

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12AL2

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 2011-2012 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 foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
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

12AL2

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 60 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 26 Middle/Junior high schools
22 High schools
0 K-12 schools
108 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 8625

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 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	7	19		6	0	0	0
K	28	27	55		7	0	0	0
1	25	22	47		8	0	0	0
2	21	22	43		9	0	0	0
3	21	25	46		10	0	0	0
4	30	22	52		11	0	0	0
5	24	25	49		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								311

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
99 % Black or African American
0 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
1 % 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 2010-2011 school year: 19%
 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, 2010 until the end of the school year.	19
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	33
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	52
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	277
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.19
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	19

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%
 Total number of ELL students in the school: 0
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0
 Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 98%
 Total number of students who qualify: 304

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: 12%
 Total number of students served: 37

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>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>6</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>6</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>15</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>32</u>	<u>4</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 daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	97%	98%	99%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

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

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

- No
- Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

Spencer Elementary was established in 1999 as part of the Mobile County Public School System. Named in honor of Frances Johnson-Spencer, the second black curriculum supervisor in the system, the school was built to replace the dilapidated Crichton Elementary. It is centrally located in the gulf coast city of Mobile, AL. Spencer is the home to approximately 320 Pre-k through fifth grade students. It is a Title I school serving a 99% African-American and 98% free and reduced lunch population. The school mainly serves students who live in the South Crichton inner-city area. The median household income for this community is approximately \$17, 000. The percentage of two-parent households is 10.9% and percentage of single-mother households is 30.2%. Nine-percent of the students at Spencer claim homeless status. Ironically, adjacent to the school, in less than a three mile radius are affluent and historical homes, several private preparatory schools, and several public magnet schools.

The history of Spencer Elementary is very unique and can probably be best described as one of a “*Pygmalion Effect*” in which a negative self-fulfilling prophecy of *can’t* was replaced by a positive self-fulfilling prophecy of *yes we can*. In 2002-2004, the school was considered an Alabama State Department of Education “School Improvement School” which means that the school had not previously made adequate yearly progress (AYP). It was slated for State take-over if immediate improvement was not made by the end of the 2004 school year. With the assignment of new administration and staff, Spencer has made AYP since 2004. This dedicated ensemble of professionals is credited with the phenomenal metamorphosis of the school.

The transformational process was an arduous undertaking from inception. The first task included identifying and recruiting the most qualified staff that would be able to meet the demands and changes associated with “School Improvement.” This involved intense professional development and adoption of a completely new philosophy, mission, vision, and culture. School programs and new state initiatives were adopted. Practices implemented were research-based best practices. With this knowledge, *buy-in* from teachers emerged, and the mantras “*No Excuses*” and “*Failure is Not an Option*” became the order of the day.

Armed with an arsenal of strategies and methodologies, teachers went about the business of closing the achievement gap for all students. In 2005, Spencer Elementary was the only “School Improvement School” in Mobile County to make “*Clear*” status, an accomplishment we are immensely proud to have achieved. We continuously meet and exceed District and State accountability standards on all assessments. In 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, Spencer was named an Alabama State Department of Education “Torchbearer School” which are high-poverty, high-performing schools that meet, exceed, and advance the challenge of student achievement. Eleven schools were identified in 2010-2011 and twelve for 2011-2012.

The most distinguished accomplishment thus far is the nomination from the State Department for the National Blue Ribbon Award (one of five). Although we as a school operate on the intrinsic reward principle of a job well-done, there is an extraordinary sense of pride to have others recognize and celebrate the milestones we have achieved. Spencer’s achievement has also been documented by several on-line statistical data analysis groups such as Great Schools and Schooldigger. Great Schools currently accredits Spencer Elementary with an 8 out of 10 rating, while Schooldigger gives it a 5 out of 5 star rating. Spencer currently ranks 34th out of 691 elementary schools in Alabama.

Like the magnificent city of Mobile, home of Mardi Gras, Ladies Professional Golf Association, and the Azalea Trail Maids, Spencer has created traditions of its own such as our annual SAT 10-ARMT Olympics in which students showcase their knowledge as they prepare for the Stanford Achievement Test

and the Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test. Other traditions include, but are not limited to, our annual Parenting Day, Family Reading Night, Black History Program, Technology Day, Fall Festival, Spring Splash, AYP-Torchbearer Celebrations, as well as quarterly Honors Assemblies. One of the most notable and visible traditions is a significant focus on the creative and performing arts in our school. This is apparent through the magnificent displays throughout the school and student talent displayed during school events. Each grade level performs at least twice a year during school-wide programs. This has become a tradition in which students and parents look forward to attending.

Each year our school continues to enhance current traditions and we sometimes adopt new ones which are in alignment with our mission statement: The mission of Frances Spencer Elementary is to provide support to students and remove barriers to achievement. This goal will be accomplished by focusing on the total child, which includes academic and character development as well as the promotion of social, emotional, and physical growth. Our vision is for each child, regardless of circumstances and station in life, to believe that they can be successful (“We Believe We Can Achieve”).

1. Assessment Results:

The standardized assessments administered at Spencer Elementary over the past five years are the Stanford Achievement Test-Tenth Edition (SAT 10) and the Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT). The accountability assessment for the State of Alabama is the ARMT. This assessment is mandatory for grades three through five. Beginning in 2012, the SAT 10 will no longer be administered. A more rigorous form of the ARMT called the ARMT *Plus* (ARMT+) will compensate for skills not tested by the SAT 10. In accordance with the “No Child Left Behind Act,” the Alabama State Department of Education has set annual measurable objectives for the ARMT each year to address accountability up to the year 2014. Reading and mathematics proficiency must increase an average of three to four points annually to maintain a predetermined proficiency level (percentage of students scoring a level 3 or 4 on a scale of 1-4). Achievement levels are: Level I – Does not meet standards, Level II – Partially meets standards, Level III – Meets standards and Level IV – Exceed standards. The minimum proficiency for reading in 2011 was 88% for grade three, 86% for grade four, and 88% for grade five. The minimum proficiency for mathematics in 2011 was 84% for grade three, 83% for grade four, and 82% for grade five. Because Spencer Elementary has exceeded the minimum proficiency for the past several years, our goals are set to increase by two to three points from the previous year to maintain growth. We work diligently to honor this trajectory. In 2011, Spencer Elementary demonstrated a stellar performance by scoring 96% for third grade reading and 98% for mathematics, 98% for fourth grade reading and 93% for mathematics, and 100% for fifth grade reading and 97% for mathematics.

When analyzing our ARMT data, several trends emerged. Overall, Spencer's students exceeded proficiency in math (72%, 79%, 83%, 84%, and 96% respectively since 2007). Spencer teachers drilled-down to determine which mathematical areas were most problematic for students which were determined to be number and operations. Deficient skills such as addition and subtraction with and without regrouping, solving word problems, multiplying and dividing whole numbers, recognizing equivalent fractions and decimals emerged as problematic for the school as a whole. Over five years, number and operations improved school-wide from averaging 59% proficiency in 2007, 62% in 2008, 66% in 2009, 71% in 2010, and 80% in 2011. School-wide strategies such as implementing the cycle of instruction, differentiated instruction such as technology, effective problem solving data meetings, math bell ringers, and scheduling a test prep period have also been implemented to improve performance on the ARMT.

Overall, Spencer students exceeded proficiency on the reading portion of the ARMT (79%, 84%, 82%, 94%, and 98%, respectively since 2007). However, teachers concluded that strategies to comprehend literary/recreational materials, functional/textual/informational materials and literary elements and devices (4th and 5th grade only) posed the most difficulty for students school-wide. The mean percent was 57%, 60%, 62%, 62%, and 75%, respectively on comprehending literary/recreational text since 2007. The mean percent was 53%, 54%, 56%, 64%, and 75% on functional/textual/informational texts respectively since 2007. The mean percent was 60%, 59%, 62%, 67%, and 72% on literary elements and devices respectively since 2007. Again, school-wide strategies such as professional development on the cycle of instruction, the incorporation of differentiated instruction such as technology, effective problem solving data meetings, the use of materials such as CARS and STARS to increase comprehension, reading bell ringers, the “Say It Again Synonyms” vocabulary strategy, and scheduling a test prep period into the daily schedule helped to improve performance on the reading portion of the ARMT.

A stanine of five is an acceptable performance on the SAT 10 for total math and reading. Gradual improvement on the SAT 10 has been made since 2007. Overall, our students ranked at a stanine of four, four, five, five, and six respectively since 2007 in reading and a stanine of four, five, five, five, and six in math since 2007. In 2010-2011, 98% of students met proficiency (stanine of five) in reading and 97%

met proficiency (stanine of five) in mathematics. Triangulation of the SAT 10 and various data sources yielded similar results from the ARMT; that is, improvement was made over the past five years. The aforementioned strategies account for the marked gains. Spencer's subgroups are Black and free-reduced lunch students. This group represents the same students in the *all students* category. Although there are not enough students in the special education subgroup to be calculated in the state department accountability data; special education students have made significant improvement over the past five years. An analysis of student records indicated an increase in proficiency from 2007-2011. Students increased from 24% to 52% in reading and 28% to 63% in math. To close the achievement gap for special needs students, we provide multiple intervention, re-teaching, test prep strategies, positive behavior support, and PST strategies with instruction that progresses from the concrete to abstract by using real world examples.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Spencer Elementary is a data-driven organization which utilizes *SMART Goals* as a compass for student achievement. By setting goals that are *Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Results Oriented and Time-Based* we take the guess work out of student achievement. Although all components of SMART Goals are essential, determining whether results are effective or ineffective is imperative to continuous improvement. Therefore we *inspect what we expect* as an integral part of our process by disaggregating the data to determine if we have met our goals. The Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) is the guiding force in the educational process. Goals are set each year based on prior performance on formative and summative assessments. Formative common assessments consist of those required by the Mobile County Public School System as well as the common assessments created by teachers. District assessments such as the End of Quarter Tests (EQT's) K-5, Assessment of Mathematical Progress (AMP's) K-5, District Common Assessments for reading (DCA's) K-5, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) K-2, STAR Reading K-5 and STAR Math K-5 are administered throughout the year to serve as benchmarks of student achievement.

Summative assessments include the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 10) and the Alabama Reading and Mathematical Tests (ARMT) which are administered to grades, three, four and five during the spring of each year. Each year begins with disaggregating summative data for each standardized test. During the first professional development day of the school year, teachers review student and group reports to determine effectiveness of instruction. Careful attention is given to sub-tests and clusters to identify trends, patterns and gaps in instruction by skills and/or subgroups. Data forms with in-depth questions allow teachers to drill down to possible deficiencies in student achievement. Once deficiencies are determined, each grade level completes the Spencer Elementary *EQT Addendum*. This instrument allows teachers to provide more focus on the deficient skills by spreading them out over the four quarters of a year. Although skills may not be tested, students still receive instruction quarterly along with the mandated quarterly pacing guide skills as required by the District.

The use of summative assessments is an essential tool to determine student success; however, it is not the most effective resource to improve student achievement. One analogy describes educators and data disaggregation by comparing the educator to a physician diagnosing a patient. The educator who diagnoses formative data has an opportunity to change the outcome, while the educator who diagnoses summative data is conducting an autopsy and can only inform the family of the cause of death. Therefore, throughout the year, teachers meet each Thursday to analyze a variety of aforementioned formative assessments. These grade level data meetings are referred to as Problem Solving Team I (PST-I) meetings. They identify students who experienced difficulty with skills and concepts by determining which students made below 70% on common assessments as documented in the INOW Grade book printout. Teachers then examine test items to determine if there is an instructional gap in their presentation. Also, part of this data-analysis process includes determining the proficiency rate of each subject (Reading, Math, and Science) by teacher and by grade level. This gives teachers an indicator of what to expect on EQT's, SAT 10 and ARMT. At the PST-I level, practitioners identify strategies for improvement by utilizing a three-tiered school-wide pyramid of intervention. Tier I includes a variety of

strategies implemented with all students, Tier II includes specific strategies such as small group intervention, tutoring, counseling, etc. for students not responding to Tier I strategies. Once students do not respond to Tier II strategies they are referred to the Problem Solving Team II (PST II). PST II is a vertical team which includes the administrator, counselor, special education teacher, and general education teachers who meet bi-weekly to assist with students who are not responding to strategies identified by PST I. This team looks at more intense Tier II and Tier III strategies such as one-on-one tutoring, positive behavior support, assignment modification, and possible referral for special services.

Spencer Elementary believes that in order to continuously improve student achievement we must disclose our data to parents and other stakeholders. This is evident as visitors enter the lobby of the school where student achievement data is proudly displayed. Each quarter during the Honor's Assembly, the principal shares EQT data by class, grade level, and school. This not only provides opportunity for parents to monitor how the school is performing, but also allows students to attain knowledge of their performance. The excitement generated during the data presentation is comparable to that of a major sporting event. Data is also shared during our Annual Partner in Education Breakfast using a similar format. Other methods include a weekly communication folder which includes assessment results, parent-teacher student conferences each semester, and information that may be found on the School's website.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Collegial sharing of best practices is a continuous improvement effort at Spencer Elementary. This ideology has evolved over time to become ubiquitous in the District, as well. Spencer Elementary has undergone a paradigm shift over the past eight years to ensure student achievement. The school has been involved in an intense school reform model called "*Raise the Bar: Close the Gap.*" This training was conducted during the summer for two weeks over two years. It involved approximately 350 educators including teachers and administrators. This forum required that each school share best practices such as achievement data analysis. During this period, the principal also attended the District-sponsored *Quality Leadership Academy (QLA)* for two years and presented information on the aforementioned topic, as well as communication, curriculum alignment and school climate.

Teachers continue to share best practices during District training in content areas such as reading, mathematics, science, and writing. Several teachers have shared practices which have been aired on the Mobile County Public Schools web-site, local school web-site and documented in the local newspaper. These include the school's recycling-beautification program and general teaching tips/strategies. Other strategies include serving as a host site for creative arts for schools in the district as requested, by modeling three-dimensional paper art techniques.

The principal of Spencer Elementary has engaged in several opportunities to share successful strategies. As principal of a *Torchbearer School*, the principal shares lessons learned and strategies to overcome obstacles each year during the Torchbearer Luncheon that is held at the State Capitol. At the 2011-2012 luncheon, she discussed *sustainability* and continuous improvement through the use of professional literature. Approximately 25-30 educators were present, including all Torchbearer principals, the Mobile County Public Schools Superintendent, as well as state department dignitaries and system heads.

As a member of a cross-school level *feeder pattern*, the principal shares best practices monthly with a team of 11 administrators. The focus of this team is to improve student achievement of elementary, middle, and high school students from grades K-12. Deficient skills are identified as a feeder pattern and strategies for improvement are shared. Also, teachers from each of the feeder pattern schools meet to identify gaps in student achievement from elementary to high school. The principal has extended this practice by becoming a member of a small cadre of administrators collaborate monthly to share successful strategies and innovative practices to address issues that are indigenous to inner-city schools. Strategies such as team building ideas are shared.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

According to researchers of school level factors, Marzano's *What Works in Schools*, ranks parental/community involvement third out of five factors in regards to impact on student achievement ranking only behind a viable curriculum (one) and challenging goals/feedback (two). Spencer Elementary systematically seeks effective methods for strengthening collaborative efforts between the school, home, and community. An Annual Title I Parent Meeting is held each year to explain components of the program such as extended day learning and parental rights. A parent organizer is employed to work with parents on budget expenditures; organizing parent meetings and volunteer opportunities; providing parenting tips on a variety of subjects; and serving as the liaison between school and home. Each year a comprehensive survey is administered to parents to gather perception data. Surveys are compiled and the results are used for planning.

Events and activities that assist parents in ensuring students' success are hosted throughout the year. They include Annual Parenting Day activities in which parents gain insight into the curriculum and school program. Oftentimes, these activities are designed to be interactive by allowing parents to participate in whole group presentations in which games such as *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Jeopardy* are utilized to assess their knowledge of the curriculum and school program. This is followed by classroom visitations. Spencer's Annual Family Reading Night is held to increase awareness of the importance of reading. Themes such as *Edible Books* in which books are brought to life by incorporating food items are used to encourage parents and students to read more. Technology sessions offer parents an opportunity to interact with technology tools and sites. They interact with Smart Boards, Brain Pop, Universal Remotes, GIZMO, Ticket to Read, Discovery Education, Big Universe, Success.Net, Accelerated Reader, etc.

Spencer Elementary engages the community by developing partnerships with a variety of entities such as the Junior League of Mobile who provides the weekly *Back Pack Program* so that qualifying students will have easily-prepared food for the weekend. Other collaborations include involving community representatives as a part of the Continuous Improvement Team, local universities (University of South Alabama and Springhill College) who provide tutoring, as well as companies and individuals who provide monetary supports for activities such as fall festival and field trips. All collaborations are instrumental in helping to remove barriers to achievement.

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum of Frances J. Spencer Elementary is based on the rigorous standards of the Alabama State Department of Education. Our school is dedicated to implementing the basic content along with providing an array of essential skills with the use of the latest techniques and strategies. As a system, we are required to implement the instruction of the Scott Foreman's Reading and Math, Houghton Mifflin Science and Alabama Course of Studies Standards for Social Studies. Technology and visual/performing Arts are integrated throughout the curriculum. English and language arts are taught as part of the reading curriculum. Extra –curricula activities include S.E.C.M.E., Gifted Program, E.Y.E., chorus, spirit squad, Girl Scouts, S.A.M., Friday Clubs (“Boogy-Body”-movement, “Picture This”- art, “Explore My World”-science, “Word Up”-vocabulary), recycling program, french lessons, and music. As each day begins with morning announcements, students are challenged to improve their oral and written language skills with the “Say It Again Synonym” activity which features a weekly focus word, its part of speech and definition. Students are given five synonyms to use when speaking and writing. The words are displayed and used in the classroom and throughout the school. By week’s end, students submit excerpts of their writing to be heard during announcements. After morning announcements, students become engaged in research-based test-taking strategies and mini-lessons in the area(s) of reading and math to gain awareness of literary/textual and informational/functional reading texts and the basic mathematical operations.

All teachers are required to utilize research based strategies during instruction. The expertise of Highly Qualified teachers is vital to the instruction of curriculum based standards. Spencer Elementary teachers believe that in order to reach the needs of all learners, barriers must be removed. Explicit instruction in all subjects (Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education) awards the student the opportunity to gain knowledge through the implementation of the cycle of instruction, which the teacher introduces the skill with a bell ringer activity, discusses the vocabulary it entails, identifies key concepts, delivers the task(s) with practice and lastly looks for evidence of learning. Differentiating instruction to meet the learning styles of all students is a focus. As a school, we are continuously analyzing the academic progress of our students as we conduct weekly and bi-weekly data meetings.

Spencer implements the program with fidelity in order to maximize student achievement. Spencer Elementary has established itself as a model institute of learning with a flair for reaching the needs of students. One of our most captivating tools has been the implementation of interactive SMART Board activities across the curriculum. This technology enables us to reach all learners whether auditory, visual or kinesthetic. The SMART Board has heightened our students desire to grasp skills with renewed enthusiasm. This technology tool allows students to take virtual field trips to places otherwise unheard or unseen, in spite of the lack of resources to travel. The children are able to engage in hands-on activities which in most cases provide automatic feedback during instruction. On-going informal and formal observations help guide teachers in reflecting and improving their teaching practice.

2. Reading/English:

The Spencer Elementary reading program is based on the standards of the Alabama Course of Study for reading and components set forth by the National Reading Panel. Mobile County Public School system has implemented the instruction of the Scott Foresman's Reading Street series which also encompasses language arts. A three-tiered model of instruction is used. The first tier involves a whole group lesson in addition to several small group lessons as needed. The small group lessons allow for more individualized learning. During tier II instruction, the teacher meets with students identified through effective checking for understanding as needing additional intervention. Tier III instruction is conducted by the special education teacher for students who have been identified as needing additional services. The cycle of

instruction is used to deliver lessons in a way that places an emphasis on modeling and allows teachers to assess student learning at various points throughout the lesson.

In recent years, the teachers have been trained to follow the module of Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) and Alabama Reading First Initiative (ARFI) which delegates strategic techniques in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. As a school, the teachers disaggregate the data of weekly assessments, unit assessments, and DIBELS benchmarks during RTI problems solving team data meetings. Teachers as well as students are able to monitor their strengths and weaknesses by engaging in on-line programs such as *Ticket to Read* and *Accelerated Reader* which provide immediate feedback. By providing parents with the necessary resources they are also able to take advantage of the on-line learning tools. Family literacy night is held yearly in order to encourage parents to engage in daily reading activities with their children. The reading coach and Title I intervention teacher provide small group intervention for “at risk” students. The reading coach also provides side-by-side coaching, as well as other professional development opportunities in order to improve teaching practices. Our media specialist collaborates with teachers in an attempt to gain insight about the skills that would be best incorporated into her lessons. Technology is also used as a means of providing enrichment. SMART Boards are used daily during whole group and small group lessons and students have the ability to engage in activities during center time as well.

3. Mathematics:

The Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (PSSM) were developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). It serves as a resource for teachers to use in examining and improving the quality of mathematics instruction. All students at Spencer, regardless of their personal characteristics, backgrounds, or physical challenges, are capable of learning when they are provided access to high-quality mathematics instruction. The Mobile County Public School System maximizes student achievement by implementing the Scott Foresman’s Mathematics Program. Spencer utilizes the program with fidelity to accelerate learning by focusing on foundational skills, clear instructional models, and ongoing progress monitoring.

By providing Tier II instruction to meet the needs of students, teachers are able to increase the comprehension of targeted skills so that all students reach the expected outcomes. The implementation of explicit direct instruction is vital in achieving student understanding and is also essential to identifying at risk students in need of additional intervention. Students also engage in daily basic math fact drills and each day calendar math is used as an additional strategy to incorporate a variety of math skills. Many students also gain insight by working with their peers in small group workstations utilizing manipulatives to enhance learning. GIZMO simulations are also used as a tool to reinforce learning as well as interactive websites via the SMART Board such as, multiplication.com, cool-math-games.com, abcya.com and wartgames.com, etc.

The University of South Alabama and Springhill College has teamed up with Spencer to provide tutors to deliver one-on-one intervention to students in need of additional instruction. During the weekly Problem Solving Team (PST-1) Data Meeting, teachers disaggregate mathematical data using the district-provided Assessment of Mathematics Progress (AMPs) assessments. This information is used to determine which strategies from the Pyramid of Intervention will be utilized in the classroom to close the achievement gap for struggling students. In addition, our Title I Intervention Teacher has also been designated to work with struggling students in a small group setting. Spencer’s Extended Day Tutoring Program allows for additional practice of key mathematical concepts and skills.

The inclusion team is vital in providing one-on-one instruction to those students who have been identified according to special education requirements, as well as providing a second delivery of instruction. The inclusion team is also instrumental in providing instructional assistance to the general education teacher when the need arises. Enrichment is provided for students who perform above grade level through the Gifted PACE Program as well as the use of enhanced SMART Board activities.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The mission of Frances Spencer Elementary is to provide support to students and remove barriers to achievement. This goal will be accomplished by focusing on the total child, which includes academic and character development, as well as the promotion of social, emotional and physical growth. The quest to develop the total child has never been more evident than in our science curriculum. Our science curriculum is based on the premises espoused by the National Science Education Standards and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Coalition (*S.T.E.M.*). Our goal is to promote life-long learners with the prerequisite skills to make an impact on the future workforce.

The Spencer Elementary science curriculum utilizes experiments which provide hands-on inquiry based experiences with the understanding that “*doing*” science is the best way to learn science. The scientific method allows students to organize their thoughts and become critical thinkers who are confident in their findings. As part of this process, students are encouraged to generate their own questions to deepen understanding. Technology resources such as SMART Board, Brain Pop, Discovery Education and GIZMO help to extend students’ understanding. BrainPop and Discovery Education provide background knowledge on a variety of subjects, while GIZMO enables students to conduct online simulations.

Science education provides real world experiences. Examples can be found in the activities of the school’s recycling and beautification Program such as planting trees, creating a cabbage garden and recycling cans. Many activities extend beyond the school day like our S.E.C.M.E. Program (Southeastern Consortium for Minorities in Engineering) and E.Y.E. (Engaging Youth in Engineering). All of the aforementioned areas have contributed to the success of our students as well as our school. Last year, we scored a proficiency of 97% on our Alabama Science Assessment. Spencer Elementary will continue to excel in our ability to produce scientifically literate students who will continue their quest for knowledge well beyond their elementary years.

5. Instructional Methods:

One size does not fit all. Professional development such as Marcia Tate’s “Worksheets Don’ t Grow Dendrites, Michael Gurian’s “Boys and Girls Learn Differently” and Ruby Payne’s “ Understanding Poverty” has taught us that all students differ in their learning styles, strengths, needs, and abilities and teachers must differentiate instruction in order to address these differences. Differentiating instruction allows us to modify and supplement instruction in order to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement.

Spencer Elementary is dedicated to implementing the *Response to Instruction* (RTI) Model. The needs of at-risk students are regularly addressed during weekly grade level problem solving team (PST-I) data meetings and vertical problem solving team (PST-II) data meetings in which we look at what our data tells us and develop a plan based on our findings. Those students not meeting proficiency are identified and strategies for improving student achievement are discussed and documented. Prior to identifying students who are in need of intervention, teachers must work with failing students by re-teaching and re-testing. If the student does not respond to this method of teaching they are then referred to PST-1 where they continue through the model until the situation is resolved or a final recommendation is made. Strategies used for improving student achievement are: re-teaching, pre-teaching, verbal/written responses, second delivery, visual aids, think-alouds, small group intervention, peer- tutoring, the use of manipulatives, and technology.

Lessons are delivered using the cycle of instruction. This method puts an emphasis on modeling and also allows for multiple opportunities to assess student learning and re-teach if necessary. Our reading and math programs are set up on three tiers, whole group, small group, and special education resources, respectively. Others structures have been set up to ensure student learning. They include employing a reading coach and reading intervention teacher to work with reluctant learners. Also, additional support staff provides daily intervention, as do tutors from two local universities.

Technology is embedded throughout the curriculum. Lessons are delivered whole group but are also adapted for use during small group lessons as a way to actively engage students in the learning process. In addition to utilizing resources such as SMART Exchange teachers also create their own lessons in order to meet the diverse needs of their students. Teachers utilize on-line resources to accommodate instruction such as Ticket to Read, Pete's Power Point, Scholastic's Tumble Books, V-Math and many others.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development program at Spencer Elementary is a comprehensive school-wide initiative that provides high-quality and on-going training that enhance the learning of all students. It enables them to meet rigorous academic standards as specified in the Spencer Elementary Continuous Improvement Plan. The No Child Left Behind Act prompted Mobile County School officials to take a closer look at the achievement of certain student subgroups. In an effort to shrink the achievement gap, Spencer Elementary has engaged in a variety of district-sponsored professional development. The district provides training on core subjects such as reading and math, including the Common Core Standards, Alabama Reading Initiative, Alabama Reading First Initiative, Scott-Foresman Math, and the Reading Street reading series.

Spencer Elementary also engages in job-embedded professional development. An ARI reading coach is employed to provide side-by-side coaching using the coaching cycle. Also, a Title I intervention teacher provides a third delivery of intervention for reading and math. A professional development calendar is created each school year which consists of school wide focuses that targets diversity, technology, differentiated instruction, personal growth, school climate, and classroom management. Book studies are assigned to the academic teams and presented weekly at the faculty meeting. Embedded in each presentation is the cycle of instruction. A new teacher mentor program is utilized for novice teachers.

General education and special education teacher collaborations and team teach. We utilize the expertise of teachers to set up demonstration study sites for colleagues as needed. Grade Level problem solving teams and vertical problem solving teams are another form of professional development. The faculty is also engaged in Technology in Motion each quarter of the school year. A representative from the University of South Alabama trains the faculty on new and innovative ways to incorporate technology into daily instruction.

PD 360 has opened many possibilities for teacher growth and has helped us assist the administrator with providing instructional best practices. As a professional community we initiate the necessary conversations regarding instructional best practices. Teachers can view research-based and classroom proven best practices videos shown in real classroom using this module.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of Spencer Elementary is one of collegiate responsibility for student achievement; hence we espouse the philosophy of "Failure is Not an Option." Rooted strongly in this belief, we hold true to our mission statements by working diligently to "provide support to students and remove barriers to achievement." Guided by reflective practices, the structure of the school is designed to analyze all variables which may affect student achievement and organize for continuous improvement. The principal serves as instructional leader and facilitator of these endeavors by collaborating with a number of individuals, teams, and committees. This includes meeting with the counselor, reading coach, reading intervention teacher, parent organizer, attendance officer, special education teacher, media specialists, central office personnel, as well as parents and students to remove barriers to achievement. School-wide activities such as CD of the Day (Character Demonstrator), Say It Again Synonyms and Friday clubs are developed and implemented in an effort to organize for results.

The principal and Building Leadership Team (BLT) develops processes, procedures and communications that will promote student achievement. This includes monitoring the school's Continuous Improvement Plan for effectiveness which is conducted three times a year. The teams consist of internal and external

stakeholders. Processes include developing and reinforcing communication such as the Faculty-Staff Handbook, Parent-Student handbook, school-wide discipline plan, and school newsletters. Other professional development include problem solving teams which address students' academic and behavioral concerns. Special activities are scheduled in order to maximize time that teachers are given to collaborate. During this time, teachers plan by developing common lesson plans for their grade level and analyzing student achievement data.

Activities which engage families and communities are planned throughout the year. They include Parenting Day activities, quarterly data presentations, Partners in Education Breakfast, Family Reading Night, Technology Day, etc. The purpose of each event is to increase understanding of the school program and promote student achievement. Several programs such as Spencer Athletic Mentoring Program (*S.A.M.*) and the We Invest in Student Education Program (*W.I.S.E.*) program have been developed to address social needs and concerns. *S.A.M.* encourages motivation, positive conduct, and study skills, while *W.I.S.E.* provides financial support such as uniforms, field trips, etc. Local, state, federal, and privately donated funds are used to support the academic program. They are used to purchase items such as materials, supplies, and technology. Home-school-community relationships have been discussed in previous sections. All structures are set into place to "put students first."

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Edition Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	65	73	72	61
Exceeds Proficiency	80	29	24	37	19
Number of students tested	50	48	43	43	57
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	64	73	71	61
Exceeds Proficiency	80	28	24	36	19
Number of students tested	50	48	42	43	56
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	65	73	72	64
Exceeds Proficiency	80	29	24	37	21
Number of students tested	50	48	42	43	57
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	6	5	2	3	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group present.					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003

Publisher: Alabama State Dept. of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	96	92	71	81	67
Exceeds Proficiency	90	33	22	35	19
Number of students tested	50	48	43	43	57
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	96	91	71	81	67
Exceeds Proficiency	90	34	22	33	19
Number of students tested	50	48	42	43	18
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	96	92	71	81	67
Exceeds Proficiency	90	33	22	35	21
Number of students tested	50	48	42	43	56
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	6	5	2	3	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group present.					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Edition Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	93	100	87	77	92
Exceeds Proficiency	80	89	67	47	50
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	48
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	93	100	86	75	91
Exceeds Proficiency	80	89	64	47	49
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	49
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	93	100	87	76	91
Exceeds Proficiency	80	89	67	47	51
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	49
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	5	3	3	9	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group is present.					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Edition Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	97	89	83	94
Exceeds Proficiency	82	86	52	28	35
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	97	88	82	96
Exceeds Proficiency	82	86	48	30	35
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	49
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	98	97	89	83	94
Exceeds Proficiency	82	86	52	27	35
Number of students tested	47	37	48	60	49
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	5	3	3	9	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group present.					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Edition Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	97	90	89	89	64
Exceeds Proficiency	83	63	43	44	18
Number of students tested	36	48	56	45	33
Percent of total students tested	97	100	98	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0				
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	97	89	89	91	61
Exceeds Proficiency	82	61	43	47	16
Number of students tested	35	48	55	45	33
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	97	89	89	89	66
Exceeds Proficiency	82	62	44	45	19
Number of students tested	35	48	55	45	33
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	3	2	7	4	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group present. One student took and passed the AAA (Alabama Alternative Assessment).					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: ARMT

Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Edition Publisher: Alabama State Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	100	94	86	89	76
Exceeds Proficiency	74	50	49	49	45
Number of students tested	36	48	57	60	33
Percent of total students tested	97	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0				
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	100	94	86	91	74
Exceeds Proficiency	73	48	49	51	45
Number of students tested	35	48	57	60	33
2. African American Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency	100	94	86	89	78
Exceeds Proficiency	73	49	48	50	47
Number of students tested	35	48	57	60	33
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested	3	2	7	4	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Meets/Exceeds Proficiency					
Exceeds Proficiency					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
No other group present. One student took and passed the AAA (Alabama Alternative Assessment)					

12AL2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and IV	95	83	83	79	72
Level IV	80	57	45	43	29
Number of students tested	133	133	147	148	138
Percent of total students tested	99	100	98	100	98
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					
Level III and IV	95	83	83	78	71
Level IV	80	56	44	43	28
Number of students tested	132	133	145	148	138
2. African American Students					
Level III and IV	95	83	83	78	73
Level IV	80	57	45	43	31
Number of students tested	132	133	145	148	139
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and IV	64	29	25	0	26
Level IV	28	10	0	0	6
Number of students tested	14	10	12	16	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and IV	97	94	82	84	78
Level IV	82	53	42	37	30
Number of students tested	133	133	148	163	139
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	100	99
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					
Level III and IV	97	93	82	85	83
Level IV	82	53	40	38	35
Number of students tested	132	133	147	163	100
2. African American Students					
Level III and IV	97	94	82	84	79
Level IV	82	53	41	37	32
Number of students tested	132	133	147	163	138
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and IV	50	39	74	12	20
Level IV	21	0	25	0	0
Number of students tested	14	10	12	16	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Level III and IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12AL2