

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: Mrs. Robin Bright

Official School Name: Ballentine Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
1040 Bickley Road
Irmo, SC 29063-9523

County: Lexington State School Code Number*: 8205055

Telephone: (803) 476-4500 Fax: (803) 476-4520

Web site/URL: http://www.lex5.k12.sc.us/Ballentine.cfm E-mail: Rbright@lex5.k12.sc.us

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Herbert Berg

District Name: District Five of Richland and Lexington Counties Tel: (803) 476-8000

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. Robert Gantt

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)
- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 12 | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 5 | Middle/Junior high schools |
| 3 | High schools |
| | K-12 schools |
| 20 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 10061

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. 1 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	65	38	103		7			0
1	70	62	132		8			0
2	61	51	112		9			0
3	78	68	146		10			0
4	55	68	123		11			0
5	61	64	125		12			0
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL								741

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
3 % Asian
10 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
84 % White
2 % 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: 5 %

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.	17
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	21
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	38
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	771
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.049
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4.929

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

Total number limited English proficient 14

Number of languages represented: 8

Specify languages:

French, Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Punjabi, Korean, Chinese, Thai

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 18 %

Total number students who qualify: 135

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.

When Ballentine Elementary was nominated for the Blue Ribbon Schools Program, the South Carolina State Department of Education used the poverty index data as part of the selection criteria. The poverty index includes students on free/reduced price lunch, as well as those on Medicaid. The data can be found in this link,

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data%2DManagement%2Dand%2DAnalysis/documents/2009ReportCardPovertyIndexR.xls>

If calculating only the free/reduced population, our numbers are lower than those listed above. Currently we have 63 children who are eligible for free/reduced lunch and the percentage of those students is 9% of our total population. The data can be found in this link,

http://www.ed.sc.gov/topics/researchandstats/reports/tech/erate/2009/show_district_erate.cfm?ID=3205

10. Students receiving special education services: 20 %

Total Number of Students Served: 151

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

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>4</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>118</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>5</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>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>44</u>	<u>6</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>

Support staff	<u>26</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>85</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 **16 :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%	95%	94%	98%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	21%	10%	10%	7%	0%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Typically our school sees very little turnover in staff. It is usually the result of a spouse's employment needs or retirement. The 2008-2009 school year was very unusual as it brought many new faces to our school. We had two teachers and one custodian retire. A part-time guidance counselor left for a full time position. Two classroom teachers moved to be closer to their home and two moved because their spouse was transferred. Our enrollment dropped in Kindergarten and through the reassignment of staff, we lost two instructional assistants. Also as a result of the enrollment shift, we lost a part time school psychologist.

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

Ballentine Elementary is located in the beautiful, rural part of the Dutch Fork/Irmo area. Since opening our doors in 2002, Ballentine has quickly established itself as a symbol of educational excellence in a safe and nurturing environment. The community that our school serves includes nontraditional as well as traditional families. We have students living with single parents, foster parents, grandparents or other relatives, as well as those who live with parents and step-parents. Our attendance area is comprised of primarily single family homes and neighborhoods. The surrounding area continues to experience tremendous development in both businesses and neighborhoods and has become one of the most sought-after communities in South Carolina in which to live and raise children.

Ballentine Elementary's unique strengths and successes are firmly rooted in the culture of learning that has been established through the partnership of community, staff, students, and families. We have accomplished a great deal in the school's eight-year history. Our school has consistently maintained test scores equal to or higher than district and state test scores. We received an "Excellent" rating, the highest possible, on the South Carolina School Report Card four years in a row. We have been recognized four times for closing the achievement gap on standardized test scores for historically underachieving groups, such as minority students and students who receive free or reduced price lunch. Our school is a winner of the state's Exemplary Writing Award and Exemplary Reading Award (awarded to just one school in SC in 2006) for outstanding literacy programs that involve the entire school community. The community finds our school very welcoming and responsive which resulted in two Red Carpet Awards. Ballentine Elementary has also been published nationally for our community service programs. The many grants written and received for programs and initiatives in the areas of literacy, science, technology and arts integration reflect our desire to enhance learning opportunities for our students. With our many successes, however, we never cease in our efforts to continually strive for improvement in ourselves and our students. Our intrinsic desire to grow by taking the initiative to reflect, refine and strengthen ourselves professionally in order to provide the finest education for all our students is what separates us from other schools.

Ballentine's mission is to prepare students to be fully participating citizens and leaders in the twenty-first century by producing successful, competent learners. We accomplish this by developing creative thinking, encouraging curiosity and problem solving, respecting individual differences and maintaining high ethical standards. Our school exhibits the exemplary qualities of a National Blue Ribbon School by establishing and maintaining a nurturing school environment, assessing and enhancing our teaching by using best instructional practices, designing innovative programs, seeking out and implementing student success alternatives, providing numerous student leadership opportunities in all grade levels, encouraging community involvement in school activities, initiatives and decision making, ensuring differentiated instruction to address the needs of all children, and participating in numerous professional development opportunities.

We are a community of lifelong learners. The warmth, energy, eagerness to learn, and innovation at our school will affirm that we are truly a unique and successful school worthy of National Blue Ribbon School status.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Ballentine Elementary students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are summatively assessed yearly in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) was given through the 2007-2008 school year. A new state-wide assessment, Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), was given in the 2008-2009 school year. Both assessments measure academic progress based on South Carolina academic standards for each grade level. PACT results were reported in four categories: Advanced (exceeded expectations based on grade level curriculum standards), Proficient (met expectations), Basic (met minimum expectations), and Below Basic (did not meet minimum expectations).

The PASS reports results in three categories: Exemplary (demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting grade level standards), Met (met grade level standards), and Not Met (did not meet grade level standards).

Both tests were designed for school, school district, and federal accountability purposes. More information on South Carolina's state assessment system may be found at: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Assessment/>

In the last five years, there is a trend of increase in the percentage of students who scored proficient and advanced in ELA and Math for all grade levels. All students are tested at Ballentine Elementary, with the only exceptions being in fourth grade in 2005-2006 (98% in ELA and 99% in Math) and in 2006-2007 (99% in ELA).

For each grade level, a significant increase is noted in 2008-2009 in ELA and Math. This is, in part, due to the reassigning of performance levels when changing from PACT to PASS. Percentages reported by PACT did not include those at the Basic level, even though Basic indicated students who met basic grade level expectations.

In third grade, ELA scores increased 8% within the first four year period and 14% in the fifth year. Math scores increased 10% during the first four year period with an additional 30% increase last year. The subgroups analyzed are free and reduced lunch/socio-economic/disadvantaged students, racial ethnic groups, and disabled groups. (In all grade levels, the subgroups examined show wide variability possibly due to small numbers of students.) Most subgroups follow the overall grade level trend. During the first four years of data, scores went from 69% to 63% to 57%, to 67%. The fifth year, scores jumped to 83%. A notable exception is in ELA and Math for third graders that qualified for free and reduced lunch. The increase in ELA went from 27% in 2004-2005 to 73% in 2007-2008, then gained another 7% in 2008-2009, for a total of 80% proficient/advanced. In Math, the increase went from 18% in 2004-2005 to 46% in 2007-2008 with another 14% gain the last year, for a total of 60% proficient/advanced.

Fourth grade shows consistent gains and is typically the highest performing grade level in ELA and Math overall and among subgroups as compared to third and fifth grades. This could be due to experienced fourth grade teachers and very little personnel turnover, and/or fourth grade standards that closely correlate to third grade. Notably, 100% of disadvantaged fourth graders were proficient/advanced in Math, and 98% of all fourth graders were proficient/advanced last year.

In fifth grade ELA, the percentage of advanced students rose from 5% to 14% the first four years, with significant increase to 63% in 2008-2009. All subgroups showed consistent increase, with the exception of African-American students that showed some fluctuation one year due to small sample size. However, this subgroup has shown great improvement; 90% of African-American students scored advanced in ELA in

2008-2009. In 2005-2006, the percentage of proficient/advanced students significantly increased in both ELA and Math, possibly due to the accomplishments of those 11 students. Math scores show ongoing improvement in all subgroups, with 96% of students scoring proficient/advanced in 2008-2009.

Ballentine Elementary received Excellent ratings and achieved Adequate Yearly Progress on the State Report Card yearly. Ballentine's 2008 Growth Rating was raised one level because of substantial improvement in the achievement of students belonging to historically underachieving groups.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Data driven decision making is key to excellence in student achievement. Ongoing assessment results are used to drive decision-making – from the administrative/teacher perspective to the student/parent viewpoint. The ultimate goal remains - to insure exceptional teaching and student learning through targeted student interventions and differentiated instructional strategies.

Student achievement and school performance are monitored through formal and informal methods. Quantitative assessments include Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Direct Writing Assessment (DWA), Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM), teacher-created tests/assessments, and student projects provide valuable information.

Qualitative measures such as daily conferencing, running records, writing portfolios, Dominie assessments and teachers' anecdotal records provide information that help document growth, inform instruction, and provide a more complete picture of each child as a learner.

School administrators use data to determine effectiveness of teacher instruction, vertical planning needs, matching students with intervention resources, and to determine staff development. Specialized groups such as our Student Assistance Team, Intervention Team, Literacy Specialists and Special Education team refer to data frequently when making decisions about effective intervention strategies, targeted instruction, and needs for further educational evaluation.

Grade level common planning allows for conversation about effective instructional strategies, validity of assessments, pacing and rigor of lessons, and differentiated instruction. Teachers reflect on instructional strengths and needs, overall student learning, and to formulate small group instruction.

Data is shared with parents through conferences and evening sessions to document growth and provide a more comprehensive understanding of their child as a learner and to discuss specific home support strategies.

Our systemic use of assessment data as the foundation for effective instruction results in excellence in student achievement at Ballentine Elementary.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Ballentine's partnership with the community, staff, students and families has established a strong culture of learning that is evident in every aspect of the school. From the hall displays of student work, student performances, PTO events, school and classroom newsletters, to the end of year festivities – such initiatives communicate our focus on excellence in teaching and student learning. Our communication includes sharing student performance and assessment results with the community, staff, students, and families throughout the year.

We believe open, two-way communication plays an important role in our overall success. Contact is made through personal phone calls, daily agenda notes, weekly progress reports, quarterly report cards, Thursday communication folders, online access to progress reports, and school/teacher web pages. Frequent parent-teacher conferences, parent observation weeks, and specialized “Parent Academies” provide wonderful opportunities to share information about student performance and progress, as well as specific ways parents can support their learner. Many classes use student-led conferences which provide students the opportunity to share their learning with their parents.

To include our surrounding community, we promote our school and its successes through the school web page, school marquee and local media. Parent and community groups such as our School Improvement Council and our active Parent Teacher Organization also play a key role in communicating these successes in the community. We also collaborate with local businesses to host school sponsored events such as Reading or Math Nights.

We proudly share all student achievements and successes: visual and performing arts achievements and assessments, classroom recognitions for achievement, and school level results of standardized assessments. Students are recognized on our daily morning news show, highlighted in school and classroom newsletters, celebrated at our awards assemblies, and student work is displayed throughout the building. We take advantage of every opportunity to showcase student learning.

4. Sharing Success:

Ballentine Elementary educators believe learning is social; we learn from each other. This is evident as we continually strive to improve, grow, and refine best practices. Our intrinsic “culture of learning” fosters a natural desire to share our experiences and successes with others.

With our strong emphasis on literacy, we earned the Exemplary Writing Award and have been named an Exemplary Reading school. We have received the Palmetto Gold and Silver Award for closing the achievement gap. Annually we share our learning and support future educators by hosting literacy classes through the local university and student teachers/interns from area universities. Our local high school sends Teacher Cadets to work hand in hand with our teachers. Our teachers and administration have presented at district, regional and state professional development events and conferences. As a result of our award winning status combined with our culture of learning, we have welcomed many visitors from other schools who were eager to learn more about our literacy practices and the strengths and successes of our school. Teachers open their classrooms for peer observations which facilitates professional conversation. By sharing our knowledge of literacy and best practices, we are able to share our successes with others.

The sharing of our successes extends to our students, families and surrounding community. Through avenues such as our morning announcements, classroom and school newsletters, local newspapers, the district, school and teacher web pages we are able to effectively promote our successes. Our PTO and School Improvement Council serve as school and community liaisons. Our school marquee is also a great tool for sharing our successes with our surrounding community. Using a variety of communicative techniques and formats to share information about school initiatives and accomplishments, we strengthen our partnerships among our students, staff, parents, and community.

Through learning, growing, reflecting, and sharing, we reveal our tenacity for providing a continuing environment of educational excellence.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Our district core curriculum is aligned with state/national standards and is the foundation for our essential instructional program (English/language arts, math, social studies and science). Kindergarten also uses the High Scope curriculum which centers on the principles and practices that children learn best through active experiences with people, materials, events and ideas. We recognize the importance of including visual and performing arts, physical education and foreign language study as they play an integral role in creating a well rounded curriculum. All students participate in related areas classes that include art, music, physical education, and Spanish. Strings, chorus, audio/video production and advanced technology are also available to fifth graders.

Instruction is delivered through a wide variety of research based instructional practices by using Routman's Optimal Learning Model, direct instruction, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, higher order inquiry learning centers, graphic organizers, and arts integration. All grade levels incorporate cross-curricular integration because we believe essential learning and understanding is enriched when teachers interlace teaching methods, concepts and strategies. Integrated learning experiences with informational texts and inquiry projects provide an excellent opportunities to connect social studies with language arts.

Related areas meet 50 minutes each week. Integrating vocabulary, math, concepts, history and culture, related area learning connects with and supports the core curriculum and engages students in significant content.

Daily, students receive approximately 75 minutes of math instruction The *Everyday Mathematics* program, used in all grade levels, provides students with challenging learning experiences. This spirally structured curriculum provides multiple exposures to concepts and frequent opportunities to review and practice skills.

Older students receive approximately 45 minutes of direct science instruction daily, while younger students experience science concepts and activities that are integrated with other content areas. We believe students learn science best through hands-on experiments. Our teachers use the *Full Option Science System (FOSS) Kits* to support state standards and provide engaging experiences.

In the younger grades, social studies is integrated with language arts through the use of read alouds, historical novels, leveled readers and morning meetings. Older grades focus on social studies content for approximately 45 minutes daily. Guided instruction incorporates streaming videos, historical fiction novels and non-fiction texts to entwine with language arts. We employ every opportunity to engage students with significant content.

The English/language arts program is taught daily within a dedicated two-hour block of time and integrates instruction of reading, writing, and research. Most of our teachers have participated in the South Carolina Reading Initiative (SCRI) which is a multi-year inquiry into reading research and best practice for teaching standards effectively and offering a balanced literacy program.

Curriculum maps and content area support documents are used to reinforce the core curriculum by assisting with pacing and fostering the transition from year to year. This enhances student engagement and facilitates rigorous instruction. The media center supports the core curriculum by providing an engaging learning environment. Serving students, teachers and parents, the library staff collaborates with teachers to guide students through research inquiry projects, provides guided literature lessons, facilitates media resources for classroom use, selects materials from professional sources, oversees school-wide reading incentives, facilitates instructional television and coordinates technology placement and repair.

Special education classes and programs for the academically gifted support and enhance the curriculum. Qualifying students receive resource instruction in reading, writing and math, based on their Individualized Education Program. For grades three through five, the Academically Gifted Program is designed to maximize the potential of exceptionally talented students by providing academic programs that match their unique learning characteristics. Third graders are served through an enrichment model 125 minutes per week. Gifted fourth and fifth graders are served daily through a content model in all areas.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

(This question is for elementary schools only)

Grounded in the South Carolina English/Language Arts standards, our District reading curriculum is taught through the balanced literacy model. Initially started as part of the District's participation in the South Carolina Reading Initiative, we have continued this approach because we are committed to providing literacy instruction that represents best practices.

Balanced literacy means balance in every aspect of instruction. The classroom teacher provides time every day to facilitate read alouds, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. A balanced literacy classroom has frequent teacher driven assessments to determine instructional needs. There is systematic word study and phonics. There is balance in reading and writing. Teachers teach students strategies and practices to become effective readers and writers. Writing instruction is presented to students through shared or interactive writing, and practiced independently. Balanced literacy instruction encourages gradual release of responsibility through the Optimal Learning Model.

Teachers are knowledgeable about utilizing data, collecting multiple samples to make informed decisions for whole group, small groups, and individual instruction. Teachers use interest inventories, interviews, running records, Dominie reading assessments, miscue analysis, anecdotal records, test scores, Curriculum Based Measurements in Reading, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, and the hypothesis-test strategy to understand each child's prior knowledge and strategies they are using to plan the next instructional steps.

Using data, teachers guide children to understand and choose books that are "just right" for daily independent reading time. After examining patterns in data, teachers create guided and shared reading groups based on a specific strategy or skill. Ongoing review of assessment information helps teachers watch for emerging patterns that suggest the next instructional move.

Comprehension strategies are taught and applied across the curriculum. The natural process of conversation paired with effective questioning that promotes higher order thinking, acting out critical scenes in a story, writing from a character's point of view, debating the conflict within a story, illustrating a passage, and comparing and contrasting various genres are just a few examples of the many ways students gain skill in and deepen their comprehension.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The mission of Ballentine Elementary School, where community, staff, students, and parents join together, is to ensure that all students are provided a quality education based upon academic success, democratic principles, and creative expression while providing a positive caring environment celebrating diversity and promoting individual strengths, responsible social attitudes and a sense of community and cooperation.

We believe our social studies curriculum provides a window to the world - thus supporting the school's mission to join community, staff, students, and parents in the total school program in order to facilitate student learning and academic success. Parents and community members volunteer assisting with theme days: Colonial Camp, Immigration Day, Pioneer Day, Native American Day, and by participating in field trips, thus providing exceptional student learning opportunities.

Teachers ensure quality educational experiences by effectively integrating cross-curricular standards with multiple content areas. One very effective method has been an inquiry approach, in which students reflectively study details in primary documents and historical paintings/photographs projected on the SmartBoard, followed by class conversations to frontload vocabulary and schema. This format promotes understanding and increases engagement. Students continue their inquiry using print resources and “lesson builder pages” on the school webpage to independently access reference resources and video streaming. Creative learning outcomes include original story-telling, drama/tableaus, arts integration, electronic projects, song and dance.

Student diversity and culture are celebrated through activities such as cooking in the classroom, inquiries on heritage family pictures, studies on holiday traditions, learning cultural dances/songs, and studying artists and instruments. Responsible social attitudes are encouraged through studies of historical events, discussion of current events and participation in service projects.

Our learning culture is evident throughout the school. By incorporating flexible grouping, highlighting individual strengths, encouraging creative expression, and celebrating diversity, students learn and experience academic success within a positive environment anchored by a strong sense community and cooperation.

4. Instructional Methods:

School-wide instruction is differentiated, modified or supplemented to maximize student learning. Our youngest students are grouped and regrouped throughout the day. Large groups are used for activities such as morning meeting, shared reading and writing, math, and read-alouds. Small groups use developmentally appropriate play/learning centers as well as targeted, individual reading and math instruction. Science and social studies are integrated into thematic units.

In older grades, teachers utilize large group instruction for mini-lessons, class discussion and modeling of concepts/content. Small group instruction is used for conferencing, shared reading, literature circles or targeted individual instruction based on student needs and assessment results. Peer tutoring, literacy buddies, cooperative learning are utilized to provide differentiated support and foster collaborative learning. Teachers incorporate FOSS kits, video streaming, and hands-on experiments to make science exciting and authentic. Fourth grade is piloting single gender science rotations to improve student learning by increasing active engagement. Cross-curricular integration such as social studies and ELA support student learning by frontloading vocabulary and schema through read-alouds, historical fiction studies and inquiry projects using primary sources.

Students identified with specific learning disabilities receive modified instruction based on their Individualized Educational Plan. Students identified by the Intervention Team receive additional daily instruction that is differentiated and supplemented with interventions such as Reading Recovery, literacy groups, small group or individual instruction and innovative scheduling of instructional assistants for classroom support.

Technology has enhanced our instructional methods. During the last five years, we have expanded our use of technology tools and applications in order to support focused interactive instruction. We now have SmartBoards and document cameras in every classroom. Teachers use student response systems to assess student understanding of concepts. In upper grades, teachers use interactive class/teacher discussions online during evening homework hours. Communication software such as Skype has been used from the classroom to a homebound student on medical leave. In the classroom and computer lab, students have regular access to Compass Learning, an interactive web-based instructional learning application designed to help students develop in math and reading at their individual instructional level.

“Whatever It Takes” is our motto with regard to instructional methods and addressing student needs. We employ a variety of formal/informal assessments in order to identify needs, organize students, and differentiate instruction. Our Intervention Team meets monthly to examine current data, monitor progress, determine appropriate intervention and instructional strategies to target the diverse needs of our most struggling students, and to evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies. Teamwork from classroom teachers, specialists, and administrators provides continuing focus on student's instructional needs.

5. Professional Development:

Ballentine Elementary faculty and staff are intrinsically motivated to grow professionally. Research shows that the best way to improve student achievement is to improve the effectiveness of the teacher. We believe that professional development is crucial to assessing and reflecting on our teaching in order to promote rigorous, high quality instructional practices.

The structure of our district’s professional development program supports improving instruction in order to maximize student learning. The district provides full day staff development activities throughout the year and devotes each Tuesday to either district or school initiated professional development opportunities. The school schedule also provides monthly early release days for common planning time.

Teachers participate in monthly district-initiated staff development sessions designed to support State Academic Standards, as well as the district’s vision and mission. Through *Vertical Collaborative Teams*, teachers create and refine curriculum and share best practices to enhance their instruction which improves student learning. Through *Professional Inquiry Cohorts* teachers focus their study on improving student achievement within the content standards.

Our Principal gathers input from our faculty about professional development needs through standardized test scores, teacher observations and feedback, district goals, conferences, informal meetings, discussions, and surveys in order to determine the focus of school level staff development activities. Each year, continuing contract teachers participate in the Goals Based Evaluation component of the State evaluation program, ADEPT. Teachers develop goals directly related to improving student achievement based on and measured by student data.

In recent years we have concentrated our studies on refining our balanced literacy practices to enhance reading and writing instruction, interpreting data to inform and differentiate instruction, integrating technology to improve student engagement, and reflecting on the level of rigor in our instruction to make sure all children are challenged. Each semester, teachers participate in multiple peer observations. This encourages teachers to reflect on their teaching and facilitates professional conversation. This emphasis on professional growth fosters the strong culture of learning that makes Ballentine Elementary unique and worthy of National Blue Ribbon recognition.

6. School Leadership:

Our leadership structure consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal and Assistant Administrator. Last summer, the Assistant Principal was named Principal and continues to work to keep our school on its journey for excellence. She believes that our learning culture and shared vision must be led by example. The leadership role and vision of the Principal is for each member of the school family to reach his/her potential; faculty will provide the best instructional and learning environment for their students; students will be healthy, happy and academically successful and reach their personal potential in all areas; parents will be knowledgeable and involved in their children’s learning continuum and active participants in the school’s quest for excellence. High expectations shared by our leadership and all stakeholders are key to our school's success.

Teachers are regarded as professionals with expertise in their field who actively participate in school decision making and whose opinions and concerns are welcomed by the administrative team. A bi-monthly Leadership Team, comprised of representatives from each grade level and unit, serves as a liaison through which important school/curricular information is shared and decisions regarding school-wide initiatives, programs, resources and goals are made.

Parents and community members are involved in the total school program through participation in the School Improvement Council, Parent Teacher Organization and family-friendly initiatives that support student achievement, and celebrate student successes.

Our school is successful because of the strong, student-focused leadership which is reflected in our commitment to insure that all students are successful. There is an evident climate of mutual respect among students, parents, faculty, staff, administration and community members, which fosters a supportive environment where everyone has the opportunity for success. Our collaborative culture and shared vision keeps us focused on the basis of all decisions – what is best for students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009 Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	89	59	57	67	49
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	59	30	18	27	15
Number of students tested	120	115	123	132	131
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	60	46			18
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	30	27			9
Number of students tested	10	11			
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	73	58	39	50	39
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	40	25	13	6	0
Number of students tested	15	12	23	16	13
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	66	50	40	58	46
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	39	33	10	32	11
Number of students tested	18	12	20	19	28
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					

Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009

Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	95	81	76	79	73
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	83	18	13	21	15
Number of students tested	120	115	123	131	131
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	80	73			27
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	50	18			0
Number of students tested	10	11			11
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	83	67	57	63	69
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	73	17	9	0	15
Number of students tested	15	12	23	16	13
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	83	67	57	63	69
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	61	8	0	26	11
Number of students tested	18	12	20	19	28
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient					

and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009

Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	98	82	79	73	82
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	69	59	51	48	56
Number of students tested	121	135	102	144	117
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	100			40	
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	44			20	
Number of students tested	16			10	
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	92	63	50	47	39
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	58	37	8	32	31
Number of students tested	12	27	12	19	13
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.		63		62	
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.		37		52	
Number of students tested		19		21	
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient					

and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009

Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	96	76	71	73	76
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	68	11	13	15	9
Number of students tested	121	135	101	143	117
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	88			50	
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	56			10	
Number of students tested	16			10	
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	80	59	42	74	46
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	58	15	8	21	0
Number of students tested	12	27	12	19	13
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.		37		62	
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.		11		19	
Number of students tested		19		21	
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient					

and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009

Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	96	72	64	79	68
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	60	45	43	55	46
Number of students tested	136	103	118	122	110
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	86		27	73	17
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	36		9	36	0
Number of students tested	14		11	11	12
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	83	53	44	44	27
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	48	0	25	22	7
Number of students tested	29	17	16	18	15
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.			50		42
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.			30		0
Number of students tested			10		12
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient					

and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: PACT: 2005-2008/ PASS: 2009

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009

Publisher: State of South Carolina

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	96	58	53	69	57
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	63	14	4	11	5
Number of students tested	136	103	118	122	112
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	2	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	86		9	64	23
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	50		0	9	0
Number of students tested	14		11	11	13
2. African American Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	90	35	63	50	31
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.	29	6	6	0	0
Number of students tested	48	17	16	18	16
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.			40		21
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.			10		7
Number of students tested			10		14
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
In 2008-2009, Met corresponds to Proficient					

and Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
In 2008-2009, Exemplary corresponds to Advanced.					
Number of students tested					

Notes: