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)

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

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

Official School Name Providence Spring Elementary
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10045 Providence Church Lane
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Charlotte	North Carolina	28277-9723
City	State	Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County USA State School Code Number* 600-507

Telephone (980) 343-6935 Fax (980) 343-6939

Web site/URL http://pages.cms.k12.nc.us/providence E-mail providencespring@cms.k12.nc.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. Peter C. Gorman
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Tel. (980) 343-3000

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 Mr. Joe I. White Jr.
(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:

95	Elementary schools
32	Middle schools
0	Junior High Schools
31	High schools
9	Other
167	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 1750

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 5270

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

   0 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**			0
K	56	67	123	**8**			0
1	70	76	146	**9**			0
2	62	88	150	**10**			0
3	76	71	147	**11**			0
4	80	76	156	**12**			0
5	68	70	138	**Other**			0
6			0				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							860

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
6 %	Asian or Pacific Islander
4 %	Black or African American
3 %	Hispanic or Latino
87 %	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 7 %

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	32
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	24
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	56
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	860
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row	0.07
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 2 %

17 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 7

Specify languages: Korean, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin), Dutch, Filipino, Afrikaans, Russian

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2 %

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: 9 %

79 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.

1	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	6	Other Health Impairment
0	Deaf-Blindness	23	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	48	Speech or Language Impairment
1	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	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)	2	0
Classroom teachers	35	2
Special resource teachers/specialists	11	8
Paraprofessionals	19	0
Support Staff	15	1
Total number	82	11

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 rates.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	97 %	98 %	97 %	97 %	97 %
Daily teacher attendance	92 %	93 %	95 %	95 %	90 %
Teacher turnover rate	10 %	11 %	14 %	14 %	0 %
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

There was no turnover rate for the year 2002-2003. That was the first year Providence Spring was open.

14. ***(High Schools Only. Delete if not used.)***

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2007 are doing as of the Fall 2007.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	100	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Provide a brief, coherent narrative snapshot of the school in one page (approximately 600 words). Include at least a summary of the school's mission or vision in the statement.

Opened in August of 2002, Providence Spring Elementary School is a public, suburban elementary school in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district. It serves the flourishing nearby community of new and established neighborhoods, as well as a small number of students that reside outside the home attendance area. Our school is home to 860 students and contains classrooms, auxiliary space for small group instruction, and a spacious media center equipped for research, instruction, television production, and desktop publishing. Classrooms for lower grades, a computer lab with advanced capabilities, an art room with a kiln, and spaces for a variety of music and performing arts programs highlight the ground floor of the school. The second floor of the school houses our upper grade classrooms, areas for tutoring and Talent Development, and spaces for project design and small group instruction. Twenty-three acres, including an twelve acre outdoor learning laboratory, grace the school grounds.

The mission of Providence Spring Elementary is to Prepare Students for Excellence in order to develop the scholars of today and the leaders of tomorrow. Among our core beliefs are:

-That the best education for the best is the best education for all
-That schooling is preparation for active lifelong learning
-That the primary cause of learning is the activity of the learner's own mind
-That the uniqueness of each learner is our starting point as we provide opportunities and learning experiences leading to optimal growth
-That the principal and faculty of a school should themselves be actively engaged in learning
-That the school is the center of a larger learning community
-That character development in the nurturing of the whole child is an essential responsibility of the school

Boys and girls are provided with a number of opportunities to pursue personal interests and develop their leadership skills. These activities include participation in safety patrol, chess club, Math Olympiad and Odyssey of the Mind. Students produce and present a weekly in-house television news program. Parents sponsor art appreciation classes, which provide students with an understanding of the important role art plays in daily life. Students also have the opportunity to work with the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association in public service roles. Academically, students participate in the Quiz Bowl, Math Olympiad and Mystery Class programs. Academic excellence is recognized in student Honor Roll celebrations and in the upper grades, academic scholars perform a variety of functions including in-house tutorial assistance for younger students. Goal setting and monitoring one's own academic performance is stressed in the upper grades. Student-led conferencing allows parents to understand their child's progress in academic studies.

Inspiring in their students a passion for learning, the school staff is committed to personal and professional growth.

-30% of the staff have advanced degrees (masters or higher)
-13 teachers (21%) are national board certified
-59% of the staff have more than ten years' experience
-23% have more than 20 years' experience
-There is a five star After-School Enrichment Program available on-site for the youngsters of Providence Spring.

The parents of Providence Spring Elementary School children are very involved in the school, with last year's PTA membership exceeding the number of students enrolled. The PTA Board is comprised of 51 members who are well organized in partnership committees that work diligently to coordinate the needs of the school program, such as for fundraising, cultural events, campus beautification and volunteer tutoring.

Our academic success is testament to the collaborative effort of all stakeholders - parents, staff and community - working as a team to ensure that all students are prepared for excellence during their years at Providence Spring Elementary.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

Providence Spring Elementary School uses both formative and summative assessments. We participate in the North Carolina state assessment program, which tests students at the end of grades 3-5 in the areas of Reading and Math, and Writing in grade 4. The tests evaluate whether students are on grade level, that is, if they have scored within the range of Achievement Levels III and IV. In addition, the state calculates how much growth is 'expected' in a single year, and how much growth is 'high growth'. At Providence Spring, the rate at which our students score on grade level in Reading and Math is 98.7% (Achievement Levels III and IV) for the most recent year. Our students exceeded the state's benchmark for 'high growth' and the school has been designated a North Carolina Honor School of Excellence.

The reading test has students reading a variety of text types, from fiction to biography, informational content to poetry. The math test requires problem solving as well as computation skills in five different goal areas which students study in increasing complexity from kindergarten to grade 5. These goal areas encompass numeration, measurement, geometry, data analysis and probability, and algebra. The North Carolina Writing Assessment reflects student learning from kindergarten through grade 4. For this assessment, students write a narrative piece which is evaluated for focus, organization, support and elaboration, style and conventions. Our school's pass rate of 90% this past year was a source of great pride for our teachers, for it was very high statewide for writing.

In addition to Achievement Level, the state reading and math tests also provide a Developmental Scale Score, which is a continuous scale beginning in grade 3. This reflects the level of difficulty of the material which a student can successfully master, and because it is continuous, it allows for calculation of 'academic change' or growth. It is expected that in one year, a student will achieve a certain number of points of growth. In other words, whether a student functions below grade level, on grade level, or well above grade level, the expectation is that he or she will achieve growth. It is not enough for a student to score at grade level; every student deserves to grow. This is a laudable goal which requires a high degree of sophistication in instructional delivery on the teachers' parts, for it requires that they 'stretch' each child to his or her potential, and that they provide instruction within the zone of proximal development for each child. While a student who has scored at the top of the developmental scale score range for a certain grade level will have a few more points available at the next grade level, it is a challenge to achieve the expected number of points of growth in such a student.

Providence Spring displays very little disparity among sub-groups as they are reported for AYP. The differences in percentages on grade level of the several sub-groups reflect the differences among one or two individuals, and not characteristics of groups of students.

In addition to participating in the North Carolina state assessment program, formative tests evaluate student progress specifically to inform instruction. In grades 3-5, quarterly assessments provided by the district help us to evaluate student achievement of objectives as they are taught. We evaluate the information we obtain, and determine whether students have mastered specific instructional objectives. These pulse-checking tests help us to fine-tune our grouping of students for instruction and to hone our planning. In grades K-2, the assessments are individualized. In reading, we use the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), which assess the fluency with which students perform various pre-reading and early reading skills. Fluency shows the extent to which a student has mastered the performance of pre reading and reading tasks. Fluency reflects how available and automatic the student's skills are, how hard he or she has to work at reading, and this is important because research shows that a student needs to have achieved a certain level of fluency in order to be able to comprehend text. Math performance assessment tasks assess how students understand and apply the concepts learned.

It is the belief of the professional community at our school that the best value of testing is in the high quality of teaching that springs from it.

The website where state assessment information can be accessed is http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/accountability/testing/.

2. **Using Assessment Results**

Following the publication of the state assessment results each year, we analyze the data closely. This is done immediately, for it is a measure of the pulse of our instruction. Firstly, we

look at the broad picture. We note which students passed, and which students did not; which students achieved at level IV. We assess whether we correctly identified a student who struggled and addressed that student's weaknesses through instruction. Next, we examine individual student scores. The developmental scale score reflects the level of difficulty that he or she was able to master successfully in the state Math or Reading assessment. Over time, we are looking for growth in each individual's scale score, for it is on a continuous scale from prior years. One of the most challenging tasks that we face is to achieve growth with students who may already perform at a very high level at the beginning of the year. We provide instruction which is vastly different for children who have difficulty with the basics than we do for those whose needs are in the area of critical thinking.

Finally, we examine teacher strengths and needs. We study the report of our performance in the goal areas by teacher. The students of some faculty members appear to be stronger at responding to questions on the reading test in the area of interpretation, for example, while students of other teachers have been successful at a higher rate with cognition level questions. We know to draw on the strengths of individual teachers and use their expertise in sharing their strategies with their grade level colleagues. Our assessments during the school year in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2, in quarterly math and reading assessment in grades 3-5, closely inform our instruction. Results show areas of strength and need, and we respond to this to provide optimal learning. We group students for tailored instruction to adjust for differences in understanding of math concepts, and we compose flexible guided reading groups to address problems with decoding and to hone instruction as appropriate in comprehension. We use our test results along the way to monitor and our effectiveness and adjust our instructional delivery to meet the learning needs of our students.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results**

At Providence Spring we understand that the optimal educational environment exists for each student when parents, students and teachers are in constant communication about student performance and achievement. To this end, we have established multiple pathways for this communication to occur. Modes of communication include the school website, classroom newsletters and teacher-developed websites, email communication, quarterly report cards and mid-quarter progress reports as well as communication of assessment data.

A variety of measures are in place to assist stakeholders in understanding assessment results. Our students have one-to-one meetings with teachers several times during the school year to discuss assessment data. In June, when all scores have been received, our teachers meet with each student to analyze the results, discuss strengths and weaknesses, and to plan for continued academic growth.

Parents have access to a tremendous amount of information on the performance of their student as well as school, district and state performance. Each family receives an individual student report which includes a developmental scale score, a percentile, the achievement level, Lexile levels in reading, and a graph showing the student performance compared to the school, the school system and the state. Information on how to read and interpret the scores is well-written and easy to understand. At parent conferences, teachers and parents discuss and interpret the assessment information. Teachers, psychologists, administrators and our literacy facilitator are available should questions arise.

In our community the media shares school, district and state level assessment data. Further data may be accessed via the Internet. Our school website links to an online report card for our school, the state department of education's assessment site, district testing results and AYP results. Additionally, we hold meetings with our School Leadership Team, comprised of parents, faculty, staff and community members, to share, explain and answer questions related to school level assessment data.

4. **Sharing Success:**

As well as seeking to learn from other schools, Providence Spring Elementary is proud to share its successes with other schools. Staff members share their expertise and successes with educators both locally and nationally.

Effectively facilitating Paideia Seminars is a success for Providence Spring Elementary. The administrative staff and teaching staff have conducted information sessions and seminar training at various district meetings and present annually at the National Paideia Conference. Plans are for staff members to continue this training and presentation at this year's national conference. Teachers and administrators from other schools within our own district have visited Providence Spring Elementary classrooms to see effective high level questioning, discussion, and Paideia seminars first hand. Future plans include additional educators observing Providence Spring classes during seminars.

The Talent Development (gifted education) program at Providence Spring Elementary serves as a model for other schools in the district. The effectiveness and successes of this program have been shared through meetings with school district coordinators and through meetings and question and answer sessions with out of state educators. Recently, as they were seeking information on developing a successful program in their district, colleagues from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania observed groups and met with PSE staff members regarding the implementation and mission of our talent development program.

Effective use of technology instruction is an ongoing success at Providence Spring Elementary. The Technology Coordinator serves as an instructor to students and adults in our school and at a district level. She has served as a volunteer consultant in assisting other schools in developing their school websites and shares the tools and expertise from the Providence Spring Elementary technology initiatives. Providence Spring has been selected as one of three schools in the state to serve as a showcase in the use of interactive whiteboards in the classroom

The outdoor education program and the outdoor classroom, the Branch Creek Nature Preserve at Providence Spring, serve as a model for other schools in planning and implementing environmental education programs. PSE staff members serve as a local environmental science resource. Staff members provide assistance to those from other schools in understanding the components of, developing curriculum for, and establishing outdoor learning areas on their own school campuses. PSE members provide written information as well as informational tours of the Branch Creek Nature Preserve to share our successes.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

The curriculum for all schools in our state is based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. We quickly discovered that our population required that we go far above and beyond the basic state-mandated curriculum.

Our mathematics program has a problem-solving orientation from kindergarten through grade 5 to ensure that every student may become mathematically literate. This entails that every student be a competent problem-solver, be able to reason and communicate mathematically, and be confident in their mathematical abilities. The five strands (number sense, algebra, probability, geometry and measurement) are woven through the instruction at each grade level. Flexible, performance based grouping allows for differentiation of content delivery. Our upper grade students participate in Math Olympiad, a world-wide competition designed to develop mathematical flexibility in solving complex problems.

In social studies the curriculum at Providence Spring is interactive, in-depth and hands-on with the goal of promoting student ability to make informed decisions as citizens of a democratic society. Field trips are linked to the content students study, so that when first graders focus on transportation and its role in our society, they travel by train to visit a transportation museum. As fourth graders learn about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and study of the system of government in our state, they experience a daylong visit to our state's capital. In the fifth grade study of the history of the new world, classroom simulations align patriots and loyalists in the United States' struggle for independence and require students to understand in depth the conflicting viewpoints of their forebears. In culmination, students participate in a three-day study trip to Jamestown and Williamsburg giving them an insider's look at our country's early days.

Likewise, science comes alive for our students through a variety of hands-on approaches. The process of become adept at science involves an understanding of basic scientific concepts and the scientific processes of reasoning. In order to apply scientific knowledge, students participate in group problem-solving and decision-making designed to replicate real-world problems. For example, students explore the current issues of rainforest conservation and habitat destruction through specialized interactive computer software in which they role-play as scientists who each have a different perspective on the issue. In another vein, teachers were awarded a grant two years in a row which linked writing with science. Clare Walker Leslie and Consie Powell, both authors and nature journalists spent a week each year in residence with our students, staff and parents, helping us recognize the biodiversity of our school grounds and expressing learning through art and writing.
At Providence Spring we recognize that a good writing program should begin with our very youngest students. Starting in kindergarten, students explore the reading-writing connection, and classes discuss story structure and author's technique. In writers' workshop, children are encouraged to apply the conventions published authors employ. This approach to writing continues through the elementary grade levels with progressively higher expectations as students grow as writers. Specific teacher-modeling of plot development and style is engaging to students and helps them to develop their own writing style.

Students are exposed to the fine arts as they are infused throughout the curriculum. For example, our third graders took part in a study of North Carolina folk traditions which incorporated music, art, physical education, social studies and storytelling. One of the highlights was an evening performance in which children showcased their playing of lap dulcimers, oral storytelling and North Carolina mountain traditions such as square dancing and playing spoons and limberjacks in time with music. At the end of the school year, each class presents their study of the art, music and folklore of a different country resulting in a spectacular exposition of international awareness spotlighting over thirty cultures from around the world.

2a. **(Elementary Schools) Reading:**

Providence Spring's reading curriculum is predicated on what we know about the development of reading in children, and on the need to differentiate for individual students' needs. Thus, a multi-faceted approach to reading instruction best accomplishes our goals. At each grade level, students come to us at many different stages of reading development. Our program of reading instruction takes children from the level of development they have

achieved and moves them ahead. Teachers work from the basis of grade level expectations and assess students' performance. In kindergarten, for example, developing phonemic awareness is at the core of reading instruction. Through informal assessment, we find that our students have needs at different stages: some need continued work for acquisition of phonemic awareness early on, while others exhibit mastery of prereading skills early. Grouping for reading instruction thus begins in kindergarten. Students are grouped flexibly by the level of their reading, and the teacher meets with groups of readers to address the needs of each using materials to supplement the basal text. In grades two through five students are engaged in the study of novels and non-fiction text. In this way, comprehension, text structure analysis, self-monitoring skills of metacognition, and vocabulary growth are addressed through the reading program.

Writing is heavily emphasized, and students write daily across the curriculum. Student reading development is enhanced as writing development grows, for children are instructed on the basis of their written products. Individual strengths and weaknesses are evident in writing and it is used for diagnosis of multiple understandings, for example of the alphabetic code in first grade, and the structure of non-fiction text in fifth grade.

The development of higher level reasoning is a priority in the reading curriculum at Providence Spring. Students take part in Paideia seminar on a regular basis, through which they engage in collaborative intellectual dialogue facilitated with questions about a text selected by the teacher for its relevance to the curriculum and for its high level of difficulty such that it might be inaccessible to the individual working alone. Teaching thinking skills aids reading growth.

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

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Providence Spring Elementary School is fortunate to have a twelve acre section of our campus that will not be developed due to its rough terrain. This tract of land has been set aside for outdoor learning, and has been named the Branch Creek Preserve at Providence Spring Elementary School. In the preserve are a creek, a spring-fed stream, meadows, a flood plain, and an upland deciduous forest. Environmental educators who visit the school note that they have never seen so much wildlife so close to a school. Teachers take their students into this area regularly as they intertwine the instruction of all of subject areas with the outdoors, and help students connect to the natural world. This area is ideal for hands-on learning of the natural sciences, but there has been an intentional effort to integrate this outdoor setting into all other areas of our curriculum as well. For example, our fifth grade students go into the preserve and build a shelter using the description from Gary Paulsen's novel, Hatchet. Third graders join a bird watchers club, take their lunch outside and record the number and species of birds sighted. Recognizing the importance of using the outdoors as a curriculum springboard for real-world problem solving, we examined our state's standard course of studies as a guide when designing the outdoor classroom curriculum.

To help teachers become skilled in using our outdoor learning areas, Providence Spring received a grant to bring internationally renowned nature journalist Clare Walker Leslie to our school for a week-long residency to instruct all of our fifth graders and our entire staff in how to integrate the outdoors to enrich our learning. In addition, Providence Spring was one of four schools in the state selected to participate in 'Using the Outdoors To Teach Experiential Science'. This is a program of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, which brings museum experts to our school site providing ongoing training in techniques for successfully teaching in the outdoors. Our school's Core Instructional Team offers inservice opportunities throughout the year to support this outdoor learning curriculum.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

Teachers at Providence Spring use many different instructional methods bearing in mind the varying learning styles, ability levels and multiple intelligences of the students. One of the factors teachers consider when selecting a method of instructional delivery is how to make the material relevant to their students.

In conjunction with traditional lecture and textbooks, teachers provide students with real-world experiences to make learning meaningful. For example, children learning about wildlife in the city spend time in the outdoor classroom observing the birds that frequent the suburban schoolyard habitat; students learning about explorers of history crossing the Atlantic to the new world engage in simulations in which they outfit their ship with crew and

cargo, and are subject to winds, tides and events beyond their control during the crossing. The topics students study alongside these experiences are made real to them, and the hands-on experiences cause content learning in greater depth than would otherwise occur.

While the teaching of math involves instruction for mathematical skill development, time is also devoted to problem solving. This requires a higher level of skill than mastery of mathematical operations themselves. Discussion is an integral part of class, for the explanation of a process contributes to thorough learning. Small group work and collaborative problem solving help children consider alternative strategies and become skillful users of math in the real world. In writing our teachers use a mini-lesson format, following which students are charged with implementing their learning in their writing. As teachers confer with students, instruction is individualized, with each student being taken as far as he or she is ready to go. Seminar instruction enables the teaching of thinking skills. Students read text which is relevant to classroom content and grade-level objectives and after several exposures to the text, they engage in collaborative intellectual dialogue facilitated with open-ended questions. Students are trained to justify and clarify their responses: while there are multiple possible correct responses to an open-ended question, students are charged with explaining and justifying their answers. Character education infuses our instruction. Students learn traits of good character through their literacy education, and the thread of learning to be a responsible, caring member of society is woven through the education they receive at Providence Spring.

5. **Professional Development:**

At Providence Spring, professional development is school-based, research driven and integrated with long-term goals to improve education. Our faculty considers themselves a group of lifelong learners and incorporates principles of adult learning into professional development experiences. Often the topics for staff development are based on teacher identified needs and are designed with collaboration with colleagues as a key component. There are opportunities for growth led by presenters from within our staff and also with presenters from around the region that are well- respected in their fields. We believe that the most effective staff development is continuous, ongoing and allows for support for further learning.

Examples of long-term staff development initiatives at Providence Spring include Paideia training led by the director of the National Paideia Center resulting in reading growth in the area of inferential comprehension. Our entire teaching staff has worked to improve writing instruction through attending 'Empowering Writers' training, resulting in a 7.5 percentage point gain in our pass rate on the North Carolina writing test. Character Education has been a focus since our school opened its door in 2002. We believe that a focus on the characteristics of a good citizen of our school, community and world helps create and maintain a positive learning environment which is essential for optimal student achievement. We also believe that the adults in a learning community should be lifelong learners. This summer the learning emphasis was a study of Tracy Kidder's Mountains Beyond Mountains, the story of one person making a difference in the world. Technology training is central to ongoing staff growth goals. The technology foci for the current school year are teacher created web pages and best practice using SmartBoards in the classroom.

Providence Spring educators believe professional development enhances subject content knowledge and teaching methods. Continuing education is an investment well worth the financial and time investments.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 3 Test North Carolina End of Grade Reading Comprehens

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Public Instruct

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	99	100	99
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	86	92	92	83	88
Number of students tested	146	131	131	126	113
Percent of total students tested	99	98	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	80	88	86	67	75
Number of students tested	15	17	14	9	12
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	92	100	94
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	88	90	75	71	63
Number of students tested	8	10	12	14	16
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 3 Test North Carolina End of Grade Mathematics Test

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Public Instruct

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	67	50	91	81	89
Number of students tested	146	133	131	126	113
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	94	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	53	29	86	56	92
Number of students tested	15	17	14	9	12
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	92	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	50	17	92	57	69
Number of students tested	8	12	12	14	16
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 4 Test North Carolina End of Grade Reading Comprehens

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	99	98	100	98
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	86	90	78	85	82
Number of students tested	134	145	130	144	114
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	94	91	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	55	81	45	81	45
Number of students tested	22	16	11	16	11
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	83	93	100	83
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	67	58	47	54	33
Number of students tested	9	12	15	13	6
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 4 Test North Carolina End of Grade Mathematics Test

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	98	99	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	66	77	88	92	97
Number of students tested	136	145	130	144	114
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. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	91	94	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	36	81	64	100	91
Number of students tested	22	16	11	16	11
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	91	92	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	45	58	73	77	83
Number of students tested	11	12	15	13	6
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 5 Test North Carolina End of Grade Reading Comprehens

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	95	81	83	90	86
Number of students tested	148	128	151	133	92
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	94	70	69	75	83
Number of students tested	17	10	16	12	6
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	100	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	67	60	46	75	50
Number of students tested	9	15	13	8	4
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 5 Test North Carolina End of Grade Mathematics Test

Edition/Publication Year Varies Publisher North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	99	97	99	99	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	78	56	92	97	99
Number of students tested	148	128	151	133	92
Percent of total students tested	99	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. Non-white					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	94	100	100	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	82	60	94	100	100
Number of students tested	17	10	16	12	7
2. Exceptional (students with disabilities)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Consistent Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	89	93	92	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards Superior Performance	44	13	69	100	75
Number of students tested	9	15	13	8	4
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested			0		
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					