

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 Dr. Dawn Nicolaus
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 803 First Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Canonsburg PA 15317-1969
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Washington State School Code Number* 101631703-000004207

Telephone (724) 745-3130 Fax (724) 873-5229

Website/URL http://www.cmsd.k12.pa.us/first_street/main.htm E-mail nicolausd@cmsd.k12.pa.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. Nick Bayat
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Canon McMillan School District Tel. (724) 746-2940

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 Mrs. Debbie Link (Vice President)
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: 9 Elementary schools
 1 Middle schools
 Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 Other
- 11 TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,057
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$10,850

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. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK				7			
K	29	25	54	8			
1	22	18	40	9			
2	31	21	52	10			
3	24	20	44	11			
4	19	22	41	12			
5				Other			
6							
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							231

[Throughout the document, round numbers 1 or higher to the nearest whole number. Use decimals to one place only if the number is below 1.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>84</u> | % White |
| <u>14</u> | % Black or African American |
| <u>< 1</u> | % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>< 1</u> | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u>0</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: 7%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	11
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	5
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	231
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.07
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 3 %
6 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 4
 Specify languages: Chinese, Czechoslovakian, Malayalam, and Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42%

Total number students who qualify: 97

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: $\frac{13\%}{30}$ 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>3</u> Autism	<u> </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u> </u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u> </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>6</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> </u>
Classroom teachers	<u>11</u>	<u> </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>25</u>	<u>8</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. 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%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	97%	98%	96%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	6%	*66%	*42%	35%	21%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	%	%	%	%	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

* District wide reassignments

PART III - SUMMARY

Located on a busy street in the East End of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, amidst homes ranging from federally funded housing to a newly developed housing plan is First Street Elementary School, one of nine elementary schools in the Canon McMillan School District. With an enrollment of 231 students and 21 highly qualified teachers, one guidance counselor, and two paraeducators, it is the oldest elementary school in the district: constructed in 1924.

Exemplifying the name “a neighborhood school,” 70% of the students are walkers. Forty-two percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch/breakfast, 30 are special needs students and 56 attend reading support classes through Title I programming. An Extended Day Kindergarten is also housed within our school. Nevertheless, come rain or shine, attendance is high among the diverse population at First Street Elementary School.

In addition to the menu of services offered during the school day, student achievement is the focus after school as well, when tutoring sessions in reading and math run at least two days a week per grade level and Orton-Gillingham, a phonics based, multi-sensory program, is offered once a week per grade level. Parenting classes are offered annually and student enrichment classes vary throughout the school year. Our school is also the site of district-wide weekly English as a Second Language Adult Classes.

A focus on student achievement through differentiation drives this hard working team and compliments the dynamic school culture. Teachers provide professional development for one another at monthly faculty meetings. Team planning meetings are held monthly with the principal and goals are established. In whole group meetings, suggestions are made on how to meet goals, proposed solutions to problems are shared, and future academic plans are developed. For example, one of the professional development endeavors was the establishment of a belief statement to guide our own learning and teaching. As a result, our mission is that “We believe through our school and community partnership all children can achieve success in a positive, safe, nurturing environment. While always respecting differences, student achievement is the force that drives instruction.”

The faculty and staff work as a team with our school community. Parents serve as classroom volunteers during the day, while teams of teachers volunteer evenings to provide professional development to the parents at the monthly Parent–Faculty Association meetings. This reciprocity reinforces responsibility and accountability, which are shared by teachers and parents alike.

Parents are encouraged to take part in the standards-based learning expectations while supporting their child’s work-study habits to foster success. The Pennsylvania State goals, anchors and expectations emerge in kindergarten. By the third and fourth grades, parents are invited to come and work with their child on a PSSA lesson. For those parents who cannot attend a day session, the teachers offer an evening learning opportunity. Furthermore, if parents cannot attend either session, members of the team gladly make a home visit. All parents must attest that they are aware of the importance of NCLB and will strive to support their child’s proficiency goals.

Working as a team is more than a part of our belief statement; it is embedded in our culture; it is our way of life. Unique family dynamics and varying social factors are not only challenges, but opportunities for collaboration and teamwork. Within the cycle of learning the faculty and staff instill a love of learning in our students and parents, while the students and parents model grateful compassion for the faculty and staff. Together we provide a learning environment that inspires our children to often say “Thank you for the best day of my life.”

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

While First Street Elementary School utilizes a variety of assessment tools to track student achievement, the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is the most significant. Each year, students in grades 3-8 and 11 are assessed in reading and math. The PSSA, developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, is a standards-based criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the Pennsylvania academic standards. State standards identify what a student should know and be able to do at various grade levels. The PSSA assesses student performance at four different levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.

The performance level indicative of meeting the standard is "Proficient." The Pennsylvania Department of Education website, www.pde.state.pa.us, contains detailed information regarding our assessment system.

The PSSA is also used to determine a school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as required by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. To meet AYP a school must meet certain targets in attendance, academic performance, and test participation. AYP targets and statistics may be viewed at www.paayp.com.

First Street has exceeded the PDE targets for the past two years and was recently awarded the Keystone Achievement Recognition Award, a public recognition of sustained improvement in teaching, learning, and achievement for all students.

Student scores at First Street Elementary have risen dramatically over the past two years. On the third grade PSSA math test, scores have gone from 42% of students Proficient or Advanced in 2004 to 99% of students Proficient or Advanced in 2006. This success continues into the reading portion of the PSSA with scores climbing from 49% to 94%.

During this same time period, our economically disadvantaged students' scores (a mandated reported sub-group) improved from 38% to 93% Proficient or Advanced in the area of math and from 60% to 86% in reading.

First Street has also consistently demonstrated 100% participation rate on the PSSA.

The success at our school has been, at times, unbelievable to many but a true testament to the dedication of the staff, students, and parents of our school community. Such a rise in student achievement doesn't happen without unlimited support and willingness to abandon old ways of thinking and embrace new ideas and techniques by all those involved in educating our students.

Because our school community has the strong desire to change the aspects of our environment that aren't successful and adopt the attitude that all of our students deserve a chance to succeed, our students have proven they can achieve success if given the opportunity. The third grade class of 2004-2005 was the only elementary school in Washington County, a county that contains 31 different elementary schools, to score 100% Proficient or Advanced on the math section of the PSSA. First Street has gone from being one of the poorest performing schools in our district to one of the highest, yet the number of economically disadvantaged students stays consistently near half of the school population.

The feedback received from the PSSA is an essential tool used by our faculty when making curriculum adjustments, determining teaching and learning strategies that have the potential to work with different learners, and examining and developing intervention strategies that can be utilized in the classroom to best meet the needs of our students.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At First Street Elementary, data is the cornerstone of decision making. Results from a myriad of assessments are used by teachers and administrators to align data with individual student instructional needs. Teachers utilize programs such as: Star Reading, Accelerated Reader, Performance Tracker, and Destination Success. At every grade level, teachers track and monitor student performance by comparing historical data with the most current assessment documentation.

The Star Reading Program provides students with computer generated quizzes and tests to assess individual reading levels several times a year. In this manner, student reading ability can be closely monitored. The Accelerated Reading Program allows students to independently select books on their reading level and take computer generated quizzes after reading their chosen book. The teacher can use this data to specifically assess student comprehension and understanding of literary elements when working independently.

Performance Tracker is a data warehouse, designed to help teachers and administrators track student performance on standardized testing over time. Scores from standardized tests such as PSSA and Terra Nova are then used by the First Street teachers to collaboratively create specialized learning groups and lessons within each grade level as well as within each classroom. These differentiated, flexible groups work together weekly and allow the teachers to re-teach, reinforce, and enrich students based on their needs as documented by the data.

Along with these programs, teachers also utilize the Integrated Learning System, “Destination Success” to monitor student performance. This software provides students with reading and math tutorials, quizzes, and activities, the results of which are tracked by each teacher. Based on each student’s individual performance, teachers can assign online assignments designed to re-teach, reinforce, or enrich specific learning areas.

School performance is monitored with these devices by our building principal. In addition to the data delivered by these programs and expressed through various grading and reporting systems, she monitors the success of each student by writing individualized comments on every report card. In this manner, she supplements the data with qualified input to further enhance student performance.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Communication is a key to any successful relationship and having open lines of communication with parents, students, and the community is a very high priority at First Street Elementary. All parents receive a mid point progress report, half way through each nine week grading period, informing them of both their child’s strengths and needs. Quarterly report cards are distributed for all academic disciplines and also indicate progress regarding social and emotional development. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year to facilitate one on one communication of student progress monitoring. To reinforce the importance of the parent-teacher conference interaction, initial conferences are mandatory for all kindergarten parents. Achievement is also chronicled via student portfolios, individual compendiums of student work. During our annual Portfolio Day, parents and family members are invited to share in an exchange of progress as each student reviews his/her most prized work of the year.

Our school also uses our district web site, www.cmsd.k12.pa.us, as one means of communication with our community. First Street specific information is available through this portal. Appropriate academic achievements, and other pertinent information, are posted for all to

view. Our district also produces and distributes a winter and spring newsletter to every home throughout the community that highlights individual student as well as whole school accomplishments.

First Street Elementary School reports both standardized testing and state assessments results through direct and confidential mailings to each home. The mailings include both visual and numerical representations as well as a detailed narrative of each child's scores. If questions arise, parents are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher or principal of the school for clarification.

Overall, these open lines of communication enhance our students' potential for academic success.

4. Sharing Success:

First Street Elementary School's professional staff is excited about our students' performance in the classroom and their achievements on the PSSA assessments. Because we work as a team to ensure our students' success, we routinely and willingly share our best practices and techniques. As a result of our successful in-house efforts such as common planning time and grade level team meetings with our principal Dr. Nicolaus, we devised a Professional Development Initiative that offers our teachers the opportunity to share their best teaching practices and strategies with district colleagues.

Through our District's "Walk-Through" Program, First Street Elementary School has the opportunity to share successful strategies with district administrators and teachers from our nine elementary buildings, one middle school and one high school in our district. During the process, student work displays and the modeling of successful teaching strategies are observed and discussed.

First Street Elementary School is very proud to have welcomed educators from neighboring schools for entire days of visitation. These visits included meetings between staffs, lesson modeling, teacher observations and question/answer sessions. The positive feedback and repeat visits from the schools reaffirmed our commitment to our innovative techniques and strategies and validated our desire to share our successes.

A series of after-school workshops led by our principal, Dr. Nicolaus, with assistance from First Street Elementary School teachers, avails professional development opportunities to all of our K-6 colleagues, district-wide. These workshops have been well attended and received. As an example, some workshops have focused on such topics as our successful practices in language arts which included two powerful reading instructional strategies: Probable Cause and Literature Circles. Our team spirit has united us as a learning community and our desire to continue to engage in efforts such as these in the future is strong.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

First Street Elementary School follows a rigorous, age-appropriate curriculum that is based on Pennsylvania State Anchors and Standards. The development of higher order thinking skills in our students is an instructional priority that facilitates their achievement at their highest potential.

The goal of the Language Arts curriculum is to develop life-long readers who construct knowledge through their interaction with text. We teach our students to be fluent readers with a strong foundation in phonemic awareness, phonics, and word recognition using the research-based Scott Foresman Language Arts Series. Comprehension skills develop as readers use strategies that assist them in gaining meaning from the printed word. This process relies on the reader's ability to connect their prior knowledge to the information presented in the text. To further enhance this mental process, teachers model strategies on how to deal with both narrative and expository texts. An additional goal of this curriculum is to develop effective communicators. Students participate in the curriculum to locate and synthesize information and to communicate with a variety of audiences in oral, written, and visual formats. Assessment occurs both formally and informally with tools that evaluate student growth and guide instructional decision making.

The Mathematics curriculum begins in kindergarten with the development of mathematical thinking. It then extends throughout the grade levels to include a wide variety of mathematical concepts based on Pennsylvania State Anchors and Standards. The many facets of this challenging curriculum include: numeration, number theory, money, fractions, decimal concepts and operations, estimation and mental math strategies, whole number addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability, along with algebraic concepts. The fundamental source of instructional material is the Scott Foresman research-based mathematics series. Through the application of this program, students are also engaged in the areas of mathematical processes such as problem solving skills and strategies, reasoning and proof, and connection of math to other curricular areas. A great emphasis is placed on both oral and written communication through math journaling.

The core of our Science curriculum consists of, but is not limited to, the discovery based Science Matters Kits, which have been developed by the National Science Resource Center. These kits are part of a standards-based, hands-on science program that engages all students in stimulating experiences in life, earth, and physical sciences, while simultaneously developing their critical-thinking and problem solving skills. Technology classes are also offered to all district third and fourth grade students for a semester and focus on analytical problem solving through constructivist activities.

The standards-based Social Studies curriculum begins with knowledge and experiences of local community life. It extends throughout the grade levels to the study of Pennsylvania and the regional areas of the United States. Students engage in the study of the geography, civics, government, economics, and history of their home state as well as other regions. Standards-based research and projects help students to reach their learning objectives.

Our Health and Wellness curriculum promotes health literacy. All students demonstrate the knowledge and behaviors they need to make informed decisions about their own personal health. Students have opportunities to learn and practice life skills and develop character traits for positive health behaviors through problem solving and critical thinking.

The Arts curriculum is comprised of weekly lessons in physical education, art, music, and

library science. Fourth grade students have the opportunity to participate in higher level musical and art opportunities via band, chorus, and art enrichment. The curricula of these classes have been aligned with the Pennsylvania as well as national standards.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

At First Street Elementary School we believe that reading and writing are the cornerstones of learning not only across the curriculum but also throughout life. It is important that children learn to read and write well to ensure that they meet or exceed grade level standards not just in the area of Language Arts but in all content areas. Over the years our reading program has been refined so that all of our students experience a balanced program of research-based strategies.

The Scott Foresman Reading Program (2004) is a large part of the foundation of instructional delivery. It compliments our Language Arts curriculum because it epitomizes the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency and reading comprehension), it aligns with the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, and it addresses the diverse needs of our heterogeneous students. Complimenting this core program are the Orton-Gillingham Program, a multi-sensory phonics program that our teachers have been trained to deliver, the STAR, Accelerated Reader and Destination Success software programs.

Additional reading support is offered through our Title I Reading specialists in a combination of pull-out and in-class collaborative models. We also have one Title I Reading Specialist trained in the research-based Reading Recovery program. Working under the auspices of Duquesne University she is able to provide Reading Recovery, an intensive one on one instructional program aimed at accelerating reading progress within a 12 to 20 week period, to the most severely at risk first graders.

3. Additional Curriculum Area-Mathematics:

The mathematics curriculum at First Street Elementary School is devoted to reaching all learners, as we are a school made up of students with many different strengths and needs. Our approaches toward learning have proven so successful that in 2004-2005 the third grade was the only class in Washington County to score 100% proficient on the state PSSA math test. Our standards-based math curriculum focuses on five anchors, which are endorsed by The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: numbers and operations, measurement, geometry, algebraic concepts, and data analysis and probability.

A typical math session at First Street is a frenzy of learning activity. You will observe students working with manipulatives to solve problems, making connections to real life situations, communicating their mathematical thinking through writing and speaking, and using technology to practice skills and concepts. You will hear Dr. Nicolaus, the school principal, read a Math Whiz problem aloud to students via the school public address system and then watch as students work feverishly to solve the problem in order to proudly present Dr. Nicolaus with their answer. You will see students working at their instructional level to practice math facts and concepts specific to their individual growth during each class' weekly Math Mania Day.

Chances are high that as you walk through the school during a math lesson, you won't discern the difference between a gifted student and a special needs student. All students work in inclusion settings, with the classroom and learning support teachers collaborating to plan lessons and activities that meet their different needs. Students effectively explore mathematical concepts

and skills during individual lessons, whole group instruction, skill-based groups and differentiated activities because teachers work collegially to provide instruction. This team approach, for both students and staff, supports our mission to make First Street Elementary School successful in fostering student achievement for a variety of children through an array of techniques.

4. Instructional Methods:

First Street Elementary utilizes many instructional methods to meet the needs of all children and improve student learning. Cooperative learning is a priority when planning instruction. All grade levels incorporate flexible grouping within their classrooms. These groupings can be organized either heterogeneously or homogeneously according to multiple intelligences, learning styles, interests, and ability levels. We strive to create an inclusive learning environment where students with different learning characteristics work and learn together. At any given time, you will see children engaged in many different activities at one time, while still working towards meeting Pennsylvania State Standards. Each grade level also supplements the curriculum by reading and studying a novel in literature circle. Here, the teacher acts as the facilitator and the students participate by actively creating their own interpretations through group discussions.

All grade level teachers meet at least once a week to work on differentiated grade level activities during a common planning time shared among the regular grade level teachers, reading specialists, learning support teachers, and media specialist. The students are then divided into small groups based on their ability level and the learning objective. The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy support the design of each individual group's instruction. The 3rd and 4th grade differentiated groups focus on PSSA preparation skills while the 1st and 2nd grade groups focus on strengthening basic reading and math skills.

Students' motivation and enthusiasm are maintained through the implementation of different instructional strategies throughout the school day. Compacting, used in spelling class and through "Math Mania" activities, is another strategy that promotes individual achievement. Cross grade-level tutoring is also useful in enhancing and reinforcing reading and math skills.

The implementation of technology is evident in day-to-day learning, and teachers are often designing and creating interactive, differentiated lessons. Each classroom is equipped with five student computers and each teacher has access to the building Smartboard and to sets of interactive student response systems. Combining these instructional tools with our Accelerated Reader program, our Integrated Learning System (Destination Success), word processing capabilities, Internet use and the PSSA preparatory Study Island website, student learning thrives.

5. Professional Development:

At First Street Elementary, professional development takes a team approach and is based on our mission and the motto, "The Strength of the team is each individual member...the strength of each member is the team." We pride ourselves on our unique and personalized peer professional development program where we teach, learn, share, and grow together. The staff at First Street Elementary School orchestrates several professional development meetings for one another throughout the year. These meetings take place before the instructional day begins. Some of our past topics have included: peer training for online learning tools, behavior intervention strategies, teacher created Accelerated Reader tests, researched-based instructional strategies, children's literature, and classroom appropriate websites. We attribute the improvements, validated by data, we have seen in student achievement in part to our professional development initiatives.

Our monthly grade level team plan meetings provide yet other professional development

opportunities. Here, the teachers and principal collaborate in a small group setting to discuss various educational topics and professional literature that have been shared with our entire staff. For instance, we have read, discussed, and applied ideas from books such as The Birth Order by Kevin Leman and The Essential 55 by Ron Clark.

Teachers are held accountable to monitor their own professional development. At the beginning of the year, each teacher sets a professional goal. At each team plan meeting, time is spent reflecting on those goals and on the progress that has been made towards reaching them. In this manner, the concept of differentiated learning activities is applied to the faculty as well as the students.

The Canon-McMillan School District also provides our teachers with several in-service days for professional development. These learning days either take place in a district wide setting or within the individual schools and focus on educational topics and district initiatives. They augment our building level professional development efforts and therefore contribute to student achievement.

PART VII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS

First Street Elementary School

Math

Grade 3 - PSSA

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	March	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At or Above Proficient	98	100	42
% Advanced	89	69	21
Number of students tested	35	48	42
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. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At or Above Proficient	93	100	38
% Advanced	86	57	14
Number of students tested	14	23	21
2. Students with an IEP			
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	18
% Advanced	*	*	9
Number of students tested	*	*	10

* Indicates fewer than 10 students in a subgroup

First Street Elementary School

Reading

Grade 3 - PSSA

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	March	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At or Above Proficient	94	73	49
% Advanced	54	28	17
Number of students tested	35	47	41
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			
<i>1. Economically Disadvantaged</i>			
% At or Above Proficient	86	64	60
% Advanced	36	23	10
Number of students tested	14	22	20
<i>2. Students with an IEP</i>			
% At or Above Proficient	*	*	30
% Advanced	*	*	10
Number of students tested	*	*	11

* Indicates fewer than 10 students in a subgroup

First Street Elementary School

Math

Grade 4 - PSSA

	2005-2006		
Testing Month	March		
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At or Above Proficient	96		
% Advanced	57		
Number of students tested	46		
Percent of total students tested	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At or Above Proficient	90		
% Advanced	35		
Number of students tested	14		

2005-2006 was the first year for fourth grade PSSA testing.

First Street Elementary School

Reading

Grade 4 - PSSA

	2005-2006		
Testing Month	March		
SCHOOL SCORES			
% At or Above Proficient	87		
% Advanced	46		
Number of students tested	46		
Percent of total students tested	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged			
% At or Above Proficient	90		
% Advanced	40		
Number of students tested	14		

2005-2006 was the first year for fourth grade PSSA testing.