

**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: Mr. Michael Eiffe

Official School Name: Cleveland Elementary School

School Mailing Address:  
140 Bridge Street  
Cleveland, NY 13042-3144

County: Oswego    State School Code Number\*: 410

Telephone: (315) 668-4213    Fax: (315) 675-3018

Web site/URL: http://www.cssd.org/cleveland/    E-mail: meiffe@cssd.org

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*: Ms. Carolyn Costello

District Name: Central Square Central School District    Tel: (315) 668-4220

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Scott Duggleby

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) |
| 1        | Middle/Junior high schools        |
| 1        | High schools                      |
|          | K-12 schools                      |
| <b>8</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>                      |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 6676

**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	8	10	18	6			0
K	18	14	32	7			0
1	16	16	32	8			0
2	17	11	28	9			0
3	15	22	37	10			0
4	24	16	40	11			0
5	19	15	34	12			0
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							221

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

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

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 16 %

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.	21
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	14
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	35
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	221
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.158
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	15.837

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

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 68 %

Total number students who qualify: 150

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: 14 %

Total Number of Students Served: 30

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>4</u> Autism	<u>        </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>        </u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>        </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>        </u> Hearing Impairment	<u>        </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>        </u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>        </u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>        </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>13</u>	<u>4</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>27</u>	<u>8</u>

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

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

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	96%	94%	94%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	96%	95%	95%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	10%	10%	22%	0%	22%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

**Regarding "Daily student attendance":** School years 04-05 and 05-06, are prior to the tenure of both building principal and secretary. Investigation into the slightly decreased attendance rate, seems to indicate an elevated level of excused absence/sickness. Similar is the case for the 2008-2009 school year, under the current office administration, hosting an increase in student sickness.

**Regarding "Teacher turnover rate":** Data information from the 04-05 and 05-06 school years, anecdotal or otherwise, is either unreliable or non-existent. Therefore, numbers provided are derived from the NYS school report card and lacking explanation. Regarding the 2006-2007 school year, the percentage is elevated due to a pocket of educators (4) who did not leave teaching, but rather moved into an administrative role.

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

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As I walked the length of a long, snowy driveway, surrounded on either side with great sweeping pines and bare December maples days before Christmas 2009, the mobile home set deep in the woods appeared cold and void of the cheerful holiday spirit synonymous with a Central New York winter. If it had only been my inaugural visit to this house, one could easily assume that it indeed was abandoned and deprived of a child's laughter and a family's love. However, the somber context of the setting did not distract me from the knowledge that as I approached this house, the faces of our children - the pride of our school and community - would joyfully fill the partially obscured window pane, beneath a casing of tattered plastic sheeting, casting only hope and righteousness on all in their midst. This house, not merely a shell, but rather a loving home was brought to life in the happiness of their smiles and elation of their mirth. Greeted at the door with the acceptance of an old friend, the local elementary school principal had not come to deliver disheartening news or misplaced homework. Rather, promised to the children of this home was a Christmas tree and an assurance to their exceptionally loving parents that worry about providing their children with a warm holiday dinner was unjustifiable. Through the unyielding generosity of the faculty/staff of our community school and the relationship of trust built with one of our own – this promise delivered and a family uplifted.

So is the story of Cleveland Elementary School.

Similar to the three leaves of a bright green shamrock, our community school is comprised of an association of three historic villages. Settled proudly on the North Shore of Oneida Lake, the hamlet of Bernhard's Bay, the Village of Cleveland and the Town of Vienna strongly unify to create a partnership of integrity – Cleveland Elementary (CE). Trimmed with green flashing, the building itself rests softly in a sea of green clovers. As it is well known that the shamrock brings luck, we are truly fortunate to be members of these villages, this community and our school – the Cleveland Shamrock Family. One of six elementary schools in the Central Square School District (CSSD), CE is a pre-kindergarten through fifth grade building with approximately 225 students. In addition to supporting our children and families, the nearly 50 professionals who call our school home pride themselves on academic rigor and achievement, character education, community/civic engagement, school safety and data driven instruction. Ultimately, the vision of CE is rooted in the belief that excellence in academia, character and civic engagement is obtainable for every child who enters our school doors. The mission of CE, is to create a place of family, the beating heart of a rural community, where the foundation for life's success is built and excellence is realized.

As do our sister schools in the CSSD, we offer a challenging academic program with curriculum in all core areas aligned with the NYS Standards. The faculty of CE, both highly qualified and extremely motivated, is truly committed to providing a positive climate of encouragement and support, ensuring the academic success and personal well-being of each child. However, unlike other schools in our district, CE is overwhelmingly comprised of a disadvantaged population. Rapidly approaching the 70% free/reduced benchmark, our students face adversity that others never experience or could not imagine. Yet, the nature of our community is giving and loyal, hardworking and proud, united and honest.

One might consider, CE as a special place based upon our commitment to the individual needs of each child through diversified instructional practices and data driven lesson planning or by virtue of our belief in literacy as the building blocks of life - striving to make reading, writing, speaking and listening an integral aspect of each child's school experience. Others may perceive our uniqueness as generated by the incorporation of technology, inquiry based learning and a hands-on approach to math and science. Still, some will conclude the distinctive nature of CE is embedded in an innovative approach to teaching and learning. I offer to you that our success, and status as a 2010 Blue Ribbon School Nominee, is woven into the tapestry of our day to day belief system - Cleveland, Family, Community.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

The New York State Education Department, in collaboration with public and private schools, conducts several standardized assessments to measure student growth and academic achievement. These evaluative tools range in level from third through twelfth grade and encompass a series of content/curriculum areas. At Cleveland Elementary School, a Pre-Kindergarten – grade 5 building, we participate in the following grade 3-5 assessments; ELA (3, 4, 5), Math (3, 4, 5), Science (4) and Social Studies (5) produced by CTB McGraw Hill. New York State examinations, required by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), are scored with both a raw score number and a scaled score level. Based upon the raw score number, students receive a rating of 1 – 4 scaled score level. For instance, on the 2008 NYS Mathematics assessment, raw score ranges are identified as the following;

Raw Score 495 – 618 = LEVEL 1 (Not Meeting the Learning Standard – limited understanding of content)

Raw Score 619 – 649 = LEVEL 2 (Partially Meeting the Learning Standard – partial understanding of content)

Raw Score 650 – 698 = LEVEL 3 (Meeting the Learning Standard – proficient understanding of content)

Raw Score 699 – 780 = LEVEL 4 (Meeting the Learning Standard with Distinction – thorough understanding)

Therefore, if a child received a raw score of 693 on this examination, his/her scale score would be a level 3 – Meeting the Learning Standard.

Information regarding NYS assessment system can be found at <http://www.nysed.gov/>

In reviewing overall trends and meaning of the results associated with Cleveland Elementary, several common threads and themes are evident. Throughout the last three school years 2006-2007 – 2008-2009, CE:

- experienced significant growth in levels 3 and 4 (proficient and advanced) in both ELA & Math
- demonstrated commendable growth of level 4 (advanced or distinguished) in both ELA & Math
- proven remarkable gains in levels 3 and 4 among disadvantaged students in both ELA & Math
- established excellent improvement in level 3 and 4 among students with disabilities in ELA & Math
- achieved state-wide recognition with superior performance, 100% levels 3 and 4, gr. 5 ELA & Math

Unmistakably, despite limited sporadic losses and slight regressions in data – attributed both to the general aptitude of particular class cohorts and the small size of each grade (each child represents 3 percentage points), the universal trend of assessment results increases dramatically in the highlighted three year period. At Cleveland Elementary, we truly believe this signifies a dramatic shifting in paradigm – where instructional practice and use of data to drive instruction create an environment conducive to academic success and student achievement. Indeed, success breeds success and the successful strategies, initiatives and daily actions of the CE faculty and staff are producing successful children – both academically and socially.

Specifically, there are several areas where we find true understanding and meaning in the enclosed data. These include, the remarkable gains in levels 3 and 4 among disadvantaged students and students with disabilities – which often overlap. At the heart of CE, is the core belief (aligned to philosophy and work of Ruby Payne's,

“Bridges Out of Poverty,”) that through understanding and support – all children regardless of socio-economic status can achieve.

Upon review of data trends, located in the later portion of the application titled, "State Criterion," one may note that in light of our gains - there are still many areas we must focus on to improve the academic experience of each child. These include, maintaining and maximizing the momentum of success year to year as a class cohort moves through our school. Yet, these challenges do not phase or suppress our courage, as in the spirit of Blue Ribbon Schools across America, it is our mission to continue to clear hurdles, tackle adversity and despite the odds - succeed.

Nevertheless, regardless of one's familiarity with the assessment results of CE and despite any shortcomings, our assessment results paint a very clear picture that CE believes in the power of we, us and team. Together - we are Cleveland.

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

A well interpreted view of assessment, whether it be formal/informal, formative/summative and the core belief of CE regarding the topic, depicts the evaluative process, tool and outcome as not only a current snapshot of a student's academic progress/skill level (what they have learned) but more importantly provides a road map/series of indicators as to the path an educator must take for a student's future learning opportunities (what they will learn). Ultimately, the CE use of assessment results is founded on the idea that the evaluative experience produces data to drive instructional practice. Intervention strategies, enrichment methodologies, re-enforcement approaches, reviewing techniques and re-teaching schemes are the fruit of the harvesting, and appropriate analysis of, assessment data. An assessment is only useful, if the educator interprets the outcomes and responds to the meaning of its message.

Specifically, over the course of the last 3 years, the educators of CE have spent a great deal of time and effort in understanding/employing the power of “real time” intelligent data to significantly impact a student's learning potential. At CE, several local evaluative instruments are used to produce this actionable data. For instance, concerning literacy data, CE measures student reading levels with the use of a tool called “Rigby Running Record” – allowing each child to be frequently progress monitored, charted and consequently instructed at their reading level. In addition, we also employ the use of “DIBELS” as a manner to calculate phonemic awareness, letter naming fluency and reading fluency. Again, DIBELS lends itself to the real time analysis and actionable intelligence for literacy instruction purposes. Likewise in the content area of mathematics, as an integral aspect of our math program – EveryDay Math (EDM), teachers use a series of probes and evaluations to progress monitor, chart and instruct a child based on the strengths and weaknesses illuminated in the data of the assessment.

Just as the professional educators of our school have emphasized the impact of formative assessments in “real time,” they have also stressed the use of summative evaluation/data to drive instruction. For example, teachers use the results of the NYS ELA & Math (grades 3-5), Science (grade 4) and Social Studies (grade 5) to conduct Gap Analysis studies by grade level and skill set. Furthermore, the data produced by these formal standardized summative assessments (of any particular child) is shared with the current teacher – to demonstrate instructional and curricular strengths/weaknesses, and the impending teacher – to expose both an individual student's skill set in addition to a grade level pattern of strengths/weaknesses. Whether it be summative or formative, both forms of data directly correlate to instructional practice and the application of Academic Intervention Service (AIS) within the building.

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

Just as an assessment tool and its outcome represent a current snapshot of a student's academic progress/skill level (and more importantly a road map of the path an educator must take for a student's future learning

opportunities), the communication of these results is the key to establishing understanding and ownership among the student, parents and community. CE utilizes a variety of fashions, diversified and layered, to impart this critical information to those who must share in the ownership of the results and subsequent course of action.

Concerning formal summative assessment data, as a supplement to the NYSED provided “State Assessment Parent Report” distributed to families, CE communicates these results via parent-teacher conferences, student-teacher conferences and if necessary an administrator-parent/student conference. For those children who do not meet NYS standardized assessment performance level 3 or 4 criteria (based on a 1-4 rating), CE support staff meet with the student and place him/her in an AIS (Academic Intervention Service) section. A letter of notification is then sent to parents, providing the family with the assessment result and proposed measure to address the deficiency. In most cases, these letters are also accompanied by phone calls, e-mails and personalized conferences to extend collaboration and communication into a child’s home. Assessment results are also provided in a general, non student-specific manner such as; CSSD Board of Education annual presentations, CSSD website, CE website, within our School Improvement Plan, on poster board in the main office and celebrated at the annual year-end “Cleveland-Family-Community Celebration.”

Regarding local assessment data (formative and summative), our school strives to provide students/parents the open lines of communication necessary for shared knowledge and collective ownership of progress. For instance, data provided by DIBELS (letter naming fluency/reading fluency measure), Rigby Running Records (reading level measure), Everyday Math exams - CSSD math program, and Harcourt Trophies assessments - CSSD ELA program, is shared via parent-teacher and student-teacher conferences, quarterly report cards, monthly progress reports, quarterly DIBELS reports accompanied by an informational brochure and through routine/regular parent-teacher communication. Similar to state summative assessments, this data is also shared in a general/non student-specific manner such as CSSD BOE annual presentations and as part of our School Improvement Plan.

Regardless of assessment form, outcome or focus, the data is universally shared in order to promote understanding and collaboration in instructional modification. True to the core belief/value of our school - using data to drive instruction.

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

Truth - The future of American leadership, in an interconnected global society, depends on the success and intellectual capital of all American children – not only those who call themselves a Cleveland Elementary Shamrock.

As a school that celebrates and honors service to our nation, we acknowledge that our success is inextricably connected to the strength of our country, and fully accept our obligation to promote and encourage the success and strength of other academic institutions of learning. To this point, at CE we like to consider ourselves trailblazers – innovative and “cutting edge.” We are a professional learning community who takes initiative in the latest research and reveals our findings professional to professional. Within the enclosed narratives, the core beliefs that have made us successful as a school are shared via district level grade meetings, collegially between principals and among curriculum/reading specialists in each elementary building (6) and in an open invitation to visit, view and sequester.

Specifically, the generosity and professionalism of our educators is shown by, but not limited to, the following bulleted examples;

- the use of DIBELS (district/national norms, standardized probes and implementation of data) - initiated in our district at CE - has been and will continue to be shared by the CE school psychologist

- the DIBELS quarterly report and informational brochure - conceived and produced in our district at CE - has been shared and exported to other CSSD elementary schools through the CE support staff
- the literacy initiative titled “The Daily 5 & CAFÉ” (a researched based approach to creating personalized student ownership of basic literacy skill growth) -first discovered in our school district at CE - has been demonstrated, exported and supported among various CSSD educators by the CE Curriculum Specialist,
- a recent grant awarded to CE allowing for the delivery of hundreds of early literacy books was shared with our district sister schools, equally and fairly, as to promote district-wide success
- instructional technology/programs such as Castle Software and Read Naturally (both promoting reading fluency/comprehension and increased vocabulary) taking strong root first at CE, were exported to CSSD elementary schools via support staff
- the early literacy intervention program CLIMB (Cleveland Literacy Initiative for Mastery of Basic reading skills) originally conceived at one of our sister schools and modified/transported to CE, has been openly studied and adapted to meet the needs of other elementary settings
- the work of Ruby Payne and Bridges out of Poverty, proven to be powerfully effective in elevating student success/performance and home-school trust, has been provided and supported in all Central Square School District schools.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

The core curriculum of CE is divided into four main areas; ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies, with special area curriculum in Physical Education, Art, Music and Library. Aligned with the NYS standards, available in the attached link, the core concentrations are delivered instructionally, in a diversified, multiple intelligence, data driven and hands-on approach. Of these, ELA represents the greatest focus, given the fundamental building belief that a student's academic and life success depends upon the foundation of strong literacy skills.

New York State Learning Standards and Core Curriculum

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/cores.html>

**ELA:** The ELA curriculum is based on the premise that instructional delivery must embody elements of reading, writing, speaking and listening in all aspects of a child's daily academic experience.

To teach reading, educators at CE use a guided reading approach as well as a basal series (Harcourt Trophies) to nurture/master basic literacy skills. Recently, an overwhelming majority of classroom teachers have adopted a literacy approach, to supplement the aforementioned strategies, called The Daily 5 and CAFÉ. This research based method provides children with the opportunity to choose a book at their independent reading level while focusing on specific reading skills that may be difficult for that child. The ultimate in differentiating instruction, every child independently exercises individualized skills based on the knowledge of their current progress – ultimately fostering true ownership.

The CE literacy commitment is strengthened by a K-3 early intervention reading initiative we call - *CLIMB*. During a 30 minute block of time assigned to each K-3 classroom, the AIS teacher, two assistants and the classroom teacher each lead small group instruction. Although the skill focus of each center changes as the needs of the students evolve, staple concentrations include; phonemic awareness, writing, shared reading, and fluency building. Heterogeneously grouped, each center typically consists of 4-6 children allowing for peer modeling and greater contact time with an instructor at an individualized skill level.

Given the CE commitment to diversification of instruction, value is not only placed on remedial and on-level instruction, but also enrichment. Students demonstrating above level performance, in need of challenge, participate in our "Castling" initiative. Given our guided reading approach, accurate real-time data regarding student progress is readily available and reviewed regularly. For instance, if a first grade child has made significant progress, above their grade level peers, the CE support staff "castle" that child to a second grade classroom/guided reading group for a portion of the literacy block.

Concerning writing, CE currently adheres to the innovative approach called - The 6+1 Traits of Writing, by Ruth Culham. Again, promoting an individualized approach while encouraging personal ownership among students, 6 +1 Traits requires teachers to concentrate on specific traits of writing to support the writing process. For example, a student may be working on a piece titled, "My Family." In contrast to past practice, which consisted of collecting the piece, highlighting errors with red pen and returning for corrections, 6+1 Traits encourages instructors to conference with children (one on one) – selecting one specific trait to discuss. By harnessing a child's attention to one specific area, comprehending the composition of a good writing piece becomes manageable rather than overwhelming. Over time the trait will improve and the focus may shift to another area of weakness, building both a collaborative relationship and strength in writing skills.

**Math:** Almost as integral as ELA, students at CE follow a rigorous math program titled, “Everyday Math.” A point of pride for CE, given that the successful CSSD program was originally piloted here, EDM is spiraling in nature by teaching, re-teaching and reinforcing skills taught unit to unit and year to year. Similar in nature to a basal series, EDM provides educators a clear path that all students will follow K-5 and reflects the values and benchmarks of the NYS core math curriculum. As a participant in an EDM lesson, students are exposed to a variety of instructional strategies including; whole group, independent practice, daily hands-on manipulative use, interactive games and a math “journal.”

**Science:** Based on NYS standards, CE educators closely adhere to state core content curriculum. However, as a supplement to this guideline, the CSSD has created skill based, themed science kits. Containing all instructional and experimental materials necessary to teach units of study, the kit supports a diversified, multiple intelligence and hands-on approach to teaching/learning. Most importantly, CSSD science kits promote inquiry based learning, providing children the opportunity to become part of the science process rather than just reading about it.

**Social Studies:** Teachers at CE use the NYS curriculum to guide their units of study in the area of Social Studies. This particular curriculum area is frequently coupled with ELA strategies/daily lesson objectives and lends itself to supporting reading and writing. First person writing perspectives, collaborative group projects and local history field trips encompass some of the diversified instructional methods used to increase student engagement and connection to course material.

As a point of pride for both CE and the Central Square School District, as previously indicated, we also offer our students a strong special area curriculum in all content areas. Each special area, P.E., Art, Music and Library, spans the district in a K-12 fashion and is aligned with NYS learning and accountability standards. The CE and CSSD Art curriculum is aligned not only with NYS standards, but also with the National Visual Arts Standards. On a similar level of notoriety, the Central Square Music program is regionally dominant and NYS prominent., providing students opportunity with chorus and band at the elementary level.

Concerning visual and performing arts, the CSSD and CE use a phenomenal BOCES supported program, "Arts In Education," which affords children the experience of both external and internal art based events. Theatrical shows, musicals, storytellers and themed performers grace both the stages of our schools and venues we are fortunate to visit. A cornerstone of our visual and performing arts program is a theatrical company, "Merry Go Round Playhouse." This traveling theatre provides an in-class (in-character) experience followed by an exhilarating (and NYS standard correlated) performance. Ultimately demonstrating the community commitment to visual and performing arts, the CSSD also supports a Hall of Fame dedicated to the concept. In fact, our very own Denise Parrotte - CE Secretary, is a 2007 inductee.

**2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**  
(This question is for elementary schools only)

At CE we believe that one of the most significant differences we can make in a child’s life is to teach them to read – for meaning, for understanding and for success. The stark reality for CE educators is realized each year, as many kindergarten aged children arrive at our doorstep unprepared and lacking basic skills necessary for a successful school experience. Correlated to our elevated poverty level and student mobility rate, skill deficiencies are illuminated at kindergarten registration/screening and display a variety of academic and social challenges for teachers including; identifying letters, numbers, colors, shapes or even their name in print. However, with certainty, we open our doors with great anticipation of their arrival and begin immediately the diligent work of bridging the poverty gap and teaching children to read.

Reading instruction, as widely accepted, does not begin in Kindergarten. Thus we affirm the following; from the promotion/support of federally funded early intervention programs such as HeadStart and an in-school

Universal Pre-Kindergarten class, to the production/distribution of a developmental parent resource guide – CE reaches out. From holding literacy nights with childcare and meals to the creation of a “Birth to 5” club – CE reaches out. Under no circumstances is an elevated poverty level acceptable as an excuse for a lack of student success and reading ability. Simply put, poverty does not equate into poor parenting or certain illiteracy – it only represents an additional adversity in the face of triumph.

Based on this knowledge, the educators of CE use a staple of guided reading instruction with a basal series (Harcourt Trophies) to supplement grammar and word study instruction. All students, K-5, are assessed in September using “Rigby Running Records” providing for the determination of instructional reading groups. Instruction, given with careful consideration to specific skill needs, is based upon student gains and growth in several key areas. Approximately 8 weeks later, students are re-assessed with the Rigby evaluative tool – in combination with the previously identified DIBELS probes, consequently adjusting instruction, grouping and intervention/enrichment service.

To support and supplement our reading program, K-3 students also take part in our early literacy initiative we call - CLIMB (Cleveland Literacy Initiative for Mastery of Basic reading skills). Each week, 4 days of the week, students receive thirty minutes of CLIMB services from a team of 4 educators. During this time, children are assigned to one of four heterogeneous groups and work on a variety of literacy topics including phonemic awareness, shared reading, test prep skills and fluency builders (to nurture comprehension). The fifth day of each week, used for progress monitoring, provides for the collection and dissemination of real-time data. Based on CLIMB data and DIBELS information, students who are determined “at risk” or “some risk” are referred to the CE SBIT (School Based Intervention Team) where additional strategies are discussed, interventions employed and students continued to be monitored for growth.

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

The use of technology, ranging from laptops, i-Pods, wikis and blogs to internet connectivity, wireless broadband and touch screen cell phones, has become a basic staple in the lives of millions of Americans. However, families that experience poverty or are classified in a low socio-economic status, nearly 70% of our school community, may find this basic staple to be an insurmountable possibility. To be competitive in the twenty first century, we believe our children require and deserve a strong foundation of knowledge and experience with the technological tools of our world. For this reason, in addition to the impact of diversification and hands-on learning it provides, technology is used regularly to support all learning areas.

The CE Parent Teacher Organization, in collaboration with strong district support but extremely limited funding, endorsed this belief/initiative and last year approved the purchase and installation of ten Smartboards with LCD and ELMO projectors for our children. This wall mounted board allows for daily interactive lessons, connected to an on-line computer, empowering students to become actively engaged at all times.

Examples of our technology use also include, but are not limited to, the following;

**Accelerated Reader:** In support of our literacy commitment, AR is a software program that assesses a student’s reading level and recommends a range of grade level equivalent books to read. How it works: a child independently reads a book at their level, logs into the system to take a comprehension quiz and receives a point value based on the difficulty level of the book. As part of the School Improvement Plan, each classroom assigns a required number of points to be earned. Monthly, the CE support team acknowledges/rewards student achievement in a building-wide assembly. Yearly, the school as a whole strives to obtain an identified point value (reaching our goal of 6,000 points last year).

**Read Naturally:** An integral aspect of our technology use and literacy commitment, this software is based upon the premise of improving fluency levels to positively impact reading comprehension. Research shows that fluent readers, those who read an elevated number of words in a minute, demonstrate greater confidence

and comprehension. Using quarterly DIBELS results, students who qualify based on data, receive thirty minutes of the program in an interval of four times a week.

**Castle Learning:** Castle software is a web based program, designed to improve student skills in a variety of capacities (vocabulary, comprehension, assessment strategies and content material). Most importantly, all data and performance results are in real time and available for a teacher to drive instruction that day or any time after.

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

Strong instructional practice is the backbone of student achievement and academic success. At CE, curriculum content is delivered in a diversified, multiple intelligence, data driven and hands-on approach – ultimately aimed at increasing student engagement. The following bulleted list encompasses some of the instructional methods and strategies utilized to obtain our collective objective – to teach them all.

- Small group “Centers” – independent and teacher facilitated (ex: CLIMB
- Guided reading)
- Use of modeling (ex: heterogeneous grouping)
- Technology integration – Smartboard, ELMO, computers (ex: Read Naturally)
- Manipulative hands-on tools – Everyday Math, science (ex: CSSD science kits)
- Group projects and team based tasks (social studies world/New York history)
- Independent research and practice (ex: math journal and math boxes)
- Breakfast Club – before school enrichment/remediation
- Tuesday/Thursday – after school enrichment/remediation
- Enrichment Clubs/Activities – Rockets, Battle of the Books, First-A-Dream
- Multiple intelligence/interdisciplinary – art, music and P.E. (ex: active literacy)
- Direct Instruction
- Whole group (ex: “instructional carpet” and “easel time”)
- Castling (ex: gr. 1 child demonstrating gr. 2 reading level – castled to gr. 2 ELA)
- Role play and theatrical performance (Merry Go-Round Playhouse Theatre visits)
- Illustrations, acrostic poems and pneumatic devices (6 nations of the Iroquois)
- Games (ex: review, Jeopardy, hand-held active voters, Everyday math)
- Student book club (ex: afterschool book talks with school psychologist)
- Writing folders (6+1 Traits of Writing)
- Zoo Phonics (alphabet/letter sound recognition and use through animal characters)
- Daily 5 and The Café

In addition to the aforementioned list, highlighting a portion of the instructional strategies, methodologies, activities and initiatives used, CE also takes exceptional care in meeting the diverse needs of our disadvantaged and students with disabilities populations. Well documented, both enrichment and remediation are essential to the CE academic program and this is no different for those of poverty or special needs. Student work is often modified/tailored to the individualized skill level of a learner – providing both accommodation for adversity and an opportunity of challenge to foster growth. Autism, learning disabilities and other health impairments call into action a teacher’s greatest responsibility – flexibility, knowledge of learner/use of data and motivational support. Personalized goal setting, especially as a part of the SBIT (School Based Intervention Team), is a superb example of maximizing a child’s potential. CE educators also are remarkable in understanding and respecting the struggles and hardship of those living in underprivileged homes. Again, flexibility, knowledge of the learner and support are instrumental.

## 5. Professional Development:

The essence of an educator is to not only teach, but model the concept of lifelong learning. Undoubtedly, development of professionals, when targeted and with purpose, expands the horizons of both staff and student alike. Traditionally available in the form of external conferences, courses, seminars and guest speakers, professional development (PD) has taken new meaning in the CSSD and CE. Budget constraints and lack of funding, well known throughout NYS, have made most of these opportunities no longer viable. Remarkably, such circumstances do not hinder or suppress the “can do” attitude/spirit of CE.

In reading the enclosed narratives, one has already been exposed to the greatest example of this form of PD – our current writing program called the 6+1 Traits of Writing. Essentially led and supported by the building Curriculum Consultant, 6+1 has transformed the nature of our literacy block and approach to student writing.

Nevertheless, the following examples of professional development carry a similar theme and follow a common thread – in-house professionalism fused with extraordinary dedication.

***CLIMB***: Studied, through a series of school visitations and research data, we transplanted and developed an early literacy intervention model to meet our specific needs. During a 30 minute block of time assigned to each K-3 classroom, the AIS teacher, two assistants and the classroom teacher each lead small group instruction – consisting of groups no larger than four - six children. Although the skill focus of each center changes as the needs of the students evolve, staple concentrations include; phonemic awareness, writing, shared reading, and fluency building.

***Professional Learning Community – Book Club***: The birth and development of a professional book club, with voluntary participation and representation throughout the staff, is a tremendous point of pride at CE. Beginning in the summer of 2009 with the book, “***The Daily Five***,” by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser, our Book Club established reading assignments, meeting dates and discussion topics. This literary work provides a skill based literacy structure and personalized approach to learning that we now employ in the vast majority of our classrooms. Feeding on our collective enthusiasm, our summer sessions soon proved exciting as it was discovered that the authors of this book, released another titled, “***The CAFÉ***.” Purchasing the books independently, teachers worked through the summer (July-August) to prepare their classrooms and utilize the strategies of both books in early September.

***Technology***: Another matter of great pride for CE is our PD in the area of technology. Recognizing that each educator has varying strengths/comfort levels regarding technology, we believe that small group, in-house sharing/support maximizes long-term benefit/growth. Staff/grade level meetings, before/after school teacher to teacher best-practice offering, even during the recent 2010 February break where 7 educators voluntarily participated in software training - all offer intimate settings to strengthen who we are as an academic family. PD topics include, but are not limited to, Smartboards, Smart Response (hand-held voting), Castle Software and early literacy/math programs.

## 6. School Leadership:

It is imperative to acknowledge the belief, that school leadership is not merely a concept associated with the building administrator(s). Good schools expect leadership from their principal, great schools inspire leadership among their teachers and parents, exceptional schools promote both - while they teach and model the virtue to the children in their care. CE is an exceptional school – a truly unique place.

To this point, school leadership is visible in the activities of our students including, but not limited to; hallway monitors, café helpers, the First-A-Dream club (civic minded group founded by CE alumni – USN Commander Christopher Flaherty), Rockets (enrichment club under the direction of teaching assistant - Pat

MacMaster), Character Education, Scouts, Big-Brother/Big-Sister, athletics, art club, peer mentoring and community participation.

School leadership is evident in the character and actions of our teachers such as; role modeling, a spirit of volunteerism, club facilitation, afterschool enrichment/remediation, a positive attitude of professionalism and teamwork, professional development, community engagement, maintaining a standard of excellence and organization of/attendance at school events.

School leadership is clear in the daily commitment of our support team figures including the school curriculum consultant – Kristen Foland, AIS – April Slade, psychologist – Scott Phillips, special education – Kelly Schwartz and the group of instructional assistants who make possible our programs. It is also noticeable in the dedication of our non-instructional support office, nurse, cafeteria and custodial staff.

School leadership is apparent in the unyielding, selfless support of the CE PTO, the CSSD Board of Education and its President - Cleveland's own, Mr. Scott Duggleby.

School leadership is palpable in the vision and support of CSSD Superintendent – Ms. Carolyn Costello and the team of instructional leaders who assemble her team.

Ms. Carolyn Costello, Superintendent, offers the following regarding the leadership role of the school principal:

Michael Eiffe is committed to following the goals established by the Board of Education, which articulate the importance of academic excellence, providing a nurturing environment and establishing open communication to the community. He is a positive leader who builds on the individual strengths of everyone that he comes into contact with. To this point, Michael and his team of educators turned Cleveland Elementary from a failing school in to a school where teachers and staff are proud of the accomplishments of their students. Michael is committed to meeting the needs of each one of his students and preparing them to become the leaders of the future. Mr. Eiffe is an exceptional leader.

Mr. Scott Duggleby, CSSD BOE President, offers the following regarding the leadership role of the school principal:

Throughout the past three years, Mr. Eiffe has challenged the long standing mainstream belief that student achievement is predicated solely on community wealth. As a Cleveland Elementary parent, past and present, I have been afforded the opportunity to witness a remarkable paradigm shift. In the face of daunting poverty and social concerns, our faculty and staff have embarked on numerous initiatives to make outstanding student achievement the expectation. Mr. Eiffe has been instrumental in raising the bar and has our school and community saying, "We Are Cleveland!"

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: NYS Math Test

Edition/Publication Year: Year of the exam

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	86	86	81	
% Advanced	27	23	11	26	
Number of students tested	36	35	37	42	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	77	90	95	
% Advanced	16	9	13	30	
Number of students tested	25	22	30	20	
<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					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<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:

There was not a NYS Math exam for third grade students in the 2004-2005 academic year.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: NYS ELA Exam

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Exam

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	69	60	59	76	
% Advanced	19	9	5	2	
Number of students tested	36	35	37	42	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	64	55	59	80	
% Advanced	8	5	7	5	
Number of students tested	25	22	29	20	
<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					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<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:

There was no test given in the 2004-2005 school year.

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: NYS Math Exam

Edition/Publication Year: Year of testing

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	82	89	77	79	89
% Advanced	47	19	26	23	48
Number of students tested	34	37	43	49	27
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	70	88	75	77	80
% Advanced	30	19	26	23	48
Number of students tested	20	26	24	22	15
<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			30		
% Advanced			0		
Number of students tested			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					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: NYS ELA Exam

Edition/Publication Year: Year of testing

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	64	47	59	51	61
% Advanced	6	0	0	2	11
Number of students tested	34	36	41	49	28
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	55	44	57	39	40
% Advanced	0	0	0	4	13
Number of students tested	22	25	23	23	15
<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				10	
% Advanced				0	
Number of students tested				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					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: NYS Math Exam

Edition/Publication Year: Year of testing

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	85	60	69	
% Advanced	18	17	8	19	
Number of students tested	34	41	48	26	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	85	44	64	
% Advanced	29	20	8	7	
Number of students tested	24	20	25	14	
<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			25		
% Advanced			0		
Number of students tested			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					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: NYS ELA Exam

Edition/Publication Year: Year of testing

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	83	59	70	
% Advanced	19	0	9	11	
Number of students tested	32	40	46	27	
Percent of total students tested	97	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	79	39	60	
% Advanced	14	0	0	0	
Number of students tested	22	19	23	15	
<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			9		
% Advanced			0		
Number of students tested			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:

There was not a state exam for grade five students in the 2004-2005 school year.