

**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. Donna Danker

Official School Name: Sprague Elementary

School Mailing Address:  
401 School Street  
Wellesley, MA 02481-4827

County: Norfolk    State School Code Number\*: 03170048

Telephone: (781) 263-1965    Fax: (781) 263-1963

Web site/URL: http://www.wellesley.k12.ma.us/    E-mail: Donna\_Danker@wellesley.k12.ma.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\*: Ms. Bella Wong

District Name: Wellesley Public Schools    Tel: (781) 446-6210

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: Ms. Ilissa Povich

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)
- |          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 7        | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 1        | Middle/Junior high schools        |
| 1        | High schools                      |
|          | K-12 schools                      |
| <b>9</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>                      |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 14330

**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. 3 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	0	0	0	6			0
K	29	36	65	7			0
1	42	31	73	8			0
2	35	41	76	9			0
3	35	33	68	10			0
4	37	34	71	11			0
5	34	41	75	12			0
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							428

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
10 % Asian  
5 % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
77 % White  
5 % 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: 1 %

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.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	5
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	428
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.012
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1.168

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 1 %

Total number limited English proficient 5

Number of languages represented: 5

Specify languages:

Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Italian, Arabic

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %

Total number students who qualify: 16

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 18 %

Total Number of Students Served: 78

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>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>18</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>25</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>19</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>53</u>	<u>16</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 22 :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	96%	96%	96%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	5%	5%	0%	6%	17%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

The Sprague School population consists of students in Kindergarten through grade 5.

Since I was not the principal in the 2004-2005 school year, I do not have any information regarding the teachers turnover rate.

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 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>0 %</b>

## PART III - SUMMARY

---

Sprague School is a vibrant community of 430 students and 69 staff members who are committed to striving for excellence and maximizing student achievement within a strong learning community. The school community is comprised of 19 classrooms in kindergarten through grade five. The community was formed in 2002 by combining students from various residential neighborhoods as well as staff members throughout the district. We are also fortunate to support a dynamic METCO program, welcoming students from the Boston community as an integral part of the learning environment. The challenge associated with establishing the school was to meld these diverse constituents to create a learning community with a shared vision and common goals.

Meeting the diverse needs of all learners within an inclusive setting, making curriculum accessible to all is a central goal for the community. Ongoing professional development through courses such as *Empowering Multicultural Initiatives* and *Differentiated Instruction*, support staff members as they strive to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Special educators focus on providing small group instruction within the classroom setting to meet the needs of students with individualized instructional plans. Additional students within each classroom who may benefit from this specialized instruction are consistently included in these flexible small groups, maximizing opportunities for support. Also, through a commitment to *Response to Intervention (RTI)*, multiple short term interventions are available for students who would benefit from targeted instruction in specific curriculum areas.

Sprague School also includes a district program for students with significant developmental and cognitive delays. Initially, this program was established as a substantially separate classroom with individual support. Through reflection, assessment, and a community commitment to an inclusive learning environment, an integrated instructional program was established. Team teaching within the classrooms helped maximize instructional opportunities. As a result of this new model, the community has been enriched and student achievement has increased.

Sprague School is a vibrant community committed to creating a vibrant, self-renewing climate with high expectations in an inclusive environment. The responsibility for the success of the educational community rests on a dedicated and skilled staff, students who are committed to learning, and families that support and value education. For the staff, ongoing professional development helps them continue to acquire and implement current effective instructional practices. Collegial collaborations resulting in a professional sharing of ideas and strategies along with discussions of current professional literature support excellence in instruction. Classroom communities that foster collaboration and exploration support student investment in their learning. Families that emphasize the importance of education and create effective home school partnerships support student achievement.

Together staff, teachers, and family members actively support student learning and enhance understanding of our role in the global community. An active parent community committed to an effective home school partnership provides extensive classroom support. Parent volunteers receive specialized training from teachers to maximize their ability to support students in the classroom setting. Also, meaningful discussion of current literature and best practices in education enables parents and teachers to collaborate and develop a shared vision.

Our shared vision is to educate students in a vibrant learning community. We take this mission very seriously focusing our efforts on meeting the needs of all learners while continuously striving to enhance knowledge and skills. We strive to support students and extend their knowledge as they master grade level standards through a solid understanding of concepts and an effective application of skills. It is gratifying to see that instructional excellence, targeted instruction, and meaningful connections with students and families foster and develop capable and knowledgeable students who are well prepared for a successful future.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

---

### 1. Assessment Results:

Review of test data provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the schools academic programs as well as the rate and level of student achievement. Over a five year period, special education students experienced noteworthy growth in proficiency and productivity. This growth is consistent with the transition from pull out instruction to a more inclusive environment in which specialized instruction is part of the classroom environment. Professional development for staff in co-teaching and strategies to support inclusion have facilitated this transition.

In addition, assessment data obtained since the implementation of the Response to Intervention(RTI) initiative has indicated that students in need of support have demonstrated growth in core curriculum areas. Using standardized and formative assessments, students have been identified for small group supplemental instruction focused on specific skills and concepts. Participation in these short term interventions have increased student mastery of skills and enabled them to successfully achieve grade level standards.

An overview of assessment trends over time reflect a substantial increase in grade 4 English/Language Arts scores of students in the advance and proficient range from 69 to 92% while grade 5 student scores have increased from 85 to 97% in the advanced and proficient range. This improvement appears to be the result of the increased focus on inclusion, the Response to Intervention (RTI) initiative of small group targeted instruction along with professional development and teacher commitment to differentiated instruction. In addition, teacher mentoring and support of curriculum specialists result in improved instructional practice. Grade 3 scores have been stagnant reflecting the need to focus on enhancing instructional strategies and differentiated instruction within this grade level.

The implementation of a new math initiative in all grade levels has had a similar impact on student achievement. Grades 4 and 5 students demonstrated notable gains in the number of students achieving in the advanced and proficient range while the scores of grade 3 students remained stagnant. As a staff, we need to thoroughly examine the instructional practice and curriculum presentations in grade 3 as well as the need for additional student supports in order to address the disparity in scores and increase alignment.

Grade 4 writing scores reflect a level of proficiency when writing essays. Students have responded well to a comprehensive Writer's Workshop program focused on content, conventions, word usage, and writer's craft. In addition, data indicated the need to strengthen writing skills when answering open response questions. As a result, instruction focuses on developing critical thinking skills, engaging in rich discourse with peers, and enhancing students' ability to clearly articulate thought and ideas in writing. Incorporation of additional opportunities for journal writing and responding to literature also supports this objective. Assessment results may be found on the website for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment system provides both individual and school data for students beginning in grade three. Student results are categorized as warning, needs improvement, proficient, or advanced in Reading, Language Arts, Math, and Science. The goal is for all student to achieve proficiency by meeting grade level standards in all curriculum areas. Currently we view our data in terms of the combination of students scoring in the proficient and advanced levels. As a school we focus instruction and strive to provide instructional support for all all students to demonstrate advanced understanding in all areas.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Assessment data serves as the basis of informed instructional decisions for all students. As the principal, I review and analyze the MCAS data as it is received to determine trends and instructional focus for grade levels and individual students. Initial review of data for all grade levels over time suggested a global difficulty with open response and short answer questions. As staff, it was necessary to explore whether writing skills or higher level critical thinking skills caused the result. Analysis of the level of discourse and collaborative learning opportunities embedded in instruction indicated students were able to understand and express complex thoughts and ideas in all curriculum areas. Grade level expectations in writing however, proved to be inconsistent. Further staff discussion indicated the need to develop consistent expectations and writing benchmarks at all grade levels and within different genres. The result has been a year long staff collaboration to create and implement writing rubrics aligned with the district and state standards to guide instruction toward the goal of enhancing skills and improving written responses.

Ongoing formative assessments provide teachers and special educators with a comprehensive view of student acquisition of skills and concepts. Using assessments such as DIBELS and the Developmental Reading Assessment, teachers are able to assess individual students' early literacy skills as well as their fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Targeted math assessments provide information regarding students' development of mathematical reasoning and complex concepts. Assessment results determine the need for small group interventions. Through Response to Intervention (RTI), short-term targeted interventions are developed to develop mastery in identified skills and concepts. Creative scheduling enables interventions to provide supplemental instruction without supplanting classroom instruction. Pre and post tests are administered to individual students as a means on determining effectiveness as well as the need for re-teaching or additional instructional adjustments.

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

Ongoing communication regarding assessment results and subsequent instructional decisions is an essential component of an effective home-school partnership that establishes community support for innovations designed to maximize student achievement. To establish effective communication with families, conferences are scheduled throughout the year offering in-depth discussions of individual progress and assessment results. Classroom teachers, specialists, and special educators engage in meaningful discussions with families to provide a comprehensive view of student performance, understanding of concepts, and level of skill. Also explored are individual MCAS results, specifying skill acquisition and mastery of grade level standards. Individual instructional goals, determined as a result of in-depth analysis of assessment data and classroom performance, are shared with families, providing additional opportunities for support and establishing a solid foundation for a productive home-school partnership that supports student achievement.

Within the school setting, classroom teachers, special educators, and curriculum specialists conference regularly with students, explaining data obtained from formative assessments and specifying instructional goals. Expectations are established and targeted individual support is provided to achieve the identified objectives. Students assume responsibility for their learning and are invested in enhancing achievement. Students understand clearly stated objectives and expectations which delineates each individual's path toward mastery of skill levels

As a school community, it is essential to articulate the role of curriculum expectations and assessment data as a basis for informed instructional decisions. Parent education programs explain learning goals and clarify expectations while increasing their capacity to support students by exploring rich dialogue and collaboration as a means of developing higher level critical thinking skills. Additional presentations and parent coffees explore the composition, expectations, and the results of the MCAS assessment. Discussion centers on identifying higher level comprehension skills, as well as the importance of synthesizing information to effectively apply skills and strategies to navigate complex curriculum.

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

Each elementary school within the district participates in extensive professional development in differentiated instruction, and collaborative learning. Sharing best practices and exploring curriculum initiatives is a central focus of courses, workshops, and professional learning communities. Through collegial collaborations and presentations, special educators shared specifically designed *Response to Intervention* (RTI) initiatives and protocols, focusing on using assessment data for informed instructional decisions. Training opportunities were provided for professional staff from other schools as a means of sharing skills and strategies that enhance instruction and supporting student achievement. Literacy specialists provide training and individual consultations for classroom teachers and support staff in the administration and scoring of formative assessments. Training in the effective implementation of subsequent intervention programs and strategies are provided followed by ongoing discussions and reflection enables staff to refine practice and collaborate on analysis.

Principals meet weekly within the district and monthly within the area collaborative to share implementation of effective instruction, new initiatives, and strategies to maximize student achievement. Assessment data is discussed and as the basis for informed instructional decisions. In these venues, specific strategies and procedures are shared enabling the process to be replicated by other schools. Ongoing consultations allow for continued refinement and assessment of small group interventions and mentoring opportunities.

As a Blue Ribbon School, the goal would be to provide a series of professional development and training opportunities regarding the design and procedures for providing targeted intervention and support. Focus will also be on the assessment administration and analysis as well as evaluating student work to refine instruction and support mastery of skills. Support in this implementation and monitoring will allow replication and effective implementation of successful initiatives designed to raise student achievement. Ongoing consultations with teachers and principals from interested schools and communities would be supported with observations, visitations, and shared resources to maximize effectiveness. Given that there will be a change in school leadership, the new principal will guide these initiatives.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

---

### 1. Curriculum:

The Core Curriculum of the Wellesley Public Schools meld the state's curriculum frameworks with high district expectations designed to create a solid foundation of content knowledge, grade level skills, and common learning experiences for all students. In addition, the curriculum focus is to provide students with a depth of understanding along with well developed critical thinking skills to effectively apply knowledge and skills. The goal and expectation is for students to be engaged, self reliant, independent learners who can effectively synthesize information to draw informed conclusions.

Literacy is a core element of the elementary experience. Literacy is the effective integration of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in order to construct meaning and establish relevance from text as individuals read for pleasure, content, and information. Using a Reading Workshop format, students read for purpose, discuss content, and respond to leveled text in order to enhance fluency, accuracy, and comprehension skills. They extend and apply their phonemic awareness and decoding skills, making meaningful connections to text, and sharing knowledge and experience with peers through rich dialogue. Using a Writers' Workshop format, students learn to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas while communicating understanding and clear messages. They learn to convey a purposeful message to an audience by developing an author's style, mastering conventions, and enhancing vocabulary. Developing capable and competent readers and writers is an essential element of the curriculum that provides students with the skills and strategies needed to learn successfully in all content areas.

*Investigations in Time and Space by TERC* is the basis of the math instruction provided to all students. The focus is on using inquiry based learning to develop mathematical concepts and understanding. Students explore mathematical problems in cooperative groups and use the resulting data to draw meaningful and relevant conclusions. Through rich discourse, they learn to clearly articulate and communicate ideas while developing complex mathematical reasoning. Through a spiraling curriculum, students continue to revisit content and explore concepts to extend knowledge and understanding.

Each grade level focuses on in-depth social studies and science units that continue the commitment to inquiry based learning. The science learning goals are designed to stimulate interest, understanding, and an appreciation for the natural world by combining core knowledge and discovery with accumulated knowledge to explore the world around us and reveal patterns to express new ideas. In addition, focus is on research through the use of technology and extensive reference material as well as the presentation of information through technology or writing. Social Studies consists of the study of specific countries and cultures which occur at each grade level offering opportunities to integrate visual and performing arts into the curriculum to address differing learning styles. Units on Mexico, Ghana, Japan, Russia, and ancient civilizations are organized around central questions that integrate culture, history, geography, music, arts, and dance.

Differentiated instruction is implemented across the curriculum. Using a standards based model, instructional goals are determined and assessment expectations are identified for all students. Clear expectations and objectives support the determination of the skills and strategies needed to enhance knowledge and understanding. Targeted instruction, ongoing assessment, and progress monitoring are utilized to encourage progress.

High expectations ensure that students strive to achieve grade level standards and maximize their potential. In a standards based environment, students identify essential knowledge and understandings while striving for mastery. Rich content, targeted resources, and commitment to learning help students achieve high standards and meet expectations.

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

(This question is for elementary schools only)

Sprague School relies on core literature as the basis for a rigorous reading program at all grade levels. Through authentic literature and ongoing assessment, students receive high quality instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, word study, vocabulary, and comprehension. The goal is to create capable, confident, independent reader who derive meaning from complex text in different genres.

Focusing on developing a balanced literacy program, Reading and Writing Workshop become the venue through which skills are introduced, practiced, and mastered. Teachers scaffold instruction through guided reading groups, word study, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary development to help students become effective readers. Comprehension and higher level thinking skills are a priority in the development of metacognition. Writing skills are enhanced through the development of a writing rubric and ongoing conferencing to address individual skills

Mini lessons provide direct instruction in specific skill areas. Students learn to make meaningful connections to text enhancing comprehension. Focus questions encourage insightful discussion and higher level thinking skills as students explore and share leveled text with their peers. As a result, students meet high expectations as they develop into capable and effective readers.

Early Literacy Instruction includes a comprehensive phonological awareness program. Students are assessed using the DIBELS assessment to identify at risk students who would benefit from additional direct instruction. Reading intervention following a reading Recovery model offers daily individual instruction in a systematic format for identified grade one students. Through Response to Intervention, Tier two and Tier three interventions are available for students who are not meeting grade level expectations. Ongoing progress monitoring maintains the integrity of the intervention by offering opportunities for modifications as needed. As a result of the ongoing assessment and varied intervention options, students receive individualized supports to improve skills and maximize potential.

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

The Social Studies curriculum integrates reading, writing, thinking, research, and communication with rigorous content knowledge to help students develop an understanding of the world and communities around them, past and present. By studying countries such as Mexico, Ghana, Japan, the United States, Ancient Egypt, and Ancient China, students learn to identify salient pieces of information about a culture from reading and discussing relevant sources. They explore culture, art, music, history, and geography to develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the past and present.

Students also enhance specific reading strategies by drawing conclusions, making inferences, and identifying central themes of related text. Specifically, strategies for reading textbooks and nonfiction sources enable students to identify facts and recognize that new interpretations may emerge through the study of history and social events. In this way, students can synthesize information to understand varied motivations and multiple perspectives.

In their thinking and communication skills, students learn to analyze information and ideas by constructing thorough explanations incorporating historical perspectives. By locating, identifying and synthesizing information from visual, auditory, and written sources such as the internet, libraries, museums, reference materials, journals, maps, and periodicals, students extend their ability to analyze and synthesize complex concepts into a meaningful understanding of characteristics and events. Students form solid thesis statements, based on a body of knowledge and support this with evidence obtained through these varied sources. This data is then used as the basis of arguments and interpretations to be shared through rich dialogue with peers or presentations in class.

The mastery of content and integration of complex comprehension and higher level thinking skills is consistent with the school's core values of creating capable independent learners who can successfully negotiate challenging text. Through common learning experiences, students obtain consistent understandings of central concepts, achieving high expectations.

#### **4. Instructional Methods:**

Differentiated instruction determined by assessment data is the basis for meeting the diverse needs of learners in Sprague School. Teachers use formative assessment in core curriculum areas to determine student skill level and areas of focus. Once the instructional focus is determined, teachers create flexible groups of students who would benefit from common instruction. Targeted instruction is then provided to support or extend skills and establish mastery.

Instructional scaffolding continues to support student understanding and achievement. Mini lessons in specific concepts or skills are complemented by teacher modeling to ensure initial understanding. Application of skills is supported through guided practice and independent practice with frequent check-ins to assess understanding. This is especially significant of students identified as in need or support as well as for students with special needs. Reteaching, modifications, and methodologies that address varied learning styles provide students with learning challenges additional opportunities for success. When appropriate, additional instructional opportunities are presented to support student classroom instruction. The focus is on making grade level concepts and curriculum accessible for all students.

Mentoring programs are also provided to at risk students who would benefit from additional adult support and encouraging relationships. Mentors are often teachers from previous grade levels who are anxious to continue supportive relationships that help students maximize their potential. The mentor serves as a tutor and confidante who provides supplemental instruction as well as listens and responds to student concerns.

In addition to teacher directed instruction, cooperative learning is an essential element of student instruction. Partner reading, collaborative pairings, and small group discussions provide opportunities to explore concepts, apply skills, and draw insightful conclusions. Peer learning supports rich discussion of complex concepts, enhancing the development of higher level thinking skills.

#### **5. Professional Development:**

The staff at Sprague School has access to extensive professional development opportunities. Each Wednesday is an early release day to be used for collaborations and professional development on both a school and district level. Within the district, teachers collaborate with grade level peers to share best practice and implementation of curriculum expectations. Specific teachers are identified as grade level leaders, serving as mentors for teachers new to the district. Additional district opportunities for workshops focused on enhancing instructional skill and differentiated instruction are available during this time as well.

On a school level, staff meetings serve as an opportunity for grade level and horizontal collaborations. Opportunities are also provided to examine student work, explore the achievement gap and diversity, and focus on current pedagogy. A teacher leadership initiative focused on establishing benchmarks and developing grade level writing rubrics has been a central focus of school level professional development as well.

Curriculum specialists collaborate with classroom teachers providing professional development and modeling instructional strategies. Administration and analysis of assessments has also been a central component of these collaborations, providing individual teachers with opportunities for reflection and support.

Graduate courses are available through the district and through local collaborative for teachers in content and pedagogy. Guided Reading, Enhancing Comprehension, Sheltered English Immersion are offerings that have enhanced teacher effectiveness. In addition, a focus on Technology has encouraged instructional expertise in the use of iMovie, webinars, Voice threads, and SMART boards. Through this extensive professional development, teachers are better able to integrate technology into classroom instruction.

Each professional development offering is an opportunity for teachers to enhance pedagogy which strengthens classroom instruction. Assessment results and classroom observations indicate the positive impact of professional development on student achievement. As a result, students are able to maximize potential and enhance achievement.

## **6. School Leadership:**

As the current principal, I strive to be an instructional leader who supports a collective vision within a vibrant learning community. School Leadership assumes many forms, encouraging each member to share ideas, explore new pedagogy, and implement innovative initiatives to maximize student achievement. Encouraging teacher leadership, providing ongoing professional development, and fostering collegial collaborations result in achieving a strong learning community. With a change in leadership for the fall, the new principal will be responsible for continuing this vision.

Being a former literacy specialist with a background in curriculum, I am committed to using the role of principal to foster effective collaborations with the staff that address the needs of all learners and make curriculum accessible. To accomplish this goal, it was important to develop an extensive leveled library, enabling all students to access authentic literature on their own level. Through creative use of budget funds and supplemental grants, this library developed into an essential instructional resource. Through a teacher leadership initiative, teachers collaborated on examining student writing and determining a rubric to specify grade level benchmarks and ensure consistency.

Through collaboration with special educators and curriculum specialists, the student support team was restructured, becoming a valuable resource for teachers to support student learning. An effective Response to Intervention (RTI) instructional model has been established and implemented to provide targeted support in specific skills for identified students. The focus is supporting rather than supplanting instruction to maximize opportunities for learning.

Developing relationships and strengthening the capacity of teachers to address varying learning styles is the objective of regular meetings with teachers both individually and in grade level teams to provide ongoing mentoring and instructional guidance. As a principal, my commitment to know each student as a learner and be well acquainted with their instruction needs makes these meetings meaningful and supportive. As a result, all consultations and collaborations are productive and valued, resulting in enhanced student achievement. Although there will be a change in leadership for the fall, the goal will be to maintain this focus.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: MCAS

Edition/Publication Year:  
2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	71	72	83	71	
% Advanced	24	29	30	5	
Number of students tested	72	70	60	60	
Percent of total students tested	98	90	97	97	
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	3	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	37	36			
% Advanced	0	0			
Number of students tested	19	11			
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

No assessment 2004-2005.

Subject: Reading  
 Edition/Publication Year:  
 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Grade: 3  
 Test: MCAS  
 Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
 Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	74	83	81	87	79
% Advanced	14	30	13	26	0
Number of students tested	72	70	60	61	67
Percent of total students tested	97	93	97	98	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	3	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	32	54			40
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	19	11			15
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics  
 Edition/Publication Year:  
 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Grade: 4  
 Test: MCAS  
 Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
 Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	84	85	65	63	71
% Advanced	35	52	34	39	33
Number of students tested	69	61	58	71	45
Percent of total students tested	94	95	98	98	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	27		12	12	
% Advanced	9		6	6	
Number of students tested	11		16	16	
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading  
 Edition/Publication Year:  
 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Grade: 4  
 Test: MCAS  
 Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
 Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	83	85	78	69
% Advanced	30	13	26	24	22
Number of students tested	69	60	58	71	45
Percent of total students tested	94	95	98	91	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	63			37	
% Advanced	18			6	
Number of students tested	11			16	
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics  
 Edition/Publication Year:  
 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Grade: 5  
 Test: MCAS  
 Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
 Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	87	68	73	80	
% Advanced	48	41	39	44	
Number of students tested	64	59	71	45	
Percent of total students tested	95	95	93	91	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	0	
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			13		
% Advanced			0		
Number of students tested			15		
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:  
 No assessment given 2004-2005.

Subject: Reading  
 Edition/Publication Year:  
 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

Grade: 5  
 Test: MCAS  
 Publisher: State of MA, Dept of Elementary and Secondary  
 Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	97	86	76	85	
% Advanced	41	32	20	58	
Number of students tested	64	59	71	45	
Percent of total students tested	98	96	93	96	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			27		
% Advanced			7		
Number of students tested			15		
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:  
 No assessment 2004-2005.