

# 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. Marc P. Nelson

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

Official School Name Harris Hill Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2126 Penfield Road

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

Penfield

City

New York

State

14526-1736

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Monroe

State School Code Number\* 261201060009

Telephone (585) 249-6604

Fax (585) 249-6616

Web site/URL www.penfield.edu/harrishill.cfm

E-mail Marc\_Nelson@penfield.monroe.ed

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 Mr. Thomas Stringing

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

District Name Penfield Central School District

Tel. (585) 249-5700

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. Anthony Felicetti

(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

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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: \_\_\_\_\_ 4 Elementary schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Middle schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High Schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 High schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 9956  
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 9900

### 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. \_\_\_\_\_ 7 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
Pre K			0	7			0
K	41	37	78	8			0
1	41	31	72	9			0
2	50	53	103	10			0
3	42	46	88	11			0
4	33	46	79	12			0
5	44	42	86	Other			0
6			0				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							<b>506</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 5  | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 3  | % Asian or Pacific Islander        |
| 2  | % Black or African American        |
| 90 | % Hispanic or Latino               |
| 90 | % 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 4 %

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

<b>( 1 )</b>	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	6
<b>( 2 )</b>	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	16
<b>( 3 )</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	22
<b>( 4 )</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	514
<b>( 5 )</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
<b>( 6 )</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1 %
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 9 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|---|---|

Number of languages represented 6

Specify languages: Farsi  
Korean  
Russian  
Tulu  
Ukrainian  
Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals 3 %

Total number students who qualify: 16

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:  $\frac{5}{24}$  % 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>2</u>	Autism	<u>1</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>          </u>	Deafness	<u>11</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>          </u>	Deaf-Blindnes	<u>5</u>	Specific Learning Disabilit
<u>          </u>	Emotional Disturbanc	<u>          </u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>          </u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>          </u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>          </u>	Visual Impairment Including
<u>2</u>	Multiple Disabilities	<u>          </u>	Blindness

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>23</u>	<u>          </u>
Special resource teachers/specialist	<u>22</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>          </u>
Support Staff	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>
Total number	<u>68</u>	<u>12</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of 22 : 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 %	97 %	96 %	99 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	95 %	95 %	96 %	95 %	96 %
Teacher turnover rate	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	3 %
Student drop out rate (middle/hig	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Please provide all explanations below

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Harris Hill Elementary School is a suburban school of 509 students in grades K-5 in the town of Penfield east of Rochester, New York. Our school excels academically, socially, and ethically in educating the whole child. Our students are strong academically, but it is our whole community approach, encompassed in the Walk the Talk program, of which we are most proud. All members of our learning community explicitly share the value that 'who you are is as important at how much you know.' Over the past few years we have developed and used a series of rights and responsibilities, called Walk the Talk. The program reinforces the school's focus on educating all aspects of children. It grew out of parental concern over the tragedies associated with Columbine. The school district asked each school to create a tool for addressing the physical and emotional safety of the student body. At Harris Hill, a committee of parents, teachers, and administrators collaboratively birthed Walk the Talk. Not only did the school embrace the program, but the community response also solicited a common language that has framed the school's current character education program. It is our belief that every response one offers is reinforced on some level by students and colleagues, not only for one's intellectual capability but also for one's ethical/moral responsiveness. Embracing the language is not enough anymore. Students learn from what they are exposed to on a daily basis. Our teachers believe that learning neither cannot, nor will not, take place unless students feel valued and respected.

### Penfield Central School District's Mission Statement

The Penfield Central School District will meet the educational needs of all our learners by creating experiences which develop excellent scholars and responsible citizens.

### Harris Hill Elementary School's Vision Statement

The students of Harris Hill Elementary will be critical thinkers, readers, and writers. They will be prepared to contribute as responsible leaders and learners in middle school and beyond.

### Harris Hill Elementary School's Mission Statement

Harris Hill Elementary is an open school where passionate professionals embrace our community by teaching students to think critically, and develop a sense of responsibility and respect for all. The Harris Hill family promotes lifelong learning.

### Walk the Talk Mission Statement

Through Harris Hill's intentional, preventative, and pro-active code of character - Walk the Talk, we develop and nurture a learning community in which all members understand and demonstrate respect, responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, and caring.

Harris Hill is committed to nurturing the whole child so that the learning environment is optimal. The philosophies of Walk the Talk embrace this commitment by allowing for a common language which provides a clear framework of expected behavior. It is then, with clarity and confidence, that all community members understand what their responsibilities are to each other, that their needs will be considered, and that they are free to communicate any needs.

Our commitment stems from the belief that it is the fundamental right of every child to be free to enjoy school and to experience community, unencumbered by fear. A child who feels safe, nurtured and protected, and who knows the limits set forth to accomplish those purposes will experience a freedom to learn and to grow at Harris Hill. Likewise, parents will experience a sense of security and peace of mind knowing that their child is in a place where there is a commitment to the whole child.

A safe school environment directly relates to the ability of students to learn optimally, and further, to take learning to the next level. Walk the Talk enhances the atmosphere at Harris Hill as it is a pro-active program that equips the community with tools and strategies that serve to maintain and protect its safe surroundings.

Walk the Talk defines expected behavior; it is the also standard against which behavior is evaluated. There are colorful visual reminders throughout the school - in the classrooms, in the cafeteria, in the gymnasium, and in the hallways. Moreover, classroom discussions and activities reinforce Walk the Talk and put it into practice. The question, 'Are you Walking the Talk?' can be heard as teachers and other staff members gently remind students to check their behavior.

Beyond classroom discussions and activities, Walk the Talk has empowered students to understand and recognize unacceptable behavior, to communicate with each other, and to work towards a resolution. In doing so, the students are helping to ensure that their school surroundings remain safe so that they can freely learn and grow in their personal relationships.

Led by the principal, each week there is a school-wide focus on one specific responsibility and its corresponding right. For the sake of reinforcement, and making the connection between school and home, families have been encouraged to partner with the school by focusing in on the same responsibility and right at home through a program called Home~School Partnership. Partnership with parents extends Walk the Talk from school to home and back again and increases the likelihood of a successful education.

Through Walk the Talk, Harris Hill pro-actively circumvents issues that may compromise the environment we are committed to maintaining - one that considers the whole child and that builds character. These issues include: bullying, relational aggression, inappropriate social responses, and exclusion. Walk the Talk focuses on pro-social characteristics such as: responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, and caring.

Through the actions of caring adults, children are given a form of protection that they cannot provide for themselves. We must also teach our children to be pro-active. How? We are convinced that equipping our students with critical thinking skills is key in the application of Walk the Talk. Those skills will fortify them to be agents of their own social improvement, development, and change, preparing them for their future as people of character and as positive contributors to society.

Harris Hill is largely characterized by the predominating language, attitudes, and behaviors that Walk the Talk promotes; it is a culture.

Walk the Talk is a concrete part of our teacher evaluations. This is enriched by the district's movement towards adapting Charlotte Danielson's work around teacher's evaluations. An environmental focus of 'respect and rapport' is part of both our school's improvement plan and our character education plan. Teachers are trained in recognizing and implementing positive methodologies and creating positive classroom environments. This has become part of both our teachers' evaluation discussions and our monthly faculty meeting. Teachers are sharing thematically based strategies, which build a positive, safe, and caring classroom environment. These strategies have become part of our faculty handbook and are engaged as practice. The response has been extremely positive and has resulted in shared strategies around such themes as: birthday recognition of students/staff, daily recognition of students/staff, diversity celebrations, student improvement, and communication and physical environment. Danielson's language, together with collegial sharing, has strategically reinforced our Walk the Talk program, enhancing its growth and effectiveness.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1 Assessment Results:

One indicator of academic success is the New York State yearly assessments. New York State yearly assessments are designed to measure performance at a programmatic level not at the student level. In order to use to assessment data to inform student instruction, a pattern of performance in students' work must be observed. A single data point does not allow a student pattern of performance to emerge.

The New York State assessments were designed to measure student progress as defined by New York State Learning Standards. The range of scale scores is divided into four performance levels, which indicate the students performance in relation to the standards.

Level 1 - not meeting the learning standards

Level 2 - partially meeting the learning standards

Level 3 - meeting the learning standards

Level 4 - meeting the learning standards with distinction

At every grade level in ELA and mathematics, a scale score of 650 is the lowest scale score that signifies meeting the learning standards. Individual student reports provide us with these scores of which we can identify specific areas of defined weakness. We have a school team that examines these assessments and student scores to identify areas where possible remediation should occur.

The scale score and the performance level describe the student's overall performance on each test. The Student Performance Indicator (SPI) gives the school and parents information about a child's strengths and weaknesses on the content areas tested. The SPI scores are reliable estimates of student knowledge and skills measured by different test objectives. This in turn provides teachers with valuable diagnostic information that can be used for instructional purposes. In short, these numbers help us know our students.

While Harris Hill students have consistently scored at Level 3 or 4 in both mathematics and English Language Arts in the last four years, we constantly strive to improve instruction and student learning. The K-5 mathematics committee and the K-5 English Language Arts committee analyze the results of the state tests and provide feedback to the faculty. Teachers are provided with specific areas of strengths and weakness. The building Principal, teachers and the building curriculum specialists also use the web site, [www.Datamentor.org](http://www.Datamentor.org) to look for trend data and comparative information about performance. For instance, based on the 2006 Grade 5 ELA test students needed additional support to address the indicator: Read unfamiliar texts to collect data, facts, and ideas. This information was shared with teachers to inform their instruction. Students receiving a score of 1 or 2 on either the Mathematics or ELA test are provided with Academic Intervention Services. Teachers who provide AIS services preteach and/or reteach skills and strategies to students based on their identified needs.

### 2. Using Assessment Results:

The faculty and staff at Harris Hill use a variety of assessment data to maximize academic growth for both challenged and gifted students. During the summer the principal, curriculum support teacher, and a member of the Instructional Support Team met to analyze student data. This team used scores from the New York State Testing Program, scores from Northwest Evaluation Association testing, and student report card data which indicated if the student received Academic Intervention Services.

This numerical data is analyzed along with teachers' classroom records and qualitative observations to develop customized, research-based strategies for each student. Outcomes are recorded and shared quarterly in order to continuously improve these strategies. This is implemented through Child Study Groups that meet four times over the course of the year. Classroom teachers collect information about these students and bring the data and their observations to grade level meetings. The Child Study Group sessions begin with the teacher sharing information about the student including; state test scores, mathematics scores, word study scores, teacher observations of student behavior, work habits and any other pertinent information. During these half-day sessions teachers in the Child Study Groups work collaboratively to provide a variety of strategies to the presenting teacher to help support that student. Teachers set goals for each student. At succeeding sessions, teachers report back on the progress of the student and how successful he or she has been in meeting goals. Based on the results, new strategies are shared and new goals are set or a student may be exited from the process.

Information from Child Study is collected on a Harris Hill form. These forms will be passed on to next

year's teacher and the Child Study Teams will continue monitoring the progress of students at risk.

This approach is also being pioneered to assure that teachers are addressing the needs of gifted students. The Child Study groups are identifying strategies for teachers to meet the unique needs of this population.

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

There are a variety of methods that are used to share student performance with key Harris Hill stakeholders: the families and the community. Documents are shared by classroom and special teachers, conferences are held, and the local community is informed via news.

Teachers meet with parents two times a year to share report card results and student progress. Academic progress reports are shared with parents three times per year. Many teachers have students participate in parent/student/teacher conferences. Students prepare for the conferences and share their learning and metacognitive thinking with parents.

New York State Education Department Parent Reports are mailed to parents. Included in the reports are the results of the New York State English Language Arts test and the New York State Mathematics test. The report explains the scores and lists available resources, including engaging in a discussion of the test results with the classroom teacher. There is a reminder that this test is an estimate of achievement based on one test.

Progress in AIS reading and AIS mathematics is reported in addition to the regular report card. Teachers of music, physical education, art and instrumental music also provide progress reports which are sent to parents during the year.

The test scores are reported to the community through the district newsletter and the local newspaper, the Democrat & Chronicle. Scores published in the district newsletter highlight achievements of each year. The local newspaper publishes scores of Harris Hill and Penfield along with scores of all local school districts so the community can compare district scores with those of other local districts.

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

Harris Hill shares its successes through multiple means of communication, ranging from newsletters to pod casts to external media. Information is included in the Harris Hill Hotline, which is shared with other schools in the district. The district newsletter also provides updates. The district newsletter is shared with community members. Information about the school is also shared with the weekly newspaper, the Messenger Post. Articles about activities appear in these publications such as holiday service activities, grade 4 classes participating in an 'archeological dig', grade 5 classes involved in an Engineering Day or Latin America Day and even the Harris Hill teacher who won the local 'Dancing with the Stars Teacher Edition' competition.

Rochester television Channel 13 WHAM sponsored the competition and each week there was a brief spot on the morning news about the teacher and the Harris Hill community. The news crews were at Harris Hill for their morning news show to announce the winner. Students and faculty members arrived to cheer on our 'dancing teacher' for the 6 AM broadcast. This faculty member's risk-taking contributed to the character of our community, showing the whole person. News crews have been at Harris Hill in the past to interview and tape award-winning teachers for the 'Spotlight-on-Teachers' news segment.

Harris Hill's principal, Mr. Marc Nelson, is also an award winner. Mr. Nelson received the Genesee Valley Regional PTA Administrator of the Year Award for 2004-05. Mr. Nelson was nominated by PTA members and Harris Hill teachers. Mr. Nelson prioritizes communication and employs a wide variety of strategies: the principal's newsletter, news in the school's newsletter, the Harris Hill Hotline, school and PTA websites, and a regular pod cast.

Students themselves are key pieces of our communications strategy. They provide news to the Harris Hill community each morning on HHTV news. This morning news show appears on televisions across the building and is taped and shared on the local cable access channel later in the day. SUNY Cortland featured Harris Hill in its spring 2004 newsletter for its character education program. The school was recognized as an exemplary character education program, Walk the Talk.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

Curriculum in each content area at Harris Hill is based on New York State Standards. Teachers work within classrooms using pre-assessments to differentiate work to meet the needs of each student. All students are held to the same rigorous standards but teachers customize resources and strategies to support each individual student in meeting the standards.

Teachers at Harris Hill present a balanced approach to mathematics. Content in each mathematics strand is introduced in Kindergarten with each succeeding grade level building on that knowledge and understanding. The mathematical strands include number sense, operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and statistics and probability. Students apply their mathematical knowledge and efficient computational strategies as they develop problem solving strategies. Students apply this knowledge as they solve authentic tasks. Teachers use a variety of resources and methods to support student growth at all levels including AIS intervention, enrichment opportunities and technology integration.

Social Studies curriculum includes an understanding of content, concepts and skills at each grade level. The content focus begins at Kindergarten with a focus on the individual students and their role in our larger community. The content spirals and builds as students learn more and more about the world around them including geography, government, U.S. Regions and U.S. History. To ensure that Harris Hill social studies content provides the most relevant and rigorous content we conducted gap analysis at each grade level. Teachers supported this research by developing curriculum maps at each grade level. Research moved smoothly to practice as the gaps identified were integrated into the classroom.

The core curriculum for our language arts program is delivered in a balanced approach to teaching literacy. Our curriculum includes the areas of listening and speaking, reading, writing, handwriting, and spelling and word study. Students demonstrate their mastery of these skills in authentic performance tasks such as writing poetry for publication, writing letters to businesses to request matching funds for a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity, writing and presenting announcements on HHTV as well as anchoring the morning news on HHTV. Teachers often integrate Language Arts and Social Studies as they select trade books for students to read and discuss in whole class and/or small literature discussion groups. Teachers work collaboratively in writing workshop with multi-grade teams. Using the writing process, students peer edit and revise their work using rubrics to guide them. Teachers use the vocabulary of the 6+1 Traits of Writing to support students as they develop as writers.

At all grade levels, the science curriculum is based on active scientific investigation. Students know and understand the process of scientific inquiry and design, conduct, analyze, communicate about and evaluate investigative methodologies. Science units in the physical sciences, life sciences, and earth sciences are addressed at various grade levels through different units of study. There are specific benchmarks for each grade level as students and teachers address each unit of study. Students are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding to authentic situations in their everyday life and to connect the knowledge with other content areas.

The Harris Hill Elementary School Art Program is designed to meet New York State Art Content Standards and to promote our students understanding, confidence and success in a world of increasing visual communication. Our process oriented Art learning units are built on a foundation of core Art elements and principles, Penfield Central School District's Graduation standards and on Harris Hill's unique Critical Thinking Skills program. From responsible citizenship to perspective drawing to linking Art brainstorming to concept synthesis and evaluation, our students use the very same higher order thinking skills and individual best efforts that they do throughout the academic spectrum.

Art projects may match up directly with other disciplines of instruction with parallels to cultural studies, math concepts and writing instruction. Students make clear connections to other academic instruction and are very aware of the purposes and influences of the visual arts in their world. As Art is an activity of the mind involving the clear interplay of thinking skills and effective communication, our students are in all ways working toward a self aware advancement of their own ideas, efforts and creativity.

The Harris Hill music program is rich in learning experiences and opportunities for students, including: a full general music program, grades 1 ' 5 (all students); jr. and sr. choruses, grades 4-5 (the entire 4th grade participates in chorus!); orchestra and Suzuki strings, grades 1 ' 5 (130 students); and band and jazz ensemble, grades 4-5 (65 students).

Students have unique and rich experiences in collaboration with the other PCSD schools, including: participation in the district-wide String and Band Extravaganzas; participation in the annual Penfield Jazz Concerts, where students perform with world-class jazz musicians; and projects of the Penfield Music Commission Project, giving students the opportunity to perform newly commissioned music and work closely with composers.

## **2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**

Harris Hill uses the Balanced Literacy curriculum because, as determined by current leading research, it addresses all of the effective components necessary for a successful reading program. Based on this research, six areas of literacy instruction are the primary focus of our reading program. These include phonemic awareness, word recognition, background knowledge and vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and motivation to read. Our philosophy is all students need explicit instruction and modeling in the six areas of literacy with guided practice on a daily basis. This instruction is delivered in a Guided Reading model as Guided Reading is considered the heart of our balanced literacy program. Continuous improvement and outcome measurement is supported through the use of Student Literacy Profiles, which were designed in grades K-5 to provide teachers with information about what students should know and be able to do as readers and writers. The Student Literacy Profiles also provide documentation of each student's literacy growth over time.

## **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Music at Harris Hill includes both classroom instruction and band and wind group lessons. The emphasis in music is on literacy and creativity. Students are guided to use the basic tools of music literacy in evaluating and analyzing their own compositions and performances and those of professionals and composers throughout history. Younger students are involved with a wide array of music experiences including: movement, playing and singing. Intermediate age students synthesize their learning via improvisation and composition, as well as outstanding group performance of high quality music. Almost all intermediate level children elect to participate in one or more performance groups. Performance electives include Junior and Senior Choruses, Junior and Senior Bands, Junior and Senior Orchestras, Suzuki String instruction, and Beginning String Ensemble.

As with all disciplines at Harris Hill, music is interlaced with academic instruction, particularly with the development of reading skills. Fluency, syllabification, vocabulary enrichment and historical background are skills closely connected and enhanced through music. Children practice independence and interdependence via musical performance and they develop poise and confidence as they appear before audiences. They embrace music as a central building block in their growth.

## **4. Instructional Methods:**

About seven years ago, in response to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Standards 2000, our district adopted a vigorous new concept-based mathematics program 'Investigations' to prepare our students for an increasingly complex and technological world. All teachers were trained to teach mathematical concepts from a more conceptual basis and this gave a degree of standardization to our teaching practice. Teachers no longer could simply stand at an overhead and lecture. They needed to engage learners in a multi-model way that encouraged cooperative learning and differentiation. Harris Hill has supplemented this instructional practice by sending small group of teachers each year to the University of Virginia's Summer Institute on Academic Diversity led by Carole Ann Tomlinson. What we are witnessing is a part of overall instructional sea of change at Harris Hill. Teachers are trained, supported, and assessed to look beyond content and engage each individual student as an independent client.

What you will witness here at Harris Hill Elementary School is teachers leading teachers, thinkers questioning the learning of themselves and those around them, and everyone pushing each other to get better for children. We have no walls in between our classrooms physically or professionally. We believe that this physical openness and our professional openness go hand in hand when it comes to our own development and instructional methods.

## **5. Professional Development:**

Teachers are the key element of change in teaching practice. A series of teacher-led workshops have

helped teachers focus on student strengths as a learning opportunity as opposed to only remediating areas of perceived weaknesses. Our school also went through an extensive training and professional development centered on Dr. Mel Levine's neurodevelopment constructs. Teachers and administration meet by grade level 4-5 times a year to create individual learning plans for students. These plans are reviewed periodically, outcome assessed and refined, and provide for the level '1' intervention as designed by New York State and the federal government.

A strong School Improvement Plan that stresses goal setting and connections between individual learning goals and the building's Mission/Vision statement is the spine of our instructional practices. All teachers involved with the formal evaluation model as adopted by the Penfield Central School District have volunteered to use videotape as a form of reflective professional development. Teachers point to areas of potential growth and video is used to reflect on this area throughout the school year.

Faculty meetings are structured to provide professional development opportunities. Professional conversations are key to this process. Led by a group of content area specialists, who are also classroom teachers, the Harris Hill community identified critical thinking skills and opportunities to imbed these within the classroom. Each classroom has a visual reminder of these skills, with signs created by teachers. Currently, teachers are working on imbedding critical thinking and questioning strategies into their lessons.

The Shared Decision Making Team is adding their voice to professional development at faculty meetings. The team is working on a plan to introduce 'Habits of Mind' to teachers. Using this knowledge, teachers will integrate 'Habits of Mind' with critical thinking skills, our Walk the Talk curriculum, and Penfield's Graduation Standards. This goal supports our mission and vision statements.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (ELA) Grade 3 Test NYS ELA

Edition/Publication Year \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher CTB McGraw Hill

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	January	January			
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3 and Level 4	80	81			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4	14	10			
Number of students tested	80	83			
Percent of total students tested	100	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	3			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	2			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 3 and Level 4	94	88			
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 4	33	27			
Number of students tested	80	83			
Percent of total students tested	100	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	3			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	2			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	January	January	February	February	February
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 3 and Level 4	89	90	87	91	81
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 4	14	19	27	25	34
Number of students tested	83	100	81	101	98
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	1	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	1	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3 and Level 4	99	95	98	98	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3	47	29	56	48	51
Number of students tested	83	99	81	102	98
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	3	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	2	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	January	January			
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 3 and Level 4	92	84			
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 4	11	15			
Number of students tested	96	86			
Percent of total students tested	100	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 3 and Level 4	95	80			
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Level 4	33	28			
Number of students tested	97	86			
Percent of total students tested	100	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
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					