

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: Ms. Jennifer Dordel

Official School Name: Columbus Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
913 North Oneida Street
Appleton, WI 54911-4910

County: Outagamie State School Code Number*: 0080

Telephone: (920) 832-6232 Fax: (920) 832-6355

Web site/URL: www.aasd.k12.wi.us E-mail: dordeljennifer@asd.k12.wi.us

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*: Mr. Lee Allinger

District Name: Appleton Area School District Tel: (920) 832-6161

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. Sharon Fenlon

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:
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 15 | Elementary schools |
| 4 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior high schools |
| 3 | High schools |
| 16 | Other |
| 38 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 11030

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 11413

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. 4 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	6	11	17	7	0	0	0
K	18	16	34	8	0	0	0
1	16	13	29	9	0	0	0
2	8	11	19	10	0	0	0
3	11	9	20	11	0	0	0
4	12	12	24	12	0	0	0
5	12	9	21	Other	0	0	0
6	4	8	12				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							176

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1 | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 20 | % Asian |
| 10 | % Black or African American |
| 8 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| | % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| 61 | % White |
| | % 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: 25 %

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.	22
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	22
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	44
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	178
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.247
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	24.719

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 18 %

Total number limited English proficient 31

Number of languages represented: 2

Specify languages:

Spanish and Hmong

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 87 %

Total number students who qualify: 153

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: 13 %

Total Number of Students Served: 22

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>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>17</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>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>16</u>
Total number	<u>19</u>	<u>21</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 16 :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	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Teacher turnover rate	25%	18%	13%	18%	35%

Please provide all explanations below.

Daily Student Attendance: Our school district does not have a program that compiles the daily student attendance percentage. (95% is a holder only for the above table).

Teacher Turnover Rate:

- The 2007-2008 turnover rate was influenced by the retirement of staff members and staff moves to other district buildings. 9/11 full-time classroom teachers stayed at Columbus School (82%).
- The 2006-2007 turnover rate was influenced by the retirement of staff members and staff moves to other district buildings. 9/11 full-time classroom teachers stayed at Columbus School (82%).
- The 2005-2006 turnover rate was influenced by the retirement of staff members and staff moves to other district buildings.
- The 2004-2005 turnover rate was influenced by the retirement of staff members and staff moves to other district buildings.
- The 2003-2004 turnover rate was influenced by the retirement of staff members and staff moves to other district buildings.

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	0
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

Columbus Elementary School was founded in 1892, and is centrally located in downtown Appleton, Wisconsin. Our school supports grades pre-school through sixth grade, and has continually strived to educate some of Appleton's finest students, who are also, unfortunately, among the most economically disadvantaged. Currently, we are operating with a student population of 178 students. Minority ethnicity at Columbus is at 43.18 percent with breakdowns of: 1 percent American Indian, 20 percent Asian, 10 percent African American, 8 percent Hispanic, and 61 percent Caucasian. Gender at Columbus is 51 percent female and 49 percent male. Students serviced with special needs are at 8 percent and students serviced within the ELL program at 30 percent. Approximately 80 percent of the students are from low-income families and receive free/reduced breakfast and lunch.

Columbus School's Mission Statement is as follows: Our vision for Columbus School is to create and maintain a true learning environment where diversity is celebrated and students, parents, staff, and community members are engaged in meaningful, relevant learning experiences. We will strive for academic excellence and physical and emotional well-being, while maintaining a safe, comfortable, and pleasant environment in which ideas and opinions are shared, respected, and accepted and character qualities are instilled. Within our school community lifelong learning will be promoted to meet the ever-changing needs of the future.

Columbus School has a number of innovative and supportive programs and activities to ensure that our students succeed academically. Columbus is a Title 1 school, which is a federally funded program designed to provide additional staff support for reading and math. Columbus is also a federally funded SAGE (Students Achievement Guarantee in Education) school for grades kindergarten through third grade, ensuring reduced class sized of a 1:18 teacher to student ratio. Other programming also available at Columbus includes the breakfast program, *Community Learning Center (before and after-school program developed/supported by the Boys and Girls Club of America)*, *United for Reading Success*, *Junior Achievement*, *Big Brothers/Big Sisters*, local support from *Lawrence University*, *Special Friends* programming in connection with Appleton North High School, *Macy's Community Partnership*, resources/support from the community emergency shelter, and most recently our *Birth to 5 Program*. Columbus School is diligent in supporting our students and families by providing a wonderful array of programs suitable to the needs and learning styles of our students.

Our teachers and support staff are frequently seeking staff development or educational opportunities above and beyond the district expectations. Many of our staff have been trained in using *Different Ways of Knowing*; a model of excellence in teaching that developed from our comprehensive school reform ten years ago. This model operates on the premise that all students can learn through a variety of modalities and curricula. At the primary level, a reading program, *Daily 5*, is being utilized to ensure blocks of reading time devoted to authentic reading, writing and skills building and in grade four, selected students utilize a math tutoring program. *Reader's Workshop*, *Interactive Read Aloud*, *Units of Study*, and *Reader's Theater* are also being utilized across grade levels. As a staff, we continually seek out grants to support our efforts, and are working towards installing Interwrite boards (interactive whiteboards) in classrooms throughout our school. As always, we continue to prepare our youth for learning success in a highly technologically-based world.

Our focus at Columbus has always been assisting our children in reaching their potential. While our student needs are growing, budgets are diminishing, and educational systems are struggling, we continue to improve instruction and raise expectations for our learners. The commitment of staff at Columbus has always been to provide only the very best instruction within an exceptional learning environment that is uniquely worthy of the Blue Ribbon status.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

Our Columbus Elementary School goals for both reading and math align with the Appleton Area School District's goals.

Our reading goal states: All students in the Appleton Area School District in grades three, six, and eight will be reading on grade level.

Our district uses the WKCE -CRT (state testing), Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing, the Harcourt Holistic Assessments (reading curriculum), and Instructional Reading Level (Benchmarking) as assessments for measuring student progress.

Our focus on reading goals in the district has driven our staff to focus on strategies to increase reading practice and time spent actually reading. We meet as a team monthly to examine data and discuss additional strategies that could be implemented to further close the achievement gap of our identified "At Risk" readers.

We are pleased to report that our "At Risk" population is making steady gains. The idea, this year, of having staff monitor how often they are actually having students reading has proven to be an effective, positive strategy showing increased reading test scores.

Getting staff involved in book studies, video studies, and increasing the awareness for staff of the need to immerse students in reading has been our main drive this school year.

Our math goal states: All students in the Appleton Area School District in grades four, eight, nine, and ten will be performing mathematics on grade level.

Our district uses the WKCE-CRT (state testing) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing as assessments for measuring student progress.

Thanks to the *Comprehensive School Reform*, the process of having staff use the same math vocabulary throughout lessons, problem solving modeling, and inquiry-based instruction has assisted with the increased assessment scores for our students.

Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, Columbus Elementary School along with other schools in the district will be focusing on our math data and creating a more stream-lined approach to further advance students.

Columbus students have done really well when looking at data from 2003-2004 through the current year's data.

To summarize, the reading emphasis, thanks to the Comprehensive School Reform and Continuous School Improvement Processes, has proven beneficial.

The following are highlights for students in grades 3-6 for both reading and math:

- Grade 3 Students:
 1. Reading - Students increased reading scores from 77% to 84 % proficient/advanced proficient as the number of students qualifying for free/reduced price meals increased from 73% to approximately 88%. We have strived to give our students as many opportunities for support while they are at Columbus.

2. Math - Students increased math scores from 57% to 79% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduce price meals increased from 60% to 81%.

- Grade 4 Students:

1. Reading - From 2003 - 2008, students increased reading scores from 60% to 87% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduced meals dramatically increased from 33% to 85%.
2. Math - From 2003-2008, there was a slight increase with students increasing math scores from 77% to 80% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduced meals increased from 61% to 77%.

- Grade 5 Students:

1. Reading - From 2005-2008, students increased reading scores from 63% to 90% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduced meals increased from 70% to 85%.
2. Math - From 2005-2008, students increased math scores from 63% to 84% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduced meals increased from 65% to 85%.

- Grade 6 Students:

1. Reading - From 2005-2008, students increased reading scores from 79% to 100% proficient/advanced proficient while the number of students qualifying for free/reduced meals increased from 77% to 87%.
2. Math - From 2005-2008, students increased math scores from 89% to 100% proficient/advanced proficient.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Columbus School uses state, district, and classroom data to make educational plans and goals, both at a school-wide and individual level. This data is entered into a district-wide assessment database which helps our school to compare and analyze Columbus Elementary students' performance with that of their peers among fifteen other schools in our district.

Upon examining reading and math assessment information, our school began our quest to dramatically improve our instruction and help our students succeed academically. In 1998, it was apparent that our school was going to be considered "in need of improvement" if test scores weren't advanced. Thus, we decided to write a grant to implement *Different Ways of Knowing*, an approved comprehensive school reform model. Since that model has been implemented, our school reviews data annually to set new goals in both reading and mathematics. Within the last two school years, we have participated in data retreats each summer, to more finitely gather data about the reading performance of our students. This data has led our school to create a "Comprehensive School Improvement Plan" in the area of reading in which we are identifying our "At Risk Readers" to establish individual instructional plans for these students. The plan also sets goals for all Columbus Elementary students to reach levels of proficiency on two or more reading assessment measures within the school year. Our improvement plan has also established goals for staff members, in the teaching of reading and writing at our school. Staff development has been aligned with our plan of support teachers in increasing their knowledge of the best practices in literacy instruction. It is our belief that a clear target, established by data, will help us to "hit the mark" on performance measures.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Our school works directly with the Appleton Area School District to set goals for improving education for our students. We report to the AASD School Board yearly and set goals based on district directives and data the

staff has collected via assessment information. We also seek to involve the community to improve our school by inviting parents, volunteers, staff, and community members to be active participants in our *School Improvement Committee*, *Continuous School Improvement Planning Committee*, *PTA (Parent/Teacher Association)*, and the advisory board for the *Boys and Girls Club at Columbus Elementary School*. All of these committees meet regularly to review goals and put plans into action to improve education at our site.

Each year, it is our hope that students will reach a level of proficiency in reading and math, as well as other content areas, as determined by local, state, and national standards and assessments. Results of proficiency are assessed using MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing three times per year with results being shared with students and families when they become available, WKCE (Wisconsin Knowledge and Comprehension Exam) testing with results being shared yearly with students, as well as, with parents at spring parent/teacher conferences. Other assessments determined by the school district, such as Harcourt theme testing, writing assessments, and the like are shared with students and families via report cards and/or parent/teacher conferences. Students are encouraged to keep individual data for the purpose of goal setting. It is our desire that sharing this information with students will allow them to become more invested in their learning and become better learners, more efficient consumers of technology-based instruction, and most importantly, critical thinkers.

4. Sharing Success:

Columbus Elementary School has been privileged to share our successes at the school, district, and state levels. We see ourselves as continual learners and it is with that in mind that we open our doors to one another and our teaching colleagues. At the district level, staff members from Columbus have shared teaching practices at grade level sharing sessions and support staff meetings. We have made presentations to the Appleton Area School District Board and district administration. Teachers have also made presentations at local organizations such as the Mid-Eastern Reading Council and the regional diversity conference sponsored by the Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center. Staff members have also made presentations at our local business partnership with Macy's Department store to share the outcomes of grants they have funded which helped raise student achievement levels. Classroom teachers have allowed staff from within and outside of our district to observe the teaching practices being utilized to raise academic achievement. The local media has written articles that showcase Columbus School's many accomplishments, including, but not limited to our rising test scores. Informing parents of our success has occurred via PTA meetings, newsletters, our school website, parent nights, classroom presentations, and even word of mouth from parent to parent via a group called the Appleton Neighborhood Voice. Our most prestigious opportunity to share our success came during the 2007-2008 school year, when our school was invited to make a two hour presentation to administrators from around the United States and DPI members centered around doubling student performance at a National Conference at the University of Madison, Wisconsin. It is with great pride that Columbus Elementary staff members share our successes.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Columbus Elementary School accesses and uses the standards, curriculum, and district assessments developed by teachers, administrators, and community members of the Appleton Area School District. The district's core curriculum is founded upon national and state curricular standards and the Framework for 21st Century Learning. As our mission statement articulates, and as embraced by the Columbus Staff and school community, "We are committed to pursuing high quality instructional programming for all students. Our success is measured by students meeting or exceeding the established academic standards. We value the diverse cultural backgrounds, educational needs, and individual aspirations of our students, challenging us to continue the development of responsive, dynamic and innovative programming".

The curriculum and instruction that serves as the foundation of our students' learning experiences is based upon best practice research. The communication arts curriculum engages students in reading, writing, speaking, and listening experiences that promote the development of literate young adults. Beginning in kindergarten and continuing through grade three, students are engaged in daily guided reading instruction and coaching, mini-lessons, whole group instruction, writing activities, public speaking, and listening activities. Each of these developmentally appropriate learning opportunities are facilitated by educators who hold students to high expectations to assure that each student develops the following: letter-sound connections, decoding, phonics, fluency, comprehension, higher level thinking skills, story structure, concepts of print, exposure to numerous different genres, parts of speech, active listening, and written expression of one's ideas. Students in grades four through six continue to build their skills and knowledge in these areas while further applying what they know to different types of text and contexts. Assuring that students are able to learn to read in kindergarten through grade three and then transition to being able to read to learn in grades four through six is of utmost importance to us.

Our mathematics curriculum engages our students in an inquiry-based, problem-solving experience where students develop their basic math facts and algorithm skills, while enhancing their conceptual understanding of mathematics. Through a cognitive guided instruction (CGI) delivery model, educators provide students with multiple and varied hands-on learning opportunities which focus instruction to guiding and coaching student learning.

The Full Option Science System (FOSS) provides our students with hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences that lead students to build their decision-making and logical thinking skill-sets. Through student engagement in investigations, analyses, scientific reading, and interactive learning experiments students are able to build their scientific literacy.

Our social studies curriculum begins in kindergarten with students building their awareness and understanding of themselves as unique individuals and continues into grade one where students learn about families and neighborhoods. Learning about the history of the Appleton community occurs in grade two and in grade three where students apply their understanding of community development while studying Plymouth, as well as our sister cities: Chinnendaga, Nicaragua; Kanonji, Japan; and Kurgan, Russia. Wisconsin and the Mid-west region serve as the focus of our fourth grade curriculum, while students in fifth grade study United States history. Students in grade six learn about Canada, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. Each year, students also develop and refine their map and globe skills as part of their learning experience. Actively engaging the students in discussion, reading, writing, small group work, and project work serves as the delivery model for our social studies program.

Providing students with opportunities to learn about, experience, and enhance their understanding of who they are as individuals occurs through our visual and performing arts curriculums. Students in kindergarten through grade six engage in weekly art, music, and human performance experiences taught by art, music, and physical

education certified teachers, as well as having opportunities to engage in extended learning opportunities in each area facilitated by the classroom teacher. Our goals are to insure that all students receive quality instruction through comprehensive fine arts education experiences and to develop knowledge, technique, and problem-solving capabilities that support and nurture creativity and innovation for each student.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Columbus School's reading curriculum is aligned with the Appleton Area School District's curriculum which states the following:

Communication Arts integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The major focus is on learning to comprehend text through word building, structural analysis, and reading strategies. Students apply these skills and strategies in a variety of quality literature and informational text. Students use study strategies to organize and remember information. The writing process and six-trait writing are keystones for writing improvement.

Our school then expands upon these directives, to further include that reading and writing occur across all curriculum areas. In reviewing current research of the most effective teachers of reading, we have also come to establish a goal of providing students with approximately thirty out of every sixty minutes of their day with authentic reading and writing tasks. This goal has become the focus of our comprehensive school improvement plan and is an expectation of staff members.

With this research-based curriculum, our students are gaining valuable practice time in both reading and writing. It is our belief, as well as an established fact in research, that successful practice leads to success in reading. By reading in all curricular areas, students are able to practice reading and writing within a variety of genres. The plethora of reading and writing experiences our students receive across grade levels gives them ample opportunities to see reading and writing modeled, as well as time for both guided and independent practice with text they can read. The overall goal for each individual Columbus student is to read with accuracy, comprehension, and fluency.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The goals of the Appleton math curriculum include developing students' abilities in problem solving, reasoning, communicating mathematical processes, computation, and use of technology. An additional goal is that students understand mathematics as "a unified whole made up of connected, BIG IDEAS, rather than a collection of abstract concepts and skills." Analysis of test data helped identify gaps in our students' achievement. In response, site goals were developed which focus on problem-solving, math fact mastery, and applied math projects.

One outcome of this focus on mathematics has been the use of consistent language for problem solving steps across grade levels. Grade-level assessments and rubrics were developed to monitor student progress toward mastery. A graphic organizer chart and student work mat was provided as a resource for instruction and to help anchor student understanding of problem-solving steps. Special emphasis was placed on helping students communicate their mathematical thinking and processes.

In the area of math fact mastery, we have established targets for students at each grade level, as well as a system for tracking individual progress. Parents have been informed of grade-level goals and resources have been provided for at-home practice.

Applied math projects were encouraged as a means to connect math concepts to other disciplines. Projects have included class-operated businesses and costume construction. These real world applications of math concepts have provided meaningful engagement for students, staff, and parents and have proven highly motivating for

students. The intent of these projects have been to help students transfer learning to new situations and to foster lifelong learning.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

In communication arts, differentiation is built into instructional methods utilized by classroom teachers. In primary grades, instruction is organized around Guided Reading groups in which students read materials at their reading level. Student progress is monitored so groupings remain flexible. Intermediate classes utilize *Reader's Workshop*, allowing each student to read appropriate leveled text. Several classrooms employ the *Daily 5 Model* to optimize student engagement and practice while teachers work with small groups. For lessons involving whole group instruction or textbook reading, staff development provides teachers with strategies for making texts accessible for all learners. Writing instruction is differentiated through *Writer's Workshop*, which provides for differentiation through choice of topic, mini-lessons geared to needs of students, individualized spelling study, and individual conferring.

As mentioned above, our staff has set site-specific goals for problem solving and math fact mastery. Primary classes use *Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI)* that allows students to choose among different number sets for problems and use the strategy of their choice and ability level. Recently adopted district math curriculum is based on CGI principles and other research-based instructional strategies. Teachers individualize math fact mastery with student self-monitoring and goal setting. High-achieving math students may be accelerated a grade level. In other content areas, differentiation is achieved through inquiry-based learning and projects. Differentiation using multiple intelligences was an integral part of our Comprehensive School Reform project.

A myriad of programs exist within, and in partnership with our school, to support students with exceptional needs:

- English Language Learners are supported through a supplemental ELL program and in-class interpreters
- Students with learning disabilities are supported by a resource teacher
- Two full-time reading teachers help meet the needs of at-risk readers
- Community volunteers serve as reading tutors to first graders and math tutors for fourth graders
- A resource teacher works with students identified as gifted and talented

Beyond the school day, students' academic needs are supported through the after-school program's homework sessions, tutors provided for the homeless students, and additional tutoring opportunities.

5. **Professional Development:**

Professional development at Columbus Elementary is based on school and district goals, which have been derived from assessment data. Each school year, a team of staff members reviews the goals of the school and establishes staff development opportunities to coincide with our goals.

Our most comprehensive staff development occurred when the *Different Ways of Knowing* coaches provided instruction with the framework of multiple intelligences. This staff development opportunity was all-encompassing in that it included all staff members and all aspects of good teaching practices. Mentoring was done by our *Different Ways of Knowing* coaches, as well as among peers. This experience led us to see the value in learning from one another and opened doors to further work as a team. With a common set of teaching principles in our repertoires, we began focusing our school on improving our instructional practices. Thus, we have gone on to consistently provide book studies, peer-coaching, one-day workshops, video studies, and staff development sessions related to school goals each year. Since this time, our test scores have risen to a much higher rate of proficiency. Staff development, in part, may be instrumental toward having achieved this goal.

Our district also provides numerous opportunities for staff development which coincide with our school goals. Staff members are required to complete twelve hours of staff development at the district level. Opportunities such as a writing institute, by the *Teachers College of Reading and Writing*, was one such opportunity that three staff members willingly participated in this past summer. As part of this opportunity, staff members had to agree to share their learning with others in the district, in order to further expand the reach of the institute. Appleton is a district that is progressive in providing staff development to all teachers.

6. School Leadership:

Columbus has been, and continues to be, a group collaboration of leadership. Our principals have been the facilitators, guiding us to set high standards for our students and our teaching. But, the essence of leadership comes from the collective effort of the principal, teachers, and support staff here at Columbus.

Columbus School's former principal had the foresight and the resourcefulness to lead us in the direction of undergoing comprehensive school reform. Within the first few months of her principalship, she wrote and received a grant to have us work with the *Different Ways of Knowing* reform model. She led by example. She organized and led book studies and staff development sessions to encourage and facilitate higher education for staff. She initiated and found funding for programming that would better meet the needs of our students. These programs included: establishing an after-school program run by the Boys and Girls Club, *Saturday Morning Live*, *United for Reading Success*, and mentoring opportunities for students. Our former principal was instrumental in making Columbus School a community of learners. She was a viable part of the school in that she was constantly accessible to students, parents, and staff, as she worked toward making education a priority for each Columbus student. Her strong commitment to our school was the foundation upon which we began the improvement of our students' academic success.

Our current principal believes in empowering staff to take leadership roles, as we strive to make Columbus School a place of excellence. With our shared governance, staff members head committees and work cooperatively to work toward our school-wide goals. She encourages and supports our efforts, as she, too, is a member of each committee. Establishing positive relationships with parents is yet another way that our principal strives to ensure students success at Columbus Elementary. Her leadership style seems to take on the adage, "It takes a village to raise a child." She knows that together, we will make Columbus the best school it can be.

Fortunately, Columbus School is also backed by a forward thinking district administration. The Appleton Area School District has continually put Columbus School as a priority when it comes to student to staff ratios, building updates, and administrative input regarding policies and programs. Several district administrators serve on our committees as well. The district has also set up summer data retreats for several years in order to help each Appleton school focus instruction on areas of academic need.

Columbus has always assumed the role of family, everyone pulling together to do what is in the best interest of the children we service. This has been key to our success as a learning community.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: WKCE

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	79	80	59		
% Advanced	11	40	27		
Number of students tested	19	15	22		
Percent of total students tested	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	81	90	60		
% Advanced	13	70	20		
Number of students tested	16	10	15		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

There is no data for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 as the third graders did not take WKCE testing those 2 years.

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

Test: WKCE

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	84	87	77		
% Advanced	42	40	41		
Number of students tested	19	15	22		
Percent of total students tested	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	88	90	73		
% Advanced	44	30	33		
Number of students tested	16	10	15		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

No data is available for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 as grade 3 began taking the WKCE state standardized test in the year 2005.

Subject: Mathematics
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 4 Test: WKCE
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	80	77	75	85	77
% Advanced	33	41	30	23	23
Number of students tested	15	22	20	26	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed				1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed				4	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	75	80	80	61
% Advanced	31	31	27	20	22
Number of students tested	13	16	15	15	18
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					75
% Advanced					17
Number of students tested					12
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: WKCE

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	87	82	90	70	60
% Advanced	40	41	35	27	17
Number of students tested	15	22	20	26	30
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	85	75	93	67	33
% Advanced	38	25	40	20	6
Number of students tested	13	16	15	15	18
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					33
% Advanced					0
Number of students tested					12
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 5 Test: WKCE
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	84	68	63		
% Advanced	37	16	13		
Number of students tested	19	19	24		
Percent of total students tested	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	85	71	65		
% Advanced	23	14	12		
Number of students tested	13	14	17		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

There is no data for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for grade 5 students.

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 5
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

Test: WKCE

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	84	63	0	0
% Advanced	32	32	25	0	0
Number of students tested	19	19	24	0	0
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	0	0
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	85	93	71		
% Advanced	31	36	24		
Number of students tested	13	14	17		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

We do not have testing data for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for grade 5 students.

Subject: Mathematics
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 6 Test: WKCE
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	86	89		
% Advanced	50	32	11		
Number of students tested	10	22	19		
Percent of total students tested	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		93	92		
% Advanced		40	0		
Number of students tested		15	13		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

There is no data available for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for grade 6 students.

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Grade: 6 Test: WKCE
Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill LLC

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Nov	Nov	Nov		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	86	79		
% Advanced	40	27	11		
Number of students tested	10	22	19		
Percent of total students tested	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		87	77		
% Advanced		33	0		
Number of students tested		15	13		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): American Indian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Asian					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. (specify subgroup): Black					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

There is no data available for the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for grade 6 students.