

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

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

Name of Principal: Ms. Eugenia Green

Official School Name: Solon Middle School

School Mailing Address:
6835 SOM Center Road
Solon, OH 44139-4297

County: Cuyahoga State School Code Number*: 113860

Telephone: (440) 349-6254 Fax: (440) 349-8034

Web site/URL: www.solonschools.org E-mail: egreen@solonboe.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*: Mr. Joseph Regano

District Name: Solon City School District Tel: (440) 248-1600

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: Dr. Roger Goudy

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

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2004.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: (per district designation)
- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 4 | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 2 | Middle/Junior high schools |
| 1 | High schools |
| | K-12 schools |
| 7 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 12647

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. 10 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	6			0
K			0	7	188	194	382
1			0	8	202	191	393
2			0	9			0
3			0	10			0
4			0	11			0
5			0	12			0
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							775

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
11 % Asian
16 % Black or African American
0 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
69 % White
4 % 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: 3 %

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.	14
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	12
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	26
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	842
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.031
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3.088

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

Total number limited English proficient 14

Number of languages represented: 5

Specify languages:

Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Japanese and Korean

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 82

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

10. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

Total Number of Students Served: 73

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>9</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>9</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>39</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>4</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>39</u>	<u>14</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>11</u>	<u>3</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Total number	<u>62</u>	<u>22</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 20 :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	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	7%	7%	16%	4%	11%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

For the 2006-07 school year, the teacher turnover rate was high at 16% due to the following circumstances: One teacher passed away, one teacher retired, three teachers resigned, three teachers were transferred to other positions within the district, and two teachers took leaves.

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

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

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

PART III - SUMMARY

The Solon City Schools' mission, created by our district Strategic Planning Team comprised of community members, parents, district administrators and teachers, states: "By inspiring students to achieve their personal best, the Solon City Schools will ensure all students attain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and become contributing, ethical citizens through a collaborative learning community working in partnership with families and our diverse community." This mission is built on the belief that all students can and will learn. It is also built on the concept that all students will achieve the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the standards set forth by the state and that the district will do everything possible to help all students reach their potential.

Our Solon Middle School vision is derived from this lofty district mission. Our vision is to become a highly effective professional learning community in which all students and all staff members actively engage in learning and continuously seek ways to improve and further their learning. We also strive to provide a safe, secure environment in which all stakeholders (staff, students, parents, and community members) value education and work together to achieve high results and make significant gains in student achievement. To ensure that each student achieves at high levels, Solon teachers use a structure known as the Professional Learning Community, which requires collaboratively developed and widely shared mission, vision, values and goals. This structure promotes shared responsibility and accountability. Teachers no longer work in isolation. Using their own professional expertise, they are purposefully and actively engaged in collaborative and reflective dialogue with other colleagues to determine best practices designed to ensure that all students learn. At Solon Middle School, this systematic approach is embedded in the daily life of our school and has transformed our school. It has shifted our focus from teaching to learning. It has also shifted us from interdisciplinary teams that worked in isolation to grade-level collaborative teams of teachers who now meet weekly to plan instruction, develop common assessments, analyze student work, analyze assessment data and develop a strategic plan to address weaknesses in student learning or teacher instruction. We support one another by sharing strategies and materials to improve student learning and to accomplish goals that would be impossible if we were working alone. To improve learning for all, we learn from each other and focus on results.

We focus daily on what we want students to learn, how we know they are learning, what we will do when we know they are not learning, and what we will do if they demonstrate that they have already learned the material. We collect and use data from assessments to inform our instructional decisions, and then strategically act on the data to achieve our results. Education is our means and learning is our outcome. This is what sets us apart from middle schools in other districts. This allows us to meet the needs of all of our students, regardless of ability, race, gender, or economic status.

As a result of our guaranteed, engaging and rigorous curriculum for all students and focused work on student achievement, we are extremely proud of our Solon Middle School accomplishments. Based on our consistently high levels of academic achievement on Ohio Achievement Tests, we have received both state and national recognition as a Middle School to Watch. For the past two years, we have placed first in the National Science Olympiad competition. Most recently, we were voted the local Fox 8 News "Cool School of Week". Each year, we have about a third of our students successfully taking high school courses, Algebra I, Honors Geometry, Science Investigations, and Level I Foreign Language, in our middle school.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Ohio began utilizing criterion-referenced “proficiency” tests in the mid-1990s. Now, the state has transitioned to standards-based “achievement” tests for grades three through eight in Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Citizenship. As a condition for graduation, the Ohio Graduation Tests in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Citizenship, and Science is administered to Grade 10 students. The percentage of students in all of the Solon City Schools, including Solon Middle School, that pass these tests, is reported to parents and the community in the form of annual District Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education and posted online at the ODE website and the Solon Schools’ website.

Individual student scores reported directly to parents rank students according to performance. In Ohio, Grade 8 students are assessed in all five subject areas and in 7 students are assessed in three of the five subject areas (Math, Reading, and Writing), on the Ohio Achievement Test based on five ranking levels: Limited, Basic, Proficient, Accelerated and Advanced, with the latter three rankings preferred. Data is also disaggregated to give more information regarding program success across all subcategories of children, including those with learning disabilities. More information about Ohio’s assessment system is available at <http://www.ode.state.oh.us>.

A direct review of the data trends for achievement results over the past few years highlights how successful Solon Middle School has been in carrying out the district mission of ensuring that students are achieving at high levels. On its individual school building report cards, the State of Ohio uses a performance index that measures student passage rates, but also assigns weighted scores according to the level of passage. Therefore, an “advanced” or “accelerated” score on the test is weighted higher than a “basic” passage score. The maximum performance index score that can be earned is 120 if all students are scoring in the advanced range. Over the past few academic years, the state’s performance index for Solon Middle School has been consistently high since it was first introduced as a measure of student achievement. In 2004-2005, our performance index was 107.2. In 2005-2006, our score dipped to 106.9, but with more strategic interventions put in place for students in 2006-2007, our performance index increased to 108.1. In 2007-2008, the performance index increased to 109.9 and in 2008-2009 was 108.6 These consistently high performance index scores have placed Solon Middle as one of the top scoring middle schools in the state. This not only demonstrates that high numbers of Solon Middle School students are meeting the standards, but also indicates that increasingly high numbers of students are scoring at the “accelerated” and “advanced” range scores on the state’s achievement tests. Even with our consistently high performance index, teachers are watching the results carefully to ensure that that the small dips seen from year to year are simply testing variances. We are not content with mediocrity, so teachers continue to do considerable work in the classroom to move every student closer to the highest level of achievement.

Also, a review of Solon Middle School’s Reading Achievement results on the state indicators over the past few years has shown high levels of student learning. In the 2004-2005 school year, the Reading Achievement test was **not** given to grade 7 students. In 2005-2006, these students took the test and the results were a 95% passage rate, which increased to 96.5% in 2006-2007, to 97.4% in 2007-2008, and dipped slightly to 94.6% in 2008-2009. In grade 8 Reading, our passage rate was 96.4%, which lowered to 93.7% in 2005-2006, increased sharply to 98.2% in 2006-2007 and 98.6% in 2007-2008, before dipping to 96.8% in 2008-2009. This pattern in the grade 8 Reading results indicated to the reading staff at Solon Middle School that our current reading program needed some revamping, which resulted in teachers moving away from traditional reading instruction and adopting the reading and writing workshop model in 2006. From this revision, we made an incredible increase to a 98.2% passage rate in 2006-2007, but dipped again in 2009. This inconsistent pattern

has resulted in teachers taking a closer look at struggling students and creating clearer, more measurable goals and more focused instruction for them.

In 2004-2005, our grade 7 Math passage rate was 89.7%. This increased to 91.7% in 2005-2006, and sharply increased to 98.1% in 2006-2007 and to 96.5% in 2007-2008, before dropping slightly to 96.2% in 2008-2009. This steady climb provides a reflective picture of our efforts to continually improve. For grade 8 Math in 2004-2005, our passage rate was 94.2%, which dipped to 93.4% in 2005-2006, but increased greatly to 97.4% in 2006-2007, remained at 97.4% in 2007-2008, then increased to 97.3% in 2008-2009. This consistent pattern for the latter years at both grade levels is the result of our efforts to implement a more focused instructional approach to teaching the standards and to identifying the needs of the students.

Similarly, in looking at the pattern and noting the decline of grade 8 reading and math results in the 2005-2006 school year, Solon Middle School experienced a setback with meeting the requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress that year in the area of Special Education reading. As a result, our administrative team and District Pupil Personnel Director developed an Adequate Yearly Progress meeting plan with each regular education teacher and interventionist to analyze the student achievement data, identify the students who struggled, identify one to two areas of weakness as identified from state data, develop a strategic instructional plan to implement, monitor, and assess student progress and to close gaps in learning.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At Solon Middle School, the assessment data we receive from the state testing drives many of the instructional decisions that are made within the building. When we receive the assessment results in mid-June, teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze the data, looking closely at benchmarks and indicators, to determine the strengths and weaknesses of our instruction, our programs and our individual students and the subgroups of students. From that analysis, we develop a strategic, measurable and attainable building goal along with a strategic action plan that each team will implement to improve student achievement in the areas of deficiency and to maximize learning in the areas of strength. The action plan is implemented and frequently monitored to determine its effectiveness.

Grade-level teams also look at their content area data and make decisions about what specific plans they need to create and implement to further the learning of their students. Based on the results of the state assessments, teams carefully analyze the data, looking at the benchmarks and indicators that students commonly missed and reviewing the item analysis to make instructional decisions about what concepts need strengthening.

From their analysis of the state assessments, grade-level teams have built days into their team pacing guide as data meeting days. During this time, they also revise their team's common assessments to confirm the rigor and alignment of their questions. They also look at their individual student data to determine whether the supports given to students and the strategies used to teach concepts actually helped students to learn the content. This is done to ensure all students meet grade-level standards and achieve at the highest levels possible.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Solon Middle School parents are actively informed about assessment results in a number of ways. The percentage of students in all of the Solon City Schools, including Solon Middle School, that pass the Ohio Achievement Tests, is reported to parents and the community in the form of annual District Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education and posted online at the ODE website and on the Solon Schools' website. The ODE website directs parents to information about what the tests mean, which skills and knowledge are assessed, and how the results are used.

Information about the assessments is also communicated to parents during Solon's district-level PTA meetings. An appointed member of PTA educates other parents about the tests, the results, the ways schools prepare students for assessments throughout the year, and the ways parents can help to prepare their child for the tests at home.

In addition, at the individual building-level PTA meetings, the principal reiterates the district PTA message about testing and educates parents with additional information about testing, celebrating the successes, identifying weak student areas on the tests, and sharing where work is needed. Parent education on these topics is also accomplished through Parent Orientation meetings and through the quarterly Principal's Newsletter.

Solon Middle School is fortunate to have an online grading system, Pinnacle Parent Gradebook Viewer, which allows parents to monitor their child's daily progress on practice application, formative assessments and common assessments.

4. Sharing Success:

Given our success as a high performing middle school, consistently ranking in the top five in Ohio over the last five years, Solon Middle School has had many opportunities to share its success with other schools. We understand the difficulty that many schools face in trying to build an educational program in which all teachers embrace the belief that all students can learn and will learn and that students in all subgroups are achieving at the highest level possible as well as the difficulty schools may have in getting parents to support their schools and students' learning. We also acknowledge the challenge some schools face in getting students to take responsibility and ownership of their own learning. Because we have been recognized as a high performing middle school, we have had many opportunities to share our best instructional practices with other districts.

As a part of our designation as an Ohio School of Distinction and a National Middle School to Watch, we have presented at local and national professional conferences and have held and attended networking meetings with other schools. We have been very honored to not only host other schools, but also to travel to other schools to assist them with building a facet of our program in their schools or simply to share our experiences. We have also communicated with other schools often through phone and email to address questions they have about our professional learning community, our programs, our assessment system, our academic intervention programs, and our master schedule. Some schools have brought teams of teachers to Solon Middle School to attend our PLC meetings and to dialogue about student achievement and our process of moving students toward high achievement.

In the event that Solon Middle School is awarded the Blue Ribbon School status, we will continue to offer our assistance to other districts. We would continue to network, mentor or simply provide support to other districts.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

In Language Arts and in PLC Language Arts (the enrichment course for students who excel in Language Arts), our curriculum focuses on literacy. Using a research-based reading and writing workshop model, Solon Middle School students participate in several types of reading instruction: large group, small group guided reading led by the teacher and independent reading. Students acquire a vast vocabulary and become independent readers and effective communicators who can make sense of written language in this language-rich structure. Additionally, students are provided with a curriculum that is differentiated and personalized.

Math at Solon Middle School requires students to develop the conceptual understanding of mathematical processes. The math curriculum is aligned with Ohio Academic Content Standards and with the standards set by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Math teachers at Solon Middle School use diagnostic tools, such as Counting On, which test students' thinking about math concepts, identify the gaps in their thinking, and provide the teachers with strategies to close those gaps. Students who excel in math are challenged with a more rigorous curriculum. They take a full-year of Algebra I and or Honors Geometry and are prepared to take higher levels of math when they reach high school.

In Science, our students are involved in collaboration, exploration and problem solving. They engage in hands-on inquiry-based activities that provide them with opportunities to work together and wrestle with science problems. They develop and test hypotheses, analyze data, draw conclusions and write about their findings. Many science students, particularly those in the upper level Science Investigations classes, further their knowledge of science concepts with activities, such as designing and presenting Science Fair projects, which deepen and extend their understanding of science and also prepares them for higher levels of science in high school.

The Social Studies curriculum, aligned to state standards, provides students with the knowledge and skills to learn history in a real-world context. Students make connections from what they read and learn to their own experiences, both locally and globally. Using MAX teaching strategies, such as two-column notes, preview strategies and anticipation guides, teachers help students to analyze, interact with, and comprehend the social studies text. Additionally, to connect classroom learning to real world situations, students extend their learning beyond the classroom when they participate in a class field trip to New York and Philadelphia to experience Constitution Hall, Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty and other historical sites.

Most students at Solon Middle School participate in a two-year program of Foreign Language. The course curriculum is aligned to the Ohio Academic Content Standards and to the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. In grade 7, students begin the first half of the Level I course and complete the second half of the Level I course in grade 8. Our students develop a rich conceptual understanding of the target language and are able to make it meaningful to them by learning the standards, connecting them to their own experiences as well as to other disciplines (art, history or literature) and to real-world issues. Students also use technology in their daily practice to further their understanding of the language.

To develop well-rounded students who will be contributing citizens in their communities, Solon Middle School offers and requires students to be actively and regularly involved in special area courses. These courses include Fine Arts (studio art, digital art and music) and Unified Arts (Family and Consumer Science, Digital Connections, Industrial Technology, Career Education and Dare/Decision-making). Through their experiences with specials, students are able to participate in hands-on classroom activities that allow them to develop their creative and cognitive abilities and make connections to other disciplines. In grade 7, the

program is designed to be exploratory; all students participate. In grade 8, students choose semester or year-long special courses based on their interests.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

(This question is for secondary schools only)

Seventh and eighth grade Language Arts teachers use the reading and writing workshop model for instruction. During reading workshop, students increase their use of reading strategies through books of their own choosing, while the writing workshop classes enhance students' writing skills in varying genres. Mini-lessons on language arts' state indicators concentrate on specific reading and writing skills, and teachers meet individual student needs by conducting student conferences and small group guided reading. In order to implement this program, we have worked collaboratively with a reading professor from Kent State University who has co-taught periodically with several members of our Language Arts team. High-performing students who are normally placed into an advanced class learn in a regular Language Arts class via differentiation of instruction through this model. This heterogeneous grouping benefits all students, as the workshop model can be used to create personal goals for each student no matter the skill level of the student.

While most students at Solon Middle School achieve at high levels, some students do so because of the support services that we make available to them. Based on information provided from the state achievement test, students who were identified as "basic" or "limited" are provided more time and daily support in an academic support class to close gaps in their areas of deficiency. This support class is a small group setting taught by both a language arts teacher and an interventionist. DRAII testing is utilized to identify students' reading levels and track progress throughout the academic year. Language Arts teachers collaborate in writing personal academic goals for these students through our pyramid of strategies, and progress on those goals is tracked continually.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Technology is also a vital part of students' learning and is integrated within all subject areas. Mobile wireless carts of 30 laptop computers are available to each of our seven interdisciplinary teams of teachers and to our team of Specials and Foreign Language teachers. The school also has two extensive computer labs with 25 computers each and 15 computers in our school library. With this easy access to computers, students meet district-adopted technology competencies and gain a deeper understanding of the state standards. Students receive technology instruction from content area teachers and utilize computers to research real world issues, do tutorial lessons and extend their learning. Students view snapshots of concepts taught through Discovery Learning video-clips and review standards-based concepts through the use of Study Island, an internet-based assessment and tutoring program.

Additionally, to further learning and to bring learning into their world, students use other modern technological tools and strategies. It is not uncommon to see Solon Middle School students downloading lessons onto their Ipods, blogging with their classmates about an online lesson topic, and using Photostory or pod- and vod-cast presentations to demonstrate and share their learning with their peers.

4. Instructional Methods:

At Solon Middle School, our motto is "Every student, every day." It is our goal and responsibility to help each student to reach his or her potential through our instruction; we go to great lengths to ensure that this happens. We truly believe all students can and will learn when provided with the right learning environment. The right learning environment includes the best possible instruction. To ensure student learning, teams of teachers have worked for several years to develop, align and refine our academic curricula to the Ohio Academic Content Standards. Our have worked to review and interpret the standards and to ensure that our implementation of instructional strategies is aligned to the standards.

To ensure all students meet high academic standards, teachers have identified the power indicators or the essential understandings that students must master in each unit of study. From the power indicators, teachers have drafted “I Can Statements,” provided each student with a hard copy, and have posted a copy online for parents. These “I Can Statements” are student friendly versions of the grade-level indicators that guide instruction, learning within a topic or unit, and are directly aligned with the common assessments that students take at the end of the unit of study. These “I Can Statements” are provided to students before a unit begins and allow students to self-assess their own learning before, during and after instruction.

The teachers conduct a daily check on student learning by using assessment *for* learning strategies. These include, but are not limited to, using student response system clickers, exit slips, response journals, think-pair-share activities, or other formats that demonstrate students’ levels of understanding, based on grade level indicators. Information gathered from the formative assessments helps teachers to determine which students are not on track with the learning or which need extension, how well they have provided instruction, and the next instructional steps for all students. From these assessments, students are able to reflect on their learning, self-assess their level of progress as indicated by their progress on the indicators, and use the teacher’s timely and descriptive feedback to correct misunderstandings or further their learning.

While most students at Solon Middle School achieve at high levels, some students do so because of the support services that we make available to them. Based on state achievement test data, students below proficient level are provided more time and daily support in an academic support class taught by both a regular education teacher and an interventionist to close gaps in students’ areas of deficiency. Students who are behind in work or need some extra assistance attend our after-school Open Library program to work with a core teacher and/or a National Honor Society student tutor from the high school to assist their learning.

5. **Professional Development:**

Schedules at Solon Middle School are unique and purposefully created to empower teams of teachers and to provide them the flexibility to modify our traditional 43-minute class schedule to fit the needs of our students. As a result, each grade level has its own schedule. In grade 7, students are provided instruction in five core classes that are taught in periods 1-5. In periods 6-8, these students attend their Specials classes. In grade 8, students take Specials classes during periods 1-3 and core classes in periods 4-8. With this structure in place, all core teachers are available to meet during the school day as grade-level content area teams during special area periods. This structure frees up teachers and allows time for weekly teacher collaboration and makes on-going job-embedded professional development possible.

With our professional development, distributed leadership and shared responsibility, we have been able to refine our instructional practices and provide a well-developed, quality, differentiated curriculum in the regular education classroom to **all** students. Each grade-level team holds four team meetings in a month: two are 43-minute meetings held during the school day and two are extended 2-hour meetings, with part of the time spent within the school day and the part outside of the school day as defined by the Solon teaching contract. The purpose of the meetings is to provide time for teachers to pursue specific measurable performance goals, focus on the key questions about learning, and access any relevant information. It also provides teachers a common planning time to collaborate on best instructional practices, to analyze and act on student data and student work, and to provide support to one another. It is not uncommon to see a teacher doing demonstrations or explaining to colleagues a lesson that worked well with students. It is also not surprising to hear teachers asking for help or for a new strategy to try. Teachers also use the time to create assessment for learning (common formative assessments) and assessment *of* learning (common summative assessments) tools aligned with the state standards.

6. **School Leadership:**

To create the Professional Learning Community and safe environment we seek, Solon Middle School's vision comes to life at our district's Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy, which includes central office staff, administrators, school counselors and teacher leaders from each department K-12, meets in August to review district data and set a yearly goal to increase student achievement. This large group effort is followed by a Solon Middle School Leadership Academy meeting, also held in August. At this meeting, Solon Middle School teacher leaders and administrators review their content area data and create an action plan for achieving the district goal in their content areas. They also further their own professional learning and explore current research-based best educational practices.

Teacher leaders, who are part of our shared leadership team, hold exemplary grade-level content area meetings with members of their departments each week. Although an administrator, who serves as a support and coach, attends each of the meetings, the teacher leader organizes and facilitates the work sessions.

To provide support to teacher leaders, the Solon Middle School administrative team, comprised of the principal, the assistant principal, the school counselors, the school psychologist, the licensed counselor, and the technology resource specialist, meet twice a month. At these meetings, we discuss building-level student, staff and parent issues; review current instructional practices; engage in professional learning; and create action plans detailing how to coach and support all Solon Middle School teachers in their learning and work with students.

To create a system of accountability for student achievement, Solon Middle School administrators engage in many observations, including both formal and informal classroom walk-throughs, to ensure that practices are implemented and the expected results are evident.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: Ohio Achievement Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
and accelerated	96	97	98	92	90
% Advanced	52	51	33	28	22
Number of students tested	390	432	424	445	408
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	4	6	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
and accelerated	93	71	100	84	75
% Advanced	30	14	10	21	5
Number of students tested	40	14	20	19	20
2. African American Students					
and accelerated	91	87	91	75	67
% Advanced	19	12	6	8	7
Number of students tested	68	52	55	65	43
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
and accelerated					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
and accelerated	76	76	95	67	65
% Advanced	12	21	17	7	4
Number of students tested	42	37	42	42	46
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
and accelerated		100			
% Advanced		46			
Number of students tested		11			
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
and accelerated	100	100	100	100	93
% Advanced	87	77	62	60	45
Number of students tested	44	44	45	27	29

Notes:

For number 6 above, the largest other subgroup at Solon Middle School is Asian and Pacific Islander. The data for that subgroup is provided.

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Grade: 7 Test: Ohio Achievement Test
Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	Mar	
SCHOOL SCORES					
and accelerated	95	97	97	95	
% Advanced	37	41	37	34	
Number of students tested	390	431	424	444	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	4	6	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	0	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
and accelerated	90	71	90	95	
% Advanced	18	14	20	32	
Number of students tested	40	14	20	19	
2. African American Students					
and accelerated	88	92	90	81	
% Advanced	13	10	15	9	
Number of students tested	68	51	55	64	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
and accelerated					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
and accelerated	69	81	91	69	
% Advanced	10	11	24	2	
Number of students tested	42	36	42	42	
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
and accelerated		100			
% Advanced		9			
Number of students tested		11			
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
and accelerated	100	100	98	100	
% Advanced	66	52	62	48	
Number of students tested	44	44	45	27	

Notes:

For number 6 above, the largest other subgroup at Solon Middle School is Asian and Pacific Islander. The data for that subgroup is entered above.

There was no 7th grade Ohio Reading Test in 2004-2005, which is why there is no data for that school year entered.

Subject: Mathematics
Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Grade: 8 Test: Ohio Achievement Test
Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	97	97	97	93	94
% Advanced	30	37	14	23	31
Number of students tested	440	431	453	427	415
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	6	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
and accelerated	88	96	92	86	87
% Advanced	6	9	13	14	7
Number of students tested	33	22	24	22	15
2. African American Students					
and accelerated	90	89	90	80	87
% Advanced	5	13	1	10	5
Number of students tested	59	62	72	49	38
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
and accelerated	76	93	91	71	74
% Advanced	16	21	0	12	14
Number of students tested	37	42	42	51	49
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
and accelerated	100	100	100	97	94
% Advanced	67	72	48	54	58
Number of students tested	46	46	27	37	31

Notes:

For number 6 above, the largest subgroup at Solon Middle School not listed above is Asian and Pacific Islander. Data for that subgroup is entered.

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Grade: 8 Test: Ohio Achievement Test
Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
and accelerated	97	99	98	94	96
% Advanced	28	52	38	53	45
Number of students tested	440	432	453	427	414
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	6	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
and accelerated	85	96	100	96	80
% Advanced	12	32	25	32	47
Number of students tested	33	22	24	22	15
2. African American Students					
and accelerated	95	92	93	84	100
% Advanced	9	27	7	22	18
Number of students tested	59	62	72	49	38
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
and accelerated					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
and accelerated	84	95	90	69	79
% Advanced	5	29	5	18	23
Number of students tested	37	42	42	51	48
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
and accelerated					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
and accelerated	100	100	96	92	97
% Advanced	39	59	56	73	58
Number of students tested	46	46	27	37	31

Notes:

For number 6 above, the largest subgroup at Solon Middle School not listed above is Asian and Pacific Islander. Data for that subgroup is entered for number 6.