

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

11IL15

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 2010-2011 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 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
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

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 11 Elementary schools
 (per district designation) 2 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
13 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 11865

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	13	22	35
K	24	20	44		7	0	0	0
1	15	26	41		8	0	0	0
2	28	17	45		9	0	0	0
3	19	21	40		10	0	0	0
4	14	15	29		11	0	0	0
5	19	16	35		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								269

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
9 % Asian
3 % Black or African American
9 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
75 % 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 2009-2010 school year: 2%

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, 2009 until the end of the school year.	3
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	5
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	269
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 6%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 15

Number of languages represented, not including English: 5

Specify languages:

Urdu, French, Spanish, Russian, and Lithuanian.

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7%
 Total number of students who qualify: 18

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-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 13%
 Total number of students served: 34

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

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>7</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>28</u>	<u>14</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: 24:1

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

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	95%	96%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	12%	0%	18%	12%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Although some percentages are over 12%, it should be noted that there is a small number of staff members at Highland School.

2006-2007: 12% accounts for two new staff members. One was due to a retirement and the other was due to a resignation of a teacher who had a baby.

2007-2008: 18% accounts for three new staff members. Two were due to retirements and one was due to a resignation.

2008-2009: 12% accounts for two new staff members. One was due to a family leave, the other was due to a resignation of a teacher who had a baby.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

PART III - SUMMARY

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Highland School is located in Downers Grove, Illinois and is part of Downers Grove Grade School District 58. Our district includes 11 elementary schools and 2 middle schools. Highland has a student population of 275 pupils in kindergarten through sixth grade. Over the past five years the student population has fluctuated between 240 and 280 students with the Caucasian population decreasing from 88% to 79% and the Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial populations growing.

Three simple statements sum up our vision for Downers Grove Grade School District 58: We envision. We seek. We believe. At Highland School we envision an environment where everyone feels welcome and is part of something wonderful. This becomes a reality as teachers begin their day by waiting in the hall for students to arrive. This also happens because the principal knows every child's name. A tradition at our school is to have all children in first through sixth grade eat lunch in the principal's office once each year. This small gesture sends the message that the office is a place that you can come to when you need help or a smile. A positive environment continues as all staff members care for the children in our entire building, not just the children in their classroom.

Highland staff and sixth graders reach out to new families through the orientation we provide each August. Before school begins, any new student and family can come to school for a building tour. Sixth graders volunteer their time to lead the tours, welcome the students, and introducing them to their teacher. A strong sense of belonging begins as children have their picture taken and displayed on our "New Student" bulletin board.

We seek the best way to educate the children in our care. Staff members learn the strengths and weaknesses of each student and look for ways to enrich or provide additional opportunities to maximize each child's learning potential. The professionals at Highland School work together to seek answers to difficult questions about how to support the whole child.

We know that a child's social-emotional learning is necessary before a student can focus on academic learning. Each year, the students spend time learning how to play together during our Recess Rodeo. Sixth graders take the lead as they review rules with each class and give the students an opportunity to play recess games and practice good sportsmanship. In addition, a Friendship Club was started three years ago to help our primary students learn social skills for working and playing with others. It is through these efforts that we focus on the social-emotional goals for our building and assist students in their development in this area.

An active Parent-Teacher Association and community volunteers in our building also add to the educational environment. The PTA provides family nights, which include Bingo Night, a family roller skating party, the back-to-school fun fair, and a bi-annual Math & Science Night.

In seeking to educate the whole child, the students and families at Highland School reach out to others. Highland School participates in the district's Older Adults and Kids (OAK) program with five or more senior citizens working with the students on a regular basis. We have a close connection with local retirement community. Everyone at our school visits the center each year at Halloween to share our costumes and present a short musical program for the senior citizens. Our active Student Council leads the school in collecting money, clothes, and toys for a local resource centers to assist families in need.

We believe that we make a difference for every child who enters our school. It doesn't matter what a child's background is, but how we can reach them and how far we can take them in the years they are at Highland School. The staff looks for ways to promote both social well being and academics. Each month we hold an All School Meeting to celebrate successes and share good news. Birthdays are celebrated with each child having the opportunity to step up to the microphone and answer a question that helps the student body get to know each other on a personal level. During these meetings new students are

introduced, children are recognized for their achievements in school and within the community, and good news is shared with the whole student body. We promote a sense of community by ending our All School Meeting with the Highland School song that was created by a staff member for the school's 50th anniversary.

The State of Illinois has granted the Academic Excellent Award to Highland School for the last three years. Our school has sustained excellence for at least three consecutive years with 90% of our students passing the state tests in the areas of reading and math. We feel that the strong sense of belonging contributes to our students' academic success. It is for these reasons that that staff feels that our school is worthy of Blue Ribbon status.

1. Assessment Results:

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) is given during the third quarter of the school year. Students in third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades are assessed in the areas of reading and mathematics. Fourth graders are also assessed in science. This test measures student achievement in relation to the Illinois Learning Standards. The ISAT has four performance levels, which include Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Below Standards, and Academic Warning. Exceeds Standards indicates that the student's work demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills in the subject. Students who exceed standards creatively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems and evaluate the results. Meets Standards indicates that the student's work demonstrates proficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Students who meet standards effectively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems. Below Standards indicates that the student's work demonstrates basic knowledge and skills in the subject. Students who are below standards demonstrate gaps in learning and apply knowledge and skills in limited ways. Academic Warning indicates that the student's work demonstrates limited knowledge and skills in the subject. Students who in the academic warning range demonstrate major gaps in learning and apply knowledge and skills ineffectively.

As part of the reading and mathematics assessments, students must complete two extended responses to demonstrate their ability to interpret what was read. In reading, students are expected to use information to explain what they have read and to make connections to other situations or contexts through analysis, evaluation, or comparisons/contrasts. In mathematics, the extended-responses items require students to consider a situation that demands more than a numerical response. Students are expected to clearly communicate their decision-making processes in the context of the task proposed by the item.

Over the last five years, Highland School students consistently excel on the ISAT. In four of the last five years of ISAT results, students scored in the Meets or Exceeds Standards categories in the area of reading at these high levels: 93% or more at third grade, 96% or more at fourth grade, 90% or more at fifth grade, and 89% or more at sixth grade. ISAT reading scores continued to improve over the five-year period. In 2010, 100% of the students scored in the Meets or Exceeds Standards categories in reading at third, fourth, and fifth grade. We are proud that many of our students scored in the Exceeds Standards category at these high levels in 2010: 50% at third grade, 63% in fourth grade, and 53% in sixth grade.

The Highland School students continue to demonstrate strong skills in the area of mathematics. In four of the last five years of ISAT results, students scored in the Meets or Exceeds Standards categories in the area of mathematics at these high levels: 97% or more at third grade, 97% or more at fourth grade, 91% or more at fifth grade, and 92% or more at sixth grade. We are proud that many of our students scored in the Exceeds Standards category at these high levels in 2010: 73% at third grade, 65% in fourth grade, and 53% in sixth grade.

As part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) we focus on high-needs students and are accountable for the achievement of every child. Through a combined effort of students, staff, and parents, the Highland School students continue to demonstrate academic growth. In the past five years, 725 students were assessed with the ISAT with only one child scoring in the Academic Warning category. The collaborative efforts of our school and community are responsible for the children's academic achievement.

Due to the small number of students in each subgroup, a comparison cannot be made in any of the grade levels. Further information about Highland School's state assessment results can be found on the Illinois Interactive Report Card (iirc) website at <http://iirc.niu.edu/School.aspx?schoolID=190220580022004>

2. Using Assessment Results:

Highland School uses national and local assessments to guide our instruction. In addition to the Illinois Standards Assessment Test at third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, a standardized assessment is given to students in third and sixth grade in both reading and math. Item analysis gives teachers information about students as a grade level, as a class, and as individuals. Through the in-depth look at each child, the teachers determine who is not meeting state standards on the ISAT, or who is not in the average or above average range on the national assessment. A collaborative approach for the at-risk students assures that a team of educators works together to assist each child.

We administer a universal screening to identify levels of proficiency for each student. The results allow for review of both group and individual performance on specific skills. Students who are not meeting the national norms are given diagnostic assessments in order to identify the student's specific strengths and weaknesses. In addition, if there is a discrepancy in performance between what is expected and what is occurring, students are progress monitored frequently to measure the response to an intervention.

Our universal screening tool is the curriculum-based measurement, which consists of fluency probes. Our staff meets to review the data and examine the trends with our school, grade level, classroom, specific populations and individual students. The data allows us to make informed decisions with our core curriculum to ensure we are providing high quality instruction.

Diagnostic assessments guide us in determining the specific area of reading that students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 need for support. We use a problem-solving model to inform our decision making. The team of teachers selects the appropriate research-based intervention for the students. Individual student progress is monitored every two weeks for students in Tier 2 or 3. The frequent data collection allows us to review the rate of improvement and to determine if the student is benefiting from the intervention.

Information obtained from a variety of assessments assist in measuring growth on an ongoing basis and to facilitate planning in order to fill the gaps for our students. Formative and summative assessments are utilized in the classroom to measure growth and to differentiate instruction to reach all learners. These results, in addition to teacher observation assure that staff member understand the strengths and weaknesses of each child and can address these curriculum needs to help students achieve at the highest level possible.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Our school communicates student performance and assessment data to our stakeholders in a variety of ways. Parents receive communications on a regular basis from the classroom teacher. Whenever possible, an explanation of the results are sent home in the parent's native language. Assessment feedback continues to be a two-way conversation between students and staff, staff and parents, and staff and the principal.

Benchmarking data in the areas of reading and math is gathered in the fall, winter, and spring for all students in kindergarten through sixth grade. A summary of this data is given to each parent with their child's report card in November, February, and June. Students review this information with the classroom teacher so that they can determine if they are reaching the target and making progress.

Highland's School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a collaborative process that involves both staff and parents. Student academic progress is analyzed and building goals are developed. During a fall PTA meeting, the principal shares state assessment data with the PTA members. The SIP presentation includes an analysis of the data, along with areas of pride, and those that areas that need improvement. Reading, math, writing, and social-emotional learning goals are always included in our SIP and are reviewed with Highland families. Parents understand how the students at Highland perform as a total group, grade level, and as individuals. Throughout the school year, staff and parents reexamine these goals and review the accomplishment of our objectives. In addition, parents are given access to school data through District 58's website and the Illinois Interactive Report Card.

A combination of formative and summative assessments is utilized in kindergarten through sixth grades. In third through sixth grades, parents receive and review all summative assessments in all curriculum areas. A parent signature on each assessment ensures that they are aware of the individual progress their child is making and keeps the lines of communication open between parents and teachers.

Our district feels that it is important to communicate with parents early in the school year. It is for this reason that parent/teacher conferences take place after the first and second quarter. Prior to the first parent/teacher conferences, parents receive a hard copy of their child's state assessment scores. They can discuss the results with the teacher or with the principal in order to help them understand the progress their child is making in the curriculum areas that are tested.

Each November the Downers Grove Grade School District 58's Board of Education reviews assessment data through our building's School Improvement Plan. This plan, along with the State of Illinois School Report Card, are published on our district's website for easy access by parents and community members.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Highland School staff looks for ways to lead other schools in new initiatives for our district. We were one of the pilot schools in initiating the district's plan for Response to Intervention. Staff members embraced new methods of collecting data and analyzing the results. The principal, reading specialist, and a classroom teacher developed a presentation that provided a step-by-step plan for a school-wide implementation of benchmarking, data analysis, and progress monitoring. This process was shared with staff members at another building in order to support them in transitioning into this new system of ongoing assessments.

Collaboration occurs between our eleven elementary schools during our District's in-service days. For the last two years, several Highland School staff members have shared their expertise as presenters in the areas of guided reading and technology. Two intermediate level teachers also work with new staff members to assist them in mastering the science curriculum.

Four years ago a small group in our building began to attend a series of workshops with Illinois Alliance for School-Based Problem Solving and Intervention Resources in Education (Illinois ASPIRE) to acquire new skills in problem solving. Several staff members led the district team and presented this information to the District 58 Board of Education. Information about Response to Intervention (RtI) and our role in its implementation was shared with everyone who works at Highland School and with our Parent-Teacher Association.

The responsibilities of each staff member continue to change within an RtI model. The speech and language pathologist works with reading specialists across the district to train classroom teachers in a multisensory reading intervention. This staff member blends her expertise in the area of speech and language with the use of technology to implement this intervention for our students.

Both the principal and the kindergarten teacher were selected as presenters at the Illinois ASCD's annual Pre-kindergarten/Kindergarten conference. This conference includes teachers from all over the State of Illinois, in addition to neighboring states. The principal shared information about preschool literacy from her dissertation research and the kindergarten teacher shared ideas for a literacy-rich kindergarten environment in her presentation entitled "The Giving Tree."

On our school's website, each classroom teacher, in addition to specialists in our building, have developed a webpage. Through the use of technology parents can review the upcoming units of study, see photos of their children in action, and find links to stretch their child's learning beyond the classroom.

1. Curriculum:

Our district curriculum is developed with a committee of administrators, teachers, specialists, and parents. Using the Illinois state standards and best practice, curriculum maps are developed to guide the students' learning to the highest level possible. Each curriculum area allows flexibility for differentiation to support all learners.

Reading/Language Arts: Our school builds the reading curriculum on a balanced literacy program. This includes guided reading; word study; listening and speaking; fluency; self-selected reading and read aloud; listening and speaking; and research. Students receive core reading curriculum instruction at their instructional level. Support from the reading specialists, special education resource teacher, and teaching assistants are part of the planning and implementation of the reading curriculum.

Math: The math curriculum includes numeration; operations and computation; patterns, functions, and algebra; geometry; measurement and reference frames; and data and chance. In our spiraling curriculum, all students are exposed to each of these concepts on a yearly basis. Beginning in kindergarten, students are taught to explain how they arrived at the answer to the mathematical question. Learners are often asked to put their learning into words to describe their thinking process.

Science: Our hands-on science curriculum allows for continuous interaction with materials that promote a discovery-learning environment. Students know that they utilize the scientific method as they work with others to investigate new concepts. Staff members have built collaborative classrooms in order to ensure that each child provides input and contributes to the learning of everyone. Throughout the district, students at each grade level experience an outdoor education field trip that enhances their science backgrounds and the learning that occurred in the classroom. Health is part of the science curriculum and includes body systems, food and nutrition. Fifth and sixth graders attend field trips to a local center for health education to learn about human growth and development.

Social Studies: The social studies curriculum is built around themes and topics with interactive experiences at all grade levels. Throughout the lessons, multiple intelligences are incorporated into learning with an experiential exercise to help students understand an event or time period in history. In addition, Junior Achievement is woven into the social studies curriculum. Children in kindergarten through sixth grade have a business partner who presents information to assist students in learning how businesses and workers contribute to a productive society.

Music: General music instruction is provided to students in first through sixth grade. Kindergarten students receive their music instruction from the classroom teacher. Curriculum includes melody/harmony, rhythm, form/style, singing, and playing instruments. Musical performances occur with every grade level throughout the school year. The fifth/sixth grade school choir presents a musical play for the students and parents each year. Students may participate in orchestra beginning at fourth grade or band beginning at fifth grade. Children in fourth through sixth grade can audition for the district wide Downers Grove Children's Choir.

Physical Education: Physical education instruction is provided to students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Areas of study include movement education, body management/fitness, rhythm/dance, and games/sports. Students in fifth and sixth grade can participate in after-school intramurals. Staff members promote physical fitness through our bi-annual Fun Run and annual staff vs. sixth grade volleyball game.

Art: Art instruction is provided to students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Areas of study include creative goals, art elements, design principles, media exploration, and art history. Students can participate in the annual Reflections contest to display their fine arts talents. A curriculum enhancement is our Partners in Art Program. On a quarterly basis, parents present a replicate of an original work or art that

can be found at the Art Institute in Chicago. Each year, children learn about four artists and their work and have an opportunity to create their own piece of artwork in the style of that artist.

2. Reading/English:

At Highland School, staff, students, and parents understand that reading is the foundation on which to build other curriculum areas. The Illinois state standards guide us in our balanced literacy approach to reading. Our core curriculum includes phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and writing instruction. National and local assessments are utilized in order to match students with the appropriate materials for independent and instructional level reading.

Teachers structure their reading block to include shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. During shared reading, teachers build vocabulary, focus on phonetic elements and develop comprehension skills through whole-group instruction. Phonemic awareness is particularly emphasized at the kindergarten and first grade levels. Students are grouped with others at a similar reading level and supported to use effective reading strategies during guided reading. An expectation at our school is for students to read on a daily basis. Teachers instruct students on how to choose “just right” books at their independent reading level.

Beginning at kindergarten, students begin to learn the writing process as they prewrite, write, revise, edit and publish their work. Throughout the grades, students write in multiple genres, including narrative, expository and persuasive. They write for a variety of purposes throughout the curriculum areas, focusing on the 6+1 traits of writing. In-class writing portfolios are kept each year, which indicate the progress that is made.

Assessment data is used to determine the amount of support or enrichment a child needs. A team of professionals reviews data to guide our instruction. Colleagues collaborate to find the best possible placement for each child within the reading curriculum and instructional program. In order to improve the reading skills of students who read below grade level, students receive an intervention in addition to the small group instruction provided in the core curriculum. The research-based intervention is specifically chosen based on the student’s area of concern. The reading specialist, special education resource teacher, English Language Learner (ELL) teacher or Learning Resource Center (LRC) teacher provides the pullout sessions.

Our staff development has focused on the areas of Language Arts. Specifically, we have been trained in 6+1 writing, guided reading, and a variety of interventions. We strive to meet the individual needs of our students.

3. Mathematics:

Working with number and mathematical concepts begins at kindergarten and spirals through each grade levels. Students explore this curriculum area through real-world applications. Woven into the math lessons are reteaching and enrichment options for all children. Finding the correct answer is only the first piece of the puzzle as students are provided with math tools in order to help them reach conclusions that make mathematical sense.

Technology is also utilized to provide practice of basic facts. Another way that students are supported in math is through the variety of tools that have been developed and introduced in the classroom. Grids, calculators, and number lines assist struggling students in manipulating numbers to solve mathematical problems.

Local assessments guide teachers in differentiating instruction for their students. For children who are not meeting district and state standards, one-on-one or small group instruction allows classroom teachers and resource teachers to provide additional assistance to assure that every child has foundational skills in math. Within the small-group instruction, weak areas are retaught and strengths are enhanced through challenging material. Staff members look for various ways to review the basic math facts and stretch

students' knowledge base as they facilitate higher-level thinking skills.

In all curriculum areas students are expected to read and write, and math is no exception to this expectation. Students are taught to look at mathematical problems in a variety of ways. Lessons in math include a written component, which requires students to solve the problem by choosing a plan and explaining why this method was chosen, in addition to the steps taken in order to obtain an answer.

Math with a purpose is our primary goal. Beginning at kindergarten, the students at Highland School use their math skills to solve real-life problems. Their learning takes them beyond basic math facts and includes connections to the many ways that number sense is prevalent in every day.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Technology is woven into each of the curriculum areas as students develop skills to share their learning. This is not a separate curriculum, but a way for students to access information and demonstrate what they have learned with different types of presentation tools.

Beginning at first grade, students are introduced to a research model to assist them in assimilating information in any content area. Primary students are taught the Super 3 approach to incorporate the information seeking strategies into the way they display information through oral or written reports. They learn the structure of "plan, do, review" in order to gather facts and describe what they have learned. These reports are completed with computer programs such as PowerPoint, Comic Life, and Garage Band.

Intermediate students are taught the Big 6 approach in order to find and use information to solve problems. The Big 6 structure includes task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, and synthesis evaluation. This format is then applied to any type of research that students do in any curriculum area.

Teachers rely on technology for teaching and assessment purposes. With the use of LCD projectors, staff members connect document cameras, computers, or SMART Boards to provide an interactive learning environment that encourages classroom participation. Staff members look for ways to show how the technology can be used throughout the day for a variety of purposes. They act as models for their students with the goal of turning over the tools to the students for their use.

Over the last three years, our district has adopted more computer-based programs to assist learners. With teacher guidance, students are able to build their phonics skills and reading comprehension through programs on an iPod or computer. It is our vision that students' learning doesn't stop at the school's doors. Using a multimedia approach, students have access to laptop computers, iPods, document cameras, and Smart Boards in order to build their 21st century skills and continue their learning beyond the classroom.

5. Instructional Methods:

Each year, students in third and sixth grade participate in the Stanford Achievement Test in reading and mathematics. In addition, students in third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades participate in the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). This annual assessment data allows us to take a close look at our students as a group, as a class, and as individuals. Staff member take a close look at data to drive our instruction in the areas of reading and math. It is through this analysis that our instructional methods have been refined or changed.

Three years ago, Highland School began our Team Read Program for primary-aged students. With the help of another elementary school in our district, lessons were developed for sixteen different levels of learners. First and second grade children are assessed and grouped according to their beginning reading skills. Four days per week they receive phonics, phonemic awareness, and comprehension skills in small groups. During this Team Read time, classroom teachers, resource teachers, the reading specialist, teaching assistants, the LRC teacher, and principal provide instruction to first and second graders. Every

six weeks all students are assessed on their progress and regrouped according to their new learning level. We are confident that the diverse needs of all student subgroups are met through this type of instructional approach. Differentiation and active engagement is key to students' success in the Team Read Program.

Students in third through sixth grade are grouped in a variety of ways throughout the day. In the area of reading they receive instruction in guided reading groups. Summative assessments are utilized in the classroom to determine proficiency in comprehension and vocabulary. For math instruction, students in sixth grade are in flexible ability groups. Math instruction in third through fifth grade is presented in whole groups, small groups, and one-on-one, depending on the strengths and needs of the students. The match between the children's learning level and instructional methods contribute to student achievement.

6. Professional Development:

Through our building-based staff development plan we have been focusing our attention on meeting the needs of students in small-group instruction. Each faculty meeting and half-day institute has been dedicated to broadening the learning of staff in order to help each learner in their classroom. During the last five years, the Highland School staff began to deepen their understanding of student progress through data analysis. By utilizing benchmark assessments, progress monitoring, local assessments and state assessments, teachers were trained to determine what the data was telling us about each student.

Staff members utilize progress monitoring to chart student growth and have deepened their understanding of how to match the deficit areas to instruction. In the last two years we have moved into learning more about guided reading instruction within a balanced literacy approach. Teachers consistently evaluate reading materials to find the best match between the resources and the students in their classroom. It is through our consistent staff development that all students are matched with the appropriate level of instruction and continue to show growth in the area of reading.

Four years ago, Highland School staff members began operating in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) at each grade level. Classroom teachers meet weekly or bi-weekly to discuss assessment data, review student progress, and make curriculum decisions. In this collaborative atmosphere, teachers include building resource personnel with different curriculum backgrounds to share expertise as they develop an effective learning environment for all students. This system allows instruction by the classroom teacher, resource teacher, and reading specialist to deliver the same curricular goals to students with a variety of needs.

In 2008, Highland School provided leadership for the district in the early stages of Response to Intervention (RtI). Three staff members attended a series of workshops in our county that provided assistance to schools in understanding and implementing RtI plans. We became a pilot school to test the AIMSweb system of data collection and began looking at students' deficit areas. Through this professional development, teachers took the lead and trained all staff members in benchmarking and progress monitoring. This led us into discussions about the ways we provided assistance and support to our learners, starting with the core curriculum in reading. Self-analysis was essential in changing the way we facilitate the learning of all students.

We know that with ongoing collaboration among staff members, every child receives what he or she needs, when they need it. Professionals in our building have a vested interest in helping children succeed and accept the responsibility of making it happen.

7. School Leadership:

The principal and staff of Highland School share a philosophy of total commitment and responsibility to the success of all students. The Highland staff recognizes that educating a student is a collaborative effort between the school, home and community. School attendance is monitored and reported to parents quarterly. Pupil-contact time is high with few interruptions to curriculum time. Students and staff come to school prepared to learn and create solid learning opportunities.

The philosophy of our instructional leader promotes participation, communication, and a strong sense of affiliation for students and teachers. Dr. Kmak's leadership of social-emotional learning (SEL) standards and a SEL curriculum is noted in her daily interactions with the faculty, students and parents. Biennial school climate surveys are completed by students, teachers and parents to assist staff in gaining the perspectives of all stakeholders. Recognition of teachers and students alike is seen in all school monthly meetings and yearly school theme. The student council and PTA promote complimentary themes that promote a positive school community.

A shared instructional leadership model is encouraged by our principal to broaden leadership to staff. Teachers are involved in shared decision-making to develop mutually acceptable goals for instruction and day-to-day operations at Highland. Individuals are expected to participate in collaborative self-assessment to drive stronger instruction and meet the individual needs of students. Flexible learning groups and facilitators at building meetings promotes leadership skills among the staff. Our staff pursues areas of interest by reviewing new research, journal articles, and books during lunch and after-school study groups. The building principal supports staff by suggesting keys areas of study and providing materials. All of these assist in the maintenance of effective learning practices and school improvement.

The role of the principal involves the blending of several tasks--planning, organizing, facilitating, promoting change, and motivating staff. She devotes time, energy and her talents to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Through frequent visits to classrooms and supervision of instruction, she provides direct assistance to teachers. She possesses a deep understanding of teaching and learning, including new teaching methods that emphasize problem solving, research-based interventions, and student construction of knowledge. New leadership positions are created and coordinated to facilitate the enormously complex job of leading instructional change. This includes flexible scheduling and training paraprofessionals, specialists and volunteers. Through our principal's instructional leadership, Highland School is a dynamic learning environment for students as well as staff.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	97	97	97	100	100
Exceeds	73	66	71	66	47
Number of students tested	30	32	34	29	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	97	100	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	100	97	89	93	97
Exceeds	50	47	46	52	44
Number of students tested	30	32	35	29	34
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	100	97	100	97	97
Exceeds	65	55	68	58	29
Number of students tested	34	33	31	36	31
Percent of total students tested	97	100	94	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	3	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	100	97	97	91	90
Exceeds	63	46	67	51	48
Number of students tested	35	33	33	35	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	3	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	94	97	90	91	94
Exceeds	28	27	15	34	26
Number of students tested	32	34	40	32	50
Percent of total students tested	100	97	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	91	94	93	78	90
Exceeds	34	54	48	47	46
Number of students tested	32	35	40	32	50
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	97	83	94	92	98
Exceeds	53	22	27	44	20
Number of students tested	34	36	34	48	41
Percent of total students tested	100	97	100	98	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: Year of Test Publisher: Pearson/State of IL

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	100	89	91	94	83
Exceeds	53	35	41	44	31
Number of students tested	34	37	34	48	42
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	2	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	98	93	95	94	99
Exceeds	55	41	43	50	29
Number of students tested	130	135	139	145	152
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds	100	75	81	75	91
Exceeds	61	20	29	40	13
Number of students tested	18	20	21	20	23
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets and Exceeds	98	94	93	90	93
Exceeds	50	45	50	48	42
Number of students tested	131	137	142	144	157
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets and Exceeds	100	80	71	68	58
Exceeds	39	15	5	11	13
Number of students tested	18	20	21	19	24
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets and Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					