staff in implementing this program, we received a full day of training from a certified *Responsive Classroom* instructor.

In a continued effort to promote and support our professional development initiatives, the faculty meets during weekly thirty-minute morning blocks. During these sessions, we have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across grade levels and disciplines.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS 2003-2005

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score	68	66	69
Number of students tested	66	58	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Black, non-Hispanic	65	63	58
Number of students tested	26	26	23
2. White, non-Hispanic	74	76	81
Number of students tested	28	19	26
3. Econ. Disadvantaged	53	--	--
Number of students tested	11	--	--
4. Not Econ. Disadvantaged	72	69	71
Number of students tested	55	50	50

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	Not Tested	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score		69	69
Number of students tested	0	69	68
Percent of total students tested		100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed		0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Black, non-Hispanic		60	59
Number of students tested		37	22
2. White, non-Hispanic		85	82
Number of students tested		24	36
3. Econ. Disadvantaged		47	56
Number of students tested		11	12
4. Not Econ. Disadvantaged		74	75
Number of students tested		58	53

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
National Mean Score	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21	21	21

ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS 2003-2005

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score	66		67
Number of students tested	65	66	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian/Pacific Islanders	--	--	62
Number of students tested	--	--	12
2. Black, non-Hispanic	57	52	58
Number of students tested	33	23	24
3. White, non-Hispanic	80	77	77
Number of students tested	25	33	32
4. Econ. Disadvantaged	49	50	--
Number of students tested	11	16	--
5. Not Econ. Disadvantaged	69	68	70
Number of students tested	54	51	63

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	Not Tested	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score		72	70
Number of students tested	0	70	65
Percent of total students tested		100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed		0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian/Pacific Islanders		74	--
Number of students tested		11	--
2. Black, non-Hispanic		63	58
Number of students tested		25	12
3. White, non-Hispanic		81	79
Number of students tested		30	39
4. Econ. Disadvantaged		64	51
Number of students tested		13	11
5. Not Econ. Disadvantaged		74	74
Number of students tested		58	54

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
National Mean Score	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21	21	21

ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS 2003-2005

Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition

Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score	73	73	77
Number of students tested	68	58	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian/Pacific Islanders	77	--	--
Number of students tested	10	--	--
2. Black, non-Hispanic	69	63	58
Number of students tested	26	26	23
3. White, non-Hispanic	76	76	81
Number of students tested	29	19	26
4. Econ. Disadvantaged	66	--	--
Number of students tested	12	--	--
5. Not Econ. Disadvantaged	74	69	71
Number of students tested	56	50	50

Subject: Math

Grade: 4

Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)

Edition/Publication Year: 9th edition

Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	Not Tested	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score		70	73
Number of students tested	0	69	66
Percent of total students tested		100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed		0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Black, non-Hispanic		60	59
Number of students tested		37	22
2. White, non-Hispanic		83	80
Number of students tested		24	36
3. Econ. Disadvantaged		55	67
Number of students tested		11	11
4. Not Econ. Disadvantaged		72	75
Number of students tested		58	53

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
National Mean Score	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21	21	21

ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS 2003-2005

Subject: Math	Grade: 5	Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9 th edition		Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score	74	70	77
Number of students tested	65	66	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian/Pacific Islanders	--	--	80
Number of students tested	--	--	12
2. Black, non-Hispanic	63	57	65
Number of students tested	33	23	24
3. White, non-Hispanic	87	79	85
Number of students tested	25	32	32
4. Econ. Disadvantaged	66	63	--
Number of students tested	11	16	--
5. Not Econ. Disadvantaged	75	72	78
Number of students tested	54	51	62

Subject: Math	Grade: 6	Test: Stanford Achievement Test (SAT9)
Edition/Publication Year: 9 th edition		Publisher: Harcourt

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	Not Tested	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score		80	77
Number of students tested	0	70	65
Percent of total students tested		100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed		0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian/Pacific Islanders		87	--
Number of students tested		11	--
2. Black, non-Hispanic		69	59
Number of students tested		25	12
3. White, non-Hispanic		88	84
Number of students tested		30	39
4. Econ. Disadvantaged		78	74
Number of students tested		13	11
5. Not Econ. Disadvantaged		80	77
Number of students tested		58	54

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
National Mean Score	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21	21	21

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS 2005-2006

Subject: Reading	Test: District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS)
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Edition/Publication Year: 1 st edition	Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill
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	2005-2006	2005-2006	2005-2006	2005-2006
GRADE	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Testing month	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	85	83	90	85
% "Advanced" State Standards	16	25	23	42
Number of students tested	61	71	62	52
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Black, non-Hispanic				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	75	79	86	77
% "Advanced" State Standards	4	15	7	23
Number of students tested	28	33	29	22
2. White, non-Hispanic				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	100	89	100	100
% "Advanced" State Standards	36	37	47	68
Number of students tested	25	27	19	22
3. Econ. Disadvantaged				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	83	75	73	67
% "Advanced" State Standards	17	8	9	0
Number of students tested	6	12	11	6
4. Not Econ. Disadvantaged				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	85	85	94	87
% "Advanced" State Standards	16	29	25	48
Number of students tested	55	59	51	46

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS 2005-2006

Subject: Math

Test: District of Columbia Comprehensive
Assessment System (DC CAS)

Edition/Publication Year: 1 st edition	Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill
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	2005-2006	2005-2006	2005-2006	2005-2006
GRADE	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Testing month	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	73	77	79	72
% "Advanced" State Standards	35	32	19	38
Number of students tested	62	73	62	53
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Black, non-Hispanic				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	57	67	66	52
% "Advanced" State Standards	25	15	21	26
Number of students tested	28	33	29	23
2. White, non-Hispanic				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	92	86	100	91
% "Advanced" State Standards	54	46	21	55
Number of students tested	26	28	19	22
3. Econ. Disadvantaged				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	67	69	73	67
% "Advanced" State Standards	33	23	9	0
Number of students tested	6	13	11	6
4. Not Econ. Disadvantaged				
% "Proficient" plus "Advanced" State Standards	73	78	80	72
% "Advanced" State Standards	36	33	22	43
Number of students tested	56	60	51	47