

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12CT2

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

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
7 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 15843

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
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	13	13	26		6	0	0	0
K	41	42	83		7	0	0	0
1	47	45	92		8	0	0	0
2	51	54	105		9	0	0	0
3	56	36	92		10	0	0	0
4	28	41	69		11	0	0	0
5	52	39	91		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								558

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
5 % Asian
1 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
92 % White
1 % 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: 1%

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.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	4
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	4
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	559
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.01
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 5

Number of non-English languages represented: 1

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1%
 Total number of students who qualify: 6

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: 15%
 Total number of students served: 86

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>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>22</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>1</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>3</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>28</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>26</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>20</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>14</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>
Total number	<u>78</u>	<u>7</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 22:1

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	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
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?

PART III - SUMMARY

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Hindley School was established in 1947 and is one of the oldest school buildings in Darien, Connecticut. However, we know that it is not the building that creates a learning environment; it's the people inside the building! Our mission statement, "Hindley School exists for children" is clearly understood by all who enter the school. These words are permeated throughout the halls and classrooms in our school building and provide a clear vision of our daily beliefs and actions.

Hindley School has experienced steady increased performance on standardized and performance assessments, such as the Connecticut Mastery Test, the Developmental Reading Assessment, and District math assessments. Our school demonstrates the ability to deliver learner-centered instruction in all content areas. Our students are reading "just right" books tailored to their individual strengths and needs. In Math the district created assessments designed to monitor curriculum and to assess student performance related to math curriculum standards. Currently, there is an initiation of differentiation of math instruction through a "workshop" model of instruction. The workshop model of teaching uses curriculum, individually paced work, student constructed meaning, processes, risk taking, performance assessment, self assessment, and individualized learning and evaluation. The strategies implemented by way of the workshop model is essential in inspiring high level thinking and problem solving opportunities in all content areas.

Hindley School is worthy of Blue Ribbon status for numerous reasons. Student performance on standardized testing indicates a steady increase of scores over several years; scores which support student growth over time. There is a level of collaboration among building administration and teaching staff which is focused on increased student performance and implementation of learner-centered instruction. Meeting the challenges of raising standards also occurs through collaboration with district central office administrators, administrative personnel and curriculum specialists.

Traditions, milestones, communication and the nature of the community and students served is created and implemented by building school community. At Hindley there are a number of opportunities for staff and students to make their mark in Hindley history. Teachers participate in various committees at our building level. Whether they want to enhance our socialization through the Sunshine Committee or become a Grade Level Team Leader (GLL) they have options for how to become better involved with our school. Adults that work and have children at Hindley understand that the more involved you become the more the school will flourish. This spring our school is participating in growing a community garden which will host a variety of ways for students to learn about the environment and how to give back to their community. There are also many other large scale efforts that help make our school unique, some of them being the Hindley Happening, Charity Softball Game and Veteran's Day program.

The Hindley Happening is a 35 year tradition which takes place on the Saturday before Mother's Day every year. Hindley School embarks upon a festive carnival, including amusement rides, game booths, food stands and community run kiosks. Not only does the entire school population attend this event, so does the entire Darien community! Families, faculty and staff take the opportunity of the carnival to bond by mingling with other school family members and interacting with each other in a different venue.

Each year the Hindley School faculty engages in a charity softball game to support breast cancer. Teachers and staff participate in playing softball by creating two teams who compete against each other on the field. Staff members announce the game, sell raffle tickets, collect tickets at the gate, while students prepare the field, sell refreshments and sing the National Anthem as Hindley School parents and students crowd the perimeter of the ball field to cheer on their teachers.

Veterans Day is a five year tradition at Hindley School. History comes alive when students meet veterans as they are honored on the stage. Students design a set of questions for the veterans to answer; other

students sing a medley of patriotic songs lead by the Music teacher. As a result of weeks of research students ask the veterans a set of questions related to the various wars and/or conflicts represented by the visiting veterans. The Veteran's Day Program has become a positive influence in Darien's public schools and as a result of Hindley's Veteran's Day Program, all other schools are required to participate with a program at their school!

Hindley is a community school. Pride and enthusiasm exudes from our building through our children, staff and parents. We feel that a Blue Ribbon school should not only embrace academic success but pride and leadership; both of which Hindley hosts. If we earn Blue Ribbon status it will be a community event not just a school-wide win.

1. Assessment Results:

In March of each year students in grades 3-8 across the state of Connecticut participate in our standardized testing process called the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). At Hindley this is approximately a two to three week process for our third, fourth and fifth grade students who are assessed in Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science (grade 5 only). The scores for the CMT are reported by scale score units ranging from 100-400. Within these scale scores, student performance is established among five performance levels for each curricular area. Performance levels range from highest to lowest as follows: Advanced, Goal, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic.

In the area of Mathematics students are provided an overall scale score which is compiled from individual math strand sub-concepts. Our state recognizes 25 different Math strands of understanding; however, not every grade level is tested on each strand.

In the area of Reading students are provided an overall scale score based on the combination of the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) assessment and Reading Comprehension tests. In the area of Writing, students scale score is created from combining the Direct Assessment of Writing (DAW) and Editing and Revising sub tests.

Students are expected to place within the Proficient to Advanced levels on the performance level continuum in the state; however, at Hindley we look for children to place in the top two levels: Advanced and Goal. We do this for two reasons: 1.) our students typically perform within the 95th-98th percentile at the proficient level across grades 3-5; and, 2.) it is clear that the achievement gap that exists in our district is between students at the proficient and Goal/Advanced levels. Our test data has provided evidence that supports that Hindley has exceeded the district average for growth over time. Teachers refer to CMT information at the start of each school year and use the data to inform best practice. Teachers understand that this information provides a universal look at a student and is used as one piece of data, that in conjunction with student work and formative and summative assessments, can assist in informing individual instruction.

For the last five years the students at Hindley have scored exceptionally well with our state standardized testing. In the areas of reading and mathematics, across the grades 3 through 5, approximately 85% to 95% of the students in all three grade levels have placed either in the goal or advanced placement for the CMT. Although the scores year to year tend to fluctuate by percentage points, more significant is the progress of the cohort groups from grades 3-5. The importance of looking at cohort data is that it measures student progress over the three years that they are enrolled in our school. When looking at our state test scores it is important to note that any sub-groups of students with under forty students does not have the results desegregated. This is reflected by N/A's shown in our data charts which are included in the packet.

In analyzing the Cohort Comparison report from CT Reports, it is noted that over four years the same students that remained at Hindley consistently progressed each year in the areas of reading and mathematics. An example of this would be to follow reading scores of our third graders to fifth graders. When looking at our third grade scores (2009), 89.2 percent scored at either proficient or above. The same group of students in fourth grade (2010) scored 96.7 percent within the proficient or above levels, and following this group to fifth grade (2011), 98.9 percent scored within the proficient or above levels. Similarly, reviewing math scores over three years with the same students the following was noted: third grade scores (2009), 96.8 percent scored at either proficient or above; fourth grade scores (2010), 98.9 percent scored at either proficient or above; and, fifth grade scores (2011), 100 percent scored at either proficient or above. This clearly indicates the importance of analyzing cohorts of students over time and

the significant impact instruction has on students that remain with us at Hindley. These overall results distinguish Hindley School as a proud, consistently high achieving school.

Several factors which contribute to our sustained highest levels of student performance include our commitment to creating a culture of developing readers, writers and mathematicians; ongoing and appropriate early interventions; and, a school culture which cultivates expectations of high achievement. Through district and school-wide professional development we continually focus on areas of effective elements of instruction to maximize learning for all students.

School administrators have a clearly defined responsibility to play a role in this process. We analyze assessment data throughout the year. In cases that evolve through our SRBI process, we review student progress toward grade level benchmarks, determine which students would benefit from support, define that support and determine how it will be implemented. In assessments such as the Connecticut Mastery Test, we review each of the strands and/or skills that are evaluated. When we find gaps or weaknesses in student performance, we determine reasons for those gaps, and map out a strategy to address those areas. One example of this occurred when “estimation” in mathematics was noted to be an area in which students didn’t perform well. We met with staff and determined ways to design instruction that addressed the concept of “estimation” in our classrooms.

2. Using Assessment Results:

“Collaboration” is the term to best describe how our school uses assessment data to analyze and improve our school performance. Evident at Hindley School is the spirit of collaboration that enables the staff to focus on improvement of student achievement.

Our Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) process is a good example of how this works in our school. The SRBI process is the Connecticut derivative of Response to Intervention (RtI) which enables us the opportunity to monitor student progress and to determine ways to support students who are not meeting expected standards. The SRBI process places students in varied levels of support wherein the classroom teacher and Specialists assist a child in a specific academic area. Teachers create specific goals to target the specific area(s) of need. Through meetings during the month the progress is reported on and alternative strategies are discussed to help support the classroom teacher. If within a designated time period the child is not showing gains (that the team deems as appropriate) a second level of intervention support will be put into place. This is another teacher assisting the child with that specific targeted goal either in or outside of the classroom. If over time the child is still not demonstrating the desired growth then more time is devoted to supporting the child, usually outside of the classroom. The idea is that with extra targeted support the child will hopefully obtain the strategies to become independent with their work. Our school psychologist is also part of the SRBI process. She will often meet with teachers to help create behavior goals and intervention strategies for assisting with classroom situations that may arise.

In the area of Literacy the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) is administered to all students, K – 5, during the first weeks of the school year. Upon completion of the assessment, teachers develop spreadsheets of the results and send them electronically to SRBI specialists (there are two in our school), the assistant principal, and principal, for their perusal. During the first week of October and at other points of the year, six distinct SRBI meetings are held, one for each grade level. Present at this meeting are the SRBI specialists, building administrators, and classroom teachers. In addition, a special education teacher, speech and language pathologist and/or school psychologist might be present. We use these meetings to review the data and discuss student performance. For students that place below benchmark, a plan is determined. The teachers, with help from the other professionals, will write specific goals and assign a time period to monitor progress on these goals.

Throughout the year each grade level uses writing prompts and math benchmark assessments to gage children’s learning, similarly to how we conduct our DRA process. Teachers meet with their grade level team members and specialists to discuss strategies that can be used to best instruct children.

Another example of the collaborative model that exists in our school is in the analysis of the CMT (Connecticut Mastery Test) that is administered to third through fifth grade students annually, which assesses mastery in Reading, Writing, and Math. Under the leadership of the principal and/or assistant principal, test coordinators and other staff analyze the CMT results. Individual student performance is reviewed, as well as group trends on individual strands. When it is determined that a number of students did not perform well on a specific strand, further analysis occurs to determine possible causes and courses of action.

Parents are formally informed of their children's progress through Progress Report meetings in December and March. Progress Reports are sent home at the end of the school year to show the last marking period growth and conferences can be set up if desired by the parent or teacher. Teachers inform parents of how children are progressing through informal emails, phone calls, and meetings during the year as needed. Once a child receives assistance through our SRBI process a letter goes home stating how the child is performing and if the level of service gets adjusted over time. Our school community recognizes that it is important to celebrate our accomplishments along the way and will often contact parents to just inform them that things are going well or when students have made progress.

The above examples demonstrate that leadership at Hindley School fosters a collaborative environment in which student achievement is analyzed and improved. The result has been consistent growth in performance, as evidenced by student performance on standardized assessments and in the classroom.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

District-wide, administrators meet collaboratively twice a month; once as an Elementary Instructional Leadership Team (EILT) and once as an Administrative Instructional Leadership Team (AILT) which consists of all schools and district specialists K-12. These teams discuss all aspects of instruction and leadership and make shared decisions for how our organization can move forward. Our focus has centered on how our leadership impacts student performance based on the actions of our teachers. In addition to these meetings, the elementary administrators meet as a group to share information and collaborate on tasks relevant to the elementary level. The consistency throughout the schools provides the opportunity for parents to feel at ease that students are receiving high quality education across the district.

District-wide committees provide a way to combine the expertise generated among teachers, administrators and specialists across the five elementary schools. The various committees include: curriculum, progress reports, behavior, special education, technology and scheduling. Release time is provided throughout the school day or committees meet before or after school to discuss the topics at hand. The work that is discussed at each committee, is shared at our larger meetings district wide (such as EILT mentioned above).

This year we have had members from the Columbia University Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project provide professional development to our school district. The instructional specialists in each building turn-key the information they learned throughout the schools in an effort to communicate effective strategies in the areas of reading and writing. Each teacher has been provided with ten hours of instruction in the Workshop Model (focusing on reading). Our Instructional Specialists coach grade level teams on writing instruction. Teachers and building administrators have attended TC summer institutes on reading and writing to lead and support continual best practice throughout the years.

If awarded Blue Ribbon School status Hindley School will be honored to have the opportunity to further share our success with other schools in the district and state.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Parent involvement is an integral part of the Hindley School community. It is not uncommon to see parents throughout the entire school day helping in a variety of capacities. The inclusiveness of parents in their child's education is what fosters a passion and purpose for learning.

Our Hindley Parent Teacher Association (HSA) meets monthly to inform parents about big events in the community and school as well as to host speakers focusing on relevant educational topics; including; Kids in Crisis, a community group involved in school/community safety; the YWCA Parent Awareness Council; and, school personnel (Superintendent, District Specialists, etc..). Our HSA has over forty sub-committees which involve parent volunteers in promoting pride and education in our school. Some of our committees include Family Socials, Welcome Center, Yearbook, Beautification and Kids Care. Each committee has a specific focus to enhancing our school community. The Hindley Happening is one of our largest social/fundraising events which takes place every May and over one hundred parent volunteers plan and attend the event to help raise money for our school. Other events such as Bingo Night and the Hindley Family Social are events that promote Hindley spirit. However at Hindley involvement goes beyond attending major events, class shares and parent guest readers. Parents lead clubs, such as Junior Great Books, Junior Achievement and Environmental Group efforts. Parents provide various enrichment programs throughout the year for each grade level.

Our parents have created an intricate parent/school website to share information with our entire community. Room mothers are assigned at the beginning of each year and communicate information via email blasts or updates in our weekly Sunday e-mailer "The Hindley Wire." In our district, we also have families from our school that serve on the Council of Darien School Parents, a group that advocates for education and communicates to help the schools remain consistent and current with what is occurring throughout the town.

Parents are a viable component to the success of our Hindley School community. The honor of a Blue Ribbon distinction is truly a shared ownership with families and members of our school community.

1. Curriculum:

The key goal for teaching and learning at Hindley School is to maximize learning through learner-centered instructional environments that promote challenge and engagement for each student. In line with that goal, administrators, coordinators and teaching staff have been working collaboratively over the past five years to design curriculum and instruction that is sensitive to the strengths and needs of all students and, at the same time, address Connecticut State curriculum standards.

The elementary curriculum includes a dedicated 90 minute block of time for literacy instruction and 60 minutes of math instruction daily. Each student also experiences 2.5 hours a week of social studies and science instruction, 1.5 hours of physical education and music, along with 50 minutes of art and 40 minutes of library media. Classes also develop their technology skills with visits to the computer lab for 30 to 60 minutes per week to supplement classroom computers and laptop labs. Instrumental music and chorus programs are provided through instruction before school in the morning. A Darien curriculum document, aligned with Connecticut State standards, specifies the instruction to occur in each of these areas across district schools to assure that learning standards are met.

The Hindley educational team is deeply involved in a continuous process of building a strong educational environment that provides challenging and engaging classroom instruction in all curriculum areas so that all students have a well-rounded program that allows them to grow as individuals, capitalizing on their strengths and developing as creative and critical thinkers in all areas. The process of balanced literacy instruction illustrates our core thinking about how children learn best. Balanced literacy integrates various modes of literacy instruction to provide a wide range of techniques to meet the varied needs of individual students so that they can meet and exceed core standards. The focus is on *developing readers and writers* who have the skills to, and choose to, read and write for their own purposes throughout their lives. Assessment-based planning is at the core of this model, with teachers learning their students through on-going formative assessments and using that information to design appropriate instruction. The teacher implements a well-planned, comprehensive literacy program that reflects a gradual release of control, whereby responsibility is gradually shifted from the teacher to the student.

The key components of balanced literacy, using a variety of instructional techniques, using assessment to identify strengths and needs, building instruction based upon assessment results, developing facility with process through content instruction, and encouraging students' responsibility for their own learning, are infused into other curriculum areas. In mathematics, teachers focus on developing the capacity of students to think independently as mathematicians through investigations, exploration, analysis, critical thinking and problem solving in experiences with core curriculum themes.

Our social studies and science programs are inquiry based so that students learn how to acquire significant information on a topic, view it critically, analyze it and produce creative ideas or solve realistic problems. Our music program is another strong example of this type of instructional focus. Over 6 years in elementary schools, students learn the basics of music composition and produce their own musical works.

One important measure of success for Hindley's instructional efforts is the results of Connecticut State Mastery tests over the past 5 years. Hindley's students in grades 3, 4, and 5 have exceeded Connecticut State averages in reading, writing and mathematics in all of these years. We are proud of these results but we experience a deeper pride in the continuous efforts of our teachers who collaborate throughout the year to design instruction that encourages all students to grow and blossom as independent learners.

2. Reading/English:

With collaboration and professional development provided by Teacher's College at Columbia University, we have adopted the Reading and Writing Workshop model for instruction. These models best serve students for learner centered instruction and differentiated instruction. By utilizing this model of instruction we are able to provide children with a balanced literacy program focusing on literature that includes fiction, nonfiction and content area literacy, and varied instructional frameworks such as whole class, small group and individual settings for instruction. We follow district created "bottom line" practices such as maintaining well stocked classroom libraries, holding reading conferences, creating word walls and scheduling daily times for independent reading and writing, all of which equate to providing a literacy rich environment for all children to learn.

We believe that children need to be exposed to the necessary tools to become authors and researchers through every step of their educational career. From Kindergarten to fifth grade children develop and strengthen reading and writing skills through daily practice, and teachers facilitate by utilizing best practices. From Kindergarten – 5th grade reading instruction includes interactive read alouds, guided, shared and independent reading, word study (phonemic awareness/ phonics/vocabulary/word analysis), and literature study. We believe that explicit teaching through the use of mini-lessons provide children with the model necessary for them to apply the skills to independent work. Our literacy block is about 60 – 90 minutes daily targeted to reading instruction and 45-60 minutes of writing instruction daily. Students are taught reading behaviors such as how to selecting "just right" books, implementing specific strategies during independent reading and applying skills learned by way of a written response. Utilizing common language through our reading instruction, students grow into proficient readers and writers.

Teachers work closely with their students during the reading periods and through small groups and individual conferences where they are able to build upon the child's repertoire of skills. Information gained from assessment data (DRA2, daily conferring and informal assessments) teachers are able to target areas that need strengthening for each child. If through small group explicit instruction the students are not making progress in a reasonable amount of time, students can be assisted by our Instructional Specialists in addition to the help that the teacher provides. It is the collaboration of professionals and the learner centered approach to reading and writing instruction that creates a differentiated literacy experience for each child at their appropriate reading level.

3. Mathematics:

At Hindley, we believe mathematics is a vigorous and growing discipline – a universal language useful for communication and research in other disciplines. We want our students to be able to reason and communicate mathematically, to be mathematical problem-solvers, to value mathematics and to feel confident in their ability to use mathematics. We create such a foundation by having a well-articulated and developmentally appropriate mathematics program for all, developing the mathematical power of each.

Mathematics is the exploration of ideas and concepts, the understanding of relationships, the ability to make predictions, to analyze data, to estimate results, to communicate ideas and to solve problems in this ever changing world. Our curriculum emphasizes conceptual understandings, multiple representations, deliberate connections and mathematical problems solving. Many of our teachers use the workshop model and are facilitators of the learning. They guide, question, listen, clarify and create an environment in which students at all levels are active participants in their learning. Growing with Mathematics and Contexts for Learning Mathematics are the core components of our curriculum, but teachers also create rich math lessons that supplement these programs. At Hindley, we monitor students' learning and progress by analyzing their performances on benchmark assessments, state assessments, and ongoing formative and summative assessments. Our school's math CMT scores are always one of the top performing schools in the state.

We recognize that students have different abilities, performance levels, needs, and interests and we strive to provide the most appropriate and challenging mathematics education possible. Because differentiation can be easily done within the workshop model, we try to include all students in the classroom during mathematics instruction. If a student needs additional support they may also receive instruction from an Instructional Specialist and/or Special Education teacher. We also have a talented and gifted program that provides students even more extensions.

At Hindley, we create meaningful experiences when teaching math, because we know by doing this our students will be much more likely to retain what they have learned. We strive for our students to gain knowledge through personal experience. The main objective of our math curriculum is to prepare all students, no matter what their level, to be contributing members of the society in which they live.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

At Hindley School we recognize that all children need music in their lives as part of a balanced public education.

Music is an integral part of our school's mission. As our school song states, "At Hindley School we are kind and accepting, honest and responsible, safe and peaceful, respectful to all." This essential message is conveyed through our school song and is sung whenever we are gathered as a school community. Our music program supports learning in content areas including literacy (speaking, reading and writing), math, social studies, science, art and physical education. In addition, music offers unique learning opportunities to explore individual creativity, artistic expression and a more in-depth understanding of past and present cultures in our diverse global community. Over the six years that children are at Hindley they have many opportunities to perform. Performing helps to give students confidence, acquire musical knowledge, work collaboratively and develop personal responsibility/character. For students with natural musical talents and abilities, music education fosters their initial learning and leads them to choices in band, orchestra and chorus.

Relative to students' acquisition of skills, an example such as the History of Rock project in 2011 represents a strong example of a year-long collaboration with the music department and the fifth grade team. Students selected a group they wanted to join and had time to work with teachers across the grade-level to research, create and develop a script for the culminating performance. The performance included the band and orchestra as well as singing by the entire 5th grade.

Grade-level meetings occurred so that teachers had time to plan. Students brought their own expertise to the program such as in the areas of dance, music, directing, organizing, motivating, and writing. After the performance, students completed a reflection response to explain what went well, what they would have done differently, what they learned and whether or not they enjoyed learning in this collaborative format.

5. Instructional Methods:

Effective instruction creates a classroom environment that maximizes student learning. Differentiation of instruction is best applied through the workshop model of instruction. This model provides individualized instruction focusing on the analysis of student work. Student work samples, formal and informal assessments, as well as a compilation of anecdotal records informs and drives future instruction. Using this model of instruction, allows the teacher to become the facilitator of learning as students become naturally more responsible in owning their learning. As a result, students are more invested in the educational process.

At Hindley we believe that children should be prepared for the 21st century of learning, which places an emphasis on technology integration. Each classroom in our building has a SMART Board which has helped to engage children in the learning process. This tool has helped to transform teaching by incorporating video and multi-media into the daily lessons. Children are more excited to display their

understandings in writing and visual forms due to this tool. Although teachers are proficient in using the SMART Board to enhance instruction, our efforts over the next few years will focus on professional development that will provide additional instruction to further enhance the use of SMART Boards as a student-directed learning tool. Currently 90% of our staff has a classroom blog or website which helps foster collaboration and communication with the home and school environment. Teachers might use the blogs to post homework, engage in interactive discussions with students based on open ended questions, or post the focus for each month in specific curriculum area. In addition to blogs, students have access to a computer lab and mobile laptop cart which provide an opportunity for our students to type and revise their writing pieces. Students learn how to use the computer while engaging in class projects such as Power Point presentations or Social Studies brochures. When attending Library each week, students use electronic databases to search for books and to research particular educational topics. Teachers also use a variety of technology tools such as Evernote or Confer Lite as a method to record and monitor individual student progress.

6. Professional Development:

Professional development activities are specifically designed to support Darien's key goal for teaching and learning: to maximize learning through learner-centered instructional environments that promote challenge and engagement for each student. Therefore, our professional development program, both district and school, has some important essential features. It is on-going throughout the year, focuses on learning that is important for effective instruction, requires the collaborative efforts of staff, involves practical classroom applications of whatever is learned, and strives for activities that are as close to the actual classroom environment as possible. Darien and Hindley School have experienced a powerful growth in meaningful classroom instruction through this professional development model.

All professional staff members have four days of professional development activities each year. At the elementary level, these days are planned by the administrative leadership team using feedback forms from staff members. Recent sessions have focused on significant topics that support our learning initiatives: strategies for designing learner-centered instruction, using assessment information to make instructional decisions, development of techniques for balanced literacy components such as launching the workshop and mini lessons and learning new instructional programs. These sessions are presented to all general and special education professionals, often in grade level groups from across the district. Built into each session is some type of activity designed to carry-over to the instructional programs in the classrooms.

Each of the elementary schools also provides opportunities for professional development. Currently, teachers at Hindley School are participating in training sessions related to implementation of reading and writing workshop for balanced literacy. A trainer presents a model of some teaching strategy in one of the classrooms for a grade level grouping. Discussions before and after the model lesson, help teachers gain clarity about the teaching strategy and implementation in their own classrooms. Other training sessions are also presented as part of monthly faculty meetings. During these sessions teachers have become better prepared to support students. Through regularly scheduled learning walks at Hindley, a team of administrators and teachers have the opportunity to collect data about the impact of these instructional endeavors on the learning of the students. Weekly meetings of grade level teams provide a forum for reviewing student work resulting for implementation of revised models of teaching to further measure its impact on students' academic growth. Both sources of information, along with student performance on state assessments confirm that our professional development efforts are effective.

7. School Leadership:

Leadership is a fascinating phenomenon. Although it comes with privilege, it also carries great responsibility. A leader's role is significant in carrying out the smooth functioning of a school.

Under the supervision and guidance of the Superintendent which is governed by the Darien Board of Education the principal of the school is responsible for carrying forward the policies and district's visions and goals. Communication between the Superintendent and the school principal occurs regularly.

Meetings with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents and the administrative cabinet take place with the administrative teams of all schools on a monthly basis. The meetings are a collaborative effort to receive information, share information and network among our administrative group to enrich and promote effective leadership, bringing out the best in each other. These professional gatherings are called the Administrative Instruction Leadership Team meetings. Typically the group functions as a professional learning community that focuses on our district goal of “learner centered instruction.”

Our mission statement is very clear: “Hindley School exists for children.” We firmly believe that all children can learn! We live this mission daily within the entire school community where teachers, staff, parents and students reflect this belief in all that we do.

At Hindley School collaboration is the focus for improving on-going best practice and a learner-centered environment inspiring the best in each student. Professional Learning Communities have been created giving teachers the time to analyze student work, synthesize data collection and learning trends; Collaborative Planning Time is scheduled weekly for each grade level providing teachers time to discuss students and share valuable strategies and skills. We meet monthly with our full faculty for communicating district initiatives and providing professional development to support the programs.

The principal and assistant principal work closely together, share responsibility for management and serve as the “instructional leaders” in the building. District Curriculum Specialists and Special Education Coordinators work collaboratively with staff, and assist in addressing the school’s needs. There is a grade level leader who represents the team in meetings with the building administrators, and who serves as a liaison between administration and grade level teams.

The key to Hindley’s success is in the staff we have hired to move our school forward. The principal plays a key role in interviewing potential staff members. This function enables her to bring on staff that is philosophically and professionally in line with the needs and goals of the school.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th Generation

Publisher: Copyright by the Connecticut State Board of Education in the name of the Sect. of the State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	97	96	97	99	96
Advanced	52	44	36	60	51
Number of students tested	67	91	93	70	81
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					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

12CT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th
Generation

Publisher: Copyright by CT State Board of Education in the name of
the Sect. of the State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	97	86	89	96	93
Advanced	27	22	20	40	30
Number of students tested	67	91	93	70	81
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					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

12CT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th Generation

Publisher: Copyright by the CT State Board of Education in the name of the Sect. of the State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	99	99	100	99	99
Advanced	50	55	68	61	43
Number of students tested	94	91	69	80	68
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					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th
Generation

Publisher: Copyright by the CT Board of Education in the name of
the Sect. of State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	90	97	100	94	93
Advanced	31	36	46	31	28
Number of students tested	94	91	69	80	68
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					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups with fewer than 20 students					

12CT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th Generation

Publisher: Copyright by the CT State Board of Education in the name of the Sect. of the State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	100	99	99	100	99
Advanced	46	47	52	65	39
Number of students tested	90	71	83	71	66
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		1			
Percent of students alternatively assessed		1			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd/4th Generation

Publisher: Copyright by the CT State Board of Education in the name of the Sect. of the State of CT

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	99	97	100	97	94
Advanced	35	46	35	38	40
Number of students tested	90	71	83	71	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed		1			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
results not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	98	97	98	99	97
Advanced	49	48	50	61	44
Number of students tested	251	253	245	221	215
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

12CT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	95	93	95	95	93
Advanced	31	33	32	36	32
Number of students tested	251	253	245	221	216
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	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
2. African American Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient, Goal, Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					
results are not presented for groups fewer than 20 students					

12CT2