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 [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Jeff Rodman
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Falmouth Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 52 Woodvile Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Falmouth	Maine	04105-1106
City	State	Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Cumberland State School Code Number* 1241

Telephone (207) 781-3740 Fax (207) 321-0107

Web site/URL http://www.falmouthschools.org E-mail jrodman@fps.k12.me.us

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

Principal's Signature

Name of Superintendent Dr. George EntwistleIII
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Falmouth School Department Tel. (207) 781-3200

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

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mrs. Beppie Cerf
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**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:

2	Elementary schools
1	Middle schools
	Junior High Schools
1	High schools
	Other
4	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 9122

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 8229

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

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

   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**	99	87	186
K			0	**8**	99	92	191
1			0	**9**			0
2			0	**10**			0
3			0	**11**			0
4			0	**12**			0
5	86	84	170	**Other**			0
6	95	98	193				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							740

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

	% American Indian or Alaska Native
4	% Asian or Pacific Islander
1	% Black or African American
1	% Hispanic or Latino
94	% 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 year 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	11
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	6
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	740
(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 %

11 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 7

Specify languages: Khmer, Russian, Latvian, Korean, Marathi, Swahili, Persian

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3 %

Total number students who qualify: 20

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: 13 %

94 Total Number of Students Served

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

6	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
1	Deafness	17	Other Health Impairment
0	Deaf-Blindness	45	Specific Learning Disability
5	Emotional Disturbance	13	Speech or Language Impairment
2	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
6	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)	2	0
Classroom teachers	39	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	28	8
Paraprofessionals	18	0
Support Staff	4	0
Total number	91	8

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 — 19 **: 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 rates.

	2006-2007		2005-2006		2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003	
Daily student attendance	97	%	96	%	96	%	96	%	96	%
Daily teacher attendance	97	%	96	%	96	%	95	%	95	%
Teacher turnover rate	11	%	6	%	3	%	1	%	3	%
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

Snapshot

Falmouth Middle School is home for 740 students in grades five through eight. It is a school that prides itself on our commitment to the educational, social, and emotional needs of each and every student. Our mission is simple in that 'we strive to provide a quality education within a supportive environment for every student who attends our school.' Our school's values comes from our district's improvement plan which is updated every 18-months. This 18-month plan is truly a 'community' event, evidencing active community support and attended by school personnel, parents, community members, civic leaders, and most importantly our students. The plans from this 'Community Dialogue' are a guide for our building goals. These goals reflect our high expectations for all students.

The foundation of any successful school is an outstanding faculty and Falmouth Middle School is no exception. We have a dedicated staff of 110, including teachers, support staff, educational technicians, secretaries, custodians, and administrators. Many of our teachers have postgraduate degrees and seven of our 70 classroom teachers have now earned the distinction of being Nationally Board Certified.

We are committed to the tenets of sound middle level practices. Our school is organized by dynamic student-centered teams. In grades five and six, we have two-person teaching teams and in grades seven and eight, we have five person teams, sharing common students, organized by content subject. In addition to the common core subjects of English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, students have choice of either French or Spanish as a foreign language. Also, there is a special education teacher assigned to each grade level team and we have both literacy and math support coaches for non-special education students in place within the grade span of 5-6 and 7-8. Understanding the unique needs of the pre-adolescent, we have implemented an advisory program in an effort to ensure that each student has at least one adult connection.

The focus of leadership of Falmouth Middle School is one of 'shared' leadership. There are team leaders at each grade level and within each content area. Decisions regarding staff development are determined by the building's Professional Development Team. In our ongoing effort to improve teaching and learning, our staff has continued to work on curriculum, assessment, and instructional strategies. Our schedule allows teams of teachers to meet by content areas and by whole grade level. These meetings occur on a regular basis during common planning time and early release days enabling teachers to improve upon their skills and their practice. The staff has continued its professional development work on curriculum, assessment, and instructional strategies, this year with a focus on literacy for the 21st century. We have partnered with the University of Southern Maine to bring in a graduate level course designed to improve literacy instruction in the content areas.

Students at Falmouth Middle School have the opportunity to participate in a rich variety of unified arts classes for 80 minutes daily which include art, music, band and chorus, tech ed, computer, health and physical education. We have band and chorus programs that are outstanding and amongst the finest in Maine. Each year our students win individual honors in the areas of art, music, English, world languages, and mathematics. We have a comprehensive athletic program that focuses on both interscholastic and intramural participation.

Our standardized test scores reflect our students' accomplishments. What has contributed to this success is our community-based focus on our school goals, our high expectations for our students, and our belief that physical, social, and emotional wellness are essential ingredients to academic success. Our decisions, actions and priorities reflect these beliefs.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) is the state's measure of student progress in achieving the academic expectations, known as Learning Results, adopted by the Maine Legislature in 1997, and revised in 2007. The MEAs through 2008 reflect the 1997 Learning Results. In 05-06, in order to monitor AYP, MEAs were expanded to include grades 5, 6, and 7, in addition to grade 8. See http://www.maine.gov/education/standards.htm

The following describes the performance levels of the 8th grade MEA reading assessment, which is based on two types of reading passages: literary and informational. Passages include both long and short 'authentic' texts. Students' responses are both multiple choice and constructed response.

Exceeds the Standards - The student's work demonstrates the ability to read and interpret literary and informational texts appropriate for the grade level by drawing in-depth inferences, analyzing texts for subtle clues, synthesizing information across texts, and using his/her knowledge of text features and literary devices to make deeper connections within or across texts to increase comprehension.

Meets the Standards- The student's work demonstrates the ability to read and interpret literary and informational texts appropriate for the grade level by drawing inferences, summarizing main ideas and providing supporting details, connecting ideas within and across texts, and using his/her knowledge of text features and literary devices to increase comprehension.

Partially Meets the Standards - The student's work demonstrates an inconsistent ability to read and interpret literary and informational texts appropriate for the grade level. The student's ability to draw inferences, summarize main ideas and provide supporting details, connect ideas within and across texts, and use his/her knowledge of text features and literary devices varies depending on the texts.

Does Not Meet the Standards - The student's work demonstrates a limited ability to read and interpret literary and informational texts appropriate for the grade level. The student's responses are often vague or incorrect leaving the impression that the student found it difficult to draw inferences, summarize main ideas and provide supporting details, connect ideas within and across texts, or use his/her knowledge of text features and literary devices to support comprehension.

The four content standard clusters in math, which are assessed, include: Numbers and Operations, Shape and Size, Mathematical Decision Making, and Patterns. There are four performance levels included in math. The descriptors for 8th grade math are as follows:

Exceeds the Standards - The student's work demonstrates in-depth understanding of essential concepts in mathematics, including the ability to make multiple connections among central ideas. The student's responses demonstrate the ability to synthesize information; analyze and solve difficult problems, including developing and implementing strategies, efficiently and accurately performing procedures, and recording and justifying solutions; and explain complex concepts.

Meets the Standards - The student's work demonstrates a general understanding of essential concepts in mathematics, including the ability to make connections among central ideas. The student's responses demonstrate the ability to analyze and solve problems including developing and implementing strategies, to perform procedures, and to record and explain solutions and concepts. The student's work may contain minor errors.

Partially Meets the Standards - The student's work demonstrates incomplete understanding of essential concepts in mathematics and inconsistent connections among central ideas. The student's responses demonstrate some ability to analyze and solve problems, and explain concepts. Problem solving strategies may be flawed, procedures performed inaccurately, methods not recorded and/or problems not completed.

Does Not Meet the Standards - The student's work demonstrates limited understanding of

essential concepts in mathematics and infrequent or inaccurate connections among central ideas. The student's responses demonstrate minimal ability to solve problems and explain concepts. Over the past five years, Falmouth Middle School has scored in the top 10% of Maine schools in both reading and mathematics. We have seen a steady increase in the number of students meeting and/or exceeding standards. In reading we have moved from 73% of 8th grade students meeting or exceeding standards in 2002-2003 to 85% in 2006-2007. In Math 46% of 8th grade students met or exceeded standards in 2002-2003. In 2006-2007, that percentage was 84%. Also notable is our progress with students with identified disabilities. In SY02-03 none of these students met standards in math and 21% met standards in reading. In SY06-07, 45% of the students with identified disabilities met or exceeded standards in math and 50% met or exceeded standards in reading.

2. **Using Assessment Results**

Assessment results are used at the individual student level, grade level and school level. At the grade and school level results of the Maine Educational Assessments (MEAs), Northwest Evaluation Association tests (NWEAs), and local common assessments such as writing prompts are utilized in conjunction with classroom daily performance to screen for students that are in need of additional support to meet standards. The district uses PowerSchool, and our technology specialists have created custom reports which allow us to look at these data points in a single report. Teachers share common students as they work in teams of two at the grade 5 and 6 levels, and teams of 5 at the grade 7 and 8 levels. They meet in these teams, along with administration and support staff, as well as content area teams to discuss assessment results and student work. Instruction can then be differentiated based on student performance and prior knowledge. Differentiation includes focusing on essential concepts, scaffolding work through practices such as providing graphic organizers and teacher notes, providing written material at the appropriate reading level, and differentiating the product/processes students use to demonstrate learning. The school's 2 literacy specialists and 2 math support education technicians assist teachers in this process as well as work with small groups of students. In addition, classroom teachers review all assessment results prior to meeting their students in the fall, enabling teachers to plan for student learning needs.

Content area teams, along with administration, inspect aggregated and disaggregated assessment results to look for strengths and weaknesses in content curriculum and instruction. Both MEAs and NWEAs provide analyses of student performance by standard that can inform curriculum design and instruction. The math content team (grades 5 through 8), for example, has done this analysis with the MEAs for a number of years. The percentage of students in grade 8 math MEAs who have met or exceeded standards has gone from 46% in 2002-2003 to 84% in 2006-2007 with steady progress alone the way.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results**

Falmouth Middle School uses a variety of venues to communicate assessment results. MEA and NWEA assessments provide individual student reports, which are sent to parents, and discussed with parents at parent conferences. School-based common assessments (such as the annual writing prompt assessment at each grade level) are also communicated at conferences, but results can, at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade level, also be viewed through the web-based parent portal of our student information system, PowerSchool. We also produce custom reports through PowerSchool. For example, our Middle School Student Profile prints a one page summary of MEA scores, NWEA scores, common assessment scores, and fluency probe scores, as well as multi-year attendance history, final grades, and a summary of interventions received by the student in grades 5 through 8. This is useful for viewing and communicating student progress over time.

School assessment results are communicated in our web-based District Report Card (http://www.falmouthschools.org/supt/documents/districtReportCard/districtReportCard.htm). The District Report Card provides data, organized by 18-month goal. The assessment results provide indicators of progress toward the goal, 'Meet the Learning Needs of Every Student'. The assessment results are also reviewed at School Board meetings and included in a monthly Principal's School Board Report, which is also posted on the web.

4. **Sharing Success:**

The professional staff at Falmouth Middle School has multiple opportunities to share successes

with other schools in the local area, state-wide, and even nationally. Up until this year, a coalition of schools in the area called the Casco Bay Educational Alliance (CBEA) allowed teachers and administrators to meet by role and interest area. Because of the demands of school consolidation planning in Maine, the alliance is temporarily inactive, but the conversations between professionals continue. A particularly strong example of this collaboration between districts was a Middle School/High School Leadership Cohort that completed a two-year course of study to prepare emerging leaders in the districts to become school leaders. Five teachers from Falmouth Middle School participated in this cohort, where, on an ongoing basis, these teachers shared successes with colleagues from other school districts.

Teachers in every content area and at every grade level share professionally. At the fall 2007 Maine Association for Middle Level Education (MAMLE), eight teachers, the principal, and assistant principal presented workshops. Our principal is on the board of MAMLE. A seventh grade math teacher spends his summers training teachers in the Connected Math Program at Michigan State University as well as elsewhere around the country. Many teachers and staff are active in their state and national content area associations as well, most notably in information technology, world languages, literacy, music, nursing, guidance, and administration.

The web provides a new venue for professional sharing. Many of our teachers subscribe to and participate in list-servs. They also maintain web pages that are not only accessed by our students, but provide resources for English speaking teachers around the world (http://www.falmouthschools.org/MiddleSchool/classSites.cfm). Some of our teachers are using Moodle, which is a program that provides a web-based component to the classroom. Many of these sites also have guest access, allowing other professionals to view both student and professional development course content (http://www2.fps.k12.me.us/moodle/). Professionals outside of Falmouth choose to visit the middle school to learn and observe, giving us another opportunity to share in such areas as technology, math instruction, and school administration.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Falmouth Middle School's curriculum is part of a carefully sequenced plan of studies for all students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Teams of teacher have assisted with the review of each content area over the past four years in order to be sure state and national learning benchmarks are addressed and available to all learners.

The English language arts curriculum is fully guided by the Revised Maine Learning Results. The reading curriculum addresses learning goals in four distinct area: 1) Interconnected elements, where students read and draw conclusions from texts by applying their knowledge and strategies of comprehension, vocabulary, alphabetics, and fluency; 2) literary text, where students read fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry; 3) informational text, where students read, paraphrase and summarize informational texts for different purposes; and, 4) persuasive text, where students read this genre in order to analyze the persuasive writing. The writing curriculum is similarly modeled to meet state criteria. It includes writing in the genres of narrative, persuasive, and analytic writing, with instructional elements in rhetorical features as well as grammar and mechanics.

The math curriculum is based on two commercial programs, both of which are evaluated to reflect national standards in mathematics education. The Everyday Math (EDM) program is taught in kindergarten through fifth grade, and then students transition to the Connected Math Program, or CMP, for grades six through eight. Everyday Math is a spiraling program which takes students through whole numbers, fractions and decimals, as well as geometry, measurement, probability, and pre-algebra. CMP emphasizes constructivist inquiry in three to four units per year echoing the strong basis in EDM.

Social studies content focus is an extension of studies begun in the elementary school. Fifth grade, following Native American, Maine, and US regional studies in grades three and four, focuses on the material diversity of the world's people and emphasizes the importance of immigration in the history of the United States. In sixth and seventh grade, students study world history from ancient peoples through the Middle Ages, and then the Renaissance through current world affairs. Eighth graders study US history, with special emphasis on key documents from colonial times to the present.

Science curriculum also is an important part of the K-12 sequence, with content covering all of the disciplines: physical, life and earth and space science. Grade 5 includes studies of landforms, chemistry, and the human body. Grade 6 focuses on earth history and habitats. Grade 7 deepens understanding of life sciences through the study of the cell and also includes solar system learning goals. Grade 8 emphasizes physics and chemistry, as well as an integrated, culminating unit entitled 'Public Policy and Global Warming.'

The visual and performing arts are a rich offering as well. All students participate in visual and performing arts, where both creative expression and disciplinary literacy are emphasized. A variety of media are addressed through four years of visual arts, and music involves similar goals through general music, band, jazz band, and chorus.

Finally, world languages are an important content area, too. Students, who begin language study in grade 1 in Spanish, have the option of French or Spanish in grades 5 and 6; those languages then become core subjects in grades 7 and 8, where the five aspects of language instruction are addressed: culture, communication, community, comparisons, and connections. Oral proficiency is strongly supported in this mix. Also, content from the social studies curriculum is now also being addressed in the target language.

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

The Middle School is fortunate to have all experienced, highly qualified English language arts teachers and two literacy coaches devoted to improving instruction and providing support services to students who continue to struggle with reading despite best efforts otherwise. Advances in the reading curriculum have recently occurred under their leadership, through facilitation of discussions regarding instructional practices to match the standards described in the overview. One by one, the goals involving interconnected elements as well as the reading of informational, literary, and persuasive texts were

dissected and instructional strategies were identified as core and consistent practice. An example of detail from the sixth grade curriculum document under 'interconnected elements' includes the following goals: Students will use a range of before, during and after reading strategies to deepen their understanding of the author's message; use vocabulary in different modes and for different purposes; determine word meaning through the use of context, definition, example, restatement, and compare/contrast to other words; use phonics- word parts, and word relationships; and, read fluently and accurately - pace, phrasing, intonation, expression.
All students are supported in these goals in the classroom. Some students are identified diagnostically for additional support either through the Individual Educational Plans under the umbrella of special education, or through individualized interventions as part of the Response to Intervention initiative. Diagnostics include zeroing in on whether the student's difficulty is in decoding, fluency, comprehension, or a combination of two or more issues. Instruction is directed appropriately as a result, and progress is carefully monitored. Lexia, Wilson Reading Program, fluency exercises, and comprehension activities such as think alouds and 'Better Answers' helps students improve.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Science is another core area of the Middle School curriculum that reflects both essential skills and knowledge based on the mission, which includes offering a rich program of studies to all learners. Science teachers have worked closely with their cross-district partners to continue the unifying science themes begun at the lower grades: Students explain interactions between parts that make up a whole human-made and natural things; use models to represent objects, processes, and events from the physical setting, the living environment and the technological world; identify basic patterns of change in the physical setting, the living environment and the technological world; and, use mathematics to describe scale for human-made and natural things. In addition, inquiry through the scientific process is emphasized, as well as the goal that students can describe how scientific investigations result in explanations that are communicated to other scientists.
Fifth grade students study content reflecting all three disciplines of science: life, earth and space, and physical science. In life science, the interactions of the parts of the human body are explored. In physical science, energy is the focus and students describe properties of objects and materials before and after they undergo a change or interaction. Earth and space sciences focuses on landforms, and forces that cause short and long term changes to the earth. The hands-on curriculum used is called SCIENCE COMPANION. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders dig deeper into subject matter, and often find ways that science disciplines interact. For example, sixth grade has an earth science unit that involves earth changes, geology, and earth history through the study of fossil remains. In their habitat unit, students study life science topics as they relate to energy sources. Seventh graders learn to explain how individual parts working together can do more than each part individually, in such systems as an organism, Earth systems, the solar system, or human-made structures. Additionally, students compare different types of models that can represent human cells as they learn the various cell structures found in the human body. Finally, in eighth grade, teachers have been working closely with their colleagues in ninth grade to create a two-year sequence of physical science, emphasizing force and motion, heat transfer, and atomic structure in preparation for the high school program of Physics First. Additionally, global warming is taught as an integrated unit of study.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

As part of the curriculum review process, teams of teachers were also asked to identify those instructional practices most effectively supporting their particular content area. Consistency in core practice was the goal, with focused professional development an important aspect of this work. First of all, all content areas were asked to embed appropriate literacy strategies in their regular practice. The list includes the following practices: model, support, and elicit text connections; elicit and/or provide background knowledge; reinforce self-monitoring and checking for understanding; pose comprehension questions; scaffold main idea with supporting details; reinforce students' use of supporting ideas with evidence; and expose and demonstrate inference. All teachers, in addition, support vocabulary development. They pre-teach relevant vocabulary, teach students to use context, definitions, examples, restatements, and comparisons to other words to define unfamiliar words, and teach questioning strategies. Those who use informational texts in their classrooms are additionally asked to guide students to use text structure to obtain specific information by using text features, review highlighting key terms, and break down

components in multi-step directions.
In addition, math teachers closely adhere to the instructional practices suggested in the curricula of Everyday Mathematics and Connected Math, where guided inquiry is key. Science teachers offer inquiry through experimentation and cooperative learning teams. Social studies teachers use role-play, Socratic discussions, and lecture/discussion as key instructional components. Arts teachers promote creative problem solving through student choice and guided practice, while world language teachers immerse students in the target language and elicit both oral and physical response to directions, guide students through vocabulary development, and offer multi-media approaches to cultural understanding.

5. **Professional Development:**

The Middle School has chosen to focus on literacy and numeracy strategies to improve student performance, and also, through the Maine Laptop Initiative, embed technology practices through the content areas.
One literacy coach position was created in 2000-01, and her role was to model and support best practice at the classroom level. In addition, she offered, along with other teacher leaders, after school courses in the Better Answers approach to reading comprehension and writing. After a second coach was added in 2006-07, this foray into literacy practice was then followed by intensive focus on those classroom practices best supporting reading and writing. A text-based discussion on components of a literacy program was offered, and all English language arts teachers participated in intensive conversation about their practice. Differentiation was further supported by the addition of the Northwest Evaluative Assessment in reading, where Lexile scores gave teachers greater insight into appropriate text matches in classroom instruction. Falmouth Middle School is proud of its inclusive and effective practice, which sets the standard for all other content. Ongoing professional learning is currently focused on the 21st Century Universal Literacy Elements of reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary development, inquiry, and technology. In addition, a graduate course entitled 'Improving Literacy in the Content Areas Through Literacy' has just been offered on site, with the majority of participants representing the Middle School. Numeracy goals for students have also been supported by an intensive focus on professional learning supporting Everyday Math instruction as well as the Connected Math Program. One teacher at the Middle School is a national trainer for CMP and as such has made sure all staff receives continuing education through on site and regional training opportunities. All new staff receives the appropriate training as well. He also, through the math content team, has encouraged collegial classroom visits and follow-up conversations. In addition, a consultant specializing in remedial strategies in math came for a one-day visit recently and worked with teachers supporting struggling students. Half of the Falmouth math students in the 8th grade recently performed at the 'exceeds standards' of the Maine Learning Results, an outstanding accomplishment and testimony to these teachers and their focus on improvement.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 5 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	NA	NA	NA
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	84	83			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	13	14			
Number of students tested	190	182			
Percent of total students tested	98	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	48	62			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	0	0			
Number of students tested	21	21			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 5 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	84	91			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	28	37			
Number of students tested	190	182			
Percent of total students tested	98	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	53	76			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	5	14			
Number of students tested	21	21			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 6 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	92	85			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	23	23			
Number of students tested	182	194			
Percent of total students tested	99	98			
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	65	50			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	0	1			
Number of students tested	20	28			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 6 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	87	84			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	44	32			
Number of students tested	182	194			
Percent of total students tested	99	98			
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	50	59			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	10	0			
Number of students tested	20	28			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 7 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	89	82			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	34	28			
Number of students tested	193	165			
Percent of total students tested	99	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	65	39			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	17	0			
Number of students tested	23	20			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 7 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March			
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	80	79			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	38	37			
Number of students tested	194	165			
Percent of total students tested	100	100			
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	46	39			
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	5	10			
Number of students tested	22	20			
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 8 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	December
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	85	87	74	69	73
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	34	38	2	5	4
Number of students tested	169	180	166	173	164
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	50	48	46	15	21
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	6	1	0	0	0
Number of students tested	18	26	24	20	25
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 8 Test Maine Educational Assessment (MEA)

Edition/Publication Year 2007 Publisher Measured Progress, Inc.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Meeting & Exceeding	84	84	65	62	46
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	48	44	12	8	1
Number of students tested	169	180	166	173	164
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Identified Disability					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Meeting & Exceeding	45	38	21	5	0
% "Exceeding" State Standards Exceeding	6	1	0	0	0
Number of students tested	18	26	24	20	24
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					