# 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. Peter Harvey Osroff
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)  (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address    98 Cherry Valley Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

| Garden City | New York | 11530-1429 |
|---|---|---|
| City | State | Zip Code+4(9 digits total) |

County    Nassau      State School Code Number*   280218030006

Telephone   (516) 478-3000      Fax   (516) 294-0732

Web site/URL   www.gardencity.k12.ny.us/middlescho   E-mail   osroffp@gcufsd.net

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. Robert   Feirsen
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name    Garden City      Tel.   (516) 478-1010

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. Kenneth   Monaghan
(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:

|     |                        |
| --- | ---------------------- |
| 5   | Elementary schools     |
| 1   | Middle schools         |
| 0   | Junior High Schools    |
| 1   | High schools           |
| 0   | Other                  |
| 7   | TOTAL                  |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:          15014

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:     9900

**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 | 0 | 0 |  | 7 | 179 | 169 | 348 |
| K | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 8 | 209 | 177 | 386 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | Other | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| 6 | 181 | 171 | 352 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL** | | | | | | | | 1098 |

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | % | American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 2 | % | Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 1 | % | Black or African American |
| 1 | % | Hispanic or Latino |
| 96 | % | 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 ____0____ %

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 | 2 |
|---|---|---|
| ( 2 ) | Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year | 0 |
| ( 3 ) | Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 2 |
| ( 4 ) | Total number of students in the school as of October 1 | 1098 |
| ( 5 ) | Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row | 0.00 |
| ( 6 ) | Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 0 |

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: ___1___ %

____2____ Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: ___2___

Specify languages: Grade 7  Japanese
                           Grade 6  Indian

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: ___0___ %

Total number students who qualify: ___4___

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.

3 free lunch
 1 reduced lunch

10. Students receiving special education services:     0     %

                                                                    142     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.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Autism | 0 | Orthopedic Impairment |
| 0 | Deafness | 35 | Other Health Impairment |
| 0 | Deaf-Blindness | 58 | Specific Learning Disability |
| 1 | Emotional Disturbance | 33 | Speech or Language Impairment |
| 0 | Hearing Impairment | 1 | Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 0 | Mental Retardation | 0 | Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 3 | 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) | 3 | 0 |
| Classroom teachers | 96 | 4 |
| Special resource teachers/specialists | 19 | 0 |
| Paraprofessionals | 23 | 0 |
| Support Staff | 8 | 0 |
| Total number | 149 | 4 |

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     13     **: 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 | 96 | % | 97 | % | 97 | % | 87 | % | 96 | % |
| Daily teacher attendance | 98 | % | 97 | % | 97 | % | 96 | % | 96 | % |
| Teacher turnover rate | 9 | % | 5 | % | 6 | % | 4 | % | 13 | % |
| 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

Garden City Middle School's programs are based on complementary middle-level and standards-based approaches and supported by the latest peer-reviewed journal research, No Child Left Behind, and the New York State Education Department's Essential Elements of Middle-Level Standards-Based Education. As noted in the mission statement's title, our school embraces the spirit of No Child Left Behind:

'Mission Statement of Garden City Middle School:Leaving No Child Behind

The mission of our middle school is to create a caring learning community where all individuals are able to reach their highest potential academically, creatively, socially, physically, and emotionally. Within an atmosphere of warmth and support, we seek to enhance each student's desire for life-long learning. As members of a school community, we affirm that we will reach academic success together, take responsibility for each other, and treat others as we wish to be treated. Success does not come at the expense of others, but is reached with others.

This inclusive standards-based vision drives our programs as evidenced through academic learning teams in all grades, a wide-ranging elective program, heterogeneous groupings of students in English and social studies, the elimination of school-assigned fixed academic tracks, open-admission into accelerated high school credit math and science courses, supplemental support classes in all major academic subjects, the integration of research-based anti-bullying approaches (monitored and measured) within all classes, improved communication between school and home, homework-volume limits, before and after-school recreation programs, greater art, music and physical education choices, and raised academic expectations for all students. Additional supportive programs include: a before and after-school Academic Intervention Service Program (AIS) in English and math, and an in-school AIS support class program; social skills enhancement program for socially awkward children, departmental grading policies, test load and homework volume policies. There is a comprehensive monthly school newsletter. Importantly, every teacher has a district supported Web page with homework assignments and class information. The school's intramural program is wide ranging and co-educational with bowling, dance, weight training and fitness, roller hockey, basketball and many other activities.

We also have a wide variety of programs geared towards building connections with our special-needs children. We have a social skills development club, a Best Buddies Club with general education student volunteers building friendships with severely disabled children, and several inter-district special-needs children parties and activities. Our school's advisory program and elective program are highly inclusive ensuring that severely disabled children have daily opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers.

Our students work tirelessly for charitable causes. Last year, our school raised more money for St. Jude's Children's Hospital than any other school in the United States. In addition, our students support innumerable causes ranging from Toys for Tots, Island Harvest (food pantry), local hospitals, and collection campaigns in support of our local men and women in harm's way overseas. For example, last year instead of a Christmas party our faculty and students held a 'packing party' to support our troops in Iraq. Without question, our school community views the building of character and social responsibility as equally important as the building of academic achievement.

Our students achieve academically at the highest levels. Last year, our school ranked first out of 47 school districts in a high-achieving county (Nassau County) in the percentage of students passing the New York State Grade 8 Math Assessment, and ranked second on the New York State Grade 8 English Assessment. Additionally, our students ranked first on the New York State Grade 8 English Assessment in the percentage of students scoring at the mastery level. Importantly, similar results are apparent in all of our grades and across all subject areas. Also, one-half of our students leave the middle school with one full year of high school credit in math and science.

# PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The New York State Assessments have been given in English and mathematics since the 1998-1999 school year. For middle schools in the State, prior to the implementation of No Child Left Behind, the various State Assessments were given only at the end of Grade 8. Student performance is ranked on this standards-based assessment on a four level scale. Students who achieve at Level Three have met the State standard and those achieving at Level Four have exceeded the State standard. The New York State Education Department does not use the terms passing or failing when referring to student performance on the Assessments; however, consistent with common usage, this application considered students who achieved at Level Three and Four as having passed the Assessment, and students who achieved at Level One and Two as having failed the Assessment.

Our students' performance is among the highest within the State. Additionally, over the past several years, the school's ranking among top-achieving school districts continues to improve. To highlight, the school's in-county performance ranking for both the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 Grade 8 English Language Arts Assessment place the school's performance results in context. In the 2005-2006 school year, the school ranked second out of 47 school districts within a high-achieving county (Nassau County) based on mean scale score. In the 2006-2007 school year, the school ranked second in the county for the percentage of students who met or exceeded the New York State ELA Standard at Level Three and Level Four. Even more impressive, the school ranked first in the county for the percentage of students who exceeded the New York State Standard at mastery Level 4.

These impressive results are also evident in the school's math performance levels. The school's ranking within the county on the New York State Grade 8 Math Assessment place the results in context. In 2005-2006, the school's students ranked eighth out of 47 reporting in-county school districts based on mean scale score, and ranked fifth in the county on percentage of students exceeding the State Standard at Level 4. Moreover, performance continued to improve and in 2006-2007 there was a significant improvement in ranking by both mean scale score and percentage passing. The school's in-county ranking in 2006-2007 moved us to first place among 47 in-county districts by percentage passing. Simply stated, our school's students achieved at the highest level in mathematics in a high achieving county.

Our school's achievement levels are also outstanding on New York State exams in social studies, science, and world languages. The students are well rounded and perform at the highest levels across all subject disciplines. This shows that the school's emphasis on improving reading comprehension results in higher achievement among all subject areas. For example, in the 2005 - 2006 school-year,  the school's students on the NYS Grade 8 Social Studies Assessment had a very strong 94% pass rate; yet, even this impressive rate improved to 98% passing in the 2006 - 2007 school-year. This would be expected since the skills involved with social studies are similar to those needed for success in English.

It is also important to note that our special education students' performance levels far exceed the performance levels of special education students within the county and New York State. The district webpage has a link to the school's report card on the New York Education Department's Website:
https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb/School.do;jsessionid=D250E141D4FA7C389C1EE841F5A3C59C?county=NASSAU&district=280218030000&school=280218030006

2. **Using Assessment Results**

The school uses assessment results to understand and improve student and school performance in several ways. First, teachers carefully review the prior year's disaggregated assessment data to identify the curriculum and skill areas where students' performance levels were particularly high or low. This data then informs the development of curriculum, and empowers high achieving teachers to share with their colleagues their successful instructional methodologies.

In addition to using the prior year's disaggregated question-by-question data to inform instruction,

teachers implement ongoing benchmark assessments for formative and summative purposes. Benchmark data is used throughout the school year to identify students who need academic support and to better differentiate instruction in the classroom. Classroom teachers are better able to fine tune their instructional approaches to best enable their students to meet with success. For example, cooperative learning groups may be formed around a particular student weakness area with the teacher then able to have flexible groupings to address the needs of students. Moreover, by having regular classroom exams modeled on the rigor, skill set and curriculum of the State Assessments, every classroom exam now can serve as a predictor of the students' achievement on the upcoming state exam. This allows teachers to change classroom instruction as needed, and allows us to identify at-risk students before their deficiencies grow undetected.

Additionally, students are placed within academic support classes within the school day if they are identified to be at risk for failure. Teachers receive intensive staff development to empower them to better meet the needs of their students. Importantly, staff development also centers on the use of benchmark data to inform instruction both for students at-risk and for students to rise to mastery levels of achievement. Teachers in all subject areas focus on building students' critical thinking, reading and writing skills. Therefore, all subject teachers support improved students' reading and writing achievement.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results**

The Garden City Middle School has incorporated a multitude of structures to support ongoing communication among the school, home, and community. The school has a comprehensive website with every teacher having a district-supported webpage. Each teacher's webpage is linked to a calendar which has the teacher's homework assignments, projects, extra help schedule, study materials, and email address. Parents may communicate and leave messages for teachers via email, voicemail and traditional notes. The school's website also has links to the school's New York State Assessment results, the daily announcements, Parent Handbook, curriculum maps, Middle-High Bridge Page, and prior issues of the school's newsletter going back several years.

Students' performance levels are shared in a variety of ways. The school has mid-quarter progress reports, and quarterly report cards. Therefore, parents receive a school report at least once every five weeks. In addition to the regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference days and evenings, parents are welcome to make an appointment to speak with their child's teamed teachers anytime they have a concern.

Since class exams are based on the state standards, the students' report card grades provide parents with predictive grades throughout the school year. At parent-teacher conferences, and through regular outreaches, teachers share with parents the ongoing benchmark results. Common daily team planning periods and teamed teaching on all grades allows for parent-teacher conferencing time to be expanded beyond traditionally scheduled district evening conferences and provides a vehicle whereby parents may discuss results and progress with their child's teacher at any time during the school year. The school's assessment results are distributed to parents in the monthly school newsletter, community newspapers and on the school's and district's webpage. The results are also highlighted at PTA meetings, board meetings, and in the local community newspapers. Parents are informed of their children's performance results on State Assessments by individual letter and by a printout with their child's disaggregated performance results. The school focuses on the state standards to provide course and grading validity. The standards provide the foundation for curriculum and level of rigor. The school seeks not only to increase the passing rate, but also to improve the number of students achieving mastery at level four.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Garden City Middle School is designated as a member of the New York State Education Department Network of Middle Support Schools; meaning New York State has designated our school as a model school for our region. The role of a Support School is to share best practice programs and approaches with other schools so they may learn how we achieve ongoing measurable high academic and affective-domain student success. Therefore, our middle school is often visited by teams from other school districts to learn how we have been able to improve our academic achievement and social-emotional development of children.

Three years ago our school became fully accredited by The Secondary Council of the Middle

States Association under the rigorous Accreditation for Growth protocol. We initiated this process to demonstrate our commitment to ongoing self-reflection, self-evaluation and ongoing improvement. Our school was the first Middle States accredited middle school in our region. Our teachers and administrators have made a commitment to serve as school evaluators for other schools seeking accreditation. Moreover, the school's accreditation reports are available on our school's website to enable parents and community members to see the areas where we excel and the areas where we are focusing on improvement.

The school's principal shares with the educational community in a wide variety of venues. For example, he has presented on school restructuring and standards-based middle level approaches at the National Middle School Association Annual Conference, the New York State Middle School Association Annual Conference, and at Hofstra University's Conference on Social Emotional Learning. The principal, Peter Osroff, has also published his findings in the journal, In Transition, which is the official journal of the New York State Middle School Association. He presently is completing his doctoral dissertation on the impact of restructuring based on standards-based middle-level approaches.

# PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

   In the 2003-2004 school year, the school was restructured based on middle-level standards-based approaches. The fundamental idea behind the reform effort was that every student deserved a first-class education. In prior years, there were fixed school-assigned homogeneous tracks which, by definition, precluded the majority of students from participating in the most challenging classes. English and social studies classes were made heterogeneously grouped. After Grade 6, students were provided with open admission opportunities to take accelerated high school credit in math and science in grades 7 and 8. Following the change to open admissions into accelerated math and science, the percentage of students earning high school credit went from 39% to nearly 50%. Importantly, the percentage of students passing the New York State high school credit exam following Grade 8 in Earth Science remained at 100% with over 90% achieving at mastery level.

   In all three grades, there is academic teaming. In Grades 7 and 8, each team consists of four teachers; a teacher of English, math, social studies and science. In Grade 6 (elementary level), the team structure consists of three-teacher teams; each teacher has a double period of English and teaches either math, social studies, or science. Students in grade six have a daily double period of English, and single periods of math, social studies and science. They also take music, health, home and careers, study skills, technology, a world language, and physical education. Concerning co-teaching (inclusion) teams, a teacher of special education is on the academic team, joins in the daily team meetings, shares common planning time and fully participates in the class teaching experience. Once a week, during the daily team meeting time, there is a weekly grade-level department meeting time for departmental curriculum coordination. There is a comprehensive elective program in Grades 7 and 8 which provides students with a wide variety of program choices. The open admissions accelerated option in math and science replaced the prior school-assigned honors track. The school has expanded seat time far above the State requirement in health, art, and music. Research based homework volume guidelines were established at approximately ten minutes times the grade level (for example, the Grade Six guideline is 10 x 6 = sixty minutes nightly) with a two-hour maximum except under unusual circumstances. Subject specific support classes were established in Grades 6, 7, and 8 in English, math, social studies, science, and world languages.

   Students in grades 7 and 8 take a daily full period of English, math, social studies, science, and world language. A daily Home Base teacher-student advisory program was established to address students' character education, affective-domain development and build relationships among teachers and students. Curriculum incorporates thematic approaches within heterogeneous, inclusive classrooms in core subjects. In addition to the core subjects, students participate in art, technology, home and careers, and physical education. All students take a world language (Spanish, French, Italian, and German) in grades 6, 7, and 8 which culminates in a proficiency exam and high school credit. Latin is offered as an elective. Health is offered in every grade reflecting the middle school philosophy to address adolescent challenges and needs. The advisory program curriculum addresses topics with respect to the affective domain.

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

   All Grade 6 students receive a double daily period of English/Reading. All students who may have difficulty in reading are assessed by a reading teacher specialist. Students receiving scores of 40% or under on the WIAT-II Pseudo, Word Reading, and Spelling Subtests are entitled to participate in our supplemental alternate-day reading class program. Throughout this class, concepts and strategies are taught through a research-based program called Wilson. The program consists of 12 levels and includes a variety of different activities and assessments. There are over 50 concepts embedded in this program as it offers students a multi-sensory approach to learning how to decode and encode words. Some decoding/encoding concepts taught in the program include: syllable types, suffix endings, multi-syllabic words, rule breakers, vowel patterns, key words, digraphs, blends, and weld sounds. Also, students receiving scores of 40% or lower on the Gates-MacGinitie

Vocabulary and Comprehension Assessments are entitled to participate in our school's reading comprehension program. Classes are offered before school one time a week, during school two times a week in lieu of an elective, or during a scheduled class on an every other day basis. Students who participate in this program are grouped based on the type of reading deficiency. During class activities, students learn a variety of reading strategies which include: sequencing, main idea, drawing conclusions, context clues, author's purpose, figurative language, cause/effect, and fact/opinion. The program also helps prepare students for the ELA assessments by offering students hands-on-lessons. In addition, the WRITE TRAITS  (Voice, Word Choice, Organization, Sentence Fluency, Presentation, Ideas, and Conventions) program is also emphasized and taught in the reading program.

In all grades, and in all subjects, teachers are expected to integrate high level critical reading and writing throughout the curriculum. Students need to know how to write effectively in English, social studies, science, math, and in all supplemental courses. This may only occur when students are required to write critically and effectively in every class every day. For example, students are required in math classes to write in prose how they arrived at an answer. Every day in science class students are required to write a summary of what they learned that day in class. Critically, we provide staff development to all teachers focusing on how they must incorporate writing in their daily lessons.

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

The Garden City Middle School English program focuses on the student as learner and the teacher as the 'link' to knowledge. The program offers rigor at all levels. Students are exposed to challenging pieces of literature, enriching writing experiences as well as the opportunity for a quality education. The teachers in this department view learning as an exciting and self-rewarding human activity. They believe that students have a natural inclination to learn and that they are curious, imaginative and skilled at creating knowledge from their own experiences. With this view of quality education in mind, the pedagogical approaches flow to support the needs and interests of the students. The students learn cooperatively in groups and participate in group problem solving activities. Whether it is plays, novels, poetry, vocabulary development, formula writing, or creative writing, our students are encouraged to view the Garden City Middle School as a place where the purpose of school is to help students become fully actualized, happy and productive individuals who contribute to society. The program is designed to meet students at their level and to help them to evolve as critical thinkers, readers and writers. Curriculum is reflective of this goal and is ever evolving to meet the needs of our technologically advancing world and the children who are growing up in this world. Students receive a double period of ELA in Grade 6. All ELA classes in grades 6, 7, and 8 are heterogeneously grouped, creating a first class seat for all students. Integration of critical reading and writing is infused throughout the curriculum in all courses and English skills are reinforced in all subject areas. English electives include Creative Writing, Journalism, and Speech and Debate. Moreover, students who face difficulties with English also receive a supplemental alternate-day support class; this extra assistance enables students to meet with success while remaining in the regular level English class.

In all grades, in all subjects, teachers are expected to integrate high level critical reading and writing throughout the curriculum. Students need to know how to write effectively in English, social studies, science, math, and in all supplemental courses. This may only occur when students are required to write critically and effectively in every class every day. For example, students are required in math classes to write in prose how they arrived at an answer, while in science classes students end each lesson with a written summary. This integration across disciplines empowers students to read and write more effectively.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

We have found that student achievement improves when students feel safe, supported, and valued. The curriculum area we highlight for this section is our affective-domain Home Base advisory program. All students, in all grades, have a daily advisory period of 16 minutes where social-emotional learning is emphasized. The smaller group setting allows teachers and students to build personal relationships which support students' academic achievement and social-emotional development. The advisory sections are organized around the students' academic teams which enable teachers to remind students of their exams and

projects. The advisory program also emphasizes the strengthening of organizational and study skills which were first introduced to students in their Grade 6 Study Skills Class.

The advisory program focuses on the development of pro-social attitudes by openly addressing bullying, and destructive decisions. We focus on building student decision-making, and resistance to untoward peer pressure. Importantly, our school regularly measures the success of the advisory program through research-based validated instruments. We need to ensure that our efforts are meeting with success in this vitally critical area.

Within the daily advisory program, teachers and students build quality relationships through a small, group-focused curriculum with study units focusing on the affective domain. Units include: anti-bullying, pro-social attitudes, community service, environmental action, study skills, drug and alcohol resistance education, empathy, courtesy, loyalty, integrity, patriotism, and multi-cultural awareness. Our educators are committed to and are advocates for our students. The weekly anti-bully Quality Circles (based on the Olweus Anti-Bully Program) provides teacher-led round-table discussion of effective anti-bullying approaches. To measure our degree of success addressing affective domain development, the school uses validated and reliable independent surveys to measure the school community's perception of academic and affective success. These instruments include the Olweus Survey, Schools as a Caring Community Survey, and the PRIDE Survey. The data is then used to fine tune school affective domain support programs. This also complements the school's academic achievement programs. From 2004 through 2006 there were dramatic reductions in the students' self-reported use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, and 96% of students reported that they felt safe or very safe in school with only 1% reporting feeling very unsafe. Additionally, drug and alcohol use in school did not appear to be a problem with 100% of sixth-grade and seventh-grade students, and 99% of eighth-grade students having reported that they were never drunk or high at school. There was consistency with the students' self-reported near zero drug and alcohol usage with their self-reporting of selling or purchasing of these substances in school.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

The past several years have witnessed strong instructional improvement within Garden City Middle School. Ongoing instructional initiatives have included differentiated instruction, active student-to-student engagement approaches, building of higher-order critical thinking skills, reading and writing across the curriculum, Understanding by Design, Cooperative Learning, and co-teaching inclusion models. The emphasis on these instructional approaches is evident through the agendas of faculty meetings, district staff development meetings, and department meetings. Critically, the school recognizes that it is insufficient to only present staff development initiatives without measurement and success of teacher implementation.

For example, the school's administration recently undertook a measurement of student-to-student engagement within observed lessons. Over a five-year period of time, student-to-student engagement dramatically improved showing that the implemented staff development was effective in this area. The data showed that there was clear improvement in the percentage of active student-to-student interaction in classrooms over the past five years moving from a low of 40% to the number of lessons including student interaction now as over 80%.

Other instructional improvement focuses have been the use of data driven instruction, curriculum mapping, developing units through the Understanding by Design model, curriculum modification to better reflect State standards and curriculum content, strategies to enhance higher level critical thinking skills, cross-curricular thematic approaches such as concept learning, learning through real-life problem solving, and inquiry-based constructionist learning approaches. Teachers have also focused on differentiated instruction, co-teaching strategies in the inclusion models, Bloom's Taxonomy of questioning and hierarchal critical thinking.

Additionally, teachers are becoming more skilled in the use of data driven curriculum modification and the use of ongoing benchmarking to inform classroom instruction. Moreover, as teachers improve instruction there has been dramatic improvement in measurable student achievement on both internal (report card grades) and independent

(State Assessments) instruments. Clearly, better instruction, use of data, and developmentally appropriate affective-domain approaches results in higher academic achievement for all students.

5. **Professional Development:**

In recognition of the critical importance of teacher development, our district provides teachers with extensive opportunities for professional development. Professional development is provided to faculty at monthly faculty meetings, department meetings, and departmental staff development meetings. In addition, teachers are encouraged to attend workshops and conferences offered by local universities and professional associations at full district expense. To provide just a few examples, topics of  recently attended independent workshops by teachers have included effective co-teaching, meeting the needs of autistic students, effective world language learning, classroom management, assisting the ADHD student, Wilson reading program, testing special needs children, social studies teacher conference, social emotional learning in the classroom, Understanding by Design, and anti-bully approaches.

In the 2006-2007 school-year, a few topics addressed at district and school level sessions included: differentiation of instruction, Bloom's Taxonomy, active student involvement approaches, Understanding by Design, ongoing formal and informal assessment of student understanding, using benchmarking to inform instruction, Response to Intervention (RTI) approaches, and the use of technology in the classroom to support instruction.

In addition to focusing on improving students' academic achievement, our staff development has focused on improving teacher effectiveness in the affective domain. Staff development has focused on running anti-bullying Quality Circles, and helping students build their support for each other when facing challenges and destructive temptations. The focus is on building pro-social attitudes. The focus on academic team building includes multi-disciplinary approaches, and building students sense of mutual respect, patriotism, tolerance and kindness to all. Our school's emphasis on the affective domain coupled with standards-based instructional approaches is reflected in our staff development foci over the past several years. The district's Curriculum Coordinators work closely on curriculum coordination and articulation across grades and buildings. The Guidance Coordinator also provides leadership in coordinating affective-domain efforts. Our affective domain staff development is also provided by our school counselors, social worker and psychologist.

The independent evidence that our staff development works is quite substantial. Over the past several years the academic achievement levels of our students have continued to rise and our school is now among the very highest performing on State Assessments within New York State. Additionally, the improvement is also evident in the affective domain. Our students self-report on validated and reliable independent instruments that they feel safe in school and they do not use drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Therefore, both our academic and affective domain staff development programs should be viewed as successful.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject  Reading (LA)  Grade  6  Test  English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year  2003-2007  Publisher  McGraw-Hill

|  | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | January | January | NA | NA | NA |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3 plus Level 4 | 93 | 88 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 20 | 32 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 345 | 378 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 2 | 1 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1.          Students with disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Level 3 plus Level 4 | 54 | 28 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 3 | 0 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 39 | 43 | | | |
| 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  Math Assessment

Edition/Publication Year  2003-2007          Publisher  McGraw-Hill

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | March | March | NA | NA | NA |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3 plus Level 4 | 94 | 88 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 55 | 42 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 346 | 379 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 2 | 1 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 0 | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1.          Students with disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Level 3 plus Level 4 | 54 | 33 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 8 | 7 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 39 | 43 | | | |
| 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   English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year   2003-2007       Publisher   McGraw-Hill

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | March | March | | | |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards  Level 3 plus Level 4 | 90 | 92 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards  Level 4 | 20 | 24 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 382 | 330 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 1 | 0 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1.        Students with disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard  Level 3 plus Level 4 | 44 | 70 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards  Level 4 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 45 | 27 | | | |
| 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  Math Assessment

Edition/Publication Year  2003-2007        Publisher    McGraw-Hill

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | March | March | | | |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br><br>Level 3 plus Level 4 | 94 | 94 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br><br>Level 4 | 34 | 52 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 383 | 331 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 1 | 0 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 0 | | | |
| <br>**SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1.            Students with disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br><br>Level 3 plus Level 4 | 51 | 56 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br><br>Level 4 | 11 | 15 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 45 | 27 | | | |
| 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  Math Assessment

Edition/Publication Year  2003-2007          Publisher  McGraw-Hill

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | March | March | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 3 plus Level 4 | 94 | 87 | 84 | 93 | 82 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 38 | 30 | 26 | 34 | 18 |
| Number of students tested | 336 | 331 | 318 | 358 | 331 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | | | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1.          Students with disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Level 3 plus Level 4 | 54 | 38 | 36 | 56 | 26 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards Level 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 28 | 29 | 39 | 34 | 42 |
| 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   English Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year   2003-2007      Publisher   McGraw-Hill

|  | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | January | January | January | January | January |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** |  |  |  |  |  |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards |  |  |  |  |  |
| Level 3 plus Level 4 | 92 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 77 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards |  |  |  |  |  |
| Level 4 | 20 | 24 | 34 | 33 | 23 |
| Number of students tested | 332 | 366 | 317 | 360 | 328 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.          Students with disabilities |  |  |  |  |  |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard |  |  |  |  |  |
| Level 3 plus Level 4 | 44 | 70 | 36 | 33 | 26 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards |  |  |  |  |  |
| Level 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 45 | 27 | 39 | 36 | 41 |
| 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 |  |  |  |  |  |