

U.S. Department of Education
2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Denise Hoctor

Official School Name: Orchard Avenue Elementary

School Mailing Address:
1800 Orchard Ave.
Grand Junction, CO 81501-6748

County: Mesa State School Code Number*: 6554

Telephone: (970) 254-7560 Fax: (970) 244-8650

Web site/URL: http://orchardave.mesa.k12.co.us/ E-mail: dhoctor@mesa.k12.co.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.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Steve Schultz

District Name: Mesa County School District #51 Tel: (970) 254-5100

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.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Harry Butler

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.

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. 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 2009-2010 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 2004.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
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: (per district designation)	26	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
	8	Middle/Junior high schools
	6	High schools
	2	K-12 schools
	42	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 7130

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. 16 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position 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	18	9	27	6			0
K	48	37	85	7			0
1	41	41	82	8			0
2	44	38	82	9			0
3	32	33	65	10			0
4	44	38	82	11			0
5	37	31	68	12			0
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							491

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
2 % Asian
3 % Black or African American
18 % Hispanic or Latino
 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
76 % 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: 21 %

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.	44
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	51
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	95
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	460
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.207
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	20.652

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 2 %

Total number limited English proficient 10

Number of languages represented: 2

Specify languages:

Tagalog and Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45 %

Total number students who qualify: 219

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: 9 %

Total Number of Students Served: 46

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>1</u> Autism	<u>3</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>5</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>16</u>	<u>4</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>
Support staff	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>39</u>	<u>28</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 26 :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%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	95%	94%	94%	94%	94%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	97%	97%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	22%	6%	0%	6%	6%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Daily Student Attendance Rates: 2005-2008 attendance rates with 94% were due to absences caused by illness in students

Teacher Turnover Rate: 2008-09 due to a retirement, change in position in the district, and two teachers job sharing one teaching position

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

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

Orchard Avenue Elementary shares a mission that states: “We believe in providing an environment which will enable each child to successfully grow in knowledge, skills, confidence and attitude.” Since the school opened 65 years ago, many successful citizens and prominent community leaders have begun their educational journeys within our classrooms, including Jane Norton, former Lieutenant Governor of Colorado and Tim Foster, former member of the Colorado House of Representatives and current President of Mesa State College. As Grand Junction has grown in population and expanded into an important state regional center, the area around our school that once was characterized as a thriving neighborhood of young families has now been replaced by a mixture of motels, low-income housing and rental properties, with middle income housing to the east of our school. We are proud that we have been able to meet the challenges offered by the richness of diversity in our area and believe that it is this diversity that makes our school community flourish.

Orchard Avenue Elementary School serves learners in preschool through fifth grade. We have a classroom for learners with significant developmental delays, a district preschool, fully inclusive classrooms, and most important, staff, parents and families who believe in learning. We are not a school that has a glitzy marquee or that promotes sporty clothes with catchy phrases. We are a place where learning is valued because it makes us better individuals, no matter our age. We have been the recipient of many awards over the past five years: Colorado Performance of Excellence Foothills Award; High Performance/Excellent Performance School; Colorado Commissioner’s Cup for Closing the Achievement Gap, and the Outstanding Administrative Leadership Reading Award from the Colorado Council of International Reading Association. We serve families from all walks of life, from homeless families to middle income families, and forty-five percent of our learners receive free and reduced lunches. Although they come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, our students have demonstrated they all have one thing in common...they are learners. Our state assessment scores are just a small indication of the many accomplishments we have made as a school community.

One of our school beliefs reflects the importance of giving back to others. In the last two years we have funded the drilling of a well in Africa, collected over 1800 food items for our local food bank, provided medical care and donations to our local no-kill animal shelter, provided funds to purchase food for our weekend backpack program (for our students who need supplemental food on the weekends when school breakfast and lunch are not available), and raised money to pay for a staff member’s daughter’s heart surgery bills. Building community and a sense of common purpose is what grounds us daily in our work.

We can proudly say we implement what Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels and Arthur Hyde call best practice instruction in our school. As educators we have studied the work of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the International Reading Council (IRA), the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the National Writing Project (NWP). We embrace and “put legs” on the Principles of Best Practice according to Zemelman, Daniels and Hyde. What a journey we have taken to arrive at this point. Prior to our many changes in curriculum and staff, we were an average school whose students primarily worked on worksheets and read out of textbooks, but were not challenged to engage in critical thinking. Now students, teachers and families are “on fire” about their learning. We have had five of our teachers professionally videotaped for a teacher education company modeling research-based practices. If you were to step into an Orchard Avenue Elementary classroom now, you would observe students trying to make sense of their learning through experience, immersion, choice, practice, engagement and interaction.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)** is Colorado’s standards-based assessment designed to provide a picture of student performance to schools, districts, educators, parents and the community. The primary purpose of the assessment program is to determine the level at which Colorado students meet the Colorado Model Content Standards in the content areas assessed. The website address is www.cde.state.co.us/.

To meet the standard the student needs to score in the Advanced or Proficient range.

The performance levels are:

Advanced - Performance Level 4: Students who score in this level illustrate exceptionally strong academic performance.

Proficient - Performance Level 3: Students who score in this level demonstrate a solid academic performance on subject matter as reflected by the Colorado Model Content Standards.

Partially Proficient - Performance Level 2: Students performing at this level show a partial understanding of the knowledge and application of the skills that are fundamental to proficient work at grade level.

Unsatisfactory - Performance Level 1: Students will usually require a considerable amount of additional instruction and remediation in order to achieve a proficient level of understanding.

Colorado’s performance levels are so rigorous that Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for NCLB goals has been set at the “Partially Proficient” level.

In reviewing Orchard Avenue Elementary’s data over the past five years on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) the following trends can be noted:

The Orchard Avenue community is proud of our achievement growth on the *Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)* over the past 5-9 years. Our trends for students scoring proficient or advanced show that for the past 5 years:

Grade 3 Reading increased 8% from 83% to 91%

Grade 3 Math increased 28% from 68% to 96%

Grade 4 Reading increased 12% from 79% to 91%

Grade 4 Math increased 15% from 68% to 83%

Grade 5 Reading increased 4% from 85% to 89%

Grade 5 Math increased 17% from 64% to 81%

Other trends: Reading

Grade 3:

- At least **80%** scored **proficient or advanced** in the past 5 years.
- **Fewer than 6%** have been in the **unsatisfactory** range in the past 5 years. In **2009** there were **no** students in that category. There is no achievement gap between males and females.
- **Economically disadvantaged students have scored as well** as their advantaged classmates in the past 2 years. The number of students scoring **advanced** in 2008 and 2009 increased from **0% to 25%**.

Grade 4:

- At least **80%** scored **proficient or advanced** in the past 3 years.
- **Fewer than 6%** have scored in the **unsatisfactory** range in the past 5 years. In the **past 2 years** there have been **no** students in that category.

Grade 5:

- At least **79%** scored **proficient or advanced** in the past 5 years.
- **Fewer than 5%** have been in the **unsatisfactory** range in the past 5 years.

Other trends: Math

Grade 3:

- For the past 5 years, the number of students scoring **proficient or advanced** has consistently grown to **96%** in 2009.
- For the past 5 years, the number of students scoring **advanced** has consistently grown to **81%** in 2009.
- **Economically disadvantaged students have scored as well** as their advantaged classmates in the past 2 years. The number of students scoring **advanced** in 2008 and 2009 increased from **33% to 70%**.
- There is **no achievement gap between males and females** in the past 3 years.
- There has been a **28% gain in Economically Disadvantaged students** scoring proficient or advanced in the past 3 years.

Grade 4:

- In the past 5 years, the number of students scoring in the **unsatisfactory** range has **decreased from 8% to 2%**.
- In the past 5 years, the number of students scoring in the **advanced** range has increased from **11% to 33%**.
- For 3 years, there was an achievement gap between males and female students. Digging deeper into the data, we found that we closed the gap at 5th grade with the same group of students.

Grade 5:

- In the past 5 years, the number of students scoring in the **unsatisfactory** range has **decreased from 8% to 2%**.
- In the past 5 years, the number of students scoring in the **advanced** range has **increased from 24% to 42%**.
- In comparison to both the district and the state averages for Reading and Math in the past 5 years, Orchard Avenue Elementary consistently scores much higher, with the exception of 4th grade Math in

2006. For all other years, the difference in scores is as high as 32% more students who are proficient or advanced. Orchard Avenue students continue to grow in their achievement, and that growth is deliberate and intentional, built on a foundation of information-based instructional practice and curriculum review.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Using data to drive improvement in instruction is critical to our staff. We engage in Data Driven Dialogues, using Bruce Wellman's protocols for predicting, exploring, explaining and acting on multiple measures that support our work to increase learning for all our students. Our analysis focuses on academic, demographic, perception and school process data. In this way, we learn what is working and why. We can check the health of our school culture and be aware of the demographic makeup of our school. We disaggregate all data by grade, programs, ethnicity, gender, SES, as well as examine the elements in the content standards where our students are not achieving.

Beyond using standardized test data, our teachers use on-going formative data to guide their instructional practices on a daily basis. For example, running records provide six levels of analysis that provide rich information about the process and product of reading. Observing readers while taking running records allows teachers to decide if readers are working to make meaning. Are they using different sources to predict and self correct? If not, the text is too difficult. Teachers read and analyze their learners' notebooks to assess their thinking which helps them to see if a concept requires re-teaching with the whole group or a small group of learners. Teachers bring math data from the end of the unit assessments to their grade level teams to analyze which learners are proficient and who needs more time and practice, as well as what that instruction and support will look like.

Information-based decision making, using meaningful data on a consistent basis, allows our staff to correctly target next steps that will ensure continuous improvement for all learners. At Orchard Avenue Elementary School achievement growth is intentional and well designed, not incidental.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Student performance is communicated to students in numerous ways. Learners set goals with their teacher and evaluate those goals weekly during individual conferences using reflection sheets. Student work is sent home every Thursday for parents to review. Teachers review the summative testing data with their learners individually prior to the conference with parents. At the beginning of the school year our teachers conference with parents about the state assessment data from the previous year, current testing data and the Reading Continuum from the past school year. Teachers are required to meet with every family, our school summative testing data is available on our website for community access and individual reports are explained, discussed and provided to families at the beginning and end of the year conferences. Learners collect data that reflect their best performances and build a portfolio to present during student-led conferences at the end of the school year. We send district report cards home three times per year. Parents are encouraged to communicate by e-mail, telephone, drop-in visit or a scheduled conference. We also provide all school *Family Learning Nights* to discuss our curriculum and to answer any questions regarding how they can support their children at home. Teachers model the language and activities that will guide their support at home. Individual classrooms and grade levels provide *Celebrations of Learning* nights for families to come to see and hear the work of the learners through the personal sharing of writing pieces, projects or work samples from that trimester. Each classroom teacher sends a weekly letter home to communicate what has been taught and how it was assessed. The assessments and results are sent home with the letter as well. At Orchard Avenue Elementary we believe that assessment data belongs to all stakeholders, not just the school or district. We believe the purpose of assessment is to measure and support growth in learning and to guide our thinking for change.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Orchard Avenue Elementary has always shared the belief that successful schools have a responsibility to share their learning with others. By engaging in professional communications with other educators, we broaden our views and gain new insight. Our school has and will continue to provide opportunities for teachers to observe “best practice” in the classroom setting. We invite teams to observe our RtI Vertical Team meetings and to spend time with teachers to answer questions and provide necessary paperwork to support their change. Our teachers volunteer to sit on district curriculum committees and have led our new Math adoption and Reading Continuum training. The teachers are often asked to attend staff meetings and Professional Development meetings at other schools to support teachers and principals with Math instruction, Reading instruction and assessment questions. Just Ask Publications filmed (at no cost) five of our teachers instructing learners this past year. The videos are available for sale on their website for schools to purchase to support teaching. A group of our teachers designed a reading and writing continuum that provides growth data and next steps for teachers in the area of reading and writing. The Reading Continuum has been adopted for use in all district classrooms and training is available at each school. Our teachers have developed modules to support schools with the professional learning necessary to understand and implement the Reading Continuum. The Writing Continuum will be implemented in two years along with a writing curriculum based on our new state standards.

The principal is engaged in training her colleagues who are first and second year principals in the school district in a 6 member principal cohort that meets every other week. The focus is leading the math and reading initiatives at the elementary level. Last year she facilitated a group of 9 Assistant Principals/Interns in a cohort that was focused on research-based instruction and how an instructional leader moves such a change forward. She also co-teaches 4 seminars of aspiring leaders after school hours. It is not uncommon to have teachers and principals from outside of our district spend time observing classrooms and discussing how our school developed into an exemplary learning community. We will continue to serve those in our profession because we owe it to our children and society.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Orchard Avenue Elementary's curriculum is solely based on current learning research and the Colorado State Standards. Our teachers use the *workshop model* to structure our students' learning in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Social Studies, Science, Music and Physical Education consist of the mini-lesson (instruction), independent practice and share time (reflection). We believe that every learner must understand what the work of a reader, writer, mathematician, scientist and social scientist, musician, artist and healthy individual is and what kind of thinking is required to perform, make decisions and problem solve in those areas. The concept is that our learners will be "apprentices" of this work and will spend time learning the authenticity of the work. Our workshops last from 60 to 90 minutes and incorporate the following components: mini-lessons, independent reading/writing, conferring, guided reading groups or strategy lessons, word study, book clubs and share time. Instructional practices in all content areas are based on concept-based instruction. Our teachers have studied the work of Lynn Erickson in her text, *Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction: Teaching Beyond the Facts* (1998). We embraced her knowledge and continue to grow as we design our lessons with the concept or "big picture" in mind and the use of guiding questions to help our learners construct their own meaning from the lessons. Our goal as a school is to establish learners who can think critically, making connections to past learning, adding new information beginning with knowledge/facts, and then moving into the analysis of topics/concepts and then finally into generalizations. Our learning environments actively engage and meaningfully challenge our learners.

Writing

Our writing curriculum is structured much like our reading using the workshop approach. Reading and writing are integrated into our school day and our lives as learners. The teachers and staff have grown as writers through our study of Katie Wood Ray, Ralph Fletcher, Carl Anderson and the Colorado Writing Project, to name a few. Our teachers will model their writing, the writing of authors or samples from past students that show what good writing looks like. Young writers use these pieces to understand what the end in mind is: a proficient or advanced. We also have a Writing Continuum that guides our next steps, monitors growth and is used as a reporting tool for families.

Mathematics

Mathematics instruction is based on the constructivist approach. We have implemented *Investigations* as our tool for supporting our school district mathematics framework. Learning is scaffolded using the CRA model. Students are able to work at a concrete, representational or abstract level to show their thinking and understanding of the concept being taught. The structure of the teaching and learning is the use of the workshop approach.

Science

Science instruction is based on our state standards using the concept-based/constructivist approach. With the use of the Carolina Biological kits we are able to provide a hands-on approach to learning how scientific thinking is constructed and how we can connect what we are learning to our real lives. Students must show their thinking in a variety of ways to establish mastery of the concept.

Social Studies

Social Studies instruction is based on our state standards integrating all content area knowledge and skills into building understanding. We use a variety of literature, technology, storytelling, field trips and experiential learning to develop deeper meaning and connection as to how this understanding as a social scientist will make our lives richer.

Music

Music instruction is based on our state standards using a constructivist approach. Our young musicians study famous musicians, music theory and read and notate music using an interactive white board. All students play a variety of instruments including recorders and guitars. Our program provides musicals for families that teach historical and cultural traditions through music and dance.

Physical Education

Physical Education encompasses the learning of developmental skills and their transfer to game activities. Integrated into that curriculum is the inclusion of knowledge about health and the human body. The sole purpose is to provide the knowledge, habits and interest in movement and healthy life-long choices.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

(This question is for elementary schools only)

Our Reading curriculum is based on the research of Allington, Keene and Zimmerman (1997), IRA/NCTE Standards, Colorado State Standards and our district reading framework. We chose this integrated curriculum because it supports “best practice” in sound learning theory and has been tested and refined over many years. Our purpose is to encourage children to develop joy in reading both inside and outside of school. Key to facilitating successful readers are skilled teachers, who understand their readers and are able to teach them to understand and think critically about what they read. Reading lessons focus on the study of characteristics of texts; genre, text structure, content, theme and ideas, language and literary features and word work. Teachers have developed units of study at each grade level to support these focus lessons.

Our learners share their thinking in a variety of ways throughout the day spending long periods of time reading personal texts independently and responding to the texts through writing or in conversation. Teachers pull small groups to address specific learning needs and confer with readers individually to determine “next steps” for teaching. Learners have time to share their thinking with the whole group while engaging in reflective discussion. The use of this time to talk about their thinking helps our children to grow and gain more confidence in their speaking skills. We explicitly teach comprehension strategies; using background knowledge, inferring, predicting, questioning, creating mental images as well as instruction in decoding, fluency, word analysis, text structures and vocabulary. Students who are below grade level and need extra support in any of these areas will receive explicit instruction in that area by a trained teacher. Teachers meet every other week to discuss learners in need of intervention. They bring evidence and data to establish the area of need and discuss instructional practices and interventions to support that learner.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Our Mathematics instruction is embedded in the Constructivist theory. Each learner is expected to actively construct a new understanding through assimilation and accommodation. We use *Investigations in Number, Data and Space*, a mathematics curriculum that focuses on teaching K-5 students basic math concepts to guide our instruction. Math essentials are found in each unit lesson based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* document. It is essential that all young mathematicians learn to value mathematics, become confident in their mathematical ability, become mathematical problem solvers using their reasoning skills and learn to be able to communicate their thinking. Our lessons pose a problem and our learners spend time working toward their solution. Learners are actively

involved in their own thinking at the level of understanding that allows them to make sense, whether they are working at the concrete, representational or abstract level. We strive to make sure that everyone understands the idea or concept that is taught through the use of meaningful tools, tasks, talk, time and instruction. Just as we base our literacy instruction on comprehending and understanding what is written we also expect our learners to understand ideas through a series of thoughts that connect and develop personal understanding. The environment in our classrooms is set up for group work and the open sharing of one's thinking. Listening to our young mathematicians share their thinking, which is unique to that of their peers, builds confidence and creates an attitude of acceptance and self worth. The love of mathematics is on the face of all of our mathematicians every day.

4. Instructional Methods:

Differentiation begins with the knowledge of the teacher, the curriculum and instruction that takes place each day based on state standards. Instructional decision making guides the success of all learners. Our teachers and learners are clear about what they want their learners to know and be able to do. Learners become apprentices. Teachers analyze the skills and knowledge embedded in the task as well as analyze the student readiness, background knowledge, interests, strengths and weaknesses to inform their teaching. Teachers support learning by providing a variety of resources at various reading levels. Learners may demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. Teachers use flexible grouping which may include individual, small or large group work. Learners may be placed in groups based on readiness, interests or a variety of reasons. We scaffold instruction by first assessing the learner and then providing instructional targets that meet his or her needs. When we determine that a learner is not meeting his or her targets or goals, even after implementing differentiated instruction, or find that the learner is not responding to the interventions put in place the teacher's next step is to refer the learner to their Vertical Team for support. The teacher completes a referral form that provides information and evidence of the progress that has been monitored with that child. Colleagues work together to share their expertise with that teacher regarding next steps. The child's progress is reviewed every other week in a scheduled meeting. After 6-8 weeks following the progress of the child we determine whether or not the child is making the growth necessary to meet the grade level expectations, if the child is not, we refer them to our Special Education Flex Team. Learning is our constant; teacher support and time are the variables. To increase time and practice we offer Reading and Math Recovery, before and after school tutoring, homework assistance, Math and Reading interventions, and extended learning in the summer.

5. Professional Development:

Learning truly is our focus. Orchard Avenue Elementary prides itself on teacher, staff, student, family and community learning. The ability to close the achievement gap is the result of our teachers and staff engaged in continuous, meaningful learning that is focused on the needs of our diverse learners. Our learners are dismissed early every Wednesday. Teachers come together every other week to participate and collaborate in professional learning for two hours, on the alternate Wednesday teachers work in grade level teams to plan and analyze student work. A small group of teachers and the administrator compose the Professional Learning Team that plans the agenda for the Professional Learning sessions for our staff. The learning that is provided is based on the results of school district initiatives and the results of summative assessments that determine the goals established on our Individual School Improvement Plan. This year's professional learning is focused on reading and mathematics.

Our school district has adopted the Reading Continuum that our school developed and has implemented the past eight years as a monitoring tool for reading growth. Our teachers are studying Fountas and Pinnell's *Comprehending and Fluency* text to support the instruction of reading and to clarify proficiency of the continuum descriptors. Each item is aligned to our state standards and reading developmental behaviors. Teachers bring student artifacts, journals, anecdotal notebooks, and formative assessments to the meeting to discuss proficiency to improve their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the teaching of reading.

Our district adopted the curriculum, *Investigations in Number, Data and Space*; 2nd ED (2008). We have used this program for the past ten years to guide our mathematics instruction. The units of study align with our state assessments, *Principles and Standards for Mathematics* from NCTM. Our teachers bring the end of unit student assessments to our professional learning meetings to discuss next steps and instruction. To increase developmental understanding of math learning, teachers will learn how to administer student diagnostic interviews to understand what children know about numbers and arithmetic strategies. This understanding will help teachers establish where a learner needs support for instruction, differentiation and intervention.

6. **School Leadership:**

We believe in developing leaders through empowerment. We have found this to be the most powerful way we can grow as an organization of learners. Our community operates with a shared vision, values, and purpose. The principal functions as a support and model for effective leadership. Her goal is to develop the talents and strengths of those individuals who share in the mission of continuous learning while putting systems in place to promote a collaborative culture. Orchard Avenue Elementary has five teams that are structured to support our mission; Staff Leadership Team, Student Leadership Team, Professional Planning Team, Accountability Committee, and Parent/Teacher Association (PTA).

The Staff Leadership Team is comprised of staff representatives from grades K-2 and 3-5, Support Staff and Classified Staff. Their purpose is to provide feedback to the team from those they represent to improve student learning. The team reviews the feedback and discusses next steps for improvement. An issue we have resolved involved PA announcements the last 5 minutes of school to provide more time for instruction by reducing interruptions.

Our Student Leadership Team has one representative from each classroom in grades 1-5. Their role involves communicating the needs of their community to the team, supporting the goals in our Individual School Improvement Plan (ISIP), collecting input to support learning in their classroom communities and keeping the lines of communication open between students and adults. An example of our work involved students collecting donated books to give to students in need of increased reading time at home.

Our Professional Planning Team is responsible for providing structured time for teachers to deepen their understanding of instructional practices by studying and analyzing student work with their colleagues in a collaborative setting. We are reading Fountas and Pinnell's *Comprehending and Fluency* and bringing formative data to analyze to improve instructional practices.

Our Accountability Committee is comprised of parents, community members, staff and the principal who meet a minimum of four times a year to analyze a variety of school data, monitor systems and to deepen the parents understanding of learning as it takes place in our classrooms. We have read articles on constructivism and studied problem based mathematics. As a result of their learning they assisted other parents during our Math Family Night.

The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) supports learning through the purchase of materials, equipment and budgeted funds to support classroom instruction such as books, science kits and technology for classrooms.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	96	89	100	78	68
% Advanced	81	52	72	34	32
Number of students tested	73	66	50	64	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	81	100	68	53
% Advanced	74	41	72	27	16
Number of students tested	39	32	18	22	32
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100				
% Advanced	75				
Number of students tested	12				
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Largest other subgroup is white

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program
Edition/Publication Year: 1998 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	83	94	88	83
% Advanced	27	8	33	17	12
Number of students tested	74	66	51	64	77
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83	73	84	82	79
% Advanced	25	3	32	9	3
Number of students tested	40	33	19	22	33
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83				
% Advanced	33				
Number of students tested	12				
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Largest other subgroup is white

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83	69	86	60	68
% Advanced	33	22	41	11	11
Number of students tested	64	51	58	70	76
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	63	63	88	45	53
% Advanced	15	0	20	9	9
Number of students tested	27	16	17	29	30
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	70			46	46
% Advanced	30			9	9
Number of students tested	10			11	11
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	54				
% Advanced	9				
Number of students tested	11				
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:
Largest other subgroup is white

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program(CSAP)
 Edition/Publication Year: 1997 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	82	85	77	79
% Advanced	8	10	16	3	8
Number of students tested	64	50	58	70	75
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	78	67	82	76	66
% Advanced	7	0	6	0	3
Number of students tested	27	15	17	29	29
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	80			73	80
% Advanced	0			0	0
Number of students tested	10			11	10
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73				
% Advanced	0				
Number of students tested	11				
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:
 Largest other subgroup is white

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)
Edition/Publication Year: 2001 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	81	73	77	78	65
% Advanced	42	31	31	17	24
Number of students tested	53	52	74	71	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83	69	66	63	59
% Advanced	39	31	24	3	14
Number of students tested	18	16	29	30	29
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			80	75	41
% Advanced			20	8	12
Number of students tested			10	12	17
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:
Largest other subgroup is white

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)
Edition/Publication Year: 2001 Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	80	93	77	76
% Advanced	25	22	19	13	23
Number of students tested	53	51	74	71	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	80	93	77	76
% Advanced	11	27	17	3	24
Number of students tested	18	15	29	30	29
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			100	83	71
% Advanced			10	0	12
Number of students tested			10	12	17
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:
Largest other subgroup was white