

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12TN5

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

12TN5

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 0 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
11 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7688

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: 5
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	11	12	23
K	25	36	61		7	0	0	0
1	37	43	80		8	0	0	0
2	25	36	61		9	0	0	0
3	34	44	78		10	0	0	0
4	30	31	61		11	0	0	0
5	29	37	66		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								430

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
5 % Asian
6 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
86 % White
1 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 2%
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	7
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	7
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	443
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

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

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10%
 Total number of students who qualify: 43

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: 3%
 Total number of students served: 15

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>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>1</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>6</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>3</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>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>21</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>36</u>	<u>15</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: 20:1

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%	98%	96%
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?

The Discovery School, a kindergarten through sixth grade school for high achievers, first opened its doors in August of 2005. The school is in the Reeves Rogers building, built in 1959. The campus is directly across from Middle Tennessee State University. There is an apartment complex on one side of the school and a middle class subdivision on the other side. The Discovery School is in an established neighborhood in an older part of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, about 30 miles from Nashville and the geographic center of Tennessee.

In the months prior to opening in 2005, the principal and assistant principal visited other successful programs for high achievers. They met extensively with Joe Renzulli and colleagues at the University of Connecticut. Newly hired staff attended a retreat with presenters from the Renzulli camp prior to the opening of the school. The phrase “a rising tide lifts all ships” was instrumental as the framework for building a challenging, rigorous program.

The Discovery School vision is built around six pillars, the first of which is to challenge students academically. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate higher order thinking skills, problem solving, research and application. The second pillar states that staff will recognize and provide programming for socio-emotional needs. The third pillar emphasizes that our students need to learn how to learn, which includes note taking and summarizing. On the fourth pillar we recognize that our students need to have opportunities to be globally connected. The fifth pillar identifies our parents as very important members of our learning team. The sixth pillar calls on our school staff to be innovative and collaborative as they embrace effective practice. All staff members are expected to exhibit a commitment to excellence in education.

Identifying students for a school of high achievers presents a unique challenge. Applicants are given a verbal and a non-verbal assessment. A score at the 90th percentile or above on either test meets the qualification for admission. Our students consistently score among the highest in the state in every subject. They regularly win awards at the state and national levels in writing competitions, DAR competitions in all categories, the state e-Tales competition and spelling bees. In addition, through the implementation of Professional Learning Communities, we have strong growth across the board as well, reflected in our value added scores.

There is a relaxed and comfortable feeling inside The Discovery School. Students and staff treat each other with consideration and mutual respect. Students are often seen working in small groups or on a beanbag or couch. There might be a group working in the hallway. Someone might be barefoot. Classrooms are not silent. There is a hum of activity and social learning. Students and teachers come and go from the library. Parents are tutoring in the hallways and preparing materials in the workroom. Students have a degree of freedom because there is a clear understanding of responsibility. Learning flourishes in this type of environment.

Part of our success comes from an outstanding teaching staff. We have award-winning teachers who have placed in the National Teacher’s Hall of Fame, were Tennessee Teacher of the Year Finalists and three Scholastic Top Teaching Consultants. Some are excellent grant writers who have earned national and local grants to implement outstanding projects such as a BEST robotics competition team, a fully outfitted science lab, digital science probes, a weather station, rockets, physical fitness equipment and numerous other valuable projects to inspire learning. Additionally, our teachers regularly present at state and national conferences and are respected leaders in the fields of education and gifted education. Our library has placed first in the National Scholastic Book Fair competition twice under the direction of an

innovative librarian and her student led initiatives. Teachers are encouraged to visit other classrooms in the building and throughout the district.

Our Director of Schools along with The Board of Education has provided our school with strong leadership, support and resources. Our district's mission is to assure academic and personal success for every child. It was with this mission in mind that Murfreesboro City Schools saw a need to further serve high achieving and gifted students. A skilled instructional support team has been added to the Central Office staff. Education specialists observe and coach in our classrooms and share their expertise at faculty meetings.

1. Assessment Results:

The Discovery School administers the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) each spring to students in grades 3 through 6. TCAP measures achievement skill levels in reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies based on a four-tiered scale of proficiency consisting of below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. This is a step up from the former three-tiered scale used prior to the 2009-2010 school year. The current cut scores for each level are listed by subject and skill and may be reviewed by visiting: http://www.tennessee.gov/education/assessment/ach_prof_level.shtml. In accordance with No Child Left Behind, student achievement and overall school success, as well as individual teacher effectiveness, are measured in two ways in Tennessee: (1) student achievement and (2) the amount of growth a student makes as estimated through the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). TVAAS scores are calculated based on how much growth students make compared to the state growth standard. A school report card is then issued each year by the state to each school and the public, assigning a grade for achievement and value added based on a three-year average of their scores. The state TVAAS expectation is one full year's growth (plus or minus half a year) each year as compared to the state growth standard to earn an average rating of a C. The achievement expectation for an average rating of C is based on the norm curve equivalent of 45-49. (For a full scale, visit <http://edu.reportcard.state.tn.us/pls/apex/f?p=200:1:3468081663124393::NO:>)

Because The Discovery School has entrance examinations designed to identify high achievers, the expectation for TCAP achievement has always been that most of the students would score proficient or advanced in all subject areas of the assessment. Prior to the 2008 assessment year, The Discovery School was housed in a building with a regularly zoned elementary school and the scores of both schools were reported as one. In the 2008 assessment year, The Discovery School population expanded and was relocated to a building of its own. A significant change in the school's population and the scores can be observed from that year forward.

The school went from being 53% white, 30% African-American, 7% Asian and 10% Hispanic with 45% economically disadvantaged to being consistently about 86% white, 5-6% African American, 8-9% Asian and 1% Hispanic with under 10% economically disadvantaged. With that change in demographic came a consistent pattern of 90% (or above) proficient or advanced in all subject areas, but a very low value added score. The initial mindset was that it was much more difficult to demonstrate growth with students who were already high achievers. It was felt that if the achievement levels remained high, then the students were doing fine. As a result, the school report card following 2008 reflected straight A's for achievement, but D's in Reading and Math for value-added.

In 2010, The Discovery School joined the school district in a move towards the development of Professional Learning Communities. Each grade level team, even those in non-assessed grade levels, began examining each student's progress on a skill-by-skill basis and began targeted differentiation and reading intervention, as needed. The district also identified a collection of power standards in math to be covered and measured for each student. As a result, in 2011, the school's value added jumped up significantly from two D's in reading and math to an A in math and a B in reading. Although these grades are a reflection of a three-year average, they indicate that we are moving in the right direction. The fifth grade still showed considerably less growth than the other grade levels in 2011, so some strategic changes in staff and in intervention practices have been implemented to bolster the needs in that grade level for the 2012 assessment year. An additional school-wide step we have taken is to set aside a daily 45-minute focus block for targeted intervention for each grade level. Students are grouped for specific needs into small, flexible groups for strategic instruction and monitored weekly for progress.

The state identified subgroups at Discovery hold far fewer than the required 45 students and go unreported in the NCLB area as a subgroup, but are referred to in the profile's percentage for proficiency. In the 2010 assessment year, there were 9 students (3%) who fell in the basic range in reading and 11 (5%) in math. In 2011, there were 6 students (2%) who fell in the basic range for reading and 10 students (4%) who fell in the basic range for math. Overall, this is a trend in the right direction for the total population. The school looks at individual students rather than the specific subgroups because the percentages listed in the profile for NCLB can be misleading. For example, the posted profile indicates that 20% of the African American students were not proficient in math in 2011. While this was technically true, there were actually only 2 students comprising that 20%, while the 4% of non-proficient white students referred to was actually 8 students. The same was true for reading in 2011; the 9% Asian and 6% African American non-proficient grouping was actually only one student per group, while the 2% white represented 4 students. It makes more sense for Discovery School to examine each student's progress on an individual basis monitoring skill by skill, regardless of subgroup at this juncture. It is our goal to ensure growth and move toward proficiency for all.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Murfreesboro City Schools and The Discovery School are dedicated to the Professional Learning Communities model for collaboration around the single purpose of student growth and success. Creating and measuring student growth is dependent upon the consistent, strategic use of assessment results. At the onset of a new school year, collaborative PLC teams are formed and armed with two types of data: the summative data collected from TCAP for grades 3-6 (or the final ThinkLink data for grades 1-2) and carryover classroom data. The classroom data includes writing samples, AIMSweb scores for reading fluency and comprehension, as well as other benchmark information that might include running records and math fluency measures. Teams are formed not only by grade level, but also vertically to ensure that each grade level is examining the status of incoming and outgoing students through the eyes of the data collected by the sending team. Before the students ever arrive, the teams begin to identify trends in outgoing and incoming student data. They begin by looking at initial groupings for intervention in reading and math, as well as identifying instructional strengths in team members. In this process, each student gets a card for reading and a card for math that records levels of proficiency, special services and strategic interventions. These cards are placed in color-coded pocket charts in a school-wide data room. This coded chart system creates a visual representation of student progress for the whole school. This system allows the leadership team to analyze large-scale trends.

Each grade level PLC team meets weekly, recording important information related to planning and student progress for the grade level notebook. A building administrator joins that meeting at least once a month, but reviews the notes weekly. During the weekly PLC meetings, the teams develop common assessments for reading and math, analyze common assessment results and carry out unit planning. They use these meetings to examine student progress toward common goals and to identify student groups needing either assistance or enrichment. These identified groups meet during the 45-minute focus block for each grade level. All educational assistants, academic interventionists and nonscheduled arts specialists join the focus blocks, adding the necessary personnel to make small groups possible for every student.

All students are benchmarked three times a year for reading fluency using AIMSweb. Some are strategically monitored weekly as a part of their intervention. Further, all first through sixth graders are benchmarked using ThinkLink assessments for reading and math three times a year. The data is used in the formative process of identifying student needs in the weekly grade level meetings. The cards for the data wall are updated by each grade level and moved as changes occur. Additionally, every 20 school days, grade level data teams assemble to formally review student progress. These teams consist of the grade level teachers, the academic interventionist, special education personnel, the school psychologist, one or both school administrators and often one of the curriculum specialists from the central office. The teams review all factors that might be contributing to student success/stress/decline beyond specific performance concerns, including socio-emotional, environmental, attendance and cultural factors. Perhaps

the most important data is the ongoing pre-assessment and post assessment data collected by the classroom teacher. Teachers assess each new skill or concept and determine where students are in their learning. Sometimes this assessment is formal and common to the grade level, but sometimes it is handled with conferences and exit slips. All of these data pieces are used to plan for daily differentiation. By analyzing the data a teacher can determine which students need in-depth instruction, which need a brief review and which are ready to go much deeper in their learning. This process provides tremendous insight into the ongoing instructional process.

As in most schools, parents receive quarterly report cards, but our goal is to include parents in the ongoing monitoring of each student's progress. Teachers meet with parents to share individual ThinkLink and AIMSweb results as we compare growth between each administration of the assessments. We provide additional specific progress reports in a variety of ways, including individual e-mails, phone conferences, text updates and general classroom newsletters. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, but parents are encouraged to set up additional meetings if the need arises. The school administration follows up on each student absence with a phone system alert call to parents. The guidance counselor works monthly with teacher teams to provide parent meetings around topics of concern generated from data trends and needs assessments. She also meets with small groups of students and families facing specific challenges that might impact a student's success. The state notifies the community about academic achievement and growth through the publication of the annual school report card.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The Discovery School is an active part of the larger learning community. Partnering with the university, we host student teachers, education interns and classroom observers on a regular basis. We have become the site for Math Night, Night Under the Stars and a collaborative writing workshop with our fourth grade. This is an amazing mutually beneficial partnership where we are both the teacher and the student.

Each year, our teachers present sessions at state and national conferences. We have presented at The National Association for Gifted Children Conference, The Tennessee Technology Conference, The National Conference for the Teachers of Mathematics and The Lausanne Laptop Institute. "Using a Handheld GPS in the Classroom", "Podcasting in the Classroom", "Math Literacy" and "Integrating Math Into the Curriculum" are examples of presentations that our teachers have made. Other topics that have been presented are using technology in the classroom and working with high achieving students. Teachers and principal visited a neighboring district that was interested in developing a school for high achievers. We host a steady stream of teachers from neighboring school districts. Administrators conduct school tours highlighting the components of The Discovery School that have contributed to its success.

Some of our visitors find out about our school from television or the Internet. Three of our teachers write online columns for teachers through Scholastic. They have written "Boys Write, Boys Read," "Reading Partnerships", and "Combining Reading Strategies and Multiple Intelligence Research" to name a few. Teachers call and request some observation time with the author of a particular article. One teacher has been featured on two different news stations and has done a segment on a local children's program, "Murphy's Burrow".

We exchange ideas with teachers and students in Beijing, China, and Turkey through videoconferencing. Teachers, students, and parents gather in the evening to be part of this dynamic learning experience. We currently have a visiting teacher from China. This yearlong opportunity was made possible through a grant from Critical Languages. The host teacher and our Chinese teacher will be traveling to a neighboring county to share the necessary steps in securing such a grant.

We continue to show our commitment to sharing successful strategies locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. It is important to network with other educators. We grow as professionals when we contribute to the field.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Our thriving PTA is a major vehicle for parent involvement at The Discovery School. The PTA is structured around a fifteen member board. Volunteer opportunities include working at the book fair, tutoring students, preparing materials for teachers, entering a family table in our annual chili cook-off and serving on committees. The PTA sponsors an annual “Boohoo, Yahoo Breakfast” on the first morning of school to help our kindergarten parents say goodbye. They also host a social event for new students each August. Discovery parents share their expertise as artists, scientists, grant writers, musicians and mathematicians with our students during our career fair. Parents are urged to partner with the school in a way that will work with their schedule and utilize their talents. On average, our parents log over 150 hours of volunteer service monthly.

There are additional opportunities for parents apart from PTA. Fathers and children are invited five times a year to join “All Pro Dads,” a program to highlight the father’s role and discuss important family issues. Our counselor hosts book studies and workshops for parents throughout the year. Internet safety, nutrition and ADHD are some of the topics addressed this year. Families join us in the evening several times each year as we videoconference with schools in China and Turkey.

One of our strongest community partnerships is with Middle Tennessee State University. The Discovery School is directly across the street from the campus. In conjunction with units of study, our students tour the rock and mineral museum, the broadcast lab and aerospace department. Two of the professors in the science department conduct lab experiences for our students. The science department also set up a star gazing evening event for our families, “Night Under the Stars.” Soccer players have come over during recess to coach Discovery students on soccer techniques. MTSU football players collaborated with us to offer an enrichment cluster on games throughout history and games across the world.

Other community partners include The Standard Register, a local printing company. They decorate our front entrance, the lobby and hallways for the opening of school. Another community partner is Publix, a grocery store. Publix sends over a team from their bakery to assist children in decorating a cake to present on Mothers’ Day. Publix also provides refreshments at some faculty meetings.

1. Curriculum:

Tennessee State Standards and National Common Core Standards drive the Discovery School's curriculum. Our school district organizes the standards through curriculum mapping. We develop a quarterly pacing guide for each content area. In addition, teams of teachers collaborate to identify the highest priority standards for their grade, 'power standards.'

We rely on student performance data to further refine our curriculum. By analyzing the data, we identify areas of strength and areas to strengthen. Since The Discovery School serves high achieving students, our curriculum is customized to serve the unique needs of this population. For example, we go much deeper into all content areas using instructional strategies such as Socratic Seminars.

Our reading curriculum builds from one grade level to the next and focuses on phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing. Instructional strategies include small and whole group instruction, guided and independent reading, literacy centers, writer's workshop and individual instruction.

Proficiency in language arts impacts success in all curricular areas. Reading, writing, listening and speaking are not taught in isolation but are applied across the curriculum. Strong communications skills are required to be successful in any field. We offer a wide selection of reading materials and require writing for a variety of purposes.

Our math curriculum is very hands-on. We use a variety of textbook resources including Everyday Math and Math Investigations, as well as on-line resources like IXL Math. The math curriculum in all grade levels includes numbers, number operations, algebra, geometry, measurement and data analysis. Instructional strategies include small and whole group hands-on activities, math centers, math journals, and Exemplars that help strengthen problem-solving skills.

Our science curriculum is designed to allow students to deeply explore all life, Earth, space and physical science areas. We have a state-of-the-art science lab that provides students with meaningful hands-on science experiments and demonstrations. The lab is utilized weekly by every grade. The annual science fair is only one of many enrichment opportunities.

Our social studies curriculum focuses on history, geography, economics and civics. We provide many real-world experiences through guest speakers, projects, field trips and Socratic Seminars. Our annual career fair invites students to interact with a host of career representatives. These experiences empower students to become critical thinkers, effective communicators and participating members of our local and global communities.

Physical education is an integral part of our students' education at The Discovery School. The curriculum primarily focuses on motor skills, movement, physical activity and fitness, as well as nutrition. Students are encouraged to develop a positive attitude toward physical fitness, make healthy nutritional choices and form a lifetime commitment to wellness.

Visual and performing arts are also an important part of our curriculum. Classroom teachers collaborate with music, art and media teachers to enhance what is being taught in the classroom. Artwork is displayed in hallways throughout the school. Each year, the art room is transformed into lighted tunnels where art and music come together as a part of a walk-through experience. Musical performances are scheduled

throughout the year. Fifth grade students get an introduction to band and sixth grade students form a beginning band.

Technology is infused into the curriculum in all content areas. Students use their laptops for research and projects. They become proficient in Garage Band, iMovie, iPhoto and PowerPoint.

This is our second year to host a visiting teacher from China. She teaches classes in Chinese as well as Chinese culture. Students may elect to attend Chinese Club after school.

2. Reading/English:

The Discovery School reading curriculum is built around Tennessee State Standards. Our district adopted Reading Streets from Scott Foresman for grade level instruction. This recent adoption addresses the five components of reading and offers options for differentiation.

Teachers at The Discovery School collaborate through a Professional Learning Community (PLC). These grade level teams meet weekly to plan for the needs of each student, skill by skill. There is a ninety-minute, uninterrupted block for literacy, which consists of whole group, small group and individual time. Teachers use leveled readers in small groups to work on comprehension skills. Group discussion and skillful questioning stimulate reflection and help to develop comprehension. Other techniques that we have found effective are summarizing, graphic organizers and Think-Pair-Share. Grade level teams develop common assessments to monitor reading progress. Book Buddies is a program that couples an experienced reader with a novice. Classes pair up and enjoy literature as they read to each other.

Grade level teams meet monthly with the academic interventionist, the guidance counselor, a district literacy specialist and administrators for progress monitoring. We look at all formative assessments and classroom progress of each child. We use that information to plan a strategy for continued academic support.

When goals are not met, our instructional coach administers AIMSweb and a running record. Classroom observations provide additional information. Each grade level is assigned a forty-five minute intervention block for remediation or enrichment. We welcome parent tutors during the intervention block. If all reading goals are met, the student is challenged with an enrichment activity. The enrichment activity is frequently project-based and stimulates higher order thinking. Teachers use *Webb's Depth of Knowledge* as a point of reference as they plan for high achievers.

Science and social studies are integrated with reading instruction as often as possible. Our librarian collaborates with classroom teachers to enhance all subjects with quality literature. The librarian and teachers frequently co-teach a lesson. The librarian promotes new books and resources at faculty meetings. A large collection of leveled readers is housed in the book room, adjacent to the library. Our library boasts over 17,000 volumes.

3. Mathematics:

During the 2010-2011 school year, math instruction and achievement became a focus for Murfreesboro City Schools. Grade level teams across the district met to identify power standards, those standards which were the most important for each student to master. Teams also constructed pacing guides to insure that critical skills were mastered. Grade level teams developed pre-assessments and post-assessments to monitor progress and flag skills that required re-teaching. This year, formative assessments continue to help us to identify students who are already proficient as well as students who need to become proficient in necessary academic skills.

Many Discovery School students are already proficient in the skills delineated by state standards. These students are challenged with problem-solving applications, projects or research opportunities. Our teachers supplement Houghton Mifflin, our adopted textbook, with material from the Investigations series, Exemplars and the Navigation Series (NCTM). Manipulatives are imbedded in lessons thus providing the opportunity for acquiring skills in discrete mathematics on a very concrete level. One particularly effective program is Hands-On Equations, Making Algebra Child's Play to introduce algebra to third graders.

Technology provides critical tools for our math program. SMART Boards are used to support instruction by importing math lessons from teachers around the globe. Discovery School is an Apple 1:1 school for grades 4 through 6. Computer assisted programs like IXL, BrainPOP and Study Jams enrich our math program. These programs allow students to delve deeper into math content or provide needed practice. In addition, we also have a growing selection of iPad applications with fresh challenges.

Test data from Discovery Education's ThinkLink is scrutinized, looking at three predictive exams given throughout the year. This information allows teachers to differentiate instruction for each student. Collaborative grade level teams use flexible grouping to address individual needs based on data analysis.

Mathematics is a high priority for our school. Expectations are high for all students. Each student is expected to show academic growth, regardless of their background, ability level, or present level of performance.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Discovery School has developed a very strong science program designed to reach beyond basic scientific knowledge and skills. A fully equipped science lab offers an empirical approach to experiments and projects that make science come alive. A part-time teaching assistant prepares materials needed for each lab experience. Occasionally, guest instructors from MTSU lead the students in experiences like dissecting a cow's heart or sifting through owl pellets.

Important resources include the Vernier Probeware and handheld LabQuest units for data collection. Students record observations and results in science journals. A grant provides materials for hydroponic gardening. Students and teachers plant a vegetable garden each year. Lessons are learned from taking part in our composting project. Most recently, we began raising 60 trout in conjunction with the Dale Hollow Fish Hatchery to be released into local waterways.

There are several area competitions that require students to apply scientific knowledge to reach creative solutions. Each year Discovery School students design and build a working robot to meet a unique challenge set forth by B.E.S.T. Robotics. Science Olympiad offers a variety of problem-solving opportunities to teams of students. This is our first year to participate in The Invention Convention hosted by Middle Tennessee State University. Students present an invention that will solve a problem or create a new game.

The Discovery School vision calls upon us to seek out global connections for our students. Our sixth grade sends a delegation to Turkey as a part of Global Friendship Through Space Education. This international space camp educates children on global awareness through space science. Classes participate in regular videoconferences with students in Turkey as well as Beijing, China.

The Tennessee State Standards serve as minimum expectations for our students. We acknowledge the school's role in producing future leaders, who will not only need a command of the standards, but will be challenged with problems that we cannot even imagine. Therefore, we have raised the bar for engagement

in the STEM areas, for higher order thinking and individual challenge. This fulfills our vision to enrich the curriculum.

5. Instructional Methods:

The Discovery School vision recognizes the need to challenge our academically advanced students by enriching the curriculum. Teachers meet weekly in their Professional Learning Communities to discuss individual students and appropriate programming for them. They look at performance on common assessments as well as classroom performance to determine instructional needs. Even though Discovery is a school for high achievers, students naturally have gaps in certain areas that must be addressed.

Each grade level has a 45 minute block of time set aside for intervention in reading and math. We use AIMSweb and running records to assess specific skills in reading development. Students who are identified meet daily with the academic interventionist during the intervention block. All other students are assigned to small flexible groups based on instructional needs. Educational assistants work with each grade level during their block. One group may be working on a skill review while another group has an enrichment project. Teachers meet regularly for progress monitoring. They consider the data as well as classroom observations as they plan for individual instructional needs.

Teachers provide additional enrichment opportunities for students each Monday for nine weeks, twice a year. These are multi-age groups and are based on student interest. Examples of enrichment clusters are studying art by the masters, ancient Egypt, architecture, edible science experiments, poetry or aerospace. Students watch a PowerPoint presentation of the possibilities and then select a cluster that is of interest to them. Each student develops a culminating project at the end of the nine weeks. Projects are shared during an evening event for parents and guests.

Learning and real world connections are supported through technology. There is a SMART Board in each classroom, laptops for all 4th through 6th graders, a mobile laptop lab for K-3rd grade as well as five desktop computers for each K-3 classroom. Students become quite proficient at using PowerPoint, iMovie and Garage Band. There is one document camera per grade level. Most recently we have added a classroom cart of iPads plus five iPads for the academic interventionist. We utilize the Tennessee Electronic Learning Center, BrainPOP, Study Jams, and Smart Exchange.

6. Professional Development:

The summer before The Discovery School opened, we hosted a retreat with a staff member from The University of Connecticut's Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. This experience provided direction for our school, which was to serve high achievers. A follow-up to the retreat was Confratute, a summer institute at The University of Connecticut that focuses on enrichment-based differentiated teaching. Several of our teachers attend Confratute each summer. It provides educators with research-based practical strategies that focus on the engagement and enrichment of all students as well as meeting the unique needs of the gifted and talented.

Our staff has participated in diversity training and poverty training to increase our sensitivity to others. COMP training was provided for all new teachers. It focused on effective classroom organization and management techniques. We are serving an increasing number of autistic students. Teachers who work with our autistic students attend TRIAD training each year. This training offers strategies to help the autistic learner succeed.

Beginning in 2010, Robert Eaker, co-author of Learning By Doing, has offered several training sessions in our district on the development of Professional Learning Communities. Dr. Eaker's training gave us a step-by-step approach to establishing an effective Professional Learning Community. The Discovery School followed up with a book study of Learning By Doing. Dr. Eaker has empowered our teachers to

form collaborative teams in which all members assume a collective responsibility for the education of all students, child-by-child, skill-by-skill. Our training with Dr. Bob Eaker has had a tremendous impact on our ability to work as a team to make sure that every child learns critical skills and is challenged to grow as a learner.

When Murfreesboro City Schools identified gaps in student reading performance, they provided Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling, LETRS training. This training formed a bridge between research and practice. Teachers learned the importance of teaching phonemic awareness and phonics to all students. Many of our kindergarten students come to school already reading and may have missed some of the critical skills that will enable them to decode words as they progress as readers. This training addressed that issue.

We take advantage of the many highly skilled teachers in our district. Several Discovery School teachers have observed in classrooms across the district. In addition, our teachers regularly share innovative ideas and strategies at faculty meetings and weekly PLC meetings.

7. School Leadership:

The Discovery School is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where all members are working together towards success for every student. Both principals attend weekly PLC grade level meetings as well as monthly leadership team meetings, IEP meetings and monthly faculty meetings. The staff has a clear focus on the following four critical questions that frame our PLC work.

1. What do we want children to learn?
2. How will we determine if they have learned it?
3. What will we do if they have not learned it?
4. What will we do if they already know the content?

The principal and assistant principal at The Discovery School serve as role models for teachers and students, voicing clear expectations of excellence. The principals empower the teachers to help each child achieve. Principals frequently meet with parents, teachers and students to explore how they can play a supportive role in attaining achievement. The result is a feeling of mutual respect and collaboration.

Principals visit classrooms daily and sometimes join in on the lesson. Principals greet the students each morning at the front door and direct traffic in the afternoon with a smile and a wave good-bye. It is up to the administration to set the tone for the school by being active, accessible, supportive and positive.

Outstanding work and good effort are recognized and rewarded. Students frequently bring their work to the office to share. Our office staff is just as excited about student work as the principals. School pencils and small awards are handed out daily. Good work is posted on bulletin boards and hallways along with the objective. Teachers and students are recognized for accomplishments on the news broadcast each morning. During the news, special challenges are issued to students. The challenge may be to research a topic further for specific information or to design a study to answer a question. A recent challenge was to find out what kind of music caused dairy cows to produce more milk. A third grader did the research and reported that it was jazz.

There is no question about why we are here. Our mission for staff and students is to continually learn and grow. It is the role of school leaders to embrace that mission with clarity, and to weave it into the fabric of the school.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	100	95	100	100	100
Advanced	66	60	96	98	98
Number of students tested	59	60	53	56	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	4	5	5	1
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	4	1	4	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1	1	
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3		4	1	1
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	100	96	100	100	100
Advanced	67	60	98	100	97
Number of students tested	54	52	47	46	36
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	94	93	100	100	100
Advanced	63	53	94	98	100
Number of students tested	59	60	53	56	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	4	5	5	1
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	4	1	4	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1	1	
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3		4	1	1
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	94	94	100	100	100
Advanced	63	78	93	98	100
Number of students tested	54	52	47	46	36
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	97	96	100	100	100
Advanced	69	55	98	92	98
Number of students tested	62	55	63	59	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	7	9	2	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	1	3	5	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1	1		
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2		2	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	96	96	100	100	100
Advanced	66	53	100	92	100
Number of students tested	53	49	53	50	38
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	97	91	100	100	100
Advanced	60	60	95	100	100
Number of students tested	62	55	63	59	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	7	9	2	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	1	3	5	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1	1		
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2		2	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	97	92	100	100	100
Advanced	61	63	96	100	100
Number of students tested	53	49	53	50	38
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	90	99	100	100	100
Advanced	57	62	100	96	100
Number of students tested	62	65	56	58	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	9	6	2	3	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	1	3	2	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1		1	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		3		2
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	93	98	100	100	100
Advanced	60	61	100	98	100
Number of students tested	54	57	49	46	37
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced	40	52	100	100	100
Number of students tested	62	65	56	58	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	9	6	2	3	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	1	3	2	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1		1	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		3		2
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced	39	53	100	100	100
Number of students tested	54	57	49	46	37
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	95	90	100	100	100
Advanced	70	44	94	95	98
Number of students tested	37	52	49	40	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	7	4	3	1
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	3	2	3	3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested				1	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	100	91	100	100	100
Advanced	67	46	95	97	97
Number of students tested	29	46	37	36	30
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: Spring Achievement Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced	46	35	94	100	100
Number of students tested	37	52	49	40	40
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	7	4	3	1
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	3	2	3	3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested				1	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White, Not Hispanic					
Proficient & Advanced	94	100	100	100	100
Advanced	63	39	95	100	100
Number of students tested	29	46	37	46	30
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	95	95	100	100	100
Advanced	64	55	97	95	98
Number of students tested	220	232	221	213	160
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					
Proficient & Advanced	83	95	100	100	
Advanced	52	41	90	100	
Number of students tested	19	24	20	13	6
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced	80			100	
Advanced	70			71	
Number of students tested	10	9	9	14	7
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2	3	2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	7	2	7	4	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient & Advanced	96	95	100	100	100
Advanced	64	55	98	96	98
Number of students tested	190	204	186	178	141
NOTES:					

12TN5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient & Advanced	97	96	100	100	100
Advanced	52	50	95	99	100
Number of students tested	220	232	221	213	160
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					
Proficient & Advanced	94	95	100	100	
Advanced	47	41	95	100	
Number of students tested	19	24	20	13	6
2. African American Students					
Proficient & Advanced	90			100	
Advanced	40			100	
Number of students tested	10	9	9	14	7
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2	3	2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	7	2	7	4	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient & Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient & Advanced	96	96	100	100	100
Advanced	55	58	96	99	100
Number of students tested	190	204	186	188	141
NOTES:					

12TN5