2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education   [X] Public   [ ] Private

Cover Sheet   Type of School
(Check all that apply)

[ ] Elementary   [X] MIddle   [ ] High   [ ] K-12
[ ] Charter   [ ] Title I [X] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal   Mr. Mark E. Ertel
<small>(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)</small>

Official School Name   Darnell-Cookman Middle School
<small>(As it should appear in the official records)</small>

School Mailing Address   1701 N. Davis Street
<small>(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)</small>

Jacksonville	Florida	32209-6518
City	State	Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County   Duval   State School Code Number* 161451

Telephone (904) 630-6805   Fax   (904) 630-6811

Web site/URL www.duvalschools.org/darnellcookma   E-mail   Ertelm@duvalschools.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____   Date _____
<small>Principal's Signature</small>

Name of Superintendent   Mr. Ed Pratt-Dannals
<small>(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)</small>

District Name   Duval County Public Schools   Tel. (904) 390-2000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____   Date _____
<small>(Superintendent's Signature)</small>

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson   Mrs. Betty Burney
<small>(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)</small>

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____   Date _____
<small>(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)</small>

Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

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 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. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2007-2008 school year.

3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2002 and has not received the No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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

All data are the most recent year available. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

DISTRICT   (Question 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1.   Number of schools in the district:

105	Elementary schools
28	Middle schools
0	Junior High Schools
19	High schools
7	Other
159	TOTAL

2.   District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____5587_____

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____8424_____

SCHOOL   (To be completed by all schools)

3.   Category that best describes the area where the school is located
.

[X]   Urban or large central city
[   ]   Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban are
[   ]   Suburban
[   ]   Small city or town in a rural are
[   ]   Rural

4.   ____1____   Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

____1____   If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5.   Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
Pre K			0		**7**	146	196	342
K			0		**8**	224	171	395
1			0		**9**			0
2			0		**10**			0
3			0		**11**			0
4			0		**12**			0
5			0		**Other**			0
6	179	218	397					
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL								1134

6. Racial/ethnic composition of   5   % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school: 9   % Asian or Pacific Islander
                                        37   % Black or African American
                                         4   % Hispanic or Latino
                                        45   % White

                                100 % TOTAL

    Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past yea   2   %

    This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	16
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	12
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	1134
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1   %

                                        12   Total Number Limited
                                              English Proficient
    Number of languages represented   7

    Specify languages: Chinese, Indian, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and
                         Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals   19   %

            Total number students who qualify: 213

    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 federally supported lunch
    program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it
    arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 2   %

                   22   Total Number of Students Serve

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

1	Autism	2	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	1	Other Health Impairment
0	Deaf-Blindnes	7	Specific Learning Disabilit
1	Emotional Disturbanc	8	Speech or Language Impairment
1	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	1	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities		

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

Number of Staff

	Full-time	Part-time
Administrator(s)	5	0
Classroom teachers	58	0
Special resource teachers/specialist	6	0
Paraprofessionals	2	0
Support Staff	12	0
Total number	83	0

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   24   **: 1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off

	2006-2007		2005-2006		2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003	
Daily student attendance	96	%	95	%	95	%	96	%	95	%
Daily teacher attendance	86	%	89	%	92	%	91	%	91	%
Teacher turnover rate	6	%	6	%	7	%	8	%	8	%
Student drop out rate (middle/high	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%
Student drop-off rate (high school	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%

Please provide all explanations below

PART III - SUMMARY

Darnell-Cookman Middle is a Gifted and Academically Talented school with a Medical Magnet program. Its mission is to prepare students for success in high school by offering a rigorous, standards-based curriculum which allows students opportunities to think critically and collaboratively in an ever-changing society.

Located in Jacksonville, Florida's downtown quadrant, Darnell attracts sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from the city's metropolitan area, crossing multiple cultures and ethnicities. Its diverse student population has gained the school the consistent honor of being recognized as one of the highest achieving middle schools in the state and nation. Additionally, Darnell has been rated an 'A' school by the Florida Department of Education for the past six years.

Our commitment to higher academic achievement for all children is our selling point. As a magnet school, we receive students based on a lottery system. The result is a diverse cognitive population of students who come from multiple socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, readiness skill, and learning styles.

During the 2006-2007 school year, 89% of students demonstrated proficiency in Reading by scoring at a Level 3 or higher on the FCAT - Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test, and 92% of students demonstrated Math proficiency as well, scoring a 3 or higher. In that same school year, Darnell showed dramatic gains in student achievement among the lowest percentile Reading and Math groups. 72% of students in the bottom quartile made learning gains in Reading. Similarly in Math, 86% of the bottom quartile showed academic growth.

The school strives to advance learning across all ability levels and maintain high academic goals. Darnell's drive to ensure that every student attains academic excellence is widely known in the Jacksonville area. Among parents and the general community, it is often said, 'If your child scored a FCAT Level 1 or 2 in Math or Reading, you want them to attend Darnell-Cookman because the explicit teachings and instructional strategies transform low-performing students into independent learners. Likewise, if your child is academically gifted, you want them there, too because the teachers will inspire and motivate them to explore every breadth of content knowledge in each subject matter.'

Darnell-Cookman students frequently take honors in academic competitions on local, state and national levels. Students have respectively placed first, second, or third in state finals in the National Geographic Geography Bee, the State Science Fair, the State History Fair, and Math Counts. Also, students from Darnell-Cookman have represented the region at the national SECME Engineering competition for five straight years beginning in 2002.

All children are inspired and challenged to become critical thinkers and future pioneers as they successfully complete their secondary education as a pathway to post-secondary learning. Administrators, teachers, parents, and community partners continue to provide a sound, nurturing school climate that enable teachers to administer effective instruction and application at a rigorous pace, resulting in our students feeling capable and confident while learning deeply about their education. The result is no child is being left behind at Darnell-Cookman.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test is a state wide standardized test for Florida school children. The FCAT is part of Florida's overall plan to increase student achievement by implementing higher standards. The FCAT, administered to students in Grades 3-11, contains two basic components: criterion-referenced tests (CRT), measuring selected benchmarks in Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Writing from the Sunshine State Standards (SSS); and norm-referenced tests (NRT) in Reading and Mathematics, measuring individual student performance against national norms. The FCAT translates student achievement of not meeting the standards, meeting the standards, and exceeding the standards by using performance Levels ranging from numbers 1 to 5. Students who score a Level 1 or 2 in Math or in Reading are performing below the state's standards. Students who score at Level 3 meet the state's standards, and students who score at Levels 4 and 5 exceed the state standards. The Florida Department of Education website - http://www.fldoe.org - has schools' FCAT scores posted for public review.

During the 2006-2007 school year, 89% of the students demonstrated proficiency in Reading by scoring a Level 3 or higher on the FCAT, with 72% of students in the bottom quartile showing gains. Student achievement in Math was just as impressive. 92% of students showed proficiency in Math, with 84% of students in the bottom quartile showing gains.

Darnell's dedication to higher student learning and academic achievement for all students is its key to functioning as an exceptionally performing school. Over the past five years, Darnell has seen steady growth in increased student learning across race, gender, and socio-economic subgroups. Our 2006-2007 school wide student performance showed increased percentage gains. However, in a few subgroups, FCAT data showed slight decreases compared to the 2005-2006 school year.

Sixth grade subgroups in math 2006-2007 vs. 2005-2006 comparisons:

86% of all 6th graders scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 82% in 2005-2006
95% of white students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 97% in 2005-2006
72% of black students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 62% in 2005-2006
67% of free/reduced lunch students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 71% in 2005-2006
96% of Asian students scored Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 100% in 2005-2006

Seventh grade subgroups in math 2006-2007 vs 2005-2006 comparisons:

90% of 7th graders scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 92% in 2005-2006
98% of white students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 95% in 2005-2006
81% of black students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 84% in 2005-2006
79% of free/reduced lunch students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 82% in 2005-2006
93% of Asian students scored Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 94% in 2005-2006

Eight grade subgroups in math 2006-2007 vs 2005-2006 comparisons:

98% of 8th graders scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 95% in 2005-2006
100% of white students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 99% in 2005-2006
95% of black students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 88% in 2005-2006
93% of free/reduced lunch students scored a Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 88% in 2005-2006
97% of Asian students scored Level 3 or higher in 2006-2007 vs. 95% in 2005-2006

We are proud of our overall school wide growth and accomplishments. Clear learning objectives address specific problems identified as needs based on the analysis of data disaggregated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups. To address the slight decreases experienced in several of our sixth and seventh grade subgroups, administrators, teachers, and staff have implemented quarterly benchmark tests, AID data, and formative assessments to better understand our student population's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, onset assessments are helping teachers more effectively identify gaps in student learning, especially among our entering sixth-grade population. Early diagnosis of students' needs is yielding academic growth.

Note: The subgroups mentioned in this section are the same subgroups discussed in part VIII.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Simply put, assessment data drives instruction and helps us make continual improvement to help meet the needs of all our students. Darnell uses reliable, valid and bias free data to improve student success. The AIDE data network of the Duval County Public Schools system provides the basic framework for maintaining the statistical information on the school and its relation to other schools in the district and state. AIDE data includes information of the population as a whole and information on each individual student. This data include the economic base, race, gender, ESOL, and ESE status, as well as data from the annual FCAT criterion and norm-reference test which evaluates students' progress toward mastery of the Sunshine State Standards.

The FCAT, NWEA (The Northwest Evaluation Association) and READ 180 Lab provide reliable data for administrators and teachers to identify strengths and weakness for each individual student, and thus implement explicit accommodations needed to promote student growth. NWEA testing connects the scale of FCAT Math and Reading assessments and pre-indicates success on the FCAT test. READ 180 Lab is an assessment tool that gauges students' Lexile scores. Each testing period monitors the progress of the students as they make steady growth. This growth should culminate in an improvement on the FCAT.

Formative Assessment Tests (FAT) are designed using collaboration of teachers in the same academic discipline and grade level. The FAT tests are given bi-quarterly to each student in the academic discipline and graded by the discipline's classroom teacher using a rubric designed by and agreed upon in the above mentioned collaboration sessions.

The data from these tests (FCAT, NWEA, READ 180 Lab, and FAT) serve as monitoring tools to determine standards and skills mastered, giving classroom teachers reliable indicators so they can make ongoing adjustments in instruction and content. As a result, classrooms teachers review, re-teach, and/or extend knowledge deeply before advancing to the next skill. Because data drives how we teach and the rigor to which we advance learning, students are prepared for success in the content areas and on the FCAT.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

Darnell-Cookman uses various avenues to communicate information about the students, their performances, and school effectiveness. Our communication targets students, parents, and community.

Darnell communicates state achievement results (FCAT scores) directly to students. As soon as their results are available, teachers schedule conference times with students to explain their scores, strengths and weaknesses in each substrand. The FCAT report is given to parents, via the end-of-the-year report card. In addition, we use the school's marquee to inform parents that FCAT scores are being included in each student's report card.

NWEA data (The Northwest Evaluation Association) measures academic progress in the fall, winter, and spring. Each report is communicated to students via teacher/student conference, and results are given to parents during teacher/parent conferences. The quarterly results are placed in each student's cumulative folder.

The Guidance Department sponsors a Parent Night at which FCAT sores, Lexile scores, and NWEA reports are explained. Counselors discuss school/student expectations and inform parents of ongoing guidance interventions made available to all students. Teachers meet with parents for the purpose of completing an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). The AIP is an academic success contract among the parent, student, and teacher. Parents are given specific interventions they agree to implement at home. Students identify academic goals they will attain during the school year. Teachers commit to developing and using strategies specific to students' needs.

Our community stakeholders are kept informed of the school's goals and success via the School Improvement Plan, School Advisory Committee, PTA meetings, School Open House, District-wide Open House, Magnet Mania, school's and district's websites, frequent mailouts, and the school's newsletter.

4. **Sharing Success:**

The principal and the leadership team continue to have 'open door' communication. Through faculty meetings, meeting with grade-level teams, offering collaborative training with our partner schools (Paxon School for Advanced Studies, Stanton College Preparatory, Eugene J. Butler and Julia Landon), our

faculty continues to explore new innovative teaching strategies that support data-driven instruction. We learn from each other. Last year our school instructional leadership team met several times with our sister school Butler. Together we shared successful strategies and classroom management approaches. We shared lesson plans, identified appropriate student projects that promote learning, and concluded which instructional methods improve motivation, engagement, and optimal learning for all of our students.

Our foreign language instructor facilitates district-wide workshops on the topic of pre- and post-lesson planning and effective foreign language methodologies. Our Social Studies Chairwoman conducts district wide workshops on the History Alive curriculum. She shares instructional methods that best improve student engagement and content comprehension.

Darnell shares best practices for classroom management with local interns. Each year, teachers partner with local university education majors and impart successful teaching styles and strategies that meet the modality needs of students in the classroom.

On September 28, 2006, Darnell participated in former Florida Governor Jeb Bush's goal of successfully earning a spot in the Guinness Book of Records for the most students reading a literary passage out loud at the same time. As Darnell came on board with this vision, we invited Eugene J. Butler Middle to join in our quest to be a part of Florida school-age children making reading history. Nearly 75 students from Butler joined us as we, along with 186,054 students from 456 schools in the state, simultaneously read for one minute.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

The curriculm, instructional strategies and assessments are aligned and articulated through state provided performance standards for each curriculum grade level and course. The state publishes course descriptions and curriculum standards for each course code. Our county, Duval tweaks the state standards to meet our district's needs.

Language Arts - This curriculum is based upon content and performance standards focused on placing the responsibility for learning with the student. As a secondary school program, our mission is to produce literate middle and high school students whose lives are enriched by their ability to read, write and speak eloquently, both in school and in the world at large.

Math -This curriculum consists of advanced and honors math courses. Our gifted and advanced students with FCAT scores of 5 take Pre-Algebra in the sixth grade, Algebra in the seventh, and Geometry Honors in the eighth. Our advanced students take Advanced Sixth Grade Math in the sixth grade, Pre-Algebra in the seventh grade, and Algebra in the eighth.

Science - This curriculum was the first in Duval County to be written in the UbD (Understanding by Design) format. UbD is a way for the teacher to look at the curriculum with the end in mind. This allows teachers to teach for true understanding in order to promote life-long learning. Our hands-on, inquiry based, 3-year spiraling curriculum builds knowledge in Earth Science, Life Science, Physical Science, and Health.

Social Studies - Our school has a comprehensive social studies curriculum that covers ancient history in 6th grade. Then, in seventh the curriculum is world geography, teaching diversity to children. In 8th grade, the students study U.S. History covering events prior to the country's conception to the Civil War. The History Alive Instructional method enhances our curriculum because it engages students and keeps them actively involved in high critical thinking and responsive writing.

Physical Education - This curriculum supports the physical and emotional development of all students. The curriculum requires daily student engagement in enjoyable physical activity. Students learn skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities. They participate in regular activities to improve their fitness level. Students are required to take three quarters of P.E.

Health - This curriculum addresses content areas that include social development, nutrition and physical activity, knowledge and understanding of the body, and communicable diseases. These content areas are taught at the appropriate development grade levels. Students are required to take a health course one quarter each school year.

Foreign Languages - The foreign language curriculum at Darnell-Cookman Middle School enables students to acquire proficiency in their chosen target language though linguistic, communicative, and cultural approaches to language learning. Emphasis is placed on the development of communication skills through listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers use a variety of highly illustrated authentic materials to complement the established curriculum and assist students in understanding the target culture as well. Our goal is to create a solid foundation in the target language to generate life-long learners interested in continuing language learning in our global society. All seventh grade students who are in an introductory foreign language course are placed in a year-long 8th grade foreign language Course I (French/Spanish).

Drama - As part of the Fine Arts Department, Drama is offered at Darnell-Cookman as both a class and an after-school club. The Theater Arts elective class offers students a chance to discover an overview of theater history and careers in theater as well as to collaborate with their peers for class activities and performances. The after-school Drama Club is open to all students at all grade levels and meets weekly for the whole school year. Club members create and act in workshops, enjoy field trips, and take part in performance opportunities.

Art - Darnell-Cookman visual arts students learn to appreciate, evaluate, and create art through hands on training and classroom discussion.

2b. **(Secondary Schools) English:**

The Language Arts Curriculum has been designed to meet all Sunshine State and Performance Standards. The curriculum closely follows the principles in UbD format which emphasizes essential questions, beginning with the end in mind approach. Suggested activities are given to ensure these standards have been met. Having the 'end-in-mind' approach, teachers purposefully scaffold higher-order thinking by developing the foundation strategies for reading comprehension and responsive writing. Students are guided to think critically during their reading. Teachers instruct and scaffold students' abilities through comparisons and cause and effect type inquiries. Students are taught strategies to read fictional and informational texts, essays, and poetry. Teachers engage students into life-long appreciation for reading using real-world knowledge content relative to current issues and student interests.

Teachers use explicit instruction to help students (especially those who read below grade level) apply context clues to identify word meaning. Our teachers continue to integrate word meaning associated with word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and root words) to help improve vocabulary skills. All students are challenged to synthesize multiple sources of information to reason through text and analyze information across texts. Teachers direct, guide, and inform students how to identify relationships between plot and theme in fictional writing; thesis statements and topic introduction on informative text; and author's purpose in persuasive and expository essays.

Writing is implemented at all Language Arts grade levels. Students write reports, narrative accounts, persuasive and expository essays, responses to literature, and creative writing and non-fiction procedures. Darnell teachers support literacy across curriculum. All content area teachers implement writing in order to improve the literacy skills of all students. Writing in math embraces real life scenarios, word problems, and written explanation on step-by-step mathematical procedures. Writing is a vital aspect of the science curriculum. Science writing includes lab reports, research papers, and science fair projects.   The Social Studies department works closely with Language Arts by teaching research information and implementation for history fair projects.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Great Books is an advanced Reading course designed to teach students how to read the text in an interpretive, analytical manner. The course does not focus on fact finding, but rather the child's individual interpretation of the text. Students learn how to search for and cite evidence to support their findings, thereby building researching and evaluative skills. This high-order critical reasoning supports our mission to offer high achievers opportunities to think and work creatively while reading advanced literature.

The Great Books curriculum challenges students to interpret why events happen the way they do in stories. Students analyze the characters' behavior then explain the characters' actions while also analyzing how the characters cope with a problem - whether it is emotional or physical. The shared inquiry instructional method allows students to challenge each other's interpretation and use of evidence to support each interpretive response. Questions of evaluation activate students' higher level thinking while asserting sound judgment concerning the text.

In addition, this curriculum fosters the belief that 'Different ideas and points of view can lead to better understanding of the story.' As the teacher poses interpretive questions, students spend time sharing various perspectives providing substantiating evidence from the text. This guided instructional method creates a classroom environment where - even though students' responses are valued - they are challenged.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

Each school in Duval County has a Standards Coach that makes sure teachers are aware of instructional strategies for their classroom.   The Standards Coach also guides all classroom teachers in the direction expected for student learning. Along with various techniques demonstrated by different teachers across the same grade level. The Standards Coach facilitates in-school workshops that are scheduled during Early Release days that provide teachers with effective instructional strategies including differentiate instruction, content, and assessment, FCAT preparation, writing strategies, classroom management, and critical thinking assessments.

Darnell teachers know that regardless of their subject area, they too, teach reading. Within the instructional teaching, teachers are implementing reading strategies to address fluency, vocabulary, and

comprehension in the content. These methods are receiving positive results in student performance.

With the support of researched-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students, teachers have implemented many initiatives: curriculum papers which outlines objectives and goals for the course; tutoring designed to increase the struggling students chances of success; Guidance informs teams of students who are legally mandated to receive accommodations so they may achieve their goals; teachers offering cross-curriculum instruction so that students become engaged in the learning process and deepen their understanding.

Last, our Team-up after school program is designed to provide individual homework support for students, and our before and after school tutoring supplements in-class instruction. We find a direct link between this instructional support and student academic success.

5. **Professional Development:**

Professional Development plays an integral part in the school improvement process. Teachers are given training on the usage of data to plan instruction, methods to differentiate instruction, and ideas on incorporating technology in their classrooms. This knowledge enables teachers to purposely consider the best way to deliver content, instruction, and provide student assignments that best create student engagement and interest. This insight and implementation does ensure a higher percentage of students understanding.

Early Release time is given to each department to discuss formative assessments, common assignments, and bell-ringer activities. This approach guarantees grade-level teachers of the same discipline are setting standards that are aligned with the state's performance standards and that learning is measured by the teacher objectives. The product is an explicit teaching that produces measurable learning.

New teachers receive additional support from the Standards Coach. Each teacher in the first year of teaching is given a TDE (Time Duty Elsewhere) to spend with the Standards Coach determining how to best implement their curriculum in this school setting. This support given enables teachers to execute effective classroom management, thus providing an optimal learning environment.

Teachers in all subject areas are encouraged to attend one session of an Intensive Reading course and a Reading Competency course in order to gain insight into and learning strategies. This process ensures struggling readers comprehend the reading and identify what support is needed to ensure correct accommodations are provided. This result is a continual academic growth among our lowest Reading percentile group.

We value and ensure high-quality professional development because it provides the 'collective mind' necessary to ensure the mission and vision of our program. When teacher and staff are clear about what implementing the vision and teaching to the standards looks like, their awareness increases and we see positive changes in the learning environment. By analyzing the challenges and successes, recognizing the uniqueness and strengths of the program, and collecting reliable data, we ensure that our professional development program continues to provide a positive impact on the learning environment at Darnell-Cookman.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA)   Grade 6   Test Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

Edition/Publication Year 2007   Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 3,4, 5	92	89	90	85	86
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 4 and 5	58	65	55	55	50
Number of students tested	348	336	467	411	428
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
White	96	98	96	94	94
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
White	68	79	74	68	63
Number of students tested	149	149	194	221	223
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Black	85	78	79	69	72
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Black	40	44	30	29	26
Number of students tested	128	141	153	134	151
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Free/Reduced Lunch	83	81	79	74	71
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Free/Reduced Lunch	41	51	32	32	32
Number of students tested	63	75	103	98	97
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Asian Pacific Islander	96	100	96	82	90
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Asian Pacific Islander	68	79	66	75	70
Number of students tested	28	19	27	28	20

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 7 Test Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards FCAT Levels 3,4, 5	90	94	91	85	87
% "Exceeding" State Standards FCAT Levels 4 and 5	58	58	60	47	54
Number of students tested	371	387	413	389	388
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard White	98	96	94	92	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards White	72	69	73	63	64
Number of students tested	158	192	205	205	238
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Black	82	91	83	70	77
% "Exceeding" State Standards Black	38	37	36	21	33
Number of students tested	155	133	135	134	112
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Free/Reduced Lunch	79	93	87	76	80
% "Exceeding" State Standards Free/Reduced Lunch	38	33	44	30	37
Number of students tested	63	72	83	82	60
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Asian Pacific Islander	90	97	90	89	82
% "Exceeding" State Standards Asian Pacific Islander	62	75	60	61	44
Number of students tested	29	32	40	18	16

Subject Reading (LA)   Grade 8   Test Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

Edition/Publication Year 2007   Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	February	February	February	February	February
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 3,4, 5	84	86	81	81	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 4 and 5	45	46	38	46	49
Number of students tested	362	390	383	383	359
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
White	88	95	91	90	93
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
White	54	58	47	54	60
Number of students tested	182	197	193	233	233
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Black	74	73	64	63	77
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Black	26	21	20	25	25
Number of students tested	119	120	130	112	96
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Free/Reduced Lunch	75	70	62	70	77
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Free/Reduced Lunch	27	28	21	22	23
Number of students tested	55	73	64	50	48
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Asian Pacific Islander	91	83	91	65	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Asian Pacific Islander	56	55	51	55	46
Number of students tested	34	40	33	20	24

Subject Math   Grade 8   Test Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

Edition/Publication Year 2007   Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 3,4, 5	98	95	96	92	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 4 and 5	80	76	67	60	60
Number of students tested	363	390	383	383	359
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
White	100	99	99	97	97
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
White	91	88	79	71	68
Number of students tested	183	197	193	233	223
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Black	95	88	89	81	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Black	55	48	43	35	37
Number of students tested	119	120	130	112	96
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Free/Reduced Lunch	93	88	94	78	89
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Free/Reduced Lunch	64	59	40	28	41
Number of students tested	55	73	64	50	48
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Asian Pacific Islander	97	95	97	85	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Asian Pacific Islander	94	95	97	75	75
Number of students tested	34	40	33	20	24

Subject Math   Grade 6   Test Flordia Comprehesnive Achievement Tets

Edition/Publication Year 2007   Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards FCAT Levels 3, 4,5	86	82	79	80	71
% "Exceeding" State Standards FCAT Levels 4,5	49	56	42	49	41
Number of students tested	348	336	405	411	428
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard White	95	97	89	90	81
% "Exceeding" State Standards WHite	62	76	56	60	52
Number of students tested	149	149	192	221	223
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Black	72	62	65	60	52
% "Exceeding" State Standards Black	28	30	20	22	19
Number of students tested	128	141	153	134	151
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Free/Reduced Lunch	67	71	69	61	56
% "Exceeding" State Standards Free/Reduced Lunch	30	37	23	28	28
Number of students tested	63	75	102	98	97
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Asian Pacific Islander	96	100	93	86	90
% "Exceeding" State Standards Asian Pacific Islander	71	79	56	79	80
Number of students tested	28	19	27	28	20

Subject Math Grade 7 Test Flordia Comprehesnive Achievement Tets

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Florida Department of Education

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 3, 4,5	90	92	88	85	85
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
FCAT Levels 4,5	60	64	61	50	47
Number of students tested	371	387	413	387	388
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. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
White	98	95	97	92	92
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
White	77	78	76	60	60
Number of students tested	158	192	205	205	238
2. Black					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Black	81	84	73	69	69
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Black	40	39	34	27	17
Number of students tested	155	133	135	132	112
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Free/Reduced Lunch	79	82	72	71	71
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Free/Reduced Lunch	42	40	42	31	33
Number of students tested	63	72	83	81	60
4. Asian Pacific Islander					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Asian Pacific Islander	93	94	90	89	88
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Asian Pacific Islander	76	75	73	89	69
Number of students tested	29	32	40	18	16