

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
**A Public School - 12IN8**

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

Name of Principal: Ms. Carrie McGuire

Official School Name: Webster Elementary School  
School Mailing Address:    1101 South Michigan Street  
   Plymouth, IN 46563-1817

County: Marshall                      State School Code Number\*: 5969

Telephone: (574) 936-2520    E-mail: cmcguire@plymouth.k12.in.us

Fax: (574) 935-4976                      Web site/URL: http://www.plymouth.k12.in.us/webster-elementary.html

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*: Mr. Daniel Tyree    Superintendent e-mail: dttyree@plymouth.k12.in.us

District Name: Plymouth Community School Corporation    District Phone: (574) 936-3115

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Melissa Christiansen

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

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

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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12IN8

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

12IN8

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: 5577

## SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
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	0	0	0		<b>6</b>	0	0	0
K	34	39	73		<b>7</b>	0	0	0
1	24	25	49		<b>8</b>	0	0	0
2	45	29	74		<b>9</b>	0	0	0
3	30	34	64		<b>10</b>	0	0	0
4	34	34	68		<b>11</b>	0	0	0
5	0	0	0		<b>12</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>								<b>328</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
1 % Asian  
1 % Black or African American  
17 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
77 % White  
3 % 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: 14%  
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.	28
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	18
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	46
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	334
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.14
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	14

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 13%  
Total number of ELL students in the school: 44  
Number of non-English languages represented: 3  
Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 54%

Total number of students who qualify: 177

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: 8%

Total number of students served: 27

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

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>2</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>31</u>	<u>8</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

24:1

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%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

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?

Due to a redistricting process, Webster Elementary underwent many changes six years ago. We gained many new students and families at this time, as well as a new principal and several new staff members. Although we underwent all of these changes at the same time, we managed to have a lot of success with all of our students and families. Our school was honored as a National Title I Distinguished School for High Achievement in 2008. We were also named a Four Star School by the Indiana Department of Education for both the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years, in addition to receiving an “A” rating designation from the Indiana Department of Education.

Although we have just over half of our students who receive free or reduced meals, we are still able to maintain proficiency rates on the ISTEP+ (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) that have been at or above ninety percent the last two years. We are worthy of recognition because we have proven our success with all students, including the ones from disadvantaged or non-English speaking homes and families, as well as our students who have special needs. We have high expectations for all of our students.

We believe our success can be attributed to our Core Values and Mission Statement. The Mission Statement of Plymouth Community School Corporation is to “commit to doing whatever it takes to maximize academic and social achievement of every individual as measured by state and community standards.” The Core Values of Plymouth Community School Corporation include: a Commitment to Students which includes utilizing strategies that work and doing what is best for kids; Caring by respecting and nurturing one another, as well as their diversity by being compassionate and showing empathy and tolerance; High Expectations which include a challenging curriculum with differentiated instruction and communication of expectations; being Team Players who collaborate and work cooperatively for the good of the whole while helping those in need by embracing diverse thoughts and ideas to build positive relationships; having Integrity by being accountable and dependable, as well as honest with one another while following through and behaving honorably; Enjoyment which includes celebrating success and engaging students by promoting a sense of belonging and providing positive feedback.

Webster Elementary staff and families have always taken great pleasure in being the “Pride of the South Side” within the Plymouth Community School Corporation. We even have a song that children learn beginning in kindergarten and sing as a whole school on our morning announcements every Friday. Our school slogan is that we strive to create opportunities for students to be “On Track to the Future.” We work very hard with parents, families, and members of the community to prepare our children for future successes.

### 1. Assessment Results:

A. The purpose of the mandatory Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+) program is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (Grades 4 and 6 only), and Social Studies (Grades 5 and 7 only). In particular, ISTEP+ reports student achievement levels according to the Indiana Academic Standards that were adopted in November 2000 by the Indiana State Board of Education. An Applied Skills Assessment and a Multiple-Choice Assessment, which are required components of the ISTEP+ program, are used to measure these standards. Cut scores are set for each grade level in each subject tested.

Students demonstrate proficiency by exceeding the pre-determined cut scores. Students who exceed the cut score are determined to have reached or exceeded proficiency in the tested area. These students are ranked either “Pass” or “Pass+”. Passed+ indicates a high level of proficiency as determined by an additional cut score. Students who did not meet the tested proficiency are ranked “Did Not Pass”.

As evidenced in the data portion of this application, we have had a steady overall increase in our state mandated ISTEP+ (Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress) pass rates in the past five years. Our fourth grade mathematics scores have gone from eighty percent passing in 2006-2007 to ninety-five percent of students passing in 2010-2011. Our fourth grade English/language arts pass rates increased from eighty-one percent of students to ninety-six percent. Our third grade scores have also shown great increases over the same period of time. Third grade English/language arts scores went from only eighty-two percent passing to ninety-four percent passing. Math scores for the same group increased from sixty-seven percent to ninety-one percent.

As part of our membership and accreditation through the Indiana Coalition of Quality Schools, we set our level of proficiency at a minimum of ninety percent of student passing. Indiana has recently started measuring the amount of student growth made by students from the ISTEP+ administration at the end of their third grade year to the ISTEP+ given at the end of their fourth grade year. Forty-nine percent of our fourth graders exhibited high growth (at or above the sixty-fifth percentile) on their 2011 ISTEP+ mathematics test. Indiana now measures all schools on a growth and proficiency matrix, on which we strive to maintain both higher than state average levels of students passing the ISTEP+ and higher than average levels of growth on the test.

B. Since 2006, our scores on the ISTEP+ (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) tests have increased in both math and reading/English language arts. We test third and fourth graders on the ISTEP+ test. During the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education switched their ISTEP test window from the end of September, when we did the entire test in one session, to a spring session, in which we give the applied skills portion in March and the multiple choice session in late April or early May. The Indiana Department of Education also added an assessment measure of schools that included a growth factor as part of the school accountability measures.

In the 2006-2007 school year, we had eighty-two percent of our third grade students who were considered as passing the reading/English language arts portion of the ISTEP + assessment, this percentage has gradually risen to ninety-seven percent in the 2009-2010 school year and then ninety-four percent in the 2010-2011 year. Our percentage of students who were at an advanced (Pass+) level increased from eight percent in 2006 to sixteen percent in 2011. Our percentage of free and reduced children passing the third grade reading/English language arts (ELA) portion of the ISTEP+ went from just seventy-one percent in 2006-2007 to ninety-four percent in 2010-2011. Our fourth grade scores showed an increase from eighty-one percent proficient in 2006-2007 to ninety-six percent in English language arts in the 2010-2011 school year. We had a gradual increase during this time, except for a drop in 2008-2009. Our free and

reduced subgroup showed a large rise in the percentage of students passing, from a score of only fifty-nine percent in 2006-2007 to ninety-four percent in 2010-2011. We also had one hundred percent of our Hispanic or Latino students pass the fourth grade ELA portion of the ISTEP+ test.

Our mathematics scores showed increases similar to our English language arts (ELA) portion of the ISTEP+ test. Our third grade math scores went from only a sixty-seven percent pass rate in 2006-2007 to a high of ninety-seven percent passing in 2009-2010, then dropped a bit to ninety-four percent passing in 2010-2011. The fourth grade students math scores on ISTEP went from just eighty percent passing in 2006-2007 to ninety-five percent passing in 2010-2011. Our fourth grade free and reduced population had an increase that was very similar to the overall fourth grade students. The free or reduced students in fourth grade saw an increase from seventy-one percent to ninety-four percent in the same five year time frame. Third grade scores for the same subgroup had an even greater increase in their pass rates, going from just fifty-seven percent of the free and reduced children passing math to ninety-four percent.

There are a number of factors that we believe have contributed to the increases in the number of students passing that we have seen over the past five years, but the main factor would be our structured schedule and reading blocks, in order to maximize student learning. We managed to create a schedule in which each grade level has a ninety minute uninterrupted reading block, as well as a thirty minute reading intervention, that is the same for all classes within that grade level. This allows us to group children across the grade level based on their needs. We have a variety of research based interventions we use to match children with the instruction that they need, while still keeping these groups flexible enough to move children as they advance or their needs change. We progress monitor all children who are not at benchmark every three weeks to assess whether their interventions are working. Although we are not as far along on our path to creating this same type of framework for math, we have been able to create a daily thirty minute math intervention for each grade level, which provides us with the opportunity to also group children across a grade level in order to better meet student needs.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

A) We pride ourselves in making data based decisions. We have many different forms of data that we use to make decisions for individual students including: small, flexible intervention groups, whole classes, a grade level, or the school as a whole. As part of our accreditation process through the Indiana Coalition for Quality Schools, we have regular S2S (System to System) talks. Our S2S talks take place in a “bottom up” type of format. The most basic foundation level of these occur on a weekly basis as teachers in second through fourth grades discuss Accelerated Reader goals and tests with their students during their reading block. Teachers participate in weekly thirty minute collaboration sessions with the principal that function as S2S talks. The principal then meets with the superintendent throughout the year for a school wide S2S session.

We have several other pieces of data that we use to “customize” the interventions and learning programs for children. In the area of reading and language arts, we also use STAR Reading and Acuity Diagnostic and custom assessments, to decide on the best plan of action for each child. Although DIBELS Benchmark Assessments, Text Reading Comprehension (TRC), and the STAR Reading Tests are only administered three times per year, we conduct DIBELS progress monitoring every three weeks and review the children's Accelerated Reader tests taken on a weekly basis. Our corporation has written our own common assessments that are given twice in each nine week grading period, which we use to determine what skills have been mastered and by whom, as well as which standards students are struggling with.

In the area of math, we are currently using DIBELS Math in grades kindergarten through second and STAR Math in second through fourth grades. Both of these assessments are administered three times per year. We progress monitor children who are not at benchmark on their DIBELS tests every three weeks and we also monitor how children in second through fourth grades are doing on their Accelerated Math

and Math Facts in a Flash. We have just started using the Apangea Math in our third and fourth grade classrooms.

We are currently using Acuity Diagnostic Curriculum Map Aligned (CMA) Assessments in third and fourth grades to determine which instructional resources we should assign to individual or small groups of students. Some students participate in the Autoskills computer based program. This is available in both math and language arts and it assesses students in order to “place” them in specific lessons or activities within the program where the individual child shows they are experiencing deficiencies.

B) Every three weeks, students who are not at benchmark based on their DIBELS Assessments are progress monitored and their results shared with them. All students at Webster Elementary are administered the DIBELS Benchmark Assessment three times per year and these results, as well as a Home Connect letter with suggested activities are provided to parents. Families who need this information in Spanish are given it in their language of choice. The DIBELS Benchmark results are one piece of information that we use to design intervention plans for students. Our parents and families have access to the Renaissance Place Program from wherever they have access to the internet. We have a Parent Resource Center located in our media center with internet and other resources available for use by our families any time the building is open. Through our monthly Parent Teacher Organization meetings, school wide data about assessment results is shared with our families. In the fall, after conducting our Beginning of the Year (BOY) STAR and DIBELS Assessments, we schedule conferences with all parents and families to review their child's progress, as well as our plan for their child. In the past five years, we have had over a ninety-eight percent participation rate at our fall conferences.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

After being designated as a National Title I Distinguished School, we shared information and strategies with several other schools. This took on a variety of formats. Our principal and Title I reading resource teacher presented sessions at a state Title I Directors Conference, as well as took part in a panel discussion with a question and answer session to explain strategies that had worked to improve student achievement within our building. We have always opened our building to both college students involved in coursework and required observations and student teachers. We have had Title I teachers, as well as other teachers representing kindergarten through eighth grade visit our building from within our local special education cooperative that represents nine other surrounding school corporations or districts. We have opened our building and hosted staff from other buildings in our corporation, including our intermediate building (fifth and sixth grades) and our junior high (seventh and eighth grades).

Our corporation provided for many opportunities for staff to participate in professional development and learning or sharing activities. We have three full days of professional development and sharing that are built into our calendar, which provides us with the opportunity to share across the corporation, both horizontally and vertically for alignment and best strategies. In order to promote the sharing of ideas and promote innovation in the area of reading, we have a corporation wide Reading Leadership Team and participate in our local Marshall County Reading Council, where our staff members have presented a variety of topics that we have found to be beneficial for maximum student learning. There are many opportunities available to our staff who are interested in sharing ideas and receiving professional development. New staff to the district participate in a three year teacher induction program that requires collaboration and sharing of ideas. Through the use of technology, we have many opportunities for our staff to communicate and collaborate with others. We have offered a variety of staff development opportunities for new and veteran staff. Staff members are often given the opportunities to participate in staff development they believe will be beneficial to them. These opportunities occur in the form of podcasts, webinars, optional staff meetings, and web-ex sessions. Our teachers and staff are also involved in a variety of professional growth activities that are completed through the use of technology. Each teacher or grade level has a moodle or website where they can share ideas, and are enrolled in communities within our Indiana Learning Connection website. In addition to these opportunities, many of our staff are sharing ideas through electronic methods such as Proteacher.com and Pinterest.

#### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

We have an exceptional amount of volunteers within our school. There is not a time when you could come to our school and not find volunteers working in our classrooms or with students. So far this year, we have completed 277 criminal history background checks for individuals wanting to volunteer at our school. In the past five years, we have had over ninety-nine percent of our students with families participating in at least two school related events per school year. Part of the reason for our high level of family and parent involvement has to do with the active role that our Parent Teacher Organization takes in informing and involving parents in both academic and non-academic opportunities available to them.

We host events that take place on the weekends and are available to all families at no cost. Some of our PTO sponsored events include Donuts for Dad, Muffins for Mom and our Landscaping Day. We believe that if we can get families into our building for events such as these, we will be more successful in involving them in events that promote academics. Meet the Teacher Night was started three years ago, and has been very well attended and proved to be quite successful in familiarizing parents and students with the school. Our Kindergarten Round-Up, hosted each April, is open to all families of incoming kindergarten students' families. During Kindergarten Round-Up, we not only provide information to incoming families, but also a free book and kit of learning activities for children to take home with them. As part of our participation in the Indiana Parent Academy during the 2010-2011 school year, we were able to train a team of parents and school staff, as well as analyze and gain input from all of our families about how to improve communication and increase family engagement. We are in the process of implementing a Parent Partnership, which partners a "veteran" Webster Elementary parent or guardian with a new incoming parent or guardian.

## 1. Curriculum:

As a kindergarten through fourth grade elementary school, we have a primary focus of teaching children to read and enjoy both reading and learning. Indiana has very rigorous academic standards and Webster Elementary, as part of the Plymouth Community School Corporation, places an emphasis on learning the standards set forth by the Indiana Department of Education. Our primary focus in all that we do, from our creation of schedules to allocation of resources and personnel, is on teaching children how to read. The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has a wealth of resources available for schools to assist with teaching and assessing the state standards. The IDOE website has many curriculum resources. In addition to listing the state standards and descriptors, they also provide sample lessons, activities, and assessments that can be used in the classroom. Indiana has created an online resource, called the Learning Connection, that provides many ways to access the standards. There are curriculum maps, assessment guides, sample lessons, and “communities” which school personnel can join to share resources and electronically discuss a wide variety of topics.

We are able to teach and incorporate many of the other subject areas within our 90 minute reading block on a daily basis in order to maximize our time. Our second grade students each have their own computer that is used on a daily basis, whereas the third and fourth graders use the computers about two or three times per week. Second through fourth grade classes also receive practice in their technology skills during weekly keyboarding and technology sessions using a training website at Learning.com. Our science and social studies, as well as other non-fiction and informational text, is used as often as possible to teach skills within our reading, such as main idea, details, and sequencing at all grades. Each child at Webster receives eighty minutes a week of music, as well as eighty minutes of physical education. Art/visual arts is taught for fourth minutes each week to every class, by a certified teacher, who also serves as a high ability resource for the classroom teachers and helps to incorporate more higher level thinking and creative activities and lessons into the classrooms.

Much of our staff training and professional development has been spent in horizontal teams, where we have developed flight plans, pacing guides, and now curriculum maps, so we can make sure the standards are not only taught, but also assessed. We have a curriculum map for each grade level that identifies the “power standards” and creates a calendar for when they are taught and assessed in each classroom. This system has been in place for both math and ELA for the past four years, but we have begun to apply the same sort of system to the other subjects, including social studies and science, within the last two years. We are in the process of aligning other areas such as physical education, music, and art to the calendar and incorporating what is done in the classrooms into these “specials” areas. We have worked hard over the past two to three years to align our science and social studies curriculum with our reading and incorporate these topics into our ninety minute reading block. All students are assessed on their progress over state standards every three to four weeks in alignment with our pacing guides. We have created corporation common assessments used to measure mastery, as well as alternate forms of the assessments to be used when the material has been re-taught.

The last time we adopted a reading series, we looked for a core program that was well aligned with the Indiana English language arts (ELA) standards. This is our fifth year using the Scott Foresman Reading Street Series. This series incorporates many components that provide for a well-rounded program of instruction, including an intervention program (My Sidewalks) that makes it easy to meet the needs of a variety of learners. Scott Foresman Reading Street has a strong component for use with English Language Learners that we have found very useful for that population in our building. Plymouth Community School Corporation has placed an emphasis on teaching the standards and having a well developed and implemented system for doing so.

For the past twelve years, we have used Saxon Math as our core math program. We just switched to Envision Math beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, which is aligned to the Common Core Standards. In addition to our core math program, we use a variety of other programs to assist children in their math. We use a lot of the DIBELS Math “Now What” Class Activities in kindergarten, first, and second grades. In second through fourth grades, we are also able to use Renaissance Programs, including Accelerated Math and Math Facts in a Flash to supplement our core program. We have been using Acuity Assessments and Instructional Resources in third and fourth grades, which are directly aligned to the state standards and can be assigned to individual or small groups of students who need the extra practice.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Plymouth Community School Corporation decided to follow the Reading First Model to design our corporation's reading program. Although we were not an official Reading First school, we decided to proceed with implementing the components of a Reading First Program. We focus on the five components of reading and train staff members in these components. We administer the Dynamics Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Assessment to all students within the first two or three weeks of school. In second, third, and fourth grades, we also assess students using the STAR Reading Assessment. DIBELS has a Text Reading Comprehension (TRC) portion, which we started administering to all kindergarten, first, and second graders three years ago.

After all children are assessed, the teachers within each grade level collaborate with the principal and intervention/resource teachers to develop small groups for students who are in need of Tier II and Tier III interventions. All children participate in a ninety minute reading block daily, which includes no more than thirty minutes of whole group instruction, while the rest of the time is spent in small group, independent work, or center activities. Students who are not at benchmark are then placed into interventions. Students in need of strategic intervention support receive thirty additional minutes of small group instruction daily, while students who are in need of more “intensive” interventions receive sixty minutes daily of intervention.

We utilize only research based activities or interventions in our reading program and make sure students in need of the most support are given instruction by the most qualified staff. The Florida Center for Reading Research website is one resource that we rely on when we are looking for center, small group, or intervention programs and activities. We have a wide variety of research based intervention programs we can select from when trying to meet a child's deficiencies. From programs like Read Naturally or Fluency First that work on increasing a child's fluency, to Sounds Sensible and Touch Phonics that focus on phonics, or Read Well and Insights which build comprehension strategies. We also have Phonemic Awareness interventions such as Earobics and more vocabulary based interventions such as Text Talk. We truly match a child's needs to their small group and interventions they will receive. We do not group students based on their “label” as a special education, English as a New Language, or Title I student. We have a very effective tiered reading program that meets the diverse needs of our students.

## **3. Mathematics:**

We used Saxon Math for the past twelve years and just switched to Envision Math for the 2011-2012 school year, since it is aligned with the Common Core Standards. In addition to our core math program, we also have other math programs that we can use with our students. In kindergarten, first, and second grades, we started assessing students with the mClass/DIBELS Math Assessments three years ago. This assessment is administered three times per year and students not at benchmark are progress monitored every three weeks, just like we do with the DIBELS Reading. Students in these grades that are not at benchmark receive thirty minutes daily of math intervention. In second through fourth grades, we administer the STAR Reading Assessment three times per year and use Accelerated Math to meet children's needs. ISTEP+ scores and Acuity Predictive and Diagnostic Assessments are utilized in third and fourth grades to decide which students are in need of interventions.

Once a child is placed in math interventions, we group them with other children within the grade level who have similar needs. We have many resources available to us when working with children who need additional support in math. In addition to the programs mentioned previously, some of the other programs we have include Touch Math, Math Facts in a Flash, Autoskills Math, DIBELS Math Tools, and the Acuity Instructional Resources. We started using Apangea Math in third and fourth grades this year.

Our corporation has designed its own curriculum maps and pacing guides of assessments. Our pacing guides lay out the common assessments that are administered every four weeks. This has worked well to keep all teachers on track for student mastery of standards. The pacing guides create an opportunity for teachers to re-teach skills in a smaller group during their math block or intervention time, and then to reassess student mastery. Since all students within a grade level are working on the same standards at the same time, our resource teachers are able to focus on and support the skills children are working on in their classrooms.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Our art teacher supports what teachers and students are also doing in their classrooms. The art teacher has been our high ability or gifted and talented teacher for many years. She has extensive training in differentiated instruction, higher level questioning and thinking, and brain based research. We share an art teacher with another elementary school, so she teaches art in each building two days a week. One full day each week is dedicated to planning high ability or enrichment activities that will be used with students who we have placed in a high group for the thirty minutes of intervention time each day. In addition to working with teachers at each grade level to plan activities for students who are in the high group during interventions each day, the art teacher also uses the pacing guides to plan her activities. All of our special subject teachers have been working to incorporate more writing and speaking within their classrooms. Art projects are assessed on rubrics that include the student's writing or sharing of their work.

Each of our grade levels is responsible for teaching children how to use and create specific “products” in which students can demonstrate mastery of their knowledge. Our art teacher works with the classroom teachers and has access to the products matrix so she can teach and utilize the products the child is learning within their classroom during that school year. Our special subject teachers have worked to create their own pacing guides and common assessments, as well as pre and post tests to measure student learning. With the transition to the Common Core Standards, our art and other special subject teachers have been working on creating lessons and assessments that incorporate more of the skills students will be expected to learn at each grade level.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

As part of a corporation plan put into place in response to our corporation being placed in Title I Improvement status, each of our certified staff members were required to take a class in differentiated instruction. All of our elementary teachers completed this course in less than two years. One representative from each grade level participated in differentiated instruction training with Carolyn Coil. Utilizing a train-the-trainer model, these grade level representatives shared the strategies and techniques they learned with others in our building. We called this team our DIRT (Differentiated Instruction Resource Team). We created a matrix of differentiated instruction products that were to be taught and utilized at each grade level. During classroom observations, one component we are looking for is differentiation of instruction. Teachers and staff have been trained in how to differentiate based upon a student's ability level, learning style, choice activities, assessment techniques, as well as other methods of differentiation.

We utilize a variety of tools, many of which are technology based, to not only meet the needs of students, but also to assess each child. The data collection and assessment tools used in kindergarten and first grade include the DIBELS Reading, DIBELS Math, and DIBELS TRC. In addition to the tools used in kindergarten and first grade, we also use Acuity custom tests, as well as STAR Reading and STAR Math

in second grade. Third and fourth grade levels use DIBELS Reading, but also incorporate the STAR Reading and STAR Math assessment tools and the Acuity tests. We have many technology based programs that enable us to meet students' needs, including Autoskills, Acuity, Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, Math Facts in a Flash, and Apangea Math.

A half hour each day is dedicated to reading intervention. During this time, all of the children in a grade level receive targeted instruction to meet their needs. We conduct interventions in small groups and match the program we are using to the child's needs. Students who are performing at a high level are grouped with one another during this time. We also provide a half hour daily of math intervention, which enables us to provide the same sort of instruction and grouping in math. Within their ninety minute reading block, teachers are allowed to teach in a whole group setting for no more than thirty minutes. The other sixty minutes is spent in either small, flexible groups, independent work, or centers. This time allows teachers to meet the needs of students better than they are able to do in a large whole group setting.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Our staff members have a wide variety of professional development opportunities available to them. Plymouth Community Schools has a great teacher induction program that is required for all new teachers. They participate in several days of activities prior to the beginning of the school year, as well as classes in Instructional Process and Differentiated Instruction within their first two years of teaching. We also match each new teacher with a mentor teacher and provide stipends for our certified mentors.

Students are dismissed thirty minutes early each Friday. This time is then “banked” and used to provide three full days of professional development each school year. These three days are built into our teacher contract and are required. Much of the training and development that takes place on these days has been done in horizontal/grade level teams. This time has been used to create flight plans, pacing guides, and curriculum maps. We have also taken time discuss and plan how the differentiated instruction products and technology can be incorporated into our standards. Teachers have worked to analyze and develop assessments that measure the students' mastery of standards.

Plymouth Community Schools has provided staff members with a variety of opportunities for professional learning. We have a help desk for staff that includes a variety of webinars and videos available for staff members. Each summer, we offer courses to staff members and provide them with an opportunity to attend “tech camp”, in which they choose from a variety of technology related trainings. Some of our professional development days have been choice opportunities for teachers, which we offer a variety of sessions and they are able to choose the ones that best meet their needs. Almost all of our staff meetings are devoted to professional development and many are led by other members of our staff.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Although our building has a principal, there are many others in leadership roles in our building, so it is more of a “shared” leadership situation. While our principal meets with other administrators within the corporation and the superintendent to develop the “non-negotiables” for the buildings, there are still many decisions that are made at the building level. In addition to our principal, we have a Title I/reading resource teacher who has an important leadership role in the building. We also have several teachers who have been trained and are certified to be mentors to new teachers. Our Title I teacher is also a certified mentor teacher.

Our principal's role is to ensure that policies and procedures are implemented and followed, as well as ensuring that resources are allocated and utilized to maximize student learning. One of the main roles of the principal is in developing a master schedule that ensures each grade level has a ninety minute uninterrupted reading block and thirty minutes daily for both math and reading interventions. The principal ensures that personnel are scheduled to provide as much support for the classrooms as possible. Another important role of the principal is in recruitment, hiring, training, retention, and evaluation of

staff. Student safety, compliance with state mandates and reporting, and accreditation responsibilities are duties that fall on the building principal.

The principal also has to take an active role as the instructional leader in the building. The most effective way that this takes place is in collaboration meetings with teachers. In addition to weekly collaboration meetings between the principal and the teachers at each grade level, which may also include the Title I and special education resource teachers, we have a building wide discussion meeting once per month. Topics for the discussion meeting may be submitted by any staff member and everyone is welcome to attend the discussions. Our teachers take turns attending our PTO meetings and we have started to include parents in some of our committees. A recent example of sharing leadership was in the creation of our building's policies, procedures, and character education program. We built a team that included teachers, classified staff, and parents to develop our policies and procedures, as well as a cafeteria incentive program that we will be implementing starting this school year.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: New edition published each year Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	97	79	69	67
Pass Plus	16	11	19	18	9
Number of students tested	69	70	72	65	76
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	97	71	69	57
Pass Plus	11	6	14	16	6
Number of students tested	36	32	28	32	35
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
Pass Plus					
Number of students tested				1	
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	86			60	31
Pass Plus	0			10	8
Number of students tested	14	6	8	10	13
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+				31	30
Pass Plus				8	10
Number of students tested	7	3	8	13	10
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+				50	10
Pass Plus				10	0
Number of students tested	3	4	5	10	10
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
Pass Plus					
Number of students tested	2	7	3	3	1
<b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: NEW EDITION EACH YEAR Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	97	86	85	82
Pass+	16	11	8	9	8
Number of students tested	69	70	72	65	76
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	97	82	91	71
Pass+	11	6	4	6	6
Number of students tested	36	32	28	32	35
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
Pass+					
Number of students tested				1	
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	86			80	62
Pass+	0			0	8
Number of students tested	14	6	8	10	13
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+				38	30
Pass+				8	0
Number of students tested	7	3	8	13	10
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+				80	50
Pass+				0	0
Number of students tested	3	4	5	10	10
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
Pass+					
Number of students tested	2	7	3	3	1
<p><b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.</p>					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: New Edition published each year Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	95	94	78	83	80
PASS+	33	40	10	14	17
Number of students tested	79	62	59	76	75
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1				
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	92	72	74	71
PASS+	19	28	7	5	3
Number of students tested	36	25	29	38	34
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested	1		1	2	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	100		67	90	
PASS+	18		0	20	
Number of students tested	11	5	12	10	9
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+			67	62	
PASS+			8	8	
Number of students tested	1	5	12	13	7
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested	2	4	6	7	8
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested	3	3	2	2	3
<p><b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.</p>					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: ISTEP+

Edition/Publication Year: New edition published each year Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	96	89	69	83	81
PASS+	13	26	10	3	8
Number of students tested	79	62	59	76	75
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1				
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	80	69	74	59
PASS+	3	12	0	0	0
Number of students tested	36	25	29	38	34
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested			1	2	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	100		67	80	
PASS+	9		0	0	
Number of students tested	11	5	12	10	9
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+			12	62	
PASS+			0	0	
Number of students tested	1	5	12	13	7
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested	2	4	6	7	8
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+					
PASS+					
Number of students tested	3	3	2	2	3
<p><b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.</p>					

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	95	78	76	73
PASS+	25	24	14	15	12
Number of students tested	148	132	131	141	151
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	94	71	71	63
PASS+	15	15	10	10	4
Number of students tested	72	57	57	70	69
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	0	0
PASS+	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	0	1	3	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	92	0	40	75	18
PASS+	7	0	0	15	4
Number of students tested	25	11	20	20	22
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	40	46	17
PASS+	0	0	4	8	5
Number of students tested	8	8	20	26	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	29	5
PASS+	0	0	0	5	0
Number of students tested	5	8	11	17	18
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	0	0
PASS+	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	10	5	5	4
<b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.					

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading      Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Sep	Sep	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Pass/Pass+	95	93	78	83	81
PASS+	14	18	8	5	8
Number of students tested	148	132	131	141	151
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	94	89	75	81	65
PASS+	7	8	1	2	3
Number of students tested	72	57	57	70	69
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	0	0
PASS+	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	1	3	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	92	0	40	80	36
PASS+	3	0	0	0	4
Number of students tested	25	11	20	20	22
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	7	50	17
PASS+	0	0	0	4	0
Number of students tested	8	8	20	26	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	47	27
PASS+	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	8	11	17	18
<b>6. MULTIRACIAL</b>					
Pass/Pass+	0	0	0	0	0
PASS+	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	10	5	5	4
<b>NOTES:</b> In the 2009-2010 school year, the Indiana Department of Education changed the test session from the fall (September) to a Spring (March-April) window. We reported only the spring test for 2009-2010, so it could be compared to the spring 2011 test. A new edition of the test is published each year. Our state does not include any data for subgroups of less than ten students in our reports.					