

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) Elementary Middle High K-12 Other
 Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Leo Weidner

Official School Name: Laurelton Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
105 Weikert Road
P.O. Box 126
Laurelton, PA 17835-0126

County: Union County State School Code Number*: 4088

Telephone: (570) 966-8360 Fax: (570) 966-8362

Web site/URL: http://www.mifflinburg.org E-mail: lweidner@mifflinburg.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Barry Tomasetti

District Name: Mifflinburg Area School District Tel: (570) 966-8200

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Jill Shambach

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

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

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*
Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of 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.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|----------|---------------------|
| 4 | Elementary schools |
| 1 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior high schools |
| 1 | High schools |
| 1 | Other |
| 7 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 7501

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 8588

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- Urban or large central city
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural area
 Rural

4. 18 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
K	14	6	20	8	0	0	0
1	6	11	17	9	0	0	0
2	8	9	17	10	0	0	0
3	8	9	17	11	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	12	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	Other	0	0	0
6	0	0	0				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							71

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
3 % Black or African American
3 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
94 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 3 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	2
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	71
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.028
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2.817

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %

Total number students who qualify: 28

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 free and reduced-price school meals 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: 18 %

Total Number of Students Served: 13

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</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	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Total number	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	93%	91%	95%	95%	92%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Teacher Turnover Rate

Prior to the 2004-05 school year the Laurelton Elementary School Kindergarten teacher (one of the four full time classroom teachers at the school) transferred to another elementary school in the district. A new teacher was then hired to teach Kindergarten at Laurelton.

Daily Teacher Attendance

2003-04

The third grade teacher's husband suffered an extended illness that required her to take some additional emergency leave as allowed by the contract.

2006-07

The first grade teacher at Laurelton used a portion of her sick leave prior to the birth of her child.

2007-08

The wife of the second grade teacher at Laurelton became ill. The nature of her illness required that he accompany his wife to several doctor appointments which required he take some additional emergency leave as allowed by the contract.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	<u>0</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0</u> %
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0</u> %
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0</u> %
Found employment	<u>0</u> %
Military service	<u>0</u> %
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>0</u> %
Unknown	<u>0</u> %
Total	<u>100</u> %

PART III - SUMMARY

The Mifflinburg Area School District is a predominantly rural school district located in north central Pennsylvania. The school district serves a population of the approximately 2300 students living in the central and western portions of Union County. School District facilities consist of four elementary schools (grades K through 3), one intermediate school (opened in 2006 to serve grades 4 and 5), one middle school (grades 6 through 8) and one high school (grades 9 through 12).

The Laurelton Elementary School is one of the four district elementary schools serving students in grades Kindergarten through three. Its mission, like that of all schools in the Mifflinburg Area School District, is “dedicated to providing an inspiring educational program that enables all students, as lifelong learners, to reach their potential, demonstrating citizenship in a global society.”

The Laurelton Elementary School is a rural school serving the western portion of Union County, Pennsylvania. The student population of Laurelton Elementary averages approximately 70 students per year. Through the course of a school year, the student population remains quite stable. There are few students who move in or out of this school. This is indicative of the strong ties residents form with their community and “their school”.

The student population at Laurelton presents the highest percentage of students in the school district qualifying for free or reduced lunch (yearly average is approximately 34%). Employment opportunities in the immediate area are limited with the area having lost several large employers over the past five years. Consequently, most of the parents of students attending the Laurelton Elementary School are employed in farming and farming related occupations, service occupations and some light industry. Over the past year, the economic climate of the area has resulted in a considerable increase in unemployment.

In the late 70s and early 80s Reading scores were so poor at the Laurelton Elementary School (60% of the students qualified for remedial reading assistance under federal guidelines) that for grades one through four (grade range at that time) there was one full time Remedial Reading teacher and two full time teacher aides for reading. This was in addition to the two “regular” teacher aides and the five classroom teachers assigned to the building. In the mid 80s, scores improved to the point where the two remedial aides were able to be phased out. Scores continued to improve, and in 1992 the Laurelton Remedial Reading teacher was able to be cut back to half time. Due to ongoing program improvements, staff development and faculty changes, the average number of students now qualifying for Title I support is 17%. In addition, since the inception of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment in 2002, third grade students at the Laurelton Elementary School have consistently posted the highest district wide third grade scores in both Reading and Math.

The Laurelton Elementary School is fortunate to have a very active community of parents. Parents willingly volunteer to help out when asked. Over the years, the school’s parent organization has become very active in providing “extras” for the students. In addition to providing a variety of fun activities, the organization has provided computers, various audio/visual resources, funds for the school library, as well as funds for teachers to use to purchase academic resources for their classrooms.

The factors influencing the ongoing success of the Laurelton Elementary School are many. The faculty and staff of the Laurelton Elementary School are committed to school, student, parent and community cooperation. The educational environment provides for the needs and individual differences of each student. This is done by a cohesive, conscientious teaching staff who strives to provide for the social and emotional as well as the academic needs of their students. To support this dedicated staff, students are provided with quality, research-based programming, supported by ongoing staff development.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Academic growth at the Laurelton Elementary School has been steady since 1991. This growth has been the result of program improvement and staff development based upon the analysis of program assessments. The assessment component initially consisted of locally generated curriculum based assessments. More recently it has consisted of revived district generated assessments along with the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (<http://www.pde.state.pa.us>) initiated in the spring of 2002.

The annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment is a standards based criterion-referenced assessment which is first given at the third grade level. This assessment is used to measure a student's attainment of the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. At the third grade level the state assessment assesses reading and math concepts specific to the expectations of the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards at that grade level. Individual student scaled scores from the assessment are used to assist teachers in identifying students who may be in need of additional educational opportunities or interventions. Building level scores provide information to schools and school districts for curriculum analysis and the improvement of instruction.

Individual student scale scores are identified as falling into four broad categories: advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. Students must score at the proficient or advanced level to be recognized as "meeting the standard" as set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In addition to the expectations or standards that are established for students, standards are also established for each individual school. A school is judged to meet Adequately Yearly Progress as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act when a specific percentage of students meet the prescribed standard. This level of school performance is increased each year by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For the 2007-08 Pennsylvania Assessment the Pennsylvania Department of Education established that 56% of the students needed to score proficient or advanced in Math and 63% of the students needed to score proficient or advanced in reading in order for a school to make Adequate Yearly progress.

Scores from the past five years demonstrate that in reading, Laurelton Elementary students steadily improved over the first four years, from 2003-04 through 2006-07. Scores steadily rose from 60% to 100% of students meeting the standard over that time period. The 2007-08 score of 83% of the students, although well above the 63% required by the state, indicates a relatively sharp decline. This decline is the result of 3 students scoring at the basic level. As is the intent of the assessment, upon identification of these students, appropriate interventions were put in place for the 2008-09 school year to provide the necessary support needed for these students to succeed.

Subgroup scores for reading over this five year time period show that, with the exception of the 2003-04 school year, the majority of students who make up these groups regularly score at the proficient or advanced levels.

In the area of Mathematics, for the same time period, scores show that Laurelton Elementary third grade students performed at a level significantly above state expectations during the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years. From the 2005-06 school year through the 2007-08 school year the third grade students have shown outstanding performance. The 2007-08 score showing that 100% of the third graders met the standards set by the Department of Education is nearly twice the 56% required of students for that school year.

Subgroup scores for math over this five year period show that the students who make up these groups all scored at the proficient or advanced levels.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At the Laurelton Elementary School, a variety of assessment resources are used to evaluate student and school performance and guide instructional decisions as well as intervention strategies. These assessment instruments, both formal and informal, include individualized assessments, grade level assessments, diagnostic assessments, and statewide assessments at the third grade level.

All assessment instruments are closely aligned with school district curriculum. The school district curriculum is, in turn, closely aligned with the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards. Consequently, assessment is ongoing as students progress through the academic program offered at the Laurelton Elementary School. Individual student success as well as that of the overall student population is continually evaluated.

All student assessments are analyzed by the teacher. The results are used to plan any necessary remediation as well as on going instruction. At regularly scheduled grade level meetings teachers discuss various techniques and/or strategies that have been found to be successful in classroom instruction. Students who begin to struggle academically are referred to a Multi Disciplinary Team made up of the Elementary Principal, Elementary Guidance Counselor, School District Psychologist and other specialists. Based upon teacher input and formal assessments, this team is able to provide additional resources and strategies to be implemented by the teacher.

At the third grade level, students receive a formal assessment three times a year. This is in addition to the state assessments given in the spring of each year as part of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment. Following the administration of these formal assessments, a detailed analysis is again conducted. The results are then shared at the appropriate grade level meeting(s). The data provided through these assessments provides a detailed student as well as classroom profile of academic strengths and weaknesses. In addition, data gleaned from this analysis is then used to not only plan instruction but to also determine curriculum strengths and weaknesses.

When the state assessment results are received, a detailed analysis is again conducted in much the same manner as described above. An added aspect of this analysis is that over time, from one year to the next, results are monitored. This information is used to make curricular decisions not only at the third grade level but also at the preceding grade levels. Such an analysis insures that we have continuity in our elementary academic program.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

The Laurelton Elementary School communicates student performance to parents, students and the community in a variety of ways. During the second week of the school year parents are invited into each elementary classroom for an evening meeting. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teacher. It also provides an opportunity for the teacher to provide information regarding the academic program as well as explain student expectations. At this meeting as well as at all parent meetings, parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher any time they have a question regarding school, particularly student progress. Suggested means of communication are through e-mail, phone, or notes to and from school.

Most assessments given at the Laurelton Elementary School, be they textbook published or teacher generated, are sent home upon completion for parent review. This provides parents with firsthand information on how their child is performing in school. Formal report cards are issued four times per year, at the end of each nine week school session. At the conclusion of the first and third nine week session, parent conferences are held. These parent conferences provide an opportunity for parents to sit down with their child's teacher and review in detail individual student performance. During these conferences, ideas are shared between the parent and teacher. The parent is often able to provide insight such as what teaching strategies are most successful with

their child. The teacher is able to provide suggestions for learning activities that can be done at home to support the child's academic growth.

In addition to the four times a year report cards, "mid marking period reports" are also sent home with each student. These reports are sent home midway through each marking period. The purpose of these reports is to give parents a "snap shot" as to how their child is doing in school regarding ongoing academic performance.

When the results of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment are made available to the school district, individual student results are sent home to parents. The mailing includes an explanation of the results and parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any questions.

On a yearly basis, overall student academic performance is presented to the school board. At least annually, student performance information as determined by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment is published in a school district publication as well as in the local newspapers.

4. Sharing Success:

The Laurelton Elementary faculty and staff welcome visitors and look forward to meeting and sharing ideas and materials with others. Within the school district, successful strategies, ideas and materials are routinely shared during faculty and grade level meetings. As part of the Mifflinburg Area School District's Staff Development Program, substitute teachers are provided for those district teachers wishing to observe at the Laurelton Elementary School.

Teachers and administrators from other school districts who have expressed an interest in our elementary program, particularly that of the Laurelton Elementary School, are welcome to visit. The same holds true for representatives and students from the college and university levels.

In addition to on-site visits, the school district's Curriculum Coordinator has made regular presentations in neighboring school districts as well as at curriculum seminars. Each presentation provides information on program development, implementation, assessment, ongoing program improvement and finally, an open invitation to visit and talk with the teachers responsible for the school's success.

In the event that the Laurelton Elementary School were to be awarded Blue Ribbon School status, we would maintain our open door policy. The faculty and staff recognize that during the journey thus far taken, to have reached the level of success that the students of the Laurelton Elementary School are experiencing, many resources were tapped. These resources included visitations to a variety of successful schools, research information provided by colleagues, training offered by representatives from other school districts and participation in staff development opportunities suggested by respected authorities. The faculty and staff at the Laurelton Elementary School look forward to the opportunity to return these many favors as well as pass them on.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The Mifflinburg Area School District and thus, the Laurelton Elementary School, recognizes that in order to meet the educational needs of its students, the curriculum cannot remain static. The school district recognizes that it is essential that the school system continually develop and modify the curriculum to meet the changing needs and diversity of its students in order to properly prepare them to assume responsible roles in society. To insure that this happens, the district implements a five year curriculum development process where every curriculum area goes through a revision process every five years. This process insures that the academic content of each subject area remains current, that students are developing higher level thinking skills, and that all curriculum areas are aligned both horizontally and vertically to provide instructional clarity and continuity.

In implementing the various curriculum areas at the Laurelton Elementary School, a variety of instructional strategies are employed. The specific instructional strategy being used at any one time in a particular curriculum area is influenced by many factors. Analysis of assessment data results pinpoint specific student needs. Diagnostic tests may be given to gather additional information that will help design differentiated instructional strategies for a specific student or students. Most importantly, teachers forming a close rapport with each student in their classroom lends itself to early and continual identification of student needs.

We have chosen a balanced literacy program for reading instruction. Students are involved in reading and writing activities throughout the day. The implementation of this model incorporates reading and writing in all facets of learning. By differentiating instruction based upon the analysis of ongoing assessment teachers ensure that every child, including our at-risk students, will learn how to effectively comprehend what they read and clearly express themselves when they write.

The content of the Mathematics curriculum emphasizes six primary content strands, essential skills and concepts. They include Numeration, Operations and Computation, Data and Chance, Geometry, Measurement and Reference Frames, and Patterns Functions and Algebra. Within this content, a problem solving approach is emphasized based on everyday situations that help develop critical thinking skills.

The Social Studies program at the Laurelton Elementary School embraces the idea that Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to become an active, responsible citizen. Students are engaged in learning activities throughout the year that connect the study of history, people in societies, geography, citizenship, rights and responsibilities. The academic curriculum is also enriched through field trips, which provide our students with life experiences that many may not otherwise experience.

The Science curriculum implemented at the Laurelton Elementary School stresses the search for understanding the natural world with its facts, principles, theories and laws. This includes the study of earth and space, life as well as physical inquiry. Organized units used to engage students in developmentally appropriate interactive experiences across the elementary grade levels serve as the core of the science curriculum. These inquiry-based units are presented in a laboratory setting that allows for a hands-on approach that includes demonstrations, experiments and the use of manipulatives.

Comprehensive health and physical education programs are also part of the learning environment for students at the Laurelton Elementary School. Students are provided with physical education instruction that emphasizes fitness-oriented exercise and recreational skill development. The health portion of this curriculum area helps provide students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to achieve and maintain a physically active and healthful life.

Laurelton Elementary's Art and Music curricula provide an opportunity for all students to observe, reflect and participate in a broad range of art and cultural activities. Art and Music are integrated into the core content areas at all grade levels on a weekly basis. Instruction is provided by subject area specialists. In addition, a "Related Arts " program provided through the efforts of the school's parent association provides regular presentations in the areas of Dance/Drama, Literature, Visual Arts and Music.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

The Reading program implemented at the Laurelton Elementary School is the Literacy Collaborative model of balanced literacy developed through the Ohio State University. This program has been carefully aligned with the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards to insure that we are meeting the specific needs of our elementary students. The Literacy Collaborative model is research based and is a more purposeful approach to reading instruction than previous programs the school district had considered. The primary components of the Literacy Collaborative model include: Interactive Read Alouds, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Independent Reading, Shared Writing, Interactive Writing, Writer's Workshop and Independent Writing. Within each component, teacher instruction and student interaction are the key ingredients to success.

The instructional approach is student-based as the students are involved in reading and writing activities throughout the day. The implementation of this model incorporates reading and writing in all facets of learning. By emphasizing the essential elements of scientific-based research, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, teachers ensure that every child, including our at-risk students, will learn how to effectively comprehend what they read and clearly express themselves when they write. We have chosen a balanced literacy program because it gives both teachers and children the best opportunity for success by incorporating a wide variety of strategies that help meet the needs of individual students.

In the process of implementing our Reading curriculum, the teaching staff uses a differentiated as well as a diagnostic approach to instruction. A variety of ongoing assessments, which include running records, teacher-made pre and post assessments and benchmark assessments are used. This approach allows for the identification of specific student needs for which specific learning activities are then designed in order to meet these needs.

An additional component of the implementation of our Reading Curriculum is the ongoing collaboration between classroom teachers and intervention staff. This collaboration provides the scaffolding necessary for struggling readers to succeed. This support provides for additional individual and small group instruction designed to meet the specific identified needs of students.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Math Curriculum implemented at the Laurelton Elementary School is the Everyday Mathematics Program developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. This program is used throughout the elementary level of the Mifflinburg Area School District. It was chosen after a review of current research literature and visits to school districts where various high quality programs were being implemented. We found the Everyday Mathematics program to be highly successful in the Pennsylvania schools using it. In addition, we found it to be closely aligned with the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards.

The content of the Mathematics curriculum emphasizes six primary content strands, essential skills and concepts. They include Numeration, Operations and Computation, Data and Chance, Geometry, Measurement and Reference Frames, and Patterns Functions and Algebra. Within this content, a problem solving approach is emphasized based on everyday situations that help develop critical thinking skills.

Language, communication (both oral and written), and the use of manipulatives all play important roles in helping students develop their mathematical skills. Learning activities are balanced between teacher-directed instruction and opportunities for hands-on explorations, along with on-going differentiated practice. To better promote understanding, teachers emphasize the use of the mathematical language and terminology, emphasized in the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards.

As with Reading instruction, assessment is an essential component of Mathematics instruction at the Laurelton Elementary School. In the process of implementing our Mathematics curriculum, the teaching staff uses a district designed assessment program. This assessment program provides for frequent diagnostic assessments that in turn guide differentiated instruction. This approach allows for the identification of specific student needs for which specific learning activities are then designed in order to meet these student needs. For those students who qualify, a Remedial Math teacher is available to provide support in those areas identified through assessment and teacher collaboration. This approach provides the necessary help for struggling students to succeed.

Goals of the mathematics curriculum being implemented at the Laurelton Elementary School are aimed at providing students the opportunities to value mathematics, become confident in their own abilities, become problem solvers, communicate and reason mathematically and understand and apply basic mathematical skills.

4. Instructional Methods:

Not all students learn in the same way through the same strategies. Based on this knowledge, the Laurelton Elementary School teaching staff uses a variety of instructional methods to meet the diverse needs of their students. First and foremost, initial assessments are conducted. These assessments include performance tasks, running records, and/or portfolios. Pre-assessments lead to successful differentiated instruction designed to meet the needs of individual students at an appropriate level. The teachers feel that it is necessary to pre-assess so that every teaching moment is spent teaching skills that need to be continually developed.

Several instructional formats, including whole group, small group, partners, and individual are utilized to provide students with the appropriate setting in which to meet specific learning goals. This approach insures that students are given every opportunity for success. Following the pre-assessments, learning activities, based on specific grade level curriculum, are designed to allow students to become active and responsible learners. Learning activities are balanced between teacher-directed instruction and opportunities for hands-on explorations, along with on-going differentiated practice. Individual learning centers are designed to challenge, engage critical thinking, and check for understanding with the individual learner. In this process, varying the degree of difficulty is essential to promote growth and development.

Supporting students who may be struggling with requisite concepts occurs in one on one and small group settings. These learning activities are directed by classroom teachers and supported by instructional paraprofessionals. Intervention specialists also work with students individually or in small groups who may be struggling academically. These students receive an additional opportunity for specially tailored instruction daily.

Key to instruction is assessment. Students are continually being evaluated to determine academic progress. The degree of academic progress, in turn, determines the rate at which students will be introduced to new material that will meet their needs and assist them in reaching their full potential.

5. Professional Development:

The Mifflinburg Area School District recognizes the importance of professional development opportunities that are high quality, continuous, and supportive to improve student achievement. At the Laurelton

Elementary School, as well as at the other schools in the district, professional development directly impacts the achievement and success of students and is extremely important to maintaining high quality instruction. Administrators, teachers, and support staff receive quality professional development during the summer months and throughout the school year.

The focus areas of professional development are based on data analysis of student assessment results and a review of best practices. This analysis leads to the identification of professional development goals that are designed to improve student achievement through improving the quality of instruction. Additionally, we routinely schedule opportunities to explore and implement promising practices that also have the potential of improving student achievement.

To address Reading, the Mifflinburg School District chose to identify a district teacher as a Literacy Coach for the district. As such, the Literacy Coach attends ongoing training. The Literacy Coach is responsible for training all literacy teachers new to the district as well as to provide ongoing training to the veteran teaching staff. This training is provided through professional development workshops that are held during the summer and continue throughout the school year. In addition to the workshops, the Literacy Coach observes and coaches all reading/literacy teachers on a rotating basis to be sure that the implementation of the balanced literacy model being taught is applied in district classrooms as per the district curriculum and the Pennsylvania State Academic Standards.

The coaching model is an invaluable asset to our district as it keeps the teachers informed of new techniques and methodologies of literacy and shifts their learning and implementation of literacy in the classroom.

6. School Leadership:

The Laurelton Elementary School does not have a full time building principal. The leadership structure for the Mifflinburg Area School District consists of the district superintendent as the chief school administrator. Reporting directly to the superintendent are the respective building principals. At the elementary level, one building principal is assigned to the four elementary buildings, one of which is the Laurelton Elementary School.

The leadership role of the building principal is essentially to use leadership, supervisory and administrative skills to promote the educational development of each student. Included in this assignment is the responsibility of regularly observing all teachers, both formally and informally, as they implement the school district's overall educational program. In doing so, the building principal is responsible for developing and evaluating instructional methods and programs and recommending changes and improvements as deemed necessary. This includes promoting and supervising curriculum development at the elementary level.

To do so at the Laurelton Elementary School, the building principal regularly meets with the building staff. These meetings provide a valuable avenue for discussion of current practices, data analysis as well as student and staff needs. As a result of these meetings, the building principal is able to formulate appropriate plans to address program and/or policy needs and coordinate the resources needed to address these needs. These plans are then presented to the school district superintendent for review and approval.

The building principal is also responsible for the recruitment, screening, interviewing and recommending of qualified candidates for teaching and support staff positions. Given the small size of the Laurelton Elementary School, this is an extremely important responsibility. Providing a compatible teaching and support staff is essential in terms of maintaining positive staff relationships, which in turn insures a learning atmosphere conducive to student achievement.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: Test Published Yearly Publisher: Data Recognition Company

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced and Proficient	100	92	100	72	70
Advanced	59	42	63	36	45
Number of students tested	17	12	19	22	20
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: Pennsylvania System of School Achievement

Edition/Publication Year: Published yearly Publisher: Data Recognition Company

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
proficient and advanced	93	100	95	73	60
advanced	12	17	32	41	30
Number of students tested	17	12	19	22	20
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes: