

2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Public Private

Cover Sheet

Type of School
(Check all that apply)

Elementary Middle High K-12
 Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Joel Willen

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

Official School Name Corte Madera School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4575 Alpine Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Portola Valley

California

94028-8040

City

State

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County San Mateo

State School Code Number* 41-68981

Telephone (650) 851-1777

Fax (650) 529-8553

Web site/URL http://www.pvsd.net

E-mail jwillen@pvsd.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

Principal's Signature

Name of Superintendent Ms. Anne Campbell

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

District Name Portola Valley School District

Tel. (650) 851-1777

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Ray Villareal

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

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

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

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

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office 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 2007-2008 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have 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 2002 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. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: _____ 1 Elementary schools
 _____ 1 Middle schools
 _____ 0 Junior High Schools
 _____ 0 High schools
 _____ 0 Other
 _____ 2 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____ 15029
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____ 7521

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 are
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural are
 Rural
4. _____ 4 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 _____ 0 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
Pre K	0	0	0	7	35	37	72
K	0	0	0	8	29	32	61
1	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
4	47	35	82	12	0	0	0
5	48	39	87	Other	0	0	0
6	43	30	73				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							375

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 0 | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 9 | % Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 2 | % Black or African American |
| 8 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| 81 | % White |

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 1 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	375
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1 %
- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|---|---|

Number of languages represented 1

Specify languages: Spanish

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

Total number students who qualify: 35

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: 12 %
46 Total Number of Students Serve

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>5</u>	Autism	<u>1</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deafness	<u>2</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deaf-Blindnes	<u>21</u>	Specific Learning Disabilit
<u>1</u>	Emotional Disturbanc	<u>15</u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>0</u>	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u>	Multiple Disabilities		

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

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>26</u>	<u>5</u>
Special resource teachers/specialist	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
Support Staff	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>42</u>	<u>12</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of 13 : 1 students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. 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 in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	97 %	94 %	97 %	98 %	97 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	95 %	96 %	96 %	95 %
Teacher turnover rate	4 %	4 %	0 %	11 %	0 %
Student drop out rate (middle/high	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Please provide all explanations below

PART III - SUMMARY

Corte Madera School's vision is to create a powerful learning community where students consistently strive to achieve excellence. When our students graduate, they move to high school with strong academic skills, an appreciation for the arts, intellectual curiosity, personal responsibility, a commitment to service, and the skills to navigate a diverse and rapidly changing world.

Corte Madera School (CMS) is a 4-8 school located in Portola Valley in San Mateo County, thirty miles south of San Francisco. Portola Valley School District includes one K-3 elementary school and one 4-8 school. The schools benefit from the town's unique qualities, including a highly-educated, community-oriented population committed to its public school; and a dedicated parent group who pursue excellence and innovation in their professional and personal lives and expect the same from their schools.

The spirit of CMS is evidenced every other Monday morning when 375 students, grades four through eight, kick off the week by coming together for a lively and informative school assembly. The Student Council sets a positive, upbeat, inclusive feeling for the week and highlights students for their academic and extra-curricular achievements. Leadership organized Spirit Days, lunchtime activities, 7th and 8th grade dances, and local fundraising efforts foster inclusion, competition, and fun for students.

CMS students work hard and actively pursue the CMS vision of excellence. They consistently demonstrate high achievement, contributing to a 2007 API of 947. Students are challenged to further excel through differentiation and class projects. More than 50% of 6-8 grade students receive Honor Roll recognition each semester and many take high school honors classes. CMS students take a rigorous core curriculum, including Spanish, along with a wide range of elective options (visual arts, band, chorus, drama, video production, and music video). Instruction is provided in a variety of ways to accommodate different student interests and learning styles.

CMS is a safe, nurturing campus with teachers and staff who care about students. As a small school, with class size averaging 20, students receive individualized attention from teachers and support personnel. Teachers can regularly be found in their classrooms during lunch and recess helping students. Every effort is made to see that all students are successful and achieve at high levels. The Site Council and PTO allocate resources to ELA, math, and focused tutorial programs to support students who are not yet proficient. Ongoing local and state assessments, along with regular 'data mining', help teachers identify student strengths and weaknesses and customize instruction to meet student needs. For those students who struggle academically, socially or emotionally, CMS has a full time counselor who offers support and guidance.

Parents are an important part of the school community. Our strong PTO supports students, teachers and staff. The 4th and 5th grade cocoa breakfasts and the 6th, 7th and 8th grade BBQ lunches are regular highlights for students. Parents and community members regularly participate in Site Council, GATE, Character Education, Service Learning, Portola Valley Foundation, classrooms, field trips, and assist in the office and library.

By emphasizing academic excellence, providing support, and encouraging active student and community involvement, CMS is actively working to produce 21st century citizens who will have the strong academic, critical thinking, and problem solving skills needed to be innovators for the future.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Results from the California Standardized Testing and Assessment system (STAR) are reviewed annually by all Corte Madera faculty and staff. Criterion referenced and aligned to the standards outlined by the state of California, these tests measure student progress toward mastery of grade-level standards. At Corte Madera all students in all grades are tested in English and Mathematics. Fourth and 7th grades are tested in writing, 5th and 8th grades are tested in science, and 8th grade in Social Studies. Performance is reported at five levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic. All students, regardless of disability or English Language Learner (ELL) status, are expected to perform at proficient or above. In addition, students in grade 7 are given the CAT-6 (California Achievement Test, 6th Edition). This norm-referenced indicator tests how well Corte Madera's 7th graders compare to a similar national demographic population over the same time period.

A review of STAR results shows that Corte Madera has maintained consistently strong scores in academic performance in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for the four years beginning in 2004. In ELA, the percentages of students scoring Proficient or Advanced were: 2004, 87%; 2005, 88%; 2006, 89%; 2007, 89%. In mathematics, percentages of scores in the Proficient or Advanced range maintained a similar steady upward trend: 2004, 77%; 2005, 77%; 2006, 84%; 2007, 83%. Please note that California does not provide 'Advanced' level data for eighth grade mathematics. The overall increase during this period of time in ELA was 2%, while the increase in mathematics was 6%.

A second measure of school accountability is the Academic Performance Index (API). API combines state assessment results for all schools and establishes a performance benchmark from 200 to 1000 for every school. A school's growth target is calculated to be 5% of the difference between the base API and the statewide target of 800. It is expected that all schools meet or exceed their annual API growth target or, after 3 years of underperformance, be subject to program improvement and state oversight. As the following indicates, Corte Madera has met or exceeded its API target every year: 2003, 912; 2004, 929; 2005, 935; 2006, 939; and in 2007, 947.

Disparities within the student population are minimal and are confined to our small group of English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD). These students have been identified for special federally-mandated programming. For our ELL population, those SWD, and regular education students with below proficient ratings, Corte Madera has established an After-School Academic Program. Students in this program receive an extra 90 minutes of instruction and enrichment twice a week, with a credentialed teacher and a paraprofessional after the regular school day. The District provides additional funding for teacher aides in grades 4 and 5, paraprofessional assistance in 4th -8th grade science, and support staff in 6th- 8th grade language arts. In addition, 6th- 8th grade offers 4 math support classes. The effect on the scores of under-performing students in these academic support classes is high and positive, and is reflected in the annual improvement of STAR test data.

Results from STAR, and other standardized metrics, reflect our high academic standards. Other ongoing assessments include, in Language Arts: formal district-wide, standards-aligned writing rubrics; grade-level narrative, expository, and literature-response writing prompts; grade-level English expectancies and checklists; grade-level spelling lists; diagnostic reading inventories at grades 4 and 5; grade-level reading comprehension essays; Open Court reading assessments in grade 5; grade-level portfolio reviews; student self-reflection instruments; use of Bloom's Taxonomy of critical thinking at all grades; the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test in grades 4-8; and the Steck-Vaughn reading comprehension program in 8th grade. Ongoing Math assessments include: the Arithmetic Mastery Test, given twice a year in grades 6-8; the CSU/CU Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) readiness tests in grades 6-8 and the STEP II Mathematics test in 8th grade administered in the spring; teacher made or curriculum driven grade-level unit tests reflecting current math series given throughout the year; annual Math Assessment Collaborative (MAC) formative performance test at every grade level; grade-level portfolio reviews; online quizzes; Weekly Challenge Problems; enrichment activities across all grade levels; and adoption of the online ALEKS program at the 4th and 5th grade.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Detailed DataWORKS analyses of STAR test results (e.g., Gap and Cluster analysis) are used collaboratively by teachers and administrators to measure overall school performance, to provide fine-grained performance profiles for all students, particularly those at and below requisite proficiency levels, to

select instructional materials, and to define School Site Planning priorities. Each fall, responding quickly to defined areas of need, grade-level teacher teams utilize this data to refine curricular planning, instruction, and pacing. Faculty and staff analyze and use standardized test data to inform individual interventions (e.g. referral to student study teams), and to deploy school resources (e.g. School Site Council funding for paraprofessionals and/or supplemental materials) where they are most needed. In addition, subject area teams meet twice each month to discuss student testing profiles, to focus student goals, and to set strategic actions to achieve those goals. This data disaggregation led to the creation, in 2006, of the After-School Academic Program that targets students at the Basic and Far-Below Basic proficiency levels and includes small group reading instruction, focusing on vocabulary development and comprehension skills, as well as math concept and skill building.

Analysis of STAR and other district level data indicating low-proficiency in certain arithmetic skills led directly to development of the 6th-8th Math Mastery Map and the addition of twice-weekly after-school math enrichment sessions, lunchtime tutorials, and extra practice opportunities for underachieving students. The Math Mastery Map expanded to 4th and 5th grade this year. The Math Mastery Map plots assessment data against state-mandated arithmetic skills. The resulting map identifies proficiency gaps that are quickly addressed by teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents through customized homework assignments, small-group instruction, math support classes, twice-weekly after-school math enrichment sessions, and/or lunchtime tutorials.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Early and regular communication with parents and community, characterized by its scope and variety, facilitates school intervention efforts. At Corte Madera, communication is viewed as an essential ingredient of a vibrant, engaged learning community.

Standardized assessment reports, including those for STAR and MAC, are sent home to parents, accompanied by a letter from Corte Madera explaining how to interpret the results. Quarterly or semester Report Cards, including a detailed comments section in the 4th and 5th grades, are also mailed with explanatory material. Our SIS, PowerSchool, provides a portal through which 6th-8th grade parents can access student grades. Our school has translators on campus and can provide essential information in the home language for EL families. Progress of SWD is monitored through alternative assessments that accommodate the learning needs and styles of the student. Progress toward IEP goals is assessed and reported formally in SWD Progress Reports at the end of each reporting period and informally throughout the year in ongoing conversation between the family and school personnel.

The District Governing Board, the PTO, and School Site Council are apprised, annually, of the school's progress in meeting targeted STAR and API goals. In addition the annual School Accountability Report Card is posted on the school website and available in the District office.

Standards and expectations in all curricular areas are reviewed at Back to School Night and reiterated in our Student Handbook for any parent unable to attend. Grade-level standards and curriculum highlights are posted on the Corte Madera website and delivered through grade-level communiques. The school routinely communicates with families at biannual conferences, at teacher or parent solicited meetings, and via phone or email. Teachers take care to ensure that parents understand their child's achievement level relative to standards-based expectations and often make suggestions for at-home interventions. Conversations about behavior and concerns requiring immediate attention are typically initiated by phone and email. The district newsletter, the Tuesday Post, provides school news and events calendars, and discussion boards are available via links on the school district website. The focus of such conversations is effective student-parent-teacher communication and coordination that ensures student progress. Student work, posted in classrooms and labs, provides a highly public display of proficiency levels. And, more recently, student podcasts have been recorded and posted to classroom websites.

4. Sharing Success:

Corte Madera has the advantage of being the single middle school in the two-school Portola Valley School District. This small size makes intra-district communications straightforward. Articulation of trends across the K-8 grade levels is enhanced by frequent discussions between administrators and district office personnel. During these semi-monthly meetings, school administrators share program and instructional successes, analyze trends, and communicate research and ideas to solve problems related to curriculum and instruction. In addition, teachers involved in the critical transition years (e.g. 3rd to 4th and 5th to 6th) engage in 'transition conferences' that discuss necessary or successful interventions with specific students. These discussions promote the smooth transfer of students between grade levels.

The Corte Madera school website broadcasts educational accomplishments to a global audience of constituents. The principal presents a State-of-the-School address at the first Governing Board meeting of each school year. Governing board meetings are frequently attended by a member of the local press corps representing The Almanac, a publication serving Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Corte Madera's principal attends and presents at San Mateo County curriculum meetings where informal discussions and networking also occur. Faculty and staff have often been selected to present workshops at county, state, and national conventions. Faculty members have been presented the Kent Award (2003, 2005, & 2006) for innovative instructional programming and the Service Learning Award (2005 & 2006), given by the National Youth Leadership Council for outstanding contributions to community service. Educator visits to our school as well as the California Distinguished School selection process have provided opportunities to collaborate and to communicate our many successes.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

All students at Corte Madera experience a curriculum fully aligned with state content standards and frameworks, and, with the exception of Everyday Math for which PVSD has obtained a waiver, curriculum is taught with State Board of Education-adopted instructional materials. Grade-level and subject area teams work within content standards to ensure a balanced, comprehensive, integrated program, enriched and tailored to accommodate diverse needs.

In 5th grade Corte Madera is piloting the Open Court reading program as a means of meeting the needs of our younger students as they move into more content-based texts in grades 6-8. Open Court provides a comprehensive, sequential program that permits explicit tracking of discreet reading skills for students who require more scaffolding. The core books (e.g. Sign of the Beaver, My Brother Sam is Dead, The Witch of Blackbird Pond) are explicitly selected for layered content that integrates well with Social Studies themes. The Kurzweil program provides computer-assisted instruction for SWD, and small-group instruction supports students struggling with comprehension. In 4th and 5th grade the 6-Traits writing program has been developed through collaboration with a consultant, whose knowledge of current research and best practices informs program development, and includes standards-based writing prompts, rubrics, and lessons. The recent addition of the Classical Roots program provides a lexicological basis for spelling that promotes both decoding and reading comprehension as well as vocabulary development.

From 2004 through May 2006, the Middle School Math Review Team (MSMRT), composed of teachers, parents, administrators, and School Board members conducted an in-depth study of middle school mathematics instruction. After reviewing research by the National Council of Teachers of Math and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the MSMRT chose to pilot Prentice Hall's Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 texts because of their strong support for different learning styles, abilities, and pacing. Two levels of 8th grade Algebra are now taught from a single text, and 8th graders no longer wear their math achievement levels on the cover of their math text. Corte Madera will be embarking on a new math textbook adoption for all grades this fall.

The recent adoption of the Scott Foresman Our California social studies series in grade 4 is an attempt to address issues of population diversity in our state. Containing a strong ELA strand, this text discusses the many contributions of women as well as Native American, Spanish, Mexican, and European influences, and provides many reflection activities for students. Our 8th grade social studies classes are engaged in a Constitutional Convention simulation where debates about property involve the complicated issues of slavery.

More than half of the student population participates in the annual, school-wide science fair that integrates science, math, language arts, research skills, technology, and graphic arts into a meaningful display. Every year a cadre of CMS students advance to the County and State Science Fairs. Integrated enrichment activities like the 7th grade Stock Market Project promote student understanding of science careers and science industries, and provide opportunities for market investigation, tracking business performance, and practice interpreting charts and graphs.

Corte Madera's visual and performing arts curriculum is comprised of a full time art teacher, and two full time music teachers (instrumental and vocal). Fourth and 5th grade classes are provided with one period of art per week, while a choice of vocal/general music or band, featuring a full array of instruments, is offered on an alternating day (i.e. A-Day, B-Day) schedule. All 6th graders participate in music, performance arts, and drama. Seventh and 8th graders choose from a wide variety of visual and performing arts (e.g. yearbook, video production) as part of the elective process.

Foreign Language instruction is a critical component of the Corte Madera core curriculum. Spanish language instruction begins in kindergarten and continues through 4-8 at Corte Madera. Fourth and 5th grade classes participate in a single block of instruction (i.e. 45 minutes) weekly. However, students in 6th - 8th grades are instructed daily throughout the year. The foreign language instructors use multiple methods to engage students, and recently have constructed extensive web-based resources that enable students to practice language skills at home.

The school's Physical Education program, coordinated by two full-time PE instructors, provides daily physical instruction for all students in grades 7-8 and alternate day classes for all students in grades 4 - 6.

The program produces students who are comfortable with their physical bodies and aware of healthy life-style choices. Students participate in the Presidential Physical Fitness testing program and in an end-of-the-year Sports Day that focuses on sportsmanship and teamwork.

Corte Madera identifies Gifted and Talented (GATE) students in grade 5 using STAR data, the OLSAT, the Naglieri, and teacher recommendation. GATE accommodation in regular education, as well as art and music classes, occurs largely through compaction and acceleration. The needs of gifted students are met through classroom strategies that includes: tiered assignments that offer opportunities for challenging exploration and in-depth application of knowledge and skills; layered complexity yielding rich connections between concepts; novel applications via extensions to new domains; and student-initiated activities and projects.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Reading instruction at the 5th grade level is currently undergoing refinement. Total focus on core literature with supplementary reading materials (e.g. Day Book of Critical Reading and Writing, The Reader's Handbook, and Writers' Express all published by Great Source: Houghton Mifflin) was not meeting the needs of all students. Open Court, a more structured approach to reading instruction, and grouping students by reading achievement is a way to provide instruction in the discreet reading skills that promote reading comprehension and fluency. In the first year, teachers report that underperforming students selected for the pilot have made great strides in reading comprehension. Following spring testing, it will be determined whether a second group will be created for 4th grade students for the 2008-09 school year.

In addition to changes in directed reading instruction, and as a response to lower than expected spelling scores on the STAR test, 4th and 5th grades have adopted a Latin-root approach to spelling titled Classical Roots. This curriculum is a departure from the routine, phonics-based spelling book used in previous years, and provides families of words that can be easily spelled and easily understood once the cluster of letters comprising the root is learned. This approach has given students an additional strategy for decoding unfamiliar words, the basis of reading comprehension.

Six-Traits is the writing program of choice in the lower middle grades. Under the guidance of a local writing consultant, 4th and 5th grade teachers have institutionalized the program, written curriculum, created rubrics and quarterly prompts, engaged in group scoring sessions, and selected anchor papers as benchmark assessments. English grammar is taught through a state approved text. However, grammar is heavily integrated into both writing activities and core literature explorations. Quick-warm-up grammar drills or group editing conferences are presented to keep students' awareness of English writing conventions sharp.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

Sixth through 8th grade reading and English instruction occurs daily during a 2-period block. The three English teachers expertly integrate English, reading, and writing skills. Using State ELA guidelines, teachers provide rich language-based instruction that reflects and incorporates grade-level social studies and history curriculum. For example, 6th grade students refine their writing skills through reading and reflection of ancient Asian texts, while 7th grade students respond to readings from the classical Greek and Renaissance periods.

All Corte Madera students have access to CORE curriculum in the regular classroom through differentiated instruction and 'Safety Net' programs. This is especially true of the 6th-8th grade students. Not yet proficient students routinely receive individualized assignments reflecting curriculum modifications. Eighth grade texts, vocabulary, and spelling lists are all differentiated according to proficiency levels determined by assessment data. An experienced ELA aide visits once a week to work 1-on-1 with students on California writing formats. This consistent support allows ELA teachers to focus on higher-level thinking and questioning strategies with students of all abilities.

A recent research study from the Stanford University Summer Writing program suggested that students who use paper and pencil to compose and edit, rather than a keyboard, develop a deeper understanding of the writing process. Therefore, at Corte Madera 6th-8th grade ELA teachers focus students away from keyboard composition and onto critical thinking and writing process skills.

The district librarian and the 6th-8th grade ELA teachers have recently created the New Fiction Project and teen book club. Awarded a grant from the Portola Valley Endowment Fund, the project purchases new fiction and encourages students to read widely for pleasure.

ELA grade-level teachers meet regularly at lunch and before and after school to collaborate on curriculum

development and instructional strategies, and to monitor and assist struggling students. The ELA department is currently refining the articulation between 4-8, planning backwards from 8th grade proficiencies, with particular focus on grade-level expectancies and rubrics, as well as uniform writing and editing processes. Teachers recently received copies of Harvey and Goudvis' *Strategies That Work*. Participating in professional learning communities, teacher leaders will use this book to guide their colleagues in staff development on effective reading instruction.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

At the 4th and 5th grade level, mathematics instruction incorporates the Everyday Mathematics program. This program, for which Corte Madera received a waiver from the State Board in 2004, focuses on obtaining multiple solutions to everyday problems using everyday materials, and contributes to the development of a firm foundation for mathematical reasoning. Using manipulatives, models, and games, the program engages students at every instructional level. Multiple pathways to learning, using varied instructional strategies (e.g. cooperative groups, pairs and triads), give students a sense of success and understanding that a strict process approach (i.e. rote-memorization) and massed practice seldom do.

Because Corte Madera views the transition from middle school to high school as highly significant, great pains are taken to ensure instructional continuity in the 6th-8th grade mathematics curriculum. Mathematics instruction at these grade levels consists of general math, pre-algebra and algebra instruction. The recently implemented Math Mastery Map, developed over two years by the Corte Madera Middle School Math Review Team (MSMRT), plots assessment data against state-mandated arithmetic skills. Performance evaluation is based on three grade-level tests per year. The resulting map identifies proficiency gaps that are quickly addressed by teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents through customized homework assignments, small-group instruction, twice-weekly after-school math enrichment sessions, and/or lunchtime tutorials. The math department extended Math Mastery Map assessment into grades 4 and 5 in the fall of 2007.

All students are given the Math Assessment Collaborative (MAC) test in March. This assessment, created by the worldwide Math Assessment and Reporting Collaborative (MARS), is not required as part of the State testing system, but it provides Corte Madera mathematics instructors with a performance-based glimpse into student problem solving ability.

4. Instructional Methods:

Corte Madera embraces an instructional philosophy that explicitly commits the school to a focus on academic excellence and CORE curriculum. This approach exploits research-based best practices and a variety of instructional strategies and techniques that offer a rigorous, balanced curriculum to address the unique learning styles and needs of middle school students. Constructivist theory, involving 'meaning-making' through interactive, cooperative, and project-based learning, coupled with the integration of a world-class technological infrastructure, is the foundation of instruction at Corte Madera Middle School.

The goals of all instruction at Corte Madera are 1.) not just to meet, but to exceed state standards, 2.) to pique student curiosity, and 3.) to instill a genuine love of learning. At every curricular level, teachers match instruction and activities to the energy levels and active learning needs of the middle school population. In all subject areas, lessons, projects, activities, assignments, and assessments contain explicit instructions, well-defined rubrics for self- and peer-evaluation, and sufficient scaffolding to ensure successful progression. Assignments are individualized based on frequent pre- and post-testing. Support for those in need is offered in class, at noon tutorials, and in the After-School Academic Program. Nearly every assignment at every grade level includes extension activities for proficient and advanced students.

The burgeoning intellects of middle school students are best served if they are teased out of their comfort zone by appealing challenges, involved in social interaction as they complete a task, and frequently urged into the realm of innovative application and the synthesis of ideas, concepts, and skills. Teachers across our campus use a variety of performance assessment modes (e.g. hands-on activities, total physical response, songs and choreography), a range of activities (e.g. individual, group, online, whiteboard), and a large repertoire of instructional styles (e.g. lecture, discussion, projects, question and response) to meet these rapidly growing intellects. Our teachers are well versed in the developmental needs of pre- and adolescent students and can, because of small class size, make learning challenging, engaging, and enjoyable.

5. Professional Development:

District professional development is offered to the certificated staff and corresponds to student achievement

and professional need. Discussions regarding student performance on a number of assessment measures outline these needs. Teachers clearly articulate gaps in student performance and freely communicate their desire for specialized training or professional assistance. Teachers are provided release time to work with consultants, and consultants offer demonstration lessons, observation, and collegial feedback. School Site Plans (SSP) target improvement needs by funding opportunities for teachers to participate in off-site training, conferences, and workshops in advanced instructional methodologies.

Professional development days are built into the district calendar. Of the five days in August given to credentialed personnel to prepare for the return of students, three are given to data disaggregation and to targeted professional development. These days are often the result of a discovered need from the previous year. Such was the case with the Quirky Kids sessions in 2006. Teachers articulated dissatisfaction with their ability to differentiate instruction for students whose behavior or academic performance was 'out of the mainstream,' but did not require special education placement. The district special education staff provided two days of professional development spearheaded by the movement's founders, Drs. Perri Klass and Eileen Costello, and included reading material, binders of tactical information, and follow-up sessions with county personnel.

The development of a positive school climate through improvement in student attitude has been a significant piece of School Site Planning in recent years. The district has provided on-going funding of specialized training for staff in the area of character education; including the development of a Peer-to-Peer mediation program, working with Quirky Kids, and curtailing bullying through the Empower Program (now the Preparing Leaders for Today Program).

The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) is welcomed at Corte Madera, and has been influential in the professional development of current staff. The school principal promotes healthy discourse in an environment of clinical supervision. In an effort to promote collegiality and collaborative planning, Corte Madera provides early Wednesday dismissal for students. Two Wednesday afternoons a month are set aside for teacher collaboration at the grade, team, or department level. This common time is used for curriculum planning and professional dialogue.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (ELA) Grade 4 Test California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR)
 Edition/Publication Year Annual Publisher Educational Testing Services

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	87	97	86	85	82
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	65	83	63	66	65
Number of students tested	85	76	71	74	65
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	45	90	69	36	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	18	90	54	18	0
Number of students tested	11	10	13	11	0
2. Asian					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	100	0	0	0	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	82	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	11	0	0	0	0
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	77	97	69	84	82
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	51	71	49	58	52
Number of students tested	85	76	71	74	65
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	18	90	54	36	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	40	31	18	0
Number of students tested	11	10	13	11	0
2. Asian					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	91	0	0	0	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	64	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	11	0	0	0	0
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	94	84	90	90	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	73	65	71	59	44
Number of students tested	78	72	75	61	102
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	98	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	0	59	54	0	50
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	42	36	0	8
Number of students tested	0	12	11	0	12
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	98	89	85	76	75
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	81	63	68	38	34
Number of students tested	78	72	75	61	101
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	98	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	0	75	45	0	41
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	50	27	0	8
Number of students tested	0	12	11	0	12
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	84	87	80	85	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	63	77	49	56	57
Number of students tested	72	61	61	93	65
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	30	0	45	58	45
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	10	0	9	25	9
Number of students tested	10	0	11	11	11
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	79	85	77	78	83
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	40	62	43	33	46
Number of students tested	72	61	61	93	65
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	50	0	45	33	64
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	10	0	9	0	0
Number of students tested	10	0	11	11	11
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	95	82	92	89	85
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	78	52	53	59	62
Number of students tested	63	60	87	54	73
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	0	42	45	0	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	17	9	0	0
Number of students tested	0	12	11	0	0
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	90	76	80		
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	71	43	40		
Number of students tested	63	60	87		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	0	50	36	0	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	8	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	12	11	0	0
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	83	92	94	86	69
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	53	72	58	57	33
Number of students tested	57	89	53	65	69
Percent of total students tested	100	98	98	99	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Students with Disabilities					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	0	55	0	0	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Advanced'	0	22	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	10	0	0	0
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards % 'Proficient' plus % 'Advanced'	70	72	64		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested	56	88	52		
Percent of total students tested	98	100	96		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					