

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

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

Name of Principal: Ms. Jade Reitman

Official School Name: Bridge Elementary School

School Mailing Address:  
55 Middleby Road  
Lexington, MA 02421-6920

County: Middlesex    State School Code Number\*: 0006

Telephone: (781) 861-2510    Fax: (781) 861-9257

Web site/URL: http://bridge.lexingtonma.org/    E-mail: jreitman@sch.ci.lexington.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\*: Dr. Paul Ash

District Name: Lexington Public Schools    Tel: (781) 861-2580

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. Margaret Coppe

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

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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)
- |          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 6        | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 2        | Middle/Junior high schools        |
| 1        | High schools                      |
| 0        | K-12 schools                      |
| <b>9</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>                      |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 14600

**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  | 40         | 27           | 67          | 7     |            |              | 0           |
| 1  | 30         | 32           | 62          | 8     |            |              | 0           |
| 2  | 43         | 29           | 72          | 9     |            |              | 0           |
| 3  | 32         | 36           | 68          | 10    |            |              | 0           |
| 4  | 59         | 30           | 89          | 11    |            |              | 0           |
| 5  | 51         | 41           | 92          | 12    |            |              | 0           |
| <b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b> |            |              |             |       |            |              | 450         |

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
20 % Asian  
3 % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
68 % White  
6 % 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: 8 %

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

|            |  |       |
|------------|--|-------|
| <b>(1)</b> | Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.   | 20    |
| <b>(2)</b> | Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year. | 16    |
| <b>(3)</b> | Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].   | 36    |
| <b>(4)</b> | Total number of students in the school as of October 1.  | 450   |
| <b>(5)</b> | Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).                          | 0.080 |
| <b>(6)</b> | Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.   | 8.000 |

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 9 %

Total number limited English proficient 42

Number of languages represented: 12

Specify languages: Serbian (1), Portuguese (1), Hebrew (1), Italian (1), Russian (1), Creole (1), Japanese (6), Korean (10), Chinese (7), Spanish (3), Farsi (3), Dutch (2)

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

Total number students who qualify: 13

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

10. Students receiving special education services: 13 %

Total Number of Students Served: 59

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>8</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>8</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>1</u>         |
| Classroom teachers                    | <u>20</u>        | <u>2</u>         |
| Special resource teachers/specialists | <u>16</u>        | <u>11</u>        |
| Paraprofessionals                     | <u>10</u>        | <u>12</u>        |
| Support staff                         | <u>1</u>         | <u>7</u>         |
| Total number                          | <u>48</u>        | <u>33</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 | 95%       | 95%       | 95%       | 95%       | 95%       |
| Daily teacher attendance | 96%       | 95%       | 95%       | 94%       | 96%       |
| Teacher turnover rate    | 3%        | 6%        | 3%        | 2%        | 2%        |
| Student dropout rate     | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |

Please provide all explanations below.

The school does not include grades 9-12.

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                      | _____ | % |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | _____ | % |
| Enrolled in a community college            | _____ | % |
| Enrolled in vocational training            | _____ | % |
| Found employment                           | _____ | % |
| Military service                           | _____ | % |
| Other (travel, staying home, etc.)         | _____ | % |
| Unknown                                    | _____ | % |
| <b>Total</b>                               | _____ | % |

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Bridge School enjoys the winning combination of supportive parents, talented teachers, motivated students, and committed leaders. Bridge School is a place where all feel safe and enjoy coming to school, and each child is accepted as the unique individual he or she is. We have dedicated staff members who are life-long learners, open to change if it is in the best interests of our students and community, work collaboratively, and challenge themselves to offer our students the very best of curriculum content and instructional strategies. We have parents who are serious about child rearing and modeling a responsible and healthy life style. Finally, we have an absolutely wonderful group of motivated students. Our entire community has been involved in preparing our application for Blue Ribbon School status. One parent submission describes our community very well: Bridge Elementary School is an extraordinary place for any child to learn and grow and, as such, it truly deserves recognition. I am often asked by envious outsiders what makes us so special. Everyone knows that it isn't the physical building; that dates from 1966. Demographically, we aren't different from the rest of the town. So, why do people want to move into our neighborhoods so their children can attend our school? In my seventh as a Bridge parent, my answer is always the same. Community. Bridge School is endowed with a community that supports our members and supports education as a whole. What makes Bridge a superb school? First, as a community, we support a common educational value for our children. This value is reflected in our school's motto, Childhood should be a journey, not a race. Rather than pushing our children to achieve beyond what is age-appropriate, our community understands that learning can't be forced. Ironically, by allowing our children access to age-appropriate curriculum and interactions, they do succeed academically. A simple glance at assessment will attest to this. However, education goes far beyond assessment. Bridge cares about the emotional well-being of all students. Second, as a community, we value our educators and we have good reason. Talented, dedicated, and tireless people work overtime to ensure the success of our children. Bridge employees care about education, continuously furthering their own knowledge so that they are the very best educators they can be. They consider Bridge their extended family and families care about each other. This is unusual in a school. As a community, we support Bridge families. One parent commented that when her daughter first entered the school years ago, she was amazed at the opportunity for family involvement that far exceeded the typical PTA socials. There is so much more at Bridge! Just as the whole child is honored and educated at Bridge, so is the family. Families are encouraged to participate in their child's education through opportunities that honor diversity, academics, community service, acceptance, the environment, and social integration, to name just a few. Lucky is the Bridge family, for parents are greeted into a welcoming, supportive community. Finally, as a community, we at Bridge support education as a whole. Our adults foster a love of learning in our children that lasts a lifetime. We understand that Bridge School is one of many stops on our children's educational journey. The greatest testimony to this is reflected in our students after they leave. Because the dedicated community has prepared the students to thrive academically and emotionally, they are successful when they leave Bridge. We believe that Bridge School will always be an award-winning school. It is a unique community of students, educators, and families that works together to support people and education.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. **Assessment Results:**

Bridge Elementary School participates in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) for English language arts and mathematics in grades 3-5. Scores range from warning, to needs improvement, to proficient, and, finally, to advanced. Over the past 5 years, it is evident from the assessment results that the majority of students in all grade levels achieved; proficient; or advanced; status on all tests, including our students of color, low-income students, and English Language Learner students. On the grade 4 ELA test, it is clear that the students performance increased steadily from 2005-2009 moving from 20% to 45% of the students achieving advanced standing. The special education subgroup at this grade level shows an upward trend so that 50% of the students scored advanced and proficient in 2009. On the mathematics grade 5 MCAS test, on average, 63% of the students achieved advanced standing over the course of 5 years. The special education subgroup increased in the advanced category from 17% to 43% over the five years and when combined with the proficient category, from 34% to 79%. We attribute this steady improvement to continued professional development for teachers in this area as well as the cumulative effects of the math program we employ.

Bridge Elementary performs well above the state norms on literacy and mathematics subtests for MCAS. In order to achieve advanced or proficient status, the students must score in the range set forth by the state. (This range varies depending on grade level and test. Cut-off scores have risen over the past five years.) In 2009, on the grade three reading test, Bridge students scored 24% advanced and 61% proficient while the state percent for advanced was 12% and 45% for proficient. The results are similar for all grade levels on both the mathematics and language arts tests in 2009 in the advanced category. Bridge students scored well above the state average. (For example, in grade five on the mathematics test, Bridge students scored 62% advanced while the state average was 22%.) Comparing the data from 2004 to the present, Bridge scored well above the state average for advanced standing on all mathematics and language arts tests. If one follows the progress of each cohort of third graders through to fifth grade, one can see a steady increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in both ELA and math.

Bridge Elementary has historically performed well on MCAS testing. The school staff and Bridge families value education highly and are dedicated to our students performing well in all educational endeavors. Through innovative approaches to teaching and the high quality of our educators, the students are able to excel in both mathematics and literacy.

For more information regarding the MCAS assessments, please visit the website at [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu).

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

Assessment data drives instruction at Bridge School. The results on the MCAS over time have indicated a general weakness across grade levels in the area of open response writing, or questions requiring written response. Programmatically, Bridge School staff members have dedicated themselves to working as a team to improve in this area. Professional Learning Communities have evolved in which teachers work in cohorts to determine how best to instruct the students in this area and how to work across grade levels to make sure that the instruction is continuous and consistent.

Classroom teachers and staff members work together to review data from formative assessments, regroup students by need, and prepare their instruction and lesson plans accordingly. As students achieve mastery of state and district standards, the teachers re-design instruction to meet each child's needs. In the intermediate grades in mathematics, for example, classroom teachers identify student needs through the use of common formative assessments, unit tests, and benchmark testing. On a weekly basis, the teams of teachers (including special educators and math specialists) evaluate the students needs and regroup them for instruction during intervention blocks. This regrouping allows for instruction to focus on individual needs.

Data is the starting point for the pre-referral process for Tier III, or special education services. We have developed two teams to assist teachers in this process: Child Assistance Team (CAT), made up of classroom

teachers and specialists, and Behavioral Assistance Team (BAT), made up of the guidance counselor, psychologist, and behavior specialists. The purpose of these teams is to provide the classroom teacher with guidance and support in trying additional regular education interventions systematically and in collecting data on a student's progress ending in either an Individual Curriculum Accommodation Plan (ICAP) for the student or a referral for a formal evaluation.

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

The Bridge School community believes that a partnership between parents and teachers is crucial. To that end, teachers and parents communicate often and in a wide variety of ways. Formal parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year to share and discuss daily work and assessment results. Parents are also kept abreast of their child's achievement through report cards issued on a trimester basis. Report cards compare the student's current work against the grade level standards. The report card comes with explanations about interpreting the grades. Concurrent with the first report card, the principal invites parents to a presentation to help them further understand the process of reporting and the grading system.

There is a shared understanding within the community that neither parent nor student should be surprised by a report card. Telephone or e-mail is used frequently to update parents about academic or behavioral concerns. Both parents and teachers initiate face-to-face meetings as needed in order to develop shared plans.

Our teachers know how important it is to keep parents informed about their children's progress. Classroom teachers keep parents up-to-date through websites and newsletters. Every parent receives a grade-level booklet at the beginning of the year with an overview of the standards and benchmarks. Teachers send home annotated work samples and the results of

Finally, the results of MCAS assessments are shared with parents in the fall of the following year in which the tests were taken. They are sent home with a guide for interpretation and the principal invites parents to attend a workshop. The district reports the results to the public in a televised public meeting of the School Committee and various newspapers.

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

The Lexington Public Schools work collaboratively to share best practices and educational successes, and to provide support to schools as needed. Bridge has shared, and will continue to share, its successes in using best teaching practices during professional development meetings with other schools, during town-wide meetings in which grade levels work collaboratively on common goals, through newspaper articles, and through community events such as Family Math Night. Our district coordinators in math and literacy, who work to some extent in all the elementary schools, act as conduits passing along what's working well in the other schools. Teachers from our school and others are called upon often to help teach their colleagues through the professional development program in the district and present at conferences outside the district.

In addition, all of the schools in the Lexington Public School System are committed to the collaborative work of its Professional Learning Communities as the means to improve all of our students academic achievement. A byproduct of this work is the sharing of expertise that tends to further enhance the repertoire of teaching skills and instructional strategies of our teachers. The work of the PLCs is shared within and between the schools both formally and informally.

If Bridge School were to be awarded the Blue Ribbon School status, we would continue to work with the five other elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school to reach the school system's overarching goal, to ensure that the academic, social, and emotional needs of ALL students are identified and matched with appropriate and effective curriculum and instructional experiences to meet or surpass the state and local standards of learning. We would be excited to share our successes with neighboring communities.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

The Bridge School employs a balanced literacy model with four distinct parts: reading, writing, word study, and independent reading. A well-known reading program provides the backbone for the reading component. We use the exemplary pieces of literature in the program's anthology as models for the introduction of reading strategies and literary skills. Students practice these strategies and skills in guided reading groups with leveled texts. Our students learn about words, from phonemic awareness and phonics to spelling and vocabulary, using a highly researched developmental word study program. Writing instruction begins in kindergarten where students are considered authors from their first day. They learn to compose using the writing process and are introduced to writing strategies through a variety of resources in a spiraling fashion. They write about their reading in reading logs and participate in book groups and literature circles.

We use a highly regarded math program as the primary resource for instruction in math for its close correlation to state and national standards. Our teachers were involved in developing additional resources that are available to teachers for areas not adequately addressed through the program as well as essential vocabulary needing to be mastered at each grade level. Through skilled teaching and this research-based program, the students build a conceptual base of understanding and knowledge in all areas of mathematical thinking and develop procedural knowledge over time.

Science education is aligned with national standards in core scientific concepts in all disciplines and the Massachusetts Standards in Life, Physical, Earth and Space Science, and Technology/Engineering. The age-appropriate scope and sequence reflects current research findings and best practices. Lexington students are taught to apply methods that scientists use to investigate the natural world, and apply basic engineering principles to design products. Students question, predict, conduct experiments, gather and record data, and draw conclusions using Science Interactive Notebooks to record and track their thinking and learning. The reservoir behind our school and the wetlands and forest on our property serve as ideal settings for providing the science inquiry experiences in nature of Our Big Backyard program.

Our students' social studies experience begins with understanding one's place in the family, school and community. By second and third grade, students study our place in the world and history, their ancestors' origins, our continent's first inhabitants, and begin to explore colonialism, our state of Massachusetts, and our country as a land of immigrants. Grade four students study the regions and political divisions of our country while they learn about the states, as well as Canada and Mexico. Grade 5 students begin an in-depth study of American history from the Age of Explorers to the beginnings of Western Expansion.

The music program builds beat, pitch matching and pitch discrimination, rhythm, music notation, ear training, improvisation, and composition skills. The music concepts are extracted from American and international folksongs, folk games, folk dances instrumental music, and movement games. Vocal instruments are enhanced by pitched percussion (xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels), unpitched percussion (drums, shakers, rhythm sticks) and in 3rd grade, the recorder. Fourth graders can choose to study a string instrument and fifth graders may opt to switch to a band instrument. Fifth graders enjoy a choral experience.

The Bridge visual arts program is comprised of three main parts: studio art, art history and cross curricular projects that make connections with classroom language arts, science and social studies topics. The art room, set up to facilitate exploration of materials, understanding of the elements of art and design, and self-expression, boasts word cards and other visual materials to support art vocabulary and vocabulary used in the math and literacy programs. During one hour of weekly instruction, students create 2D and 3D work in the areas of painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, bookmaking, collage and fiber arts.

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

(This question is for elementary schools only)

Comprehensive literacy learning is the backbone of our instructional program. Since research supports the symbiotic relationship between reading and writing, the two-hour literacy block each day supports both reading and writing activities. Independent reading and word study comprise the remainder of the literacy block. A number of years ago our district acquired a scientifically research-based reading program for all elementary students in order to provide systematic phonics instruction as well as continuous and spiraling instruction in the use of comprehension strategies.

In small flexible guided reading groups, the students practice comprehension strategies and learn the special attributes of literature at their level. Benchmark assessments are administered three times a year for instructional placement purposes and to identify those students who are not meeting the benchmarks. In our tiered approach, the classroom teacher instructs all students in the classroom while differentiating instruction in Tier I. In Tier II, students who haven't met benchmarks receive additional small-group instruction in the classroom and possibly several times a week from reading specialists inside or outside the classroom. Students who continue to struggle may proceed to Tier III which requires an evaluation for a specific learning disability. Specialized and intensive instruction at this level is with a special education teacher. Students receiving support in Tiers II and III are monitored for progress on a weekly basis and decisions are made collaboratively regarding appropriate interventions.

Concurrently, English Language Learning instruction is offered to our 21% who speak a language other than English at home. Students are assessed at the beginning and end of each year, or when they matriculate. They receive services according to their need in pull-out groups using a specially designed ELL program. Our classroom teachers are trained in ELL immersion strategies and these students are included in the tiered reading support model, as well.

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

In part, the Bridge School mission is “to develop each child’s intellectual capacity” to “high standards” in a “nurturing environment”. In the area of mathematics, district standards, aligned with state and national standards have been developed. A scientifically research-based program was identified that best matches the standards as well as our belief that students must construct their conceptual knowledge in a child-centered environment. We know that children develop and deepen mathematical concepts and procedures over time so we chose a program that spirals through the years. Students are introduced to all the mathematical strands in kindergarten and revisit them in increasing complexity throughout the elementary grades.

Students demonstrate a range of conceptual readiness and skill levels relative to our curriculum and standards. Additional instructional suggestions and materials have been added over time to provide both extension and support, including resources for working with English Language Learners. Students come to understand concepts beginning with concrete representations of real problems and use a variety of strategies to solve them. Over time, students’ procedural knowledge is built and refined. Students’ factual knowledge is built beginning with familiarity through practice in games and hands-on challenging activities and brought to automaticity with the help of computer programs. Students regularly communicate their understanding of mathematical concepts and procedures through discussion and writing.

Students are assessed regularly in their classrooms, both formatively and summatively. Based upon the results, teachers work collaboratively at the intermediate grade levels to provide interventions to struggling students. We also have the services of mathematics specialists who work with individual and teams of teachers. In addition to providing embedded professional development to teachers in the form of model lessons and coaching, they also work with teachers to differentiate their instructional strategies for the broad range of learners in their classrooms. Our goal in mathematics is to increase the teachers' capacity,

individually and in teams, to provide interventions, as needed, for most students to succeed at a proficient level.

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

When designing core lessons, we incorporate as many learning modalities as possible and consider the students' varying backgrounds and learning needs. Our subgroups include a sizeable ELL population, a smaller learning disabled population, a smaller yet group of students of color, some of whom are brought to us daily by bus from nearby Boston, and fewer socio-economically disadvantaged students.

Since the curriculum standards are the same for all students, we differentiate instruction through means of delivery, techniques for processing new information, or the kind or amount of practice provided using a wide-range of instructional materials and resources. We have found that variety keeps our students interested and alert. A priority is to deliver instruction in short 'chunks' and provide adequate time for processing the new learning in terms of what they already know. Using 'essential' or 'focus' questions keeps the instruction and focus on the standards.

Students process what they have heard, seen, or read by talking with each other, writing, or drawing before they discuss. Teachers say, "Turn and talk" or "Take out your interactive notebooks and write or draw about..." or "Add this new information to your graphic organizer..." Our students learn new vocabulary by drawing visual representations of the concept and relating new words to their personal experiences. Some students need longer to process than others or need different strategies to anchor new material and these strategies provide for these needs while make learning more secure for all students.

Some students' programs are compacted because they need less practice for mastery while other students receive multiple opportunities for reteaching and practice during intervention periods and, for some, a mandatory extended day. Reading and math specialists 'push into' the classrooms to provide small group practice and 'pull out' students who need re-teaching. Alternate materials are often used. Students practice their learning using engaging software programs, educational games, project learning, and solving real-life problems.

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

Teachers and staff from Bridge School take full advantage of our district's professional development program. All courses offered through the district, the embedded professional development designed at the school level, and professional development activities undertaken outside the district are designed or approved to answer one, or more, of four corollary questions: 1. What do we want students to learn? 2. How will we know they have learned? 3. What will we do if they don't learn? and 4. What will we do if they already know it?

Courses and learning activities are designed for the adult learner. The content is aligned to district or state learning standards. Embedded in the course design is training and coaching to mastery of 'best practices'. An example of this is the support offered to all teachers in district initiatives such as Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Response to Intervention (RTI). Every professional educator is expected to participate in a PLC. Using the four corollary questions, teachers identify common content, develop formative assessments, provide interventions, and extensions. Sharing a belief that if we work collaboratively to share our expertise and resources, we will be able to meet the needs of ALL of our students and close the achievement gap that still remains between our student subgroups.

This shared belief plays out at Bridge School in how we spend available professional development time and funds. We analyze MCAS data yearly in order to identify programmatic and sub-group trends and use the results to guide our professional development plans at the building level. An example of this is how we have tackled the area of open response writing. Open response writing, writing that requires students to analyze

content material and communicate evidence or a process in written form, is a general weakness for most of our students. We have addressed the challenge as a faculty PLC by deconstructing the standard and researching 'best practices' in this area. We adopted a scope and sequence of skills and strategies so that teachers now begin to work with their students on open response writing as early as kindergarten.

## **6. School Leadership:**

Bridge Elementary School is led by a principal and a half-time assistant principal committed to the belief that every child can learn. The principal has created a culture for learning by assuring that the school setting and classrooms are conducive to learning for all children, and by allocating time for teacher collaboration. She attends grade level meetings, working directly with teachers to make their grade level goals a reality. She shares staff meeting time with teachers who assist their peers in better understanding children's learning styles and to become aware of best practices to meet these challenges.

The principal brings questions about school goals, spending money, and current issues to staff meetings for teacher input. Teachers have decided how to utilize grant money in a way that benefits every classroom, such as purchasing games to complement our word study program. Teachers lead in their classrooms as they prioritize student goals. They identify specific areas of need and develop plans targeted to improve achievement in their self-selected PLCs. By working together and sharing leadership, teachers are successful in designing excellent programs that have resulted in high student achievement.

Student learning and leadership are fostered by the administration's belief in children's abilities to learn from each other, both in and outside their classrooms. The strategic placement of like grade levels has further encouraged cross-classroom interaction among students. Students lead on the Service Patrol, recycle, assist teachers, organize math and literacy games with younger students, and read the morning announcements. Most classrooms have a 'buddy' classroom which promotes opportunities within and across grade levels for students to exhibit leadership skills.

Leadership shared in this way has resulted in a community that is devoted to high standards for each individual. This standard of excellence is at the base of all decision-making. Staff and students work together to become the best they can be and are proud of their accomplishments.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: MCAS

Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 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        | 84        | 83        | 84        | 0         |
| % Advanced  | 49        | 49        | 45        | 12        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 84        | 82        | 106       | 99        | 0         |
| Percent of total students tested  | 99        | 100       | 100       | 100       | 0         |
| Number of students alternatively assessed                                   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed                                  | 0         | 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  | 54        | 50        | 75        | 50        |           |
| % Advanced  | 23        | 10        | 31        | 0         |           |
| Number of students tested   | 13        | 10        | 16        | 10        |           |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 77        |           | 90        |           |           |
| % Advanced  | 44        |           | 70        |           |           |
| Number of students tested   | 18        |           | 10        |           |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 85        | 95        | 94        | 85        |           |
| % Advanced  | 55        | 63        | 65        | 8         |           |
| Number of students tested   | 20        | 19        | 23        | 13        |           |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

There was no mathematics assessment in 2005 at grade 3.

Zeros are used as placeholders where subgroups were not large enough to assess.

Subject: Reading  
Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Grade: 3 Test: MCAS  
Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month   | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 85        | 83        | 89        | 81        | 82        |
| % Advanced  | 24        | 23        | 29        | 30        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 84        | 82        | 107       | 99        | 84        |
| 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         |
| <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  | 69        | 50        | 71        | 50        | 62        |
| % Advanced  | 0         | 0         | 6         | 10        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 13        | 10        | 17        | 10        | 13        |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 73        |           | 80        |           |           |
| % Advanced  | 17        |           | 30        |           |           |
| Number of students tested   | 18        |           | 10        |           |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 80        | 90        | 96        | 92        | 77        |
| % Advanced  | 35        | 37        | 39        | 54        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 20        | 19        | 23        | 13        | 22        |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

Zeros are used as placeholders where subgroups were not large enough to assess.

Subject: Mathematics  
Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Grade: 4 Test: Math  
Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month   | May       | May       | May       | May       | May       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 85        | 90        | 86        | 70        | 83        |
| % Advanced  | 48        | 57        | 52        | 46        | 57        |
| Number of students tested   | 84        | 100       | 99        | 85        | 91        |
| Percent of total students tested  | 100       | 100       | 100       | 99        | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed                                   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed                                  | 0         | 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  | 50        | 74        | 46        | 46        | 50        |
| % Advanced  | 10        | 27        | 15        | 23        | 10        |
| Number of students tested   | 10        | 15        | 13        | 13        | 10        |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| Number of students tested   |           |           |           |           |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 95        | 87        | 93        | 78        | 91        |
| % Advanced  | 74        | 78        | 73        | 52        | 74        |
| Number of students tested   | 19        | 23        | 15        | 23        | 23        |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

Zeros are used as placeholders where subgroups were not large enough to assess.

Subject: Reading  
Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Grade: 4 Test: MCAS  
Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month   | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 90        | 81        | 85        | 77        | 89        |
| % Advanced  | 45        | 21        | 39        | 20        | 47        |
| Number of students tested   | 84        | 100       | 99        | 86        | 92        |
| 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         |
| <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  | 50        | 47        | 38        | 38        | 40        |
| % Advanced  | 10        | 7         | 15        | 0         | 20        |
| Number of students tested   | 10        | 15        | 13        | 13        | 10        |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  |           |           |           | 60        |           |
| % Advanced  |           |           |           | 0         |           |
| Number of students tested   |           |           |           | 10        |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 95        | 78        | 86        | 88        | 94        |
| % Advanced  | 58        | 26        | 53        | 17        | 65        |
| Number of students tested   | 19        | 23        | 15        | 24        | 23        |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

The zeros are placeholders where subgroups were not large enough to assess.

Subject: Mathematics  
Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Grade: 5 Test: MCAS  
Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month   | May       | May       | May       | May       | May       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 89        | 90        | 89        | 85        | 0         |
| % Advanced  | 62        | 65        | 61        | 65        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 107       | 102       | 90        | 100       | 0         |
| Percent of total students tested  | 100       | 100       | 100       | 100       | 0         |
| Number of students alternatively assessed                                   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed                                  | 0         | 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  | 79        | 50        | 59        | 34        |           |
| % Advanced  | 43        | 25        | 24        | 17        |           |
| Number of students tested   | 14        | 12        | 17        | 12        |           |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| Number of students tested   |           |           |           |           |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 96        | 100       | 100       | 96        |           |
| % Advanced  | 82        | 88        | 68        | 88        |           |
| Number of students tested   | 22        | 17        | 28        | 25        |           |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

Grade 5 was not assessed in mathematics in 2005.

Zeros are used as placeholders where subgroups were not large enough to assess.

Subject: Reading  
Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Grade: 5 Test: MCAS  
Publisher: Measured Progress

|   | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month   | Apr       | Apr       | Apr       | Apr       | Apr       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 92        | 95        | 89        | 91        | 0         |
| % Advanced  | 47        | 37        | 26        | 53        | 0         |
| Number of students tested   | 106       | 102       | 90        | 100       | 0         |
| Percent of total students tested  | 100       | 100       | 100       | 100       | 0         |
| Number of students alternatively assessed                                   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed                                  | 0         | 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  | 78        | 75        | 53        | 50        |           |
| % Advanced  | 7         | 8         | 6         | 8         |           |
| Number of students tested   | 14        | 12        | 17        | 12        |           |
| <b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>                               |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Advanced  |           |           |           |           |           |
| Number of students tested   |           |           |           |           |           |
| <b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced  | 91        | 100       | 92        | 100       |           |
| % Advanced  | 68        | 53        | 21        | 60        |           |
| Number of students tested   | 22        | 17        | 28        | 25        |           |

Notes:

The largest other subgroup is Asian.

A reading test was not administered to grade 5 in 2005.

Zeros are used as placeholders where the subgroups were not large enough to assess.