

U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools):
(Check all that apply, if any) Charter Title 1 Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Rick Fears

Official School Name: Otwell Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 1869 N State Road 257
 P.O. Box 38
 Otwell, IN 47564-0038

County: Pike State School Code Number: 6759

Telephone: (812) 354-2600 E-mail: rfears@pcsc.k12.in.us

Fax: (812) 354-2655 Web URL: http://www.pcsc.k12.in.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*: Mr. John Thomas Superintendent e-mail: jthomas@pcsc.k12.in.us

District Name: Pike County School Corporation District Phone: (812) 354-8731

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. Chris Satterfield

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

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

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

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

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 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: 3 Elementary schools
 (per district designation) 1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
5 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 10900

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural
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	12	12	24		6	0	0	0
K	16	13	29		7	0	0	0
1	11	16	27		8	0	0	0
2	15	9	24		9	0	0	0
3	17	15	32		10	0	0	0
4	19	21	40		11	0	0	0
5	8	11	19		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								195

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
0 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
100 % White
0 % 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: 6%

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.	9
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	3
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	201
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.06
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 0%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 2

Number of languages represented, not including English: 1

Specify languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 33%
 Total number of students who qualify: 66

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: 18%
 Total number of students served: 36

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</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>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>24</u>	<u>9</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 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	97%	97%	97%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	93%	94%	98%	94%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

Daily Teacher Attendance Explanation

2006-2007

One teacher used 88 sick days for maternity leave.

2008-2009

One teacher used 27.5 family illness days due to a family member's medical problem. One teacher used 15.5 sick days at the beginning of the year to complete a maternity leave.

2009-2010

One teacher used 21 family illness days due to a spouse's medical condition. Another teacher used 18 family illness days due to a spouse's medical condition. Another teacher had a medical condition requiring the use of 17 sick days.

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%

“We are small, but mighty!” This simple statement is often used by students, parents, and staff to describe the learning culture at Otwell Elementary School. The smallest of three elementary schools in Pike County, Indiana with just under 200 students, Otwell Elementary is clearly a school surrounding districts can look to for leadership.

The mission at Otwell Elementary School is:

We believe that all students have the ability to learn. We provide an individualized, challenging curriculum that is strongly embedded in the core subjects and the state standards. Through the cooperative efforts of the students, parents, community, and staff, we accept the challenge to create lifelong learners. We strive to instill in our students the skills necessary to be successful members of a global society.

OES distinguishes itself when it comes to student academic performance. The school and staff are routinely recognized by two state organizations - the Indiana Student Achievement Institute (INSAI) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) - for scoring high on ISTEP+, Indiana’s school accountability test. For a seventh consecutive year, Otwell Elementary School was named an “ISTEP Top-Gainer” school by INSAI, and last year was awarded “Four-Star School” status by the Indiana Department of Education, the first time a Pike County school has received such recognition.

Over the past ten years, Otwell has steadily increased their ISTEP+ test scores. However, this year Otwell students and staff learned their school had achieved at a rate no other school in Indiana could match – a perfect, 100 percent pass rate on the mathematics portion of ISTEP+!

Otwell Elementary School is located in rural southwest Indiana. It is one of five schools in the Pike County School Corporation, the only public school district in the county. Pike County is the largest county in southwest Indiana in size, but has the smallest population. Unemployment in the county is higher than state average. In fact, the poverty rate at Otwell Elementary School is often 35 percent or greater, a percentage that regularly qualifies the school for Title 1 assistance.

The employment base in Pike County consists mainly of farming, coal mining, and small manufacturing jobs for local residents. Only 5% of county residents hold a Bachelor’s degree. There are few professional, white collar jobs available in the county for local college graduates.

The staff and administration at OES work diligently to establish positive relationships with parents. Constant communication is generated through newsletters, emails, phone calls, and parent meetings. This communication is vital to insure student success.

The book “Waiting for Superman” suggests school success starts at the top. At Otwell Elementary School, the principal plays an important role in supporting teachers. He makes sure proper curriculum is followed. He promotes a learning environment that eliminates barriers to student success. He sees that responsibility for learning is shared, and perhaps most important, encourages collaboration over competition and combativeness.

The principal has led Otwell Elementary since 2005. During this time, he has set high expectations for staff. He wants his students to be successful not only at the elementary level, but at secondary and postsecondary levels as well. The principal is an effective supervisor, keeping his school running smoothly despite the many challenges that come his way. He works with his staff to define a common vision of academic excellence for everyone, and a challenging set of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices. His teachers are engaged with one another and their students! They are supported

with the necessary resources needed for success. OES teachers are lifelong learners who always look for ways to improve instruction within their classrooms. Simply stated, OES has a principal who clearly serves as a role model for teachers and students alike.

Leadership, teamwork, high expectations by teachers, staff, parents and community, and a clear path to follow all play an important role in the academic successes achieved by Otwell Elementary School. Other elementary schools may make periodic academic gains, but OES has found a way to sustain superior student academic achievement and satisfaction year after year.

Otwell may be a SMALL school, but the ideas and practices developed by the school have had a BIG impact on student success, success worthy of national recognition.

1. Assessment Results:

As do all Indiana public school students, Otwell Elementary School students participate in Indiana's school accountability testing process as prescribed by Indiana Public Law 221. At the conclusion of each spring semester, Otwell students are administered the *Indiana State Test for Educational Progress*, or ISTEP+ test. This exam is criterion-referenced, and is comprised of two subtests, one in mathematics and the other in English/language arts.

The Indiana Department of Instruction (IDOE), using input from classroom teachers across the state, developed ISTEP+. Test items are linked to a set of state-wide academic standards and indicators in mathematics and English/language arts, grades three through eight. "Cut-scores" for each grade level and subject are based on recommendations from classroom teachers and the Indiana Education Roundtable, with the Indiana State Board of Education responsible for final approval.

Otwell Elementary School students and staff take pride in doing well on the annual ISTEP+ exam. Otwell faculty and staff have a "can-do" attitude when it comes to ISTEP+, which is clearly evidenced by the school's outstanding record of past performance. Doing well on standardized tests is truly part of the Otwell Elementary School culture. OES students have consistently scored above state average on both sections of the test over the years.

Since the 2005-2006 school year, combined student performance in grades three, four and five has steadily improved. OES math scores improved from an 89 percent pass rate in 2005, to an astonishing 100% pass rate in 2010. This perfect school-wide math score was an accomplishment no other elementary school in the state of Indiana was able to attain in 2010, a feat often cited by Indiana's public school superintendent Dr. Tony Bennett in his travels across the Hoosier state.

OES students were also able to improve their English/language arts performance over the past five-year period. Eighty-six percent met English/LA standards in 2005-2006, however, by 2010, 93 percent in grades three through eight were passing ISTEP+, a significant seven percent gain.

A closer look at the data reveals that not only a greater percentage of students are passing ISTEP+, but within that statistic a greater percentage of students are achieving "pass+" scores in math and English/language arts. In 2010, 63% earned "pass+" scores in math, with 15 percent earning "pass+" in English/language arts. These figures are significantly greater than the percentage of "pass+" scores earned in 2005-2006.

In 2009-2010, 35% of Otwell Elementary School qualified for free-and-reduced lunch assistance. Historically, this subgroup tends to underperform paid-lunch students on standardized tests. However, at Otwell Elementary School, economically disadvantaged students are able to score high on ISTEP+. Our latest information shows in 2008-2009, 79 percent of OES free-and-reduced lunch students met English/language art standards. In 2010, 100 percent, or all students regardless of their economic status, were meeting mathematics standards as measured by ISTEP+.

Special education students perform well on both sections of ISTEP+ at OES. In 2008-2009, nearly two-thirds, or 65%, passed the English/language arts section of ISTEP+. In 2010, 100% of OES' special education student population passed their ISTEP+ math tests.

Otwell teachers work in grade-level teams. Teachers cooperatively work on curriculum and lesson plans. This arrangement has led to superior student achievement on ISTEP+ in grades 3, 4 and 5.

One of the keys for success at Otwell Elementary School is ensuring students get their public school careers off to a great start. Primary teachers at OES do an outstanding job in preparing students to enter the third grade.

ISTEP+ test scores in Grade Three showed improvement in mathematics during the most recent five-year period. In 2005-2006, 92 percent of third graders met math standards. In 2010, 100% of OES third graders passed their ISTEP+ math exam. English scores increased from 87 percent pass rate in 2005 to 93 percent passing in the spring of 2010. Otwell scores continued to be well above Indiana state average each year during this period.

At Grade Four, more students passed the ISTEP+ math test in 2010 than in any other year. Math scores went from 74 percent passing in 2005 to 100 percent meeting standards in 2010. English scores improved as well during this same period, with yearly student achievement hovering around the 90% pass mark.

As in grades three and four, OES fifth graders recorded above average scores on ISTEP+. In four of the last five years, OES students scored above the 90% pass rate in mathematics, and in English/language arts, improved their score of 81 percent meeting standards in 2005 to 91 percent passing in 2010.

The Indiana Department of Education publishes school statistics on their web site. This web site can be found at www.doe.in.gov.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment data drives all remediation at Otwell Elementary. Our school improvement process through InSAI (The Indiana Student Achievement Institute) allows staff, students, parents, and community members to review longitudinal achievement data in the areas of ISTEP+, mastery grades, and promotion rates. The stakeholder groups study the disaggregated data which shows specific academic skills, groups, and subgroups that will need the extra attention. Detailed data targets are created that will be focused on during the following school year. Finally, research based strategies are written and used to meet our new data targets. This is a continuous process of review and revise, which drives our curriculum, instruction, and professional development.

In grades K-2 teachers use DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills) tests to screen for phonemic awareness. K-2 teachers use TRC (Test of Reading Comprehension) to determine if students are comprehending what they read and Wireless Generation's Mclass Math which tests essential math skills. Results of these tests are printed and reviewed by the teacher, teaching assistant, and principal. Students are categorized in the amount of help they need and the skills that are lacking. The K-2 teachers plan whole group, small group, and individualized lessons based on the results. These might include learning games, activities, computer programs, internet sites, extra time reading with an available adult, and other programs which have proven successful, such as Ultimate Phonics and Hooked on Phonics. Remediation assistants work both in and out of the classroom according to the needs of the students. Teachers monitor the students on a weekly or biweekly basis and reanalyze the plans for the students.

Acuity in grades 3-5 assesses skills each quarter to determine which students need remediation and in what areas. Acuity assesses reading, language arts, math, social studies, and science. Acuity results provide individualized blueprints for each student and are broken down by standard and skill. Teachers and instructional assistants use those results to tailor remediation activities. Students work with remediation assistants on each targeted skill and are retested to check for mastery.

Reports from DIBELS, TRC, Mclass Math, and Acuity are also used to inform parents what skills their child is lacking. These reports are sometimes necessary for relaying to parents the need for further remediation and accurately conveying the student's progress and need for improvement.

In addition to these assessments, we use classroom work, tests, and homework performance as daily tools to guide plans for student improvement.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Communicating student performance is an integral part of Otwell Elementary's success. Teachers use a variety of methods to convey a student's progress to students and parents. With good communication, parents feel informed, and students are accountable for academic progress.

All teachers grade and return papers in a timely manner. This is crucial in conveying daily progress. Parents expect to see that work each night, and students understand they are to share this work with parents. Otwell Elementary has four nine-week grading periods. Formal grade reports are sent at midterm and at the end of each grading period. Many teachers, however, send home grade updates weekly or every other week. Those updates must be signed by parents and returned to school. This insures parents are constantly aware of a child's level of success, and if a problem develops, immediate attention is given to the specific problem.

Parent-teacher conferences are held with the teacher, parents, and principal present. If retention is a concern, a conference can be a way to discuss issues and develop ideas or solutions to help a struggling student. Teachers also communicate with parents through phone calls, emails, newsletter, and notes home. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers with any questions or concerns.

Many teachers send home Accelerated Reader reports which include a student's point goal and how many points they have achieved. This encourages students to continue working on a goal and keeps parents informed on a student's reading level and progress.

To communicate student achievement to the community, our local newspaper plays a key role. Each year, the newspaper publishes an Annual Performance Report written by our superintendent. Also, weekly, our students are recognized in the newspaper for success in such things as academic teams, honor roll, attendance, classroom projects, extra-curricular events, and various other activities.

Parents and community members are always invited to special programs and academic competitions. The community is informed of our events and accomplishments by means of radio, television, school marquee, and school website.

Communication plays a valuable part in achievement at Otwell Elementary. Our parents and community are very supportive and understand the importance they play in students' success. Most importantly, daily verbal praise is always offered to and appreciated by the students. Our students are very aware of their progress, and this drives them to want to succeed.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The teachers at Otwell Elementary share successful strategies with other schools in our district through regular communication with our colleagues. We have district grade-level meetings, in which teachers share ideas with others teaching the same grade. During those meetings, we share ideas and are able to learn from our colleagues. Our staff members also serve on district-wide committees to work on various areas of instruction. Also occurring are informal meetings with other county teachers as well as phone calls and email communication.

Several of our teachers have presented ideas at conferences. One of our kindergarten teachers presented at a national Title I conference in California to talk about our pre-school program. We have also had several staff members make presentations at our annual Indiana Student Achievement Institute conference. Some of our teachers' works have been published in national educational magazines.

Sharing her knowledge of our second grade student laptop program, one of our second grade teachers has presented laptop lessons to other teachers in our county. She is also collaborating with a teacher in Westhampton Beach, NY by exchanging lesson ideas and creating thematic projects shared by both classes electronically. She provides support and information to Westhampton Beach Elementary School as well.

All of our teachers serve as mentors to younger teachers. We open our classrooms for observations by college students and colleagues. Each year, teachers mentor student teachers who are beginning their educational careers.

Our school shares a literacy coach with another school in the county. This collaborative effort allows new and inventive strategies to be shared with colleagues. Teachers with high ability students meet periodically to discuss instructional techniques and lesson plan ideas to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Mr. Fears, our principal, interacts with local and area administrators to discuss successful educational strategies. We have hosted teams of teachers to view and discuss our programs and have sent teachers to other schools to observe various programs as well. Presently, we are serving as the lead school in our corporation for Active Board research.

It is through this constant exchange of ideas that our staff is able to not only share valuable information with other educators, but they also are able to gather new techniques and ideas to explore in the classroom.

1. Curriculum:

Otwell Elementary bases its core curriculum upon the state requirements for Indiana. Every teacher has a copy of the basic requirements which make up the core of the school's curriculum. From these core concepts teachers have constructed programs at every grade level which reflect the concepts and objectives to be taught.

The teachers utilize textbooks, hands-on resources, media, and technology to not only enhance, but facilitate the learning of that core material. With these materials, teachers develop lessons that meet students' varied learning styles. Concepts are approached in more than one way to insure students learn, retain, and apply ideas and facts emphasized in state standards.

The traditional format of beginning at the front of a textbook and proceeding toward the end has been discarded. The teachers use textbooks, but not in the traditional way. Now students may be learning concepts from page 4 and page 440 in the same week. Textbooks serve only as a guideline in the instructional process.

In math, not only are the Indiana standards addressed, but also NCTM standards and methodology are applied.

Otwell Elementary staff expects younger students to become responsible for learning math facts that will be used to tackle more difficult concepts and math problems. Our teachers believe students can learn anything if it is presented in a clear, varied, and simple manner.

In reading, there is extensive use of AR books and tests in addition to each level's daily work. Poetry, short stories, non-fiction informational pieces, and novels are incorporated so that the student is exposed to a variety of literature and becomes comfortable with each. In addition to the literature, all levels of instruction address the individual skills necessary for reading success at that level, be it main idea or outlining. These skills are tested frequently and remediated daily.

In history, the textbook is helpful, but at some levels students have more than one for comparison study. These same students also see historic films, construct lapbooks and PowerPoint presentations, and at grade level 5 put together a formal research project which corresponds to a particular aspect of history and use PowerPoint presentations to deliver their research orally.

Otwell Elementary participates in Geo Bowl and utilizes community resource people come to explain certain aspects of history as they remember it. Yearly field trips are historical in nature.

Science is a combination of textbook and experience-based learning. In order to internalize scientific concepts, students must experience ideas and also read about the reasoning behind each idea. Every year students conduct a science fair in which every upper elementary student is required to participate. This affords every individual the opportunity to put into practice the scientific methods, as well as language and art skills to which he has been exposed. Critical thinking skills and hands on application are utilized in these projects extensively.

The art curriculum at Otwell emphasizes many aspects of art. Students learn to apply basic elements and principles of the discipline. They read about famous artists and view their art. Then students are allowed to experience the pleasures and frustrations of the medium used, be it ceramics or watercolor. So many of the other disciplines come into play in the learning of art that students become aware that geometry, measuring, geography, and math are highly important even when they are not defined as such. Student projects are displayed for other students, parents, and community members to observe.

This awareness carries over into music, as well, where students learn to read, play, and notate music. Their vocabularies are expanded as they study music, composers, and musicians. Math is such an integral part of music that learning of fractional time comes readily as they become composers. The use of modern technology is incorporated as our music teacher utilizes “Music Ace”, a computer generated music program in her instruction.

The physical health of the students at our school is achieved through a program of cross-curricular instruction implemented with physical activity. The instructional guidelines follow Indiana state standards stressing the physical, mental, and social well-being of students.

The students compete with themselves to achieve improvement in fitness testing so they become eligible for national recognition at upper elementary levels. Yearly improvement is achieved using dance, memory games, rhythmic, team competitions, and right/left brain activities. These activities, in turn, aid in all aspects of education.

To achieve increasingly higher levels of academic success at Otwell, faculty and staff are constantly working in tandem to evolve in all aspects of proficiency so that no student lacks those skills necessary for ultimate success in the global society in which we live. Our vision of student success is evident in all areas of learning.

2. Reading/English:

Otwell Elementary’s reading/language arts curriculum consists of a wide variety of successfully researched resources and techniques. Using differentiated instruction to teach reading and Language Arts assures we meet the needs of all types of learners.

Teachers use a basal reader which includes leveled books and lessons that differentiate reading curriculum and instruction. Whole group instruction is delivered daily, along with flexible group instruction. Students are placed according to strategic intervention, on-level readers, and advanced. Many different skills are covered in reading, beginning at an early age. Skills include phonics, fluency, and comprehension. Other important skills, such as making inferences, author’s purpose, cause and effect, generalizations, summarizing, fact and opinion, main idea and supporting details are taught using the basal reader, leveled books, computer activities, and other supplemental materials.

All of our teachers attend professional development activities to learn new methods to incorporate into reading instruction. Teachers share these ideas with other staff members, which are added as teaching tools to produce great readers. Teaching strategies include 4 Block, Ultimate Phonics, Hooked on Phonics, Tucker Signing, and DIBELS activities.

DIBELS assessments for the beginning, middle, and end of the year drive curriculum and instruction in phonics and comprehension, resulting in remediation and progress monitoring for those below standard.

Accelerated Reader encourages our students to become better readers. Students may retest each quarter. Frequent assessments, encouragement from staff and parents, and constant reminders of goal progress are essential in producing quality readers.

Teachers and staff constantly encourage and inspire the students to be better readers. Students are encouraged to read daily at home. Teachers and the librarian expose students to various reading materials accelerating the desire to expand their reading base.

Otwell staff strives to create skilled writers. Our Language Arts curriculum focuses on writing with the integration of English grammar skills. Staff members use components from research-based best practices, such as Write Traits, 4 Block, and the writing process to teach writing and grammar. Students write for meaningful purposes. Some examples include journals, blogging, pen pal letters, emails, and letters to the principal, descriptive essays, research papers, and written submissions to the newspaper. Thematic and

cross-curricular writing activities are incorporated into daily writing. Teachers edit writing and create mini lessons based on conventions, ideas, organization, voice, word choice, and fluency. Rubrics are used to assess these skills. Students leave Otwell Elementary with exemplary writing skills.

3. Mathematics:

Otwell Elementary teachers use a math series that corresponds to Indiana academic standards. The series builds yearly on the previous year's skills, thus staff must work together to build skills, introduce new skills, and remediate. Just as with our school's reading curriculum, no singular approach to math is used. Our teachers take ideas and methods from many sources and incorporate the methods that work best into their classrooms.

Our math series also includes a technology component which allows for exploratory study and presents information in multiple ways. Hands-on games and manipulatives, such as counters, cubes, number lines, and shapes, are also used to reach each child.

Teachers use technology to supplement math instruction. Such programs include Study Island, Harcourt math, Plato math, and Acuity, as well as internet sites like aaamath.com, learn360.com, and brainpop.com.

Fourth and fifth grade students apply Hands-On Equations as a learning tool to begin exploring algebraic thinking. The students use manipulatives to solve equations, and thus, are able to transfer that thinking on to paper.

Problem solving lessons and activities play an important role in the math curriculum. Students incorporating problem solving learn to think critically and, in turn, make great gains in math. Teachers use small group work and peer-tutoring for problem solving. This strategy allows for all levels of learners to benefit from the varied methodology of the teachers' instruction.

Students performing below grade level receive daily instruction with remediation aides. Those students also receive extra one-on-one assistance from teachers during recess time. Small group instruction is utilized as well as extra practice on white boards to review missed problems. We incorporate hands-on lessons when topics are particularly difficult for students.

Many avenues are used to reach diverse learners, such as DVD's, online videos, and online activities. The importance of learning basic math facts is stressed and reinforced by timed tests given frequently with a reward system. Flash cards, board races, and math games are used to teach math facts.

Our math curriculum is focused on helping each and every student achieve at a high level. We encourage students to persevere and to believe in themselves. Differentiated instruction, staff encouragement, and parental support all play vital roles in our academic success.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Technology is an integral part of curriculum, instruction, and assessment at Otwell Elementary School. Teachers utilize a wealth of resources and endless lesson possibilities in the area of technology. Students have accessibility to two computer labs that allow for multiple lab times per week, along with four computers in each classroom.

Programs, such as Acuity, DIBELS, TRC, and Mclass Math, are used to assess students' strengths and weaknesses. Other programs are used to drill, remediate, and enhance skills and knowledge. Students use Tux Math, Harcourt, Plato, www.studyisland.com, www.aaamath.com, and various other websites to enhance math skills based on readiness level. In reading and language arts, students use Accelerated Reader, webinars, www.studyisland.com, www.spellingcity.com, www.dictionary.com, online story starters, www.pbskids.org, webquests, epals, and others to acquire the skills needed. Social studies,

science, English, math, reading, and writing lessons are greatly enhanced using videos, quizzes, and activities on www.brainpop.com and www.brainpopjr.com.

Technology permits learning to be expanded to limitless boundaries. Students are provided many opportunities to broaden their knowledge using the internet, Skype, and distance learning.

Otwell Elementary School is currently piloting the use of interactive whiteboards to assist with lessons in the classroom. Several teachers, along with our principal, wrote and received a grant to fund purchasing six interactive whiteboards. This will allow us to expand differentiated instruction.

The second grade at Otwell Elementary is incorporating technology by using of 24 laptop computers in their classrooms. Students utilize the laptops every day and are eager and excited about coming in to the classroom and beginning the day's assignment. One second grade teacher has a blog site in which students post daily in response to a writing prompt. Second grade students take spelling tests online every Friday, frequently test in Accelerated Reader, and use the laptops during daily lessons. Thanks to the laptops, students are completely engaged in the lessons.

Not only do students learn basic academic skills but they also learn important technology skills which they will use in everyday life. Students learn to navigate the web, search, copy and paste, send emails, use flashdrives, create PowerPoint presentations, create text documents, use spreadsheets, create pie, line, and bar graphs, format type, and more. These skills require problem solving and critical thinking, which develops higher level thinkers. Otwell Elementary is committed to preparing our students for the global society they will enter by incorporating the latest technology into daily learning.

5. Instructional Methods:

At Otwell Elementary School we understand the importance of meeting the needs of all learners. An important strategy in our school improvement plan is to differentiate instruction and curriculum in the classroom. Staff has been trained in differentiation and has worked on this strategy for several years integrating it into our daily school culture. Differentiation training is ongoing.

We incorporate various teaching methodologies to meet student needs. In reading, we offer leveled lessons in small flexible groups. Our science textbook has leveled readers which are great for nonfiction comprehension. In the upper grades, novel studies are assigned and instruction is based on ability level. Appropriate activities are used according to level. Teachers incorporate cross-curricular methodology to enhance student learning as well.

In math, small group instruction is one way in which diverse learner needs are met. Students use board games, computer games, multi-leveled flashcards, and teacher-created materials. Teacher incorporate math manipulatives, such as coins, clocks, and counters so students have exposure to visual and kinesthetic means when learning the skill. Students are taught Touch Math when they struggle with addition and subtraction. Each student is assessed and their needs addressed on an individual basis.

Teachers use stations as a way to differentiate as well. The students rotate stations so the teacher can work with a small group of students and tailor the lesson to individual needs. Computer games and literacy games used are self-leveling and address all ability levels.

Special needs students have different accommodations to meet their diverse needs. They are allowed extra time and help, and assignments are abbreviated when necessary. Special needs students often read aloud for better comprehension, work in small groups, have the answer written for them while they give it aloud, have directions repeated or explained, check work on calculators to find errors, use computers to type instead of writing, and are taught different methods to solve problems. Our special education students consistently score above state average on ISTEP+.

Teachers in our district meet and create their own high ability lesson plans. Along with the differentiated activities in the classroom, high ability students are provided the opportunity to participate on academic teams, such as science bowl, math bowl, spell bowl, and the National Geographic Geography Bee. Some enrichment activities used to challenge high ability students include field trips to science and history museums, Lego robotics lessons, large group projects, and technology programs.

6. Professional Development:

Otwell Elementary's professional development program offers teachers diverse learning opportunities. Our principal encourages all staff members to continually look for ways to improve teaching methods as well as keep up to date on the latest technology.

All of our K-2 personnel have been trained in DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), an assessment used in the lower grades. Those teachers are also trained in TRC (Test of Reading Comprehension) and Generations Math. Our 3-5 teachers have received training in Acuity, our state online diagnostic assessment program. Instructional assistants have also been trained in both programs, as they remediate and incorporate interventions. DIBELS assessments have assisted in improving reading ability and comprehension as ISTEP reading scores indicate.

Our second grade teachers have received training and visited other schools to learn how to incorporate laptops into their educational programs, as all second graders use laptops throughout the school year. We are currently in the process of installing Promethean interactive boards and staff members are being trained in how to use them in the classroom. Some staff members have also visited other schools to learn how the boards are utilized by all their teachers.

All teachers have been educated on using a differentiated curriculum. Our staff is also offered monthly technology workshops. These workshops are provided by our school corporation technology staff and are offered before and after school hours.

Various other workshops attended by staff include training on Hands-On Math and Equations, Direct Approach Teaching, children's literature, high ability, helping students succeed on writing assessments, Indiana history, and science.

Our kindergarten teachers attend Camp Kindergarten each summer as well as attending the Indiana State Kindergarten Conference. Our InSAI (Indiana Student Achievement Institute) team attends a yearly Indiana Conference on Learning, where they gather ideas from leading educational experts and participate in workshops throughout the day.

Due to limited funding in recent years, teachers are encouraged to choose meaningful learning experiences and workshops to enhance student learning in their classrooms. Professional development is viewed as an opportunity to learn from educational experts and to apply that knowledge in the classroom. Each professional development experience should bring the opportunity to incorporate new and exciting methods to impact student success in the classroom. Student success is a direct correlation of our staff keeping current with best practices teaching and applying these methods in the classroom.

7. School Leadership:

Mr. Rick Fears has been Otwell Elementary's principal for the last six years. It is during this time our school has been recognized for improving student achievement. His leadership has provided the framework for our school's success.

Mr. Fears provides support for his staff by efficiently and quickly handling discipline issues so the classroom focus can be on education. He offers support to the teachers during parent-teacher conferences and fosters a good relationship between the community and school.

He encourages his staff by offering daily open communication and positive reinforcement with all staff members. He also makes sure teachers have needed resources, and he spends his own time and money beautifying the school grounds. Mr. Fears offers student reward and incentive programs and finds the necessary resources to fund these programs. By offering an attendance incentive program, Mr. Fears has greatly increased student attendance and, therefore, achievement.

Mr. Fears looks for professional development opportunities for his staff and encourages those who will most benefit from them to attend to improve teaching skills. Remaining informed on the latest educational workshops, Mr. Fears effectively distributes that information to his staff. He has been instrumental in the interactive whiteboard process. He was able to get several demonstration boards and set up training and observations in other schools.

Working hard to establish positive relationships between our school and community, Mr. Fears works closely with the parents and community and is able to bring in speakers and programs that are beneficial to our students. Due to this relationship with the community, he has expanded our monetary resources via area business organizations for student reward and incentive programs.

Despite being the smallest school in the county, Mr. Fears makes sure Otwell Elementary receives its share of the county's resources. He has also been instrumental in keeping our staff members when we experience variations in student enrollment from year to year.

To encourage student success, Mr. Fears holds regular assemblies to encourage students to do their best in academics and attendance. He also works on attendance by making phone calls and home visits to habitual offenders and rewarding those with good attendance. Mr. Fears uses every opportunity to encourage the student body as a whole as well as inspiring each child on an individual basis. He is always visible and available to the staff, community, and the students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	100	95	88	68	92
Pass+	43	25	14	18	14
Number of students tested	35	20	35	28	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	100	95	73	45	83
Pass+	15	7	9	9	8
Number of students tested	13	14	11	11	12
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					70
Pass+					10
Number of students tested					10
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	97	90	83	82	94
Pass+	17	35	14	14	19
Number of students tested	35	20	35	28	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	92	86	82	82	92
Pass+	0	7	9	9	17
Number of students tested	13	14	11	11	12
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					80
Pass+					0
Number of students tested					10
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTM/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	100	91	88	95	74
Pass+	48	25	17	28	4
Number of students tested	21	32	24	39	27
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass		80	85	90	64
Pass+		10	8	8	0
Number of students tested		10	13	13	13
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	90	94	88	95	85
Pass+	24	0	8	13	11
Number of students tested	21	32	24	39	27
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass		80	85	80	82
Pass+		0	0	20	9
Number of students tested		10	13	10	13
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	100	87	90	96	94
Pass+	66	9	15	24	16
Number of students tested	32	23	39	25	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	100		85	100	87
Pass+	50		0	14	13
Number of students tested	10		13	14	15
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	91	83	87	88	81
Pass+	9	9	8	16	10
Number of students tested	32	23	39	25	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	80		77	82	73
Pass+	20		0	9	7
Number of students tested	10		13	11	15
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	100	90	87	87	87
Pass+	63	12	13	18	14
Number of students tested	88	75	98	92	94
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	100	85	76	74	77
Pass+	28	6	11	13	13
Number of students tested	32	33	37	38	40
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass	100	80	69	77	67
Pass+	18	5	8	6	8
Number of students tested	11	20	13	13	12
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
Pass	93	89	88	89	87
Pass+	15	7	9	11	10
Number of students tested	88	75	98	92	94
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Pass	84	79	81	74	77
Pass+	9	8	8	8	7
Number of students tested	32	33	37	38	40
2. African American Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Pass	67	65	69	62	58
Pass+	0	5	0	0	0
Number of students tested	10	20	13	13	12
5. English Language Learner Students					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Pass					
Pass+					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11IN8