

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 **Mr. Randall S. Vincent**

Official School Name **Fieldcrest Elementary South**

School Mailing Address **523 Johnson St.
Minonk, Illinois 61760-1363**

County **Woodford** State School Code Number* **43-102-0060-26-2001**

Telephone **(309) 432-2838** Fax **(309) 432-2192**

Web site/URL www.fieldcrest.k12.il.us E-mail **rvincent@fieldcrest.k12.il.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* **Mr. Randall S. Vincent**

District Name **Fieldcrest Community Unit School District No. 6** Tel. **(309) 432-2177**

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. Joe Kirkpatrick**

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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: **9%**

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

(1)	14	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year
(2)	6	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year
(3)	20	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]
(4)	226	Total number of students in the school as of October 1
(5)	.0885	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)
(6)	8.85%	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: **0%**
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: **0**
 Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: **26%**

Total number students who qualify: **75**

10. Students receiving special education services: **15%**
44 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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 3 Autism | 1 Orthopedic Impairment |
| 0 Deafness | 3 Other Health Impaired |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness | 14 Specific Learning Disability |
| 0 Emotional Disturbance | 21 Speech or Language Impairment |
| 0 Hearing Impairment | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 1 Mental Retardation | 1 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 0 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)	0	1
Classroom teachers	12	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	5	0
Paraprofessionals	6	0
Support staff	2	3
Total number	25	4

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 **24:1**

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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	97%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	96%	97%	96%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

PART III - SUMMARY

Fieldcrest South is part of the Fieldcrest Community School District No. 6 with a total student enrollment of 1300 that encompasses the rural communities of Dana, Minonk, Rutland, Toluca and Wenona. The district was formed in 1992 through the consolidation of the former Minonk-Dana-Rutland, Wenona and Toluca school districts. The finances of the district have suffered as a result of a decline in the value of farmland as it composes 40% of the district's wealth. Despite that, recent community support was demonstrated by the passage of a referendum in November 2006 with new revenue earmarked for educational programs and personnel. We are also benefiting from the construction of a large wind farm which will increase the wealth in the district and consequently revenue to support and expand our educational programs.

The original building was built in 1937 and served the Minonk community until 1957 when an addition was added. After the Fieldcrest district was created the need for additional class space resulted in the most recent addition constructed in 2002. The new 6 classroom addition is not only modern but is air conditioned resulting in some minor inequities in the instructional environment during hot weather.

The Fieldcrest South Elementary vision is "To build a Better World One Student at a Time."

Our families, communities and staff are committed to providing an environment which nurtures the whole child... physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Our goal is to engage every student in learning, enabling each to become a life-long learner.

Fieldcrest South currently houses 289 students in grades Pre-K through 4. Beginning with the 2006-07 school year the district designated Fieldcrest South as the early childhood center. With 2 sections in each grade this results in an average class size of 22.6. Space is not an issue as there are approximately 4 vacant classrooms. We are already planning using one of these classrooms as an early childhood autism class for our special education co-op. This will directly benefit 3 of our students and students from neighboring communities.

The teaching staff is a good mix of new and experienced teachers. The building is staffed by a ½ time principal who also serves as the district superintendent. The superintendent duties take up more than 50% of the time resulting in the lack of a day to day administrative presence and instructional leadership. Fortunately, as a result of our successful referendum the Board authorized the search for an administrator that will be in the building every day. The recent cuts of elementary physical education and art have put a time burden on the regular education teachers who have been asked to teach these areas. Consequently this has reduced the instructional quality in these art and physical education. However, our recently passed referendum will see both of these programs restored in 2007-08.

The support staff at Fieldcrest South includes 1 fulltime psychologist, 1 fulltime secretary, 1 and ½ custodians, 4 instructional aides and 1 and ½ food service personnel. The psychologist is not only instrumental in the gathering and analyzing of achievement data, but plays an important role in special education entitlement cases and also counsels South students on personal issues. The 4 aides support instruction of our special education students as documented in their individual education plans.

Fieldcrest Elementary South is supported by a very active Parent-Teacher Organization. Their primary function is to raise funds for additional instructional materials and equipment. During the lean times of our budget problems their contributions of almost \$10,000 per year were essential to maintaining quality programs.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:** The results in the tables at the end of this application show reading and math scores on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) for Fieldcrest South the past 5 years. The ISAT for reading and math consists of three 45 minute sessions each composed of multiple choice and extended response questions. State performance levels for each student are divided into 4 categories including; exceeding standards – demonstrating advanced knowledge and demonstration of skills; meeting standards – demonstrating proficient knowledge and effective application of skills; being below standards – demonstrating basic knowledge and limited application of skills; and academic warning – demonstrating limited knowledge and ineffective application of skills. Fieldcrest South was nominated for the Blue Ribbon Schools award as a result of performance on the 2005-06 4th grade ISAT. The chart show that 96% of the 4th grade met /exceeded expectations in reading and 98% of the 4th grade met/exceeded expectations in math. This resulted in Fieldcrest South being ranked in the top 10% of Illinois schools. The other table shows 3rd grade ISAT scores in reading and math the past 5 years. The 4th grade is not included because the ISAT did not test 4th grade in reading and math until the 2005-06. Nevertheless, analysis of the last 3 years of ISAT reading and math show a positive trend in Fieldcrest South scores.

The percent of students meeting/exceeding expectations in math went from 90% in 2003-04, to 96% in 2004-05, and to 98% in 2005-06. We are most proud of is the increase in percentage of students that are exceeding math expectations. This went from 38% in 2003-04 down to 35% in 2004-05 and up to 58% in 2005-06. This means that the third grade that had 35% exceeding ISAT math expectations in 2004-05 is the same group of students who as 4th graders had 58% exceeding ISAT math expectations in 2005-06.

We have enjoyed a positive trend in reading performance that improved from 69% meeting/exceeding reading expectations in 2003-04, to 83% in 2004-05, and up to 96% in 2005-06. We saw a significant increase in the percentage of student exceeding reading expectations from 24% in 2003-04, down to 19% in 2004-05, up to 47% in 2005-06. It is important to note the 3rd grade percentage of 83% meeting/exceeding reading expectations in 2004-05 is the same group of students who as 4th graders had 96% meeting/exceeding reading expectations in 2005-06. This same group had 19% exceeding reading expectations as 3rd graders in 2004-05 but 47% exceeding reading expectations as 4th graders in 2005-06. The number of students exceeding expectations in that class of 51 students went from 10 to 24.

2. **Using Assessment Results:** When we get ISAT results back we look at group scores in specific performance areas within each subject of reading and math to determine where instructional changes may need to take place. Upon receiving the 2004-05 ISAT results we determined that the areas of greatest weakness in reading were vocabulary and word analysis. While our 2004-05 math scores were pretty good we still needed an emphasis in measurement, algebraic concepts and problems solving. All staff members developed specific instructional strategies designed to attack these areas of deficiency. Instructional strategies could be items such as a change in presentation, increased daily emphasis or spending more time on the concept. Staff members were required to schedule administrative observations of these strategies in order to gain additional feedback. In addition, they were also asked to analyze how these changes affected day to day classroom performance achievement. While the group scores served to inform us on where instructional changes could take place, teachers also targeted students who were not meeting expectations for remediation. The change in instructional focus, tighter alignment to the ISAT and targeting individual students resulted in improved performance in both math and reading.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:** Assessment results are used to develop a detailed school improvement plan and school improvement goals. The first step in the process is to communicate achievement results to the staff. From these results staff members develop their portion of the school

improvement plan. The 2 components emphasized are first how group achievement scores can inform staff members about necessary instructional and curricular changes; and secondly how individual scores can dictate specific interventions for particular students. The recommended curricular and instructional changes from each grade level comprise the bulk of the school improvement plan. Teachers are then asked to communicate school improvement goals with their students in grade level appropriate terms. School improvement plans are then approved by the board and then passed on to parents through our website or hard copy if necessary. While the school improvement plan shows the bigger picture of targeted school achievement activities teachers communicate individual student achievement results directly to parents at parent teacher conferences along with strategies they might be able to help with at home.

It is important to note that assessment results are also communicated throughout the district as well as being compared to neighboring schools. Once school improvement plans for each school are developed after receiving assessment results each school shares their school improvement goals with the other buildings. The purpose of this is to determine if larger district wide curricular issues need to be addressed and to provide an opportunity to dialogue with other buildings on successful intervention strategies that may have already been implemented. The school Board has set an achievement goal that Fieldcrest schools will out perform neighboring schools. Consequently, assessment results are also communicated in the context of this comparison to the Board and the general public through our website.

4. **Sharing Success:** Sharing of our success starts within the building, then moves throughout the district and then on to other schools.

Due to our focused effort on improving vocabulary and word analysis it was with great pride that we shared what is classic school improvement success within our building. Because of the need to improve achievement in these areas the 4th grade teachers made a significant change in the way vocabulary and word analysis was taught. The tremendous increase in the percentage of students who meet and exceeded state standards was eagerly shared with the rest of the staff thereby demonstrating the success of focused and aligned school improvement activities.

This example of success was then shared with the other three Fieldcrest building administrators and staff members. While the needs for improving achievement might be slightly different the process for focusing and aligning improvement efforts can be replicated. It was with the purpose of replication that we were eager to share our success. First, the success of the school improvement process in improving student achievement is being shared with our 2 other elementary schools for potential replication.

Even though our Board goal is to out perform neighboring districts we understand the importance of collectively improving education by sharing our successes with other districts as we would want their success shared with us. What can be replicated in the Fieldcrest district can be replicated in schools in other neighboring districts. We have already communicated our Blue Ribbon nomination to 2 other superintendent groups. As a result of this communication we have been able to share the success of our school improvement process with these groups and have been asked to make individual presentations to educators from these districts.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum** The curriculum at Fieldcrest Elementary South focuses on reaching one student at a time to enable them to demonstrate exemplary performance in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science. There is an emphasis also on the fine arts and physical education. The curriculum is aligned to the State of Illinois Learning Standards for each grade level.

Language Arts

Students will learn to read and comprehend various types of literature that are representative of a variety of cultures for the purpose of becoming an able reader who enjoys reading. At the primary grade levels there is an emphasis on phonemic awareness, letter and word recognition, vocabulary development, and the ability to read the printed word with understanding and fluency. Students will demonstrate the ability to express their thoughts and ideas in written form using correct Standard English. FES uses Daily Oral Language exercises and Shurley English practice activities. Students will also be able to listen and respond appropriately to the oral message, and also be able to communicate by speaking in an organized manner.

Mathematics

Students will be able to demonstrate and apply an understanding in the various areas of mathematics, such as algebraic concepts, geometry, number sense, probability, measurement, and math vocabulary. The use of math manipulatives, technology, and extra help is provided for those who require additional assistance to succeed. Students are also be required to write written responses when problem solving.

Social Studies

The Social Studies curriculum teaches the students map and globe skills, chart and graph skills, citizenship skills, and to understand and use social studies terminology correctly. Our school uses the Harcourt Horizons series. Reading comprehension strategies are an integral part of this curriculum.

Science

Our school uses the Silver Burdett Ginn Science Discovery Works series. This series emphasizes learning scientific concepts (life science, physical science, earth science, space science, and health units) and learning the scientific process by providing the students with opportunities to conduct experiments and apply their knowledge. This curriculum is aligned with the State of Illinois Learning Standards.

Physical Education

Students participate in physical education classes twice a week. The curriculum involves activities to promote fitness and skill development. Teamwork is also stressed to promote learning to work in cooperative groups.

Music

All students attend music classes daily. Students learn to read musical notes, how music is counted out, musical instruments, and various types of music. The students also work with “Music Counts” in the computer lab once weekly.

Art

Students are provided art instruction in the classroom. Students are exposed to various elements and principles of art. They are allowed to work with many different mediums to convey their ideas.

2. Reading: Fieldcrest Elementary South kindergartners are involved in early literacy skills development. Our Reading Discovery Program provides students who need extra reinforcement of these

skills with that assistance. First grade students who require extra help receive assistance in our Reading Recovery Program.

Fieldcrest Elementary South uses Houghton Mifflin's Reading A Legacy of Literacy series, which is supplemented with many trade books. This series provides the scope and sequence of skills and strategies. These are some of the strategies that are taught: metacognition, building background, creating sensory images, making connections, predicting, making inferences, summarizing and synthesizing, and determining main idea. Reading is taught in small groups based on instructional reading levels. Teachers also use learning centers, Versa Tiles, and computer related activities on a regular basis.

Fieldcrest Elementary South encourages students to read independently with the use of the Accelerated Reading Program. Students are asked to earn at least five points monthly. At the conclusion of each month students who have reached their reading goal participate in a monthly reading party.

Students in grades 2-4 also receive additional instruction and assistance with their reading fluency and comprehension skills from the Title I teacher who works with small groups of students. Many of these students also work in the Read Naturally computer program.

3. Additional Curriculum Area – Math: Fieldcrest Elementary South provides students many opportunities to develop their math skills. Teachers make use of manipulatives such as clocks, geoboards, tangrams, pentominoes, base ten blocks, pattern blocks, Fraction Factory, meter sticks, balance scales, and weights. Students use these tools to help them further their mathematical understandings.

The math curriculum is supplemented with additional resources such as Drops in the Bucket and Math 4 Today to reinforce previously taught skills on a weekly basis. These skills are then assessed weekly. There is a variety of software in the computer lab and in each of the classrooms that also help reinforce skills that have been taught in the classroom.

There is a strong emphasis on problem solving strategies and communicating how the students employ these strategies. Students are asked routinely to solve problems and then provide a written explanation of how they solved the problem.

4. Instructional Methods: Teachers at FES employ a wide variety of instructional methods to help insure that each student experiences success in learning. Since all students do not learn in the same manner or at the same rate teachers provide many different ways for students to master skills. Learning centers are provided to help reinforce academic skills. These centers are designed to meet the needs of small groups of students. If students do not master the skill the first time, additional activities are provided when necessary. Teachers also work small groups of students who are grouped according to their instructional levels. Students are also provided opportunities to work in cooperative groups, peer editing, and working independently. There is also software available in the computer lab and classrooms for students to use to reinforce skills, to master math facts, and to explore areas of interests. Access to the Internet also enhances the students learning experiences.

Specialists to address the students' individual needs provide special services. There are teacher aides who also help provide individual or small group assistance for those students who require extra assistance with classroom assignments.

5. Professional Development: Throughout the year there are half-day in-service opportunities for the staff. These days are used in a variety ways: alignment of curriculum with state standards, collaboration with grade level teachers, alignment of curriculum from grade to grade, and review of assessment results. Curriculum is adjusted to meet the needs of students when test results indicate that it is necessary.

Specific professional development activities are related to our school improvement goals toward improving student achievement. To that end selected staff members are being trained in Standards Aligned Classroom which will benefit all students and Response to Intervention which will benefit our most at-risk students.

The district encourages teachers to attend conferences, workshops, and seminars by allowing each teacher up to three days per academic year to attend conferences, workshops, and seminars. The district helps defer the cost of conferences, workshops, and seminars. The district also reimburses teachers for any graduate level courses.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject **Reading** Grade **4** Test **Illinois Standards Achievement Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2006** Publisher **Harcourt Assessment, Inc.**

*For 2005-06 the highest grade tested at Fieldcrest South Elementary was 4th grade. This was the first year the Illinois Standards Achievement Test for reading and math was administered to 4th grade. That data is included below and it is the 4th grade performance that resulted in our nomination for the Blue Ribbon Schools Award. The other charts shows 3rd grade scores for the last 5 years since that was the highest grade tested.

	2005-2006
Testing month	March
SCHOOL SCORES*	
% "Meeting" plus "Exceeding" State Standards	96%
% "Exceeding" State Standards	47%
Number of students tested	51
Percent of total students tested	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES – NA	
No subgroups of 10 or more.	

Subject **Reading** Grade **3** Test **Illinois Standards Achievement Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2006** Publisher **Harcourt Assessment, Inc.**

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus "Exceeding" State Standards	74%	83%	69%	71%	71%
% "Exceeding" State Standards	23%	19%	24%	19%	15%
Number of students tested	53	52	45	48	48
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES – NA					
No subgroups of 10 or more.					

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **4** Test **Illinois Standards Achievement Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2006** Publisher **Harcourt Assessment, Inc.**

	2005-2006
Testing month	March
SCHOOL SCORES*	
% "Meeting" plus "Exceeding" State Standards	98%
% "Exceeding" State Standards	58%
Number of students tested	51
Percent of total students tested	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES - NA	
No subgroups of 10 or more.	

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **3**

Test **Illinois Standards Achievement Test**

Edition/Publication Year **2006** Publisher **Harcourt Assessment, Inc.**

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Testing month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus "Exceeding" State Standards	87%	96%	90%	96%	95%
% "Exceeding" State Standards	25%	35%	38%	31%	35%
Number of students tested	53	52	45	48	48
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES – NA					
No subgroups of 10 or more.					