

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12PV90

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

12PV90

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

Questions 1 and 2 are for Public Schools only.

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: 3
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		6	0	0	0
K	17	16	33		7	0	0	0
1	18	16	34		8	0	0	0
2	14	13	27		9	0	0	0
3	13	16	29		10	0	0	0
4	14	12	26		11	0	0	0
5	17	14	31		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								180

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
3 % Asian
3 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
87 % White
6 % 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: 8%

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.	11
(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)].	15
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	200
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.08
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	8

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 1

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3%
 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.

The private district, Christian Academy School School System, does not participate in the federal free and reduced lunch program. The district follows federal guidelines and offers a reduced lunch program for qualified families.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 7%
 Total number of students served: 13

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

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

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>20</u>	<u>11</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: 15:1

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	98%	98%	96%	98%	98%
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 _____ %

Total _____ **0%**

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?

While many qualifications for Blue Ribbon Schools center on academic achievement, Rock Creek Elementary School is worthy of Blue Ribbon status due to its high academic performance in addition to the intentional focus on developing the whole child. Guided by the mission statement, “... *to develop students with hearts for God who grow as Jesus did in wisdom, stature and in favor with God and men,*” committed educators partner with families, churches, and the local community to ensure the well-rounded development of each child *academically, physically, spiritually, and socially*.

Concentration on character development fosters student ownership of social responsibility and deepens academic, physical, and spiritual/moral growth. Parents, teachers, and staff collaborate to ensure students are developing into Responsible, Obedient, Compassionate Kids, the character theme that students helped develop. The theme encompasses the culture of the campus and is based on an acronym of the school name, Rock Creek.

Responsible ~ Obedient ~ Compassionate ~ Kids

who are

Christ-like ~ Respectful ~ Encouraging ~ Enthusiastic ~ Kingdom Seekers

Excellent **academic** preparation of students, experienced and dedicated staff, and stakeholder involvement are strengths of Rock Creek. Grade-level percentile scores on the Complete Battery of the Stanford Achievement test over the last five years have ranged from the 71st to the 88th percentile with most years being around the 80th percentile. Eighty-one percent of the teachers have master’s degrees and fifty percent of the instructional staff has over ten years of experience at the Rock Creek campus. This consistency in personnel contributes to a positive campus culture, stability of curriculum, and the continuity of academics. Teachers create an environment rich in collaboration as they commit to improve professional practices, share instructional strategies, demonstrate innovative uses of the SmartBoard/technology, and implement cross-curricular applications of learning with Fine Arts, Spanish, Technology, Media/Library, and Physical Education teachers. AdvancEd (SACS), the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and the Kentucky Non-Public School Association accredit Rock Creek.

Rock Creek’s rich tradition of engaging all stakeholders is a strength. An annual family festival actively engages current families, alumni families and the community. Parents volunteer regularly, attend Parent Nights that address curricular or parenting topics, and about forty percent of parents participate in the annual Field Day.

Recent accomplishments include teacher collaboration on assessment practices, teacher implementation of technology, and receiving the 2010 Mom’s Choice Award. Teacher collaboration on assessment practices led to the development and implementation of common assessments in reading, math, and science. Within the past eighteen months, document cameras and interactive white boards were placed on campus and teachers quickly grasped the inclusion of technology in instructional practices. Students responded to a classmate’s illness by raising \$126,279 dollars for St. Baldrick’s Foundation over the last five years. A group of students worked with national authors to write and illustrate *Cutting Class*, a book about the fundraising experience, which won the prestigious 2010 Mom’s Choice Award.

Rock Creek serves 200 students in grades K-5 from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. High-quality core instruction is the norm and is proven by student achievement on the Stanford Achievement Test,

which meets or exceeds qualifying scores for Blue Ribbon School status. Following Response to Intervention (RTI) specifications classroom and resource teachers provide services for students who need moderate intervention such as phonemic awareness, fluency, development of number sense, and auditory/visual processing. When students are in need of increased intensity levels of intervention (physical, emotional, and cognitive), the school collaborates with parents and outside agencies to ensure that individual academic needs are met.

Rock Creek has rich traditions in community service and considers “*growing in favor with God and men*” to be more than Bible study. It is applying God’s Word. It is *spiritual* action resulting in *social* responsibility. Rock Creek recognizes the need for students to participate in developmentally appropriate local and global service opportunities. Locally, students visit and send cards to nursing homes, collect for local food banks/shelters, and write notes of appreciation to emergency workers. Students have given hundreds of Operation Christmas Child Boxes and have collected items for victims of hurricanes and earthquakes.

Developing a healthful lifestyle is a part of the nature of the Rock Creek community and “*growing in stature*” is considered more than mere *physical* growth. Students understand they are created in the image of God and are responsible for maintaining healthy living practices. This healthful culture includes direct instruction in physiology, nutrition and lifestyle practices, as well as providing opportunities for physical activity through curricular and intramural programs.

Rock Creek is an elementary school where *academic* excellence is expected, *physical* development as a healthful lifestyle is promoted, *spiritual* development is deliberate, and *social* growth targets learning compassionate responsibility for others. Caring parents, professional educators, and dedicated staff intentionally work together for the development of the whole child. Rock Creek Elementary School is Blue Ribbon worthy.

1. Assessment Results:

A. The Stanford Achievement Test has been administered to Rock Creek students in grades K-5 for more than twenty years, and the Tenth Edition has been in use since 2005. Performance levels in grades K-5 on the Complete Battery for the past five years have ranged from the 71st to the 88th percentiles. The acceptable grade-level percentile score on the Complete Battery has been designated as equal to or greater than 75.

During the past five years, the Total Reading scores in grades K-5 have ranged from the 72nd to the 97th percentiles. In grades 3-5 during this time period, scores for Total Reading ranged from 73rd to the 91st percentiles. Total Math scores for grades K-5 ranged from the 69th to the 90th percentiles over the past five years. Total Reading and Total Math grade-level percentile scores equal to or greater than 75 are acceptable.

Mean Scaled Scores (SS) in Total Reading and Total Math are used for reporting purposes in the tables of this Blue Ribbon Schools application. However, Christian Academy School System uses percentile scores for benchmark settings and when communicating with stakeholders regarding performance on the Complete Battery of the Stanford Achievement Test. Percentiles are a common language of stakeholders and facilitates assessment discussion within the school system. Therefore percentile scores are used in this section (a) of the narrative response on assessment results.

B. Analysis of the assessment data over a five-year period reveals that Rock Creek students are performing above the national average in every subject at every grade. Assessment data for 2010-11 show that in grades three, four, and five, 90% of the student body scored above the national average in Total Reading and 87% scored above the national average in Total Mathematics. All grade levels scored in the top 15% of the nation in both Total Reading and Total Mathematics. Performance trends over a five-year period on longitudinal studies show yearly student gains in Total Mathematics and Total Reading, while latitudinal studies show a slight decrease in Total Reading and fluctuation ranging from a loss of 15 SS points to a gain of 20 SS points in Total Mathematics.

Rock Creek does not have ten or more students in any subgroup in any grade and subgroup scores are not reported per CAPE's application instructions. However, Rock Creek does have students with accommodation/modification plans and their scores are included in the general population. Given the small student population at Rock Creek, every test carries great weight, and one student score can greatly affect the scores of a grade level either negatively or positively.

A reading curriculum which intentionally teaches comprehension and vocabulary skills was introduced in 2007-08. Although not a significant drop, Total Reading scores slightly decreased across third, fourth, and fifth grades that year. Since the implementation, teachers have received extensive training in reading pedagogy, including seven-day training for all teachers and observations from mentor teachers. A latitudinal study of performance shows a slight decrease from the 2006-2007 Total Reading scores to the present scores. However, a comparison of scores longitudinally, measuring the same group of students' scores over time, shows an increase ranging from 7-25 SS points per grade level in Total Reading each year. Rock Creek desires continual improvement in student achievement and an analysis of the cluster sub-skill scores showed that comprehension skills have increased, but word-decoding has decreased. Therefore, a data-driven decision was made to revise the curriculum to allow more word-decoding instruction.

In mathematics a latitudinal data analysis over the last five years reveals slight fluctuation in Total Mathematics scores from year to year with a decrease in fourth and fifth grades, but growth in third. However, when studying the longitudinal trend, there is steady growth ranging from 18 to 26 SS points of increase in each grade annually. Rock Creek adopted a new math curriculum in 2010-11 and all professional development centered on math pedagogy which influenced students' increase. The longitudinal gain for students from 2009-10 to 2010-11 was 39 SS points in third grade, 22 SS points in fourth grade, and 18 SS points in fifth grade.

A factor contributing to fluctuation in test scores is the classroom teacher. When a new teacher is hired, the scores often drop until a level of knowledge is reached in teaching the curriculum. Rock Creek hired a new fourth grade teacher in 2008 and a new fifth grade teacher in 2009, which may have influenced the lower scores in both reading and math those years.

Experienced educators and data driven instructional/professional development decisions are factors contributing to student gain. Through the use of professional learning communities, educators make data-driven decisions, changes in curriculum, and changes in instructional strategies. Teachers work in professional learning communities, both laterally at grade levels, and vertically to assess teaching techniques and problem-solve together, yielding gains in student achievement.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Rock Creek administration uses assessment data to monitor strengths and weaknesses at the student level, teacher level, and school level. At the student level, assessment data are used to determine if students are meeting the established learning standards of content area courses. Additionally, the classroom/resource teachers use assessment data as diagnostic evidence related to individual learning differences and needs for various levels of intervention according to Response to Intervention (RTI). At the teacher level, assessment data are included as part of the criteria in evaluating teacher effectiveness in the relationship between results and instructional strategies employed in the classroom. Teachers also reflect on instructional practices as they analyze the data on the outgoing student group and compare it with data from previous groups of students. At the school level, assessment data provide verification for accomplishment of the school's mission, guidance on establishing instructional goals, and as confirmation that the optimal scope and sequence of curriculum is in place.

Rock Creek teachers meet annually prior to the start of school to analyze assessment data and prepare for the new school year. After an interdisciplinary group discussion of assessment data, grade-level teachers further analyze data to establish curricular and instructional decisions/goals. Grade level groups dissect assessment data by looking for trends over the last five years and recording inferences about fluctuations and/or how to increase gains even further. Teachers also analyze data of both outgoing and incoming student groups to determine the content areas or cluster subtests in which a particular grade may be performing below the school's standard. The teachers then discuss possible curriculum, textbook and instructional method changes necessary to meet improvement goals and increase student gain. This plan for data analysis involves all parties: teachers, principal, counselor, and district curriculum directors in a concerted effort to improve student learning and achievement.

Recently data was used to systematically improve mathematics instruction and student learning. Disaggregated total math scores revealed the need for improvement of problem-solving and mastery of understanding of mathematical concepts. These particular results led the teachers to make changes in curricular materials and instructional pedagogy that resulted in a more balanced framework of math instruction in conceptual, procedural and problem solving skills. During the first year of implementation of the revised math curriculum, the school worked with a local university to ensure implementation of instructional strategies for student mastery of concepts. Teachers also used professional development days for reflection and collaboration on instructional practices, ongoing analysis of formative and summative assessments, and the development of common unit tests which allow comparison of data within the district.

Rock Creek teachers use assessment data to determine intervention needs of individual students for improved student learning. With the goal of having all students meet the school's acceptable performance level, the performance levels of individual students are monitored by collaborative assessment analysis that involves all instructional personnel and the principal. An intervention plan is developed for any student whose scores in Complete Battery, Total Reading or Total Math fall below the 60th percentile. Intervention plans are created collaboratively (principal, teachers, resource teacher, and outside agency representatives when applicable) in accordance with RTI guidelines.

The academic achievement of Rock Creek students is communicated at the district level, school level, and classroom level. The Christian Academy School System annually publishes an assessment data report that includes results of each of the eight schools in the district. This report is communicated to all district stakeholders. Rock Creek celebrates student achievement by annually communicating assessment data to stakeholders via email, parent meetings, and through school newsletters. Individual student reports from the Stanford Achievement Test Tenth Edition are mailed to parents and include an informative letter from the principal explaining how to interpret assessment results. The principal is also available to meet with individual parents for further assessment explanation. Classroom teachers use achievement test assessment data, results of formative and summative classroom assessment, and anecdotal records when conferencing with parents regarding student performance. Parents use PowerSchool, the school's administrative software, to view grades online and to remain up-to-date on their children's academic progress. PowerSchool also allows parents to set preferences for receiving grade reports via email.

Rock Creek administration and staff systematically analyze a variety of assessment data to make decisions that guide curriculum, instructional methods, and ultimately to improve student achievement. The school strives to communicate and partner with parents and stakeholders to increase student gain on national assessments. Rock Creek is intentional in analyzing data to ensure that the school's mission is met in the development of the whole child: academically, physically, spiritually, and socially.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Students are well served when teachers remain current in best practices while also gaining wisdom through experience. Providing time for teachers to collaborate on best practices enhances student success. Rock Creek teachers share successful strategies, creative ideas, and effective methods with other district teachers and instructional staff from other schools in the area.

Successful instructional strategies are shared at district level professional development days where grade level/content teachers collaborate on specific topics. Schools outside the district are invited to these sessions, which have covered topics including teaching student leadership, using cognitive research to develop effective lesson plans, and implementing Robert Marzano's strategies to improve student and school success. Collaboration with local universities to improve math and writing instruction enabled peer-led workshops where teachers established curricular goals, built common language, and developed similar methodologies to improve student skills.

Rock Creek teachers work purposely with district teachers to ensure a consistent and viable curriculum. Collaboration on curriculum mapping, lesson planning, use of SmartBoard/technology, and common assessment development occurs during professional development days. District teachers also share successful strategies through online curriculum mapping, email discussions, and phone conference calls. Collaboration allows for implementation of best instructional practices and is instrumental when adopting new curricula.

Rock Creek teachers attend regional and national conferences in multiple content areas. Teachers also attend specialized conferences for Christian school teachers (ACSI) and teachers of middle level students Association of Middle Level Educators (AMLE). Conference attendees are required to share successful strategies, new ideas and best practices with colleagues at faculty meetings. Many teachers have taken advantage of opportunities to present at these conferences. At regional ACSI conferences, first grade

teachers have presented workshops on “Project Days,” the media specialist presented on summer reading and enrichment programs, and fine arts specialists have presented at regional subject-specific conferences.

All teachers, but especially new teachers, are encouraged to observe master teachers through professional work days. Mentoring became a priority at Rock Creek in 2005, when the district’s curriculum coordinator began documenting curricula for consistency across elementary campuses and to vertically align district goals. Upon the adoption of the ATLAS online curriculum mapping program, as well as SmartBoard/technology, elite teachers volunteered to be early adopters. These teachers piloted new programs and served as mentors upon district-wide implementation. With each new curriculum adoption, this “teach the teacher” model has been effectively employed.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Based on Robert Marzano’s research for student success, Rock Creek intentionally involves parents in the learning process, creates a welcoming climate, and engages the community by taking advantage of its resources and responding to its needs. The administration and teachers purposefully communicate with parents through a monthly newsletter and email updates. Primary grade teachers inform parents of daily homework via a weekly newsletter. Intermediate grades use their agenda notebook for daily communication between child, parent, and teacher. Teachers are readily available for conferences, but to assure that relationships are established and student’s progress and needs are discussed, two days per year are set aside for individual conferences. Students’ progress can also be monitored on PowerSchool, an online grade book. These practices demonstrate commitment to partnering with families for each student’s success.

Maintaining a warm, inviting atmosphere is an effective strategy in working with families. Rock Creek’s administration, teachers, and PTO strive to involve many family members in daily activities. Eighty percent of parents volunteer whether through serving as room parent, scientist of the week, cafeteria helper, carpool parent, School Improvement Team member, or coach. Families attend Grandparents Day, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, plays, concerts, talent shows, field trips, literacy nights, phonics workshops, chapel, and parenting skills workshops. Parents participate in weekly prayer meetings focusing on individual, school, and community concerns. Because family involvement on campus is crucial to developing successful students, Rock Creek offers many opportunities to engage families through a welcoming school climate.

Louisville offers a variety of resources that Rock Creek employs to deepen student learning. For enrichments and remediation the school partners with local agencies, such as Langsford Center (Linda-Mood Bell Reading), counseling and therapeutic clinics, and the local Visual Arts Association. Students participate in field trips to enhance science and social studies curricula. Community involvement also includes dentists addressing the students during Dental Hygiene month, author visits, local pastors speaking at chapel, association with Junior Achievement, and community leaders participating in awards ceremonies. The mission statement is incorporated in all aspects of education in order to engage with and respond to the needs of the community. Students are motivated toward independent service by visiting nursing homes, participating in school supply drives, packaging gifts for Operation Christmas Child, and raising money for local, national, or global needs.

1. Curriculum:

Learning standards that apply to Rock Creek Elementary School are drawn from the mission statement, best practices derived from brain-based research, and national/state standards. Indicated by the mission statement, curricula equip students to become self-directed learners with the ability to think critically, and live responsible, informed lives that positively affect others. In accordance with research, the school maintains learning standards that promote an emotionally, physically, and cognitively safe environment with challenging expectations accompanied by effective feedback. Lesson formats typically follow the combined research of cognitive information processing and social constructivism that suggests students learn best when new information is connected to previously learned concepts through social collaboration. Teachers guide students to organize and elaborate on information through multiple representations. Opportunities to transfer new understanding to real life situations are innate to the instructional design.

Core content areas include English language arts, math, science, social studies, and biblical studies. Additionally, courses are offered in Spanish, technology, library, fine arts, and physical education. The Common Core State Standards, as well as National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA) standards designate language arts content. Instruction affords students applied practice in comprehension, evaluative, and interpretive strategies. Students interact with print and non-print narrative and informational text from various genres, cultures, and time periods. Students communicate with varied audiences for various purposes through spoken, written, and visual means.

Mathematics curricular goals incorporate the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) focal points and, recently, National Common Core Standards. Elementary students are involved in problem solving, demonstrating reasoning and proof, using multiple modes to communicate understanding, connecting mathematical and scientific ideas in outside contexts, and representing ideas and solutions through multiple means.

Science curriculum includes the content standards designated by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). Science courses guide students in learning about the history and nature of science and the concepts and processes of science. Inquiry-based learning is an important component of instruction in the domains of physical science, life science, earth-space science and computer science. Science lessons involve hands-on activity as well as reflective scientific writing.

Social studies courses, and courses in biblical and religious studies, adhere to the themes stipulated by the National Council of Social Studies. The crux of content is the history of the United States. Through the study of history students analyze aspects of cultural diversity, individual development and identity, structures of power, relationships between technology and society, and distribution of goods and services.

The visual and performing arts programs encompass visual art, vocal music and instrumental music education. Students receive instruction in singing and music notation with basic instrumental music principles through activities with Orff rhythm instruments and recorders. Students receive instruction on the elements of visual art: texture, space, value, form, line, shape, and color.

Physical education classes include direct instruction in physiology, nutrition, specific sports skills, and healthful living. Students practice multi-combinational movements while learning about life long physical activities.

Technology instruction includes keyboarding, presentation media, word processing, and data collection and display. Students also are given opportunities to apply skills during regular classroom curricular units. Spanish curriculum develops beginning skills in writing, speaking, listening, and reading as established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Multisensory instruction is provided to correspond to the developmental characteristics of an elementary student.

2. Reading/English:

The reading curriculum and instruction was chosen because it aligns with the findings of the National Reading Panel and best instructional practices related to brain-based research. The reading program is based on five pillars of instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. Phonemic awareness and phonics are directly taught to students in grades K-2. All students are directly taught comprehension skills, fluency skills, and vocabulary as part of the reading instructional format adopted by the school.

The standard lesson format for K-2 students begins with 30 minutes of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction and practice activities. Then the teachers follow the basic lesson format used by all teachers in grades K-5 for a total of 90 minutes, using the components of cognitive blending theory and social constructivism. The teacher provides demonstrations that activate students' prior knowledge to connect the newly presented information to what is already known. Students are then led to identify a principle or pattern that exists within the new information to enhance memory encoding. Using a read-aloud book, the teacher models how to think through a particular comprehension skill, such as cause-effect. The teacher also models how to record relationships of textual information using graphic organizers. Students read independently using ability-matched texts, followed by small group discussion. K-2 students begin with decodable texts until they can read grade-appropriate chapter books. Students in grades 3-5 read novels to match the ability level of below grade level, at grade level, or above grade level. During small group time, the teacher provides instruction in related vocabulary and fluency techniques. Multiple guided-thinking opportunities are provided to enable students to independently apply the thinking strategies to new texts and situations, thus promoting transfer of learning.

Struggling readers are provided with texts that are below grade level to meet their instructional level. Students who are performing below grade level and require moderate to more intense interventions receive individualized instruction from the resource teacher in areas such as phonemic awareness, decoding, comprehension, and fluency.

3. Mathematics:

Rock Creek teachers are motivated to differentiate instruction based on their understanding that God uniquely creates each student. Solid math foundation is formed from high quality core instruction that incorporates best practices in teaching and a curriculum that meets national standards. The math curriculum focuses on students' ability to generalize, understand, and process information with curriculum decisions stemming from NCTM focal points, high quality core instruction, test data analysis, and committee discussion. The math curriculum features the use of Envision Math, including the Investigations component by Scott Foresmen-Addison Wesley, and is supplemented by interactive technology

Adhering to the NCTM focal points, teachers develop math fluency, deepen understanding, and instill ability to generalize in each math unit. Math fluency is achieved by emphasizing and practicing number sense and by teaching numerous strategies for solving problems for accurate and efficient number manipulation. The curriculum spirals yearly to build upon prior knowledge of math concepts and extend thinking. Exploring patterns and estimating in real-world situations also create the ability to generalize. Depth of understanding is preceded by lessons modeled by teachers, then practiced by students using manipulatives to prove understanding of algorithms and mathematical concepts. Students demonstrate

deep understanding by writing to explain how they solved real-world problems and incorporate mathematical vocabulary as a verbal tool.

Realizing that each child learns at a different pace and through unique means, Rock Creek seeks to propel students who are excelling and improve the understanding of students performing below grade level. Teachers provide individualized instruction to extend the thinking of students who are above grade level. Enrichment also takes place through hands-on Investigations, online games, computer programs, and in-class games where students are grouped by understanding.

When a student performs below grade level, high quality teaching includes tier one interventions, such as individualized small-group instruction with manipulatives, online tools which allow students to act out problem solving, and game show style quizzes which enable students' review for tests. Differentiation is also provided through Scott Foresman's SuccessNet.com allowing parents to review at home. Teachers also assign and monitor online homework, which can be an extension or a review, based on student need. For students who continue to perform below grade level, tier two interventions include individualized instruction with the resource teacher. After diagnostic testing, the resource teacher uses a variety of instructional methods including Neufeld Math, an online mathematics program, for individualized instruction.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science and technology permeate almost every facet of life in the 21st century. The importance of science and technology to life was a driving factor in the thinking of the vertical team assigned to revise the district's science curriculum. The desire to implement a science curriculum focused on depth over breadth, and to provide engaging experiences for students to participate in how science is actually conducted, was foremost in developing curriculum standards. Therefore the standards/essential skills of the science curriculum are based on the three major dimensions defined by National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) which are: Scientific and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas (Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Earth-Space Sciences, and Engineering-Technology-Applications of Sciences).

The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy is the scheme used by teachers to deliver instruction that develops students' knowledge in scientific thinking and learning. Students remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create to master scientific concepts and understandings. Inquiry-based learning is an important component of instruction; therefore science process skills are developed by hands-on participation as well as reflective writing. Teachers format instruction so new information is connected to previously learned concepts; then students are guided to organize and elaborate on information through multiple representations. Opportunities to transfer new understanding to real-life situations are innate to the instructional design. Students are encouraged to integrate scientific concepts across the disciplinary core: physical, life, earth-space, and engineering-technology-applications of science.

The science curriculum maintains a balance between scientific study and the school's mission statement to grow morally responsible students "... *who grow as Jesus did in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and men.*" Therefore God is presented as the Creator of the universe with man as the steward to learn about and care for God's creation. The study of scientific content enables students to grow in their wisdom about the Creator and his creation while becoming responsible tenders of the world around them. Essential scientific skills and knowledge, based on the framework established by NSTA and instructed through the scheme of the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, are taught via the school's mission statement which views God as the Creator of the universe.

5. Instructional Methods:

Rock Creek teachers differentiate instruction based on the understanding that each student is unique. Teachers collaborate using technology, developing interventions, and partnering with community professionals to meet the individual needs of students in order to promote growth in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men. Differentiated instruction begins with high quality instruction in the classroom. Based on analysis of assessment data, student performance, formative and summative assessments, teachers collaborate to modify or supplement instruction to meet student needs. Enrichment and remediation occur through individualized instruction that provides specific feedback: differentiated reading groups, small math groups, and individual conferences in writing and reading. Neufeld Math, an online individualized mathematics program, is also incorporated for differentiated math needs. Other methods to ensure high levels of student achievement include amended assignments, preferential seating, peer-editing, online math practice, and communication with parents.

Different learning styles also drive instruction. The use of SmartBoards, document cameras, e-tools, online games, and modeling engage visual learners. Auditory learners are aided by music to practice English and phonics skills, and teachers use an auditory amplification system to increase auditory retention. Teachers incorporate multisensory approaches for kinesthetic learners such as using manipulatives, hands-on experiments, and performing activities that cross the midline to strengthen the right brain/left brain connection.

Rock Creek modifies and supplements instruction through intervention strategies and after school activities. Teachers supplement instruction by providing after-school enrichment clubs in writing, spelling, music, and history to ensure high levels of learning. When students need moderate intensity beyond classroom instruction, they meet with qualified educators outside of the classroom. Early intervention begins with a Search/Teach program in Kindergarten. Screenings (Search) determine struggling students, who enter a program (Teach) to strengthen reading pre-readiness skills. A battery of tests and informal assessments is administered to determine student needs, including Woodcock Johnson test of achievement, Roe Burns informal reading test, Beery test of motor integration, and a phonemic awareness screening. Resource and classroom teachers collaborate to meet the needs of students performing below grade level, and the resource teacher meets biweekly with these students for remediation. For students requiring increased levels of intensity, Rock Creek partners with local professionals and programs such as Langsford Center (Linda-Mood Bell Reading) and Phonographics (a phonemic awareness program). Rock Creek differentiates instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students and to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development program is based on identified student needs, identified teacher needs, as well as content area adoption cycle as determined by the State Department of Education. The pattern of the professional development plan is to analyze student assessment data, teacher professional development requests, teacher evaluation data, and school improvement goals to determine topics for professional development. Based on the aforementioned sources, needs are prioritized and a three-year plan is developed. Topics, methods or strategies are prioritized, introduced, practiced and implemented for an entire year. Implementation success is monitored and evaluated for needed changes or adjustments the following year, as new initiatives are being introduced.

Over the past five years, *What Works in Schools/Classroom Instruction that Works*, Cognitive Blending (Social Constructivist) Theory, and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have been implemented as part of the professional development plan. These professional development programs have provided methods and opportunities for teachers to analyze and improve classroom instruction and curriculum design. As part of the content area adoption cycle, teachers serve on committees, visit national conferences, and implement information learned in the adoption/revision process.

The area of writing is a recent example of how the school's professional development supports student learning. Professional development days were utilized for teachers to discuss and document the current genre of writing required at each grade level, study CCS Standards, and revise the elementary writing curriculum. The vertical teaming involved in the revision of the writing curriculum promoted rich reflection by teachers and discussion on expectations of student performance in writing. The professional development plan included working with a writing consultant from a local university who presented instructional strategies that coincide with CCS Standards.

Another component of professional development activities, Professional Learning Communities (PLC), has been effectively implemented at Rock Creek. Administration and teachers saw a need to ensure a common language and approach to classroom management and selected *Teaching with Love and Logic* as a PLC to meet this need. Goals were met as the study led to the development for common classroom management techniques and the creation of a school-wide character program. Another recent PLC study, *The Architecture of Learning: Designing Instruction for the Learning Brain*, promoted rich discussion on application of Cognitive Blending Theory to lesson design. Rock Creek employs a variety of professional development activities that enables teachers to meet high academic standards and have a positive impact on student learning.

7. School Leadership:

Acknowledging God as the true leader of the school, the Rock Creek administration strives to maintain an innovative and cooperative learning environment. Christian Academy School System is structured with a governing board of directors who oversees the Superintendent and Executive Director. District curriculum decisions are made by multi-level, district-wide committees which are coordinated by an Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.

The primary role of the principal is to ensure the fulfillment of the mission statement that students grow in specific areas: *academic, physical, spiritual, and social*. To this end, the principal values input from stakeholders and utilizes collaborative decision-making. The principal leads a school improvement team and chairs the lead teacher committee of faculty representatives. Committee input, feedback from faculty, and general interaction with stakeholders, along with years of experience, guide decisions made by the principal.

The principal makes certain the *academic* standards/programs are met through a consistent and viable curriculum. For example, mentoring relationships arranged by the principal allow teachers to learn, reflect, and collaborate on instructional practices. The principal leads an analysis of assessment data, assists in establishing academic goals, and monitors student progress. Individual student achievement is analyzed regularly throughout the year, and coordination occurs among administration, teachers, guidance counselor, resource teacher, and parents to develop intervention plans as needed. Additionally, the principal and parent leaders guide fund-raising efforts to add technology and other instructional materials in classrooms providing teachers resources to support additional student gains.

Student achievement is best enabled when children feel emotionally and physically safe. The principal upholds district policies by maintaining a safe place to learn, play and explore that enriches the *physical* growth of the whole child. The principal collaborates with parents, community members, and district personnel on campus renovation for improvements in structural integrity and aesthetics. An emergency response plan, new fire alarm system, and video-monitoring system are examples of recent improvements focused on ensuring student safety policies are met.

The principal oversees staff devotions, parent prayer groups, teacher ACSI certification (requires ongoing biblical studies), weekly chapel services, and inclusion of biblical integration in lesson planning which contributes to meeting the *spiritual* growth of students and deepening their relationship with God. The principal also cultivates peer relationships and *social* maturity of students through character development, based on the ROCK CREEK acronym. Acknowledging students' positive behavior choices empowers intrinsic responses and creates a positive school climate which in turn boosts student achievement.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

12PV90

1. Private school association: Other Christian

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3) status? Yes

3. What are the 2011-2012 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$7175</u>	<u>\$7575</u>	<u>\$7575</u>	<u>\$7575</u>	<u>\$7575</u>	<u>\$7575</u>
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) \$9650

5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$345

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?
4%

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 25%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Stanford Achievement Test Test
 Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Edition Publisher: Pearson Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	648	628	638	630	642
Number of students tested	31	34	45	42	38
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV90

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Stanford Achievement Test
 Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Edition Publisher: Pearson Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	650	656	655	668	658
Number of students tested	34	39	40	41	34
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV90

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: Stanford Achievement Test Test

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Edition Publisher: Pearson Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	671	668	668	682	691
Number of students tested	34	39	40	41	34
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV90

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: Stanford Achievement Tst

Edition/Publication Year: Tenth Edition Publisher: Pearson Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	674	677	692	679	681
Number of students tested	39	36	36	38	47
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV90

