# *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. Molly Bensinger-Lacy
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Graham Road Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3036 Graham Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

| Falls Church | Virginia | 22042-1836 |
|---|---|---|
| City | State | Zip Code+4(9 digits total) |

County Fairfax County State School Code Number* 093

Telephone (571) 226-2700 Fax (571) 226-2779

Web site/URL http://www.fcps.edu/GrahamRoadES/ E-mail molly.bensingerlacy@fcps.edu

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. Jack Dale
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fairfax County Public Schools Tel. (571) 423-1000

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. Dan G. Storck
(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:

| | |
|---|---|
| 137 | Elementary schools |
| 22 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior High Schools |
| 21 | High schools |
| 17 | Other |
| 197 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 13407

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 9755

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

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

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

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

| Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total | Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pre K** | 11 | 10 | 21 | **7** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **K** | 32 | 31 | 63 | **8** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **1** | 27 | 29 | 56 | **9** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **2** | 16 | 20 | 36 | **10** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **3** | 17 | 17 | 34 | **11** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **4** | 21 | 14 | 35 | **12** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **5** | 24 | 23 | 47 | **Other** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **6** | 20 | 21 | 41 | | | | |
| **TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL** | | | | | | | 333 |

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | % | American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 17 | % | Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 15 | % | Black or African American |
| 61 | % | Hispanic or Latino |
| 7 | % | 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 17 %

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 | 26 |
| **( 2 )** | Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year | 32 |
| **( 3 )** | Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 58 |
| **( 4 )** | Total number of students in the school as of October 1 | 333 |
| **( 5 )** | Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row | 0.17 |
| **( 6 )** | Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 17 |

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 46 %

158 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 14

Specify languages: Amharic,
Arabic,
Bengali,
Cambodian,
Chinese-Mardarin,
Farsi,
Kurdish,
Lao,
Somali,
Spanish,
Tagalog,
Tigrinia,
Urdu,
Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 68 %

Total number students who qualify: 226

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: 14 %

47 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 | | Orthopedic Impairment |
| | Deafness | 4 | Other Health Impairment |
| | Deaf-Blindness | 28 | Specific Learning Disability |
| | Emotional Disturbance | 9 | Speech or Language Impairment |
| | Hearing Impairment | | Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 4 | Mental Retardation | | Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 1 | 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 | |
| Classroom teachers | 18 | |
| Special resource teachers/specialists | 19 | 8 |
| Paraprofessionals | 11 | |
| Support Staff | 11 | 5 |
| Total number | 61 | 13 |

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 — 19 **: 1**

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

| | 2006-2007 | | 2005-2006 | | 2004-2005 | | 2003-2004 | | 2002-2003 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Daily student attendance | 95 | % | 95 | % | 95 | % | 95 | % | 95 | % |
| Daily teacher attendance | 95 | % | 96 | % | 95 | % | 96 | % | 96 | % |
| Teacher turnover rate | 27 | % | 33 | % | 43 | % | 20 | % | 25 | % |
| 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

Principal Molly Bensinger-Lacy came to Graham Road, July 2004, when the school was 'accredited with warning' by the State of Virginia. She set high expectations for all students in all subjects and for teacher commitment to this task. As is often the case when a new principal arrives at a school, quite a few teachers decided to leave at the end of Ms.

Bensinger-Lacy's first year, citing a variety of reasons. Since then, the turnover rate has decreased each year, as recently hired teachers' vision more closely matches that of school leaders.

# PART III - SUMMARY

The mission of Graham Road Elementary School is to inspire students to achieve academically, to think critically and creatively, to learn independently, and to become ethically responsible within a diverse and dynamic community. Graham Road Elementary School, located 10 miles outside the nation's capital in Falls Church, Virginia, is a vibrant public school that provides an enriched, rigorous academic program for each child. The 55-year-old two-story facility occupies about four acres of land, giving it an 'urban suburban' flavor. This old-fashioned building houses a wonderfully diverse student body that reflects the changing demographics of the new millennium. Ethnic- and language-minority students compose over 80 percent of the student body, representing more than 23 countries and 15 different languages. 68% of our students qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

At this point in the school's history, we are a predominantly walking school. Two-thirds of our students, mostly from immigrant households, live in the townhouse community that abuts the school. We enjoy a unique and productive relationship with the proprietor and staff of the townhouse community, as well as with several business partners. For example, during the 2006-2007 school year, these partners provided a new desktop computer and printer to any sixth grader who completed an extensive beyond-the-bell training program with our technology specialist. Thirty-three students, most of whom would not have been able to acquire this hardware otherwise, successfully completed the course.
To support all Graham Road students' ability to access, master and exceed the challenging standards set by the district and the state, school leadership works to hire and retain only the best classroom teachers. Our teachers hold themselves and each other to high standards, spending many extra hours in professional collaboration and learning. Joining these classroom teachers is a cadre of highly skilled resource teachers and teacher coaches. The modified calendar and many after-school programs provide extra learning time for students. School staff members are determined that all students will learn and achieve. This attitude is reflected in the words our teachers:

'Our vision is that all students can and will learn because we will change our teaching to match the students' needs.' (Graham Road Instructional Coach)

'The single most important endeavor that I believe impacts my students most powerfully and directly is the time and intensity of instruction, particularly extra instruction.' (Graham Road Sixth Grade Teacher)

Every student at Graham Road has access to an enriched education. Beyond the core curriculum, the school has additional staff and material resources focusing on languages and the arts, including full time visual arts, music, Literacy Collaborative and Spanish teachers. Students begin instrumental music instruction in grade three with weekly violin lessons. Through a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, second graders will spend five weeks with a professional artist in spring 2008. The school has a partnership with the Washington Performing Arts Society, which provides professional performances to the school community as well as artists in residence at grades three through five.
Graham Road Elementary School is a sparkling example of a public school where students and their learning always come first.

# PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The Virginia Standards of Learning assessments are given to students in grades three through six each spring. These are criterion-referenced assessments are based on grade-level Standards of Learning objectives (SOL). The grade three English, mathematics, science, and social studies tests are cumulative and are based on the SOLs for kindergarteners through third graders. The grade four English, mathematics, and history tests are based on the SOLs for fourth graders. The grade five English and mathematics tests are based on the SOLs for fifth graders, while the grade five writing and science tests are cumulative, and are based on SOLs for fourth and fifth graders. The grade six English, mathematics, and history tests are based on the SOLs for sixth graders.

Assessment of all third through sixth graders in English and mathematics is required by the 2001 Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. In Virginia, third and fifth grade students began taking English and mathematics SOL tests in 1996. Fourth and sixth grade students began taking the English and mathematics tests in the spring of 2006.

SOL test results are reported as scaled scores ranging from 0-600. In order to pass, a student must obtain a score of at least 400, which is approximately 70% of items correct on each test. Scores ranging from 400-499 are designated as 'Pass Proficient,' while scores ranging from 500-600 are designated as 'Pass Advanced.' A score falling below 400 is designated as a 'Fail.'

At Graham Road Elementary School, 61% of students are Hispanic, 46% of students have Limited English Proficiency, and 78% are economically disadvantaged. Therefore, we consider the rise in English achievement to be remarkable. Grade three test scores have risen from 49% to 91%, and grade five test scores have risen from 71% to 98% between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007. In fact, by 2006-2007, every third and fifth grade subgroup with more than ten students, including Hispanic students, students with Limited English Proficiency, and students identified as disadvantaged, had achieved pass rates ranging from 87% to 100%.

The grades four and six English SOL tests have been given for only the last two years, but the gains are still significant. Fourth grade English scores have risen from 70% to 91%, and sixth grade scores have risen from 85% to 97%. In 2006-2007, the subgroup pass rates for Hispanic students, students with Limited English Proficiency, and students identified as disadvantaged in fourth and sixth grades ranged from 89% to 100%.

Students at Graham Road have also made remarkable progress in mathematics. Grade three test scores have risen from 72% to 91%, and grade five test scores have risen from 49% to 100% between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007. In 2006-2007, every third grade subgroup with more than ten students, including Hispanic students, students with Limited English Proficiency, and students identified as disadvantaged, achieved pass rates ranging from 91% to 94%. Every fifth grade subgroup achieved a pass rate of 100%.

The grade four and six mathematics SOL tests has also been given for the last two years. Fourth grade achievement has risen from 62% to 71%, and sixth grade achievement has risen from 55% to 95%. In 2006-2007, the fourth grade subgroup scores ranged from 68%-69%, an increase from 55%-57% in 2005-2006, and the sixth grade subgroup scores ranged from 90%-93%.

Graham Road Elementary has met all NCLB requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and has been fully accredited by the State of Virginia for the past three years. Additional information about the Virginia SOL Assessments can be found at www.pen.k12.va.us.

2. **Using Assessment Results**

On any school day, some team or individual staff members is analyzing formal or informal assessments data to ensure that curriculum, instruction and assessments are aligned and that every student succeeds. Data not only help to identify individual students who need enrichment or remediation, they also are used to identify instructional weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Thus, we aim to become 'consciously competent' professionals. We focus on assessment data to understand, question and discuss student performance. We call these conversations 'data discussions.' They occur during team meetings, meetings with literacy and mathematics coaches and with teachers and administrators.

These discussions improve student performance by finding trends in instruction, recognizing staff development needs, and brainstorming other methods of instruction for students. Assessment data are gathered using a variety of instruments'common assessments created by grade-level teams, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Developmental Spelling Inventory, Math Reasoning Assessment, running records and miscue analysis, and the Benchmark Assessment Resource Tool (BART), a division-wide multiple choice test developed by Princeton. We also look at informal data that includes anecdotal records, notes from team meetings, observations of classroom practice and reflections on all of the above.

After we administer assessments, we construct data grids, listing individual questions/standards/subtests as well responses/scores for each student. The grids springboard discussions about what students can and cannot do and about which instructional techniques were and were not effective. We notice which questions and/or standards we struggled to teach. We focus on what the teacher needs to do differently when students haven't learned what we taught. These discussions are at the heart of how the staff uses data to know what and how to teach so that our students will learn. After reviewing the summative data from state tests, we focus on lower-scoring subgroups by researching best practices and changing how we teach accordingly.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results**

At Graham Road, we believe that all stakeholders have the right to know how students are performing on a variety of assessments. At parent coffees and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, the principal reports annually on how each grade level and each AYP subgroup has fared on state and district assessments. During these sessions, simultaneously interpreted in Spanish and Vietnamese, the principal ensures that attendees understand the nature of the assessments and how each subgroup compares to similar groups nationally, statewide and locally. She explains what teachers plan to do to improve weak areas. The principal also sends assessment results by email to community members and elected officials who do not have children attending Graham Road. In addition to providing summative performance data, we provide formative assessment results to students and parents. All teachers inform parents midway through each marking period when students' academic or social behavior marks are in danger of falling one or more letter grades on the next progress report. Even though not required by the district, our Spanish FLES teacher (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) has created an interim and a quarterly progress report for all students in the program in grades kindergarten through five. If it is important that our students learn Spanish, then it is important for parents to know how their children are progressing. Many students attend annual parent-teacher and Individual Education Plan (IEP) conferences, taking an important role in discussing their progress. Students in grades three through six take three cumulative reading and math assessments (BART) to prepare for spring state testing. After each assessment, teachers have individuals redo problematic questions and/or analyze how they arrived at incorrect answers. When appropriate, students set personal improvement goals for the next BART. At Graham Road, we aspire to be transparent about progress and to use results to increase student and teacher efficacy.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Graham Road educators eagerly share what we have learned about improving the academic achievement of all students, but especially of those who have limited English proficiency (LEP) and those who live in poverty. The staff has responded to all requests from educators inside and outside the district and initiated opportunities, as well. Given the school's success on spring 2005 state examinations, administrators from Hanover County Public School, Virginia, requested to visit Graham Road to discuss what changes had been made during the previous year that allowed for the testing results. Thus, our teacher leaders and administrators spent a day in dialog with Hanover colleagues. Due to the students' impressive spring 2007 results on the proxy test for LEP and IEP students, the staff had repeated requests to share strategies and lessons learned with other schools. In August, the Graham Road grade three through six teaching staff met with its counterparts from a neighboring school to share strategies. To accommodate similar requests from other schools, the instructional coach and principal offered half-day sessions attended by staff from thirty local schools. During fall of 2007, the principal met with the Assistant

Superintendent and Director from another district administrative cluster to give them insights regarding how Graham Road had made dramatic improvements in reading and mathematics in a such short time. In January 2008, the principal presented at a countywide principals' meeting to talk about how Graham Road 'beat the odds' regarding performance of disadvantaged students. Furthermore, the staff has agreed to present a March 2008 administrative seminar on the effective use of data in professional learning communities. Graham Road educators will continue to be generous with their knowledge and time because they understand that collegiality not only helps children in other schools but also makes them more powerful agents within their own classrooms.

# PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

At Graham Road Elementary, the curriculum for prekindergarten through sixth grade is that which is set forth by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), the local school authority. FCPS has developed a Program of Studies for each content area. The Program of Studies includes the Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools set by the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as additional objectives to enhance student learning. The Program of Studies and Standards of Learning describe the expectations for student achievement in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, fine arts, health and physical education.

The mathematics curriculum in grades prekindergarten through six is organized around content strands'number and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability and statistics, and patterns, functions and algebra. Within each strand, concepts progress in complexity as students move from grade to grade. The mathematics curriculum also reflects the national mathematics goals for students including becoming mathematical problem solvers, communicating mathematically, reasoning mathematically, and making mathematical connections. We use the Silver Burdette Ginn textbook series, enhanced by Technical Education Research Centers' (TERC) Investigations series, to provide students with developmentally appropriate activities that build conceptual understanding of mathematics topics.

The social studies curriculum in grades prekindergarten through six includes a study of history, geography, civics, and economics at every grade. In grades kindergarten and one, students learn about themselves as individuals, as members of families, and as members of different communities. They also learn about American traditions, leaders, and historical events. Grade two students learn about famous Americans, American Indian tribes, early European explorers, the ancient empire of Mali, and contemporary Mexico. Grade three students learn about the cultures of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, China, Greece, and Rome. They also study the biographies of significant Americans. Grade four students study the growth and development of the state of Virginia from 1607 to the present. Grade five students focus on world civilizations, and Grade 6 students study American history from exploration to 1877. Textbooks, trade books, primary resources, electronic and virtual resources, art and music activities, and field trips are used to engage students in learning at each grade level.

The science curriculum is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of earth and space, life, and physical science concepts. The science curriculum at every grade is organized around content strands' scientific investigation, force, motion and energy, matter, life processes and living systems, interrelationships in earth/space systems, earth patterns cycles and changes, and resources. Through hands-on activities, students engage in the experimental design process to solve problems and draw conclusions about science in the everyday world. Trade books, Spanish lessons, art and music activities and field trips also are used to engage students in their learning.

The language arts curriculum is organized around oral language, reading and writing strands. Direct instruction, modeling and guided practice allow students to develop language arts skills. In the primary grades, students learn to read and write using a combination of phonics, language structure cues, and meaning cues. In the upper grades, students learn to use reading strategies to access texts to learn about new topics. Guided reading at the students' instructional levels is the main mode of reading instruction. A large variety of guided reading texts is used across the school.

Graham Road is a Focus School for Language and Fine Arts, with an emphasis on Spanish, music and art. With twice weekly Spanish classes in grades kindergarten through five, students work toward fluency. With opportunities to participate in specialized programs, residencies, and after school programs, students have opportunities to work toward becoming practicing artists and musicians. In addition, these disciplines are used to strengthen the core curriculum.

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

The Virginia Standards of Learning objectives drive the reading program at Graham Road Elementary School. Interactive read-aloud, shared, guided, independent reading instruction and word study provide a gradual release of teacher responsibility to promote independent readers at all grades. Our upper-grade curriculum also includes vocabulary development.

The Literacy Collaborative (LC) framework, developed at Ohio State University, is used across the school to provide a balanced approach to literacy instruction. During the spring of 1998, our staff examined three different literacy programs'two scripted programs and LC. Teachers voted overwhelmingly for the LC approach because it allowed for differentiated instruction, a must given the range of readiness levels in any one classroom. Over the years, our LC coach has continued to provide teachers with instructional strategies to develop readers' fluency and comprehension, including phonological awareness. To ensure program quality and continuity, teachers new to Graham Road receive individual coaching and commit to attending literacy classes offered by the coach and the upper grade reading teacher.

Ongoing assessment assures that students are taught at their instructional levels in small guided reading groups. Important assessment tools include the Developmental Reading Assessment, running records, teachers' anecdotal notes, Phonological Awareness Test, and grade-level common assessments. Students significantly behind receive double or triple doses of guided reading and/or alternative reading methods, such as 'Read Naturally.' Lowest achieving first graders enroll in Reading Recovery for intensive individual help. Students reading above grade level participate in advanced programs, such as 'Jacob's Ladder' from the College of William and Mary. Students take home independent reading books daily and complete logs to self-monitor their wide reading accomplishments.

Teams and administrators monitor student achievement. At weekly grade-level professional learning community (PLC) meetings, teachers and reading resource teachers meet to construct and review assessments and to create data driven plans for instruction of diverse learn

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

The science curriculum is based on the Virginia Standards of Learning and involves hands-on activities in every grade. Science is a curriculum area that is easily linked with elements of the school mission-- to inspire students to achieve academically, to think critically and creatively, and to learn independently.

In order to inspire students to achieve academically, teachers create curriculum maps to ensure that essential skills and knowledge of the Virginia Standards of Learning are addressed. Teachers track student progress through the use of common assessments and discuss results to determine remediation needs. Most grade levels hold a science-focused Family Night to enable family participation in science activities and to strengthen home-school connections.

To help students think critically and creatively, science is one of the curriculum areas in which art, technology, and Spanish are integrated to enhance student learning. Weekly integration of these subjects provides students with opportunities to think critically about the essential skills of science while engaging in creative activities. In order to ensure that students learn the essential skills, the art and Spanish teachers meet with classroom teachers on a weekly basis to discuss curriculum and how classroom teachers will support and engage students during each lesson.

To help students learn independently, Essential Knowledge or 'EK Notebooks' are used. These notebooks contain the required science information and also give students a place to make sketches, to record what they noticed about experiences, and to summarize what has been learned. Students use their notebooks to review and to prepare for tests. During testing, students use school-wide 'Best Effort Strategies' to actively engage with test questions.

The gains in science achievement are impressive. In 2003-2004, 70% of third graders and 54% of fifth graders passed, while in 2006-2007, 81% of third graders and 91% of fifth graders passed.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

We employ instructional techniques that our students need to succeed. As a result of studying the research of Marzano et al, we focus on cooperative learning, summarizing and note taking, nonlinguistic representations and questions, and frames and advanced organizers. With cooperative learning, students participate more equally in active/interactive activities. Summarization requires students to identify the most important information related to a concept. Nonlinguistic representations give another modality for coding information being learned. Question, cues and advanced organizers' known as 'Best Effort Strategies' (B.E.S.) at Graham Road'empower students with active reading strategies, including identification of question-answer relationships, sketching of important points and written justification of thinking.

To provide students with maximum learning time, all teachers use the district-recommended lesson plan template. Thus, our predominantly economically disadvantaged LEP population can focus on content, not on navigating a variety of lesson plan formats. Other strategies used to reduce students' need to learn classroom procedures repeatedly are schoolwide formats for interactive/essential knowledge notebooks and summarizing and note taking.

Primary teachers use learning stations during mathematics and language arts to support differentiation. All grades use workshop formats for language arts to ensure differentiation of reading instruction. We seek out tools/mnemonics that support students' learning styles. Examples include visual representation, kinesthetic modality, and rhythmic representation (clapping, songs). Our technology specialist collaborates with teachers to design lessons employing a variety of software and web-based experiences for students. We use interdisciplinary instruction to address learning styles, support core curriculum and provide an enriched instructional program. For example, Spanish and visual arts and drama are integrated with science, social studies and language arts at targeted grade levels.

Knowing that students must develop strong personal relationships within the school to develop resilience and to be academically successful, homeroom teachers conduct Morning Meetings three to five mornings per week throughout the year.

5. **Professional Development:**

The professional development program at Graham Road is strategic and research based. Each grade level and the entire school function as professional learning communities (PLC). Grade-level PLCs meet to focus on language arts and mathematics each week for 60-79 minutes. We also meet monthly for whole-school learning. Based on student performance data, teacher leaders and administrators make decisions regarding topics of study at weekly team meetings, school-wide meetings, and for selected offsite opportunities. For example, when mathematics test scores lagged behind reading scores, teacher leaders conducted monthly 'Math Camps' during which teachers studied content and instruction.

We are part of the Literacy Collaborative, developed at Ohio State University. As a Literacy Collaborative school, we have a coach who maintains a model classroom, teaches a class for teachers and coaches teachers in the implementation of the balanced literacy framework. Our upper grade reading teacher also teaches a course, 'Upper Grade Literacy Instruction,' for teachers new to the school. Because our teachers are trained and coached in all components of the framework, they are equipped to provide our students with many opportunities to become successful readers and writers.

Most of our staff development is done on site with resource teachers supporting colleagues in PLC meetings and individual conferences. For over three years, teacher leaders have conducted numerous book studies on current findings in the field, including A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Words Their Way, Getting Started-Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities, and Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement.

Our teachers also attend seminars offsite, including DRA training, Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development's Building Background Knowledge, Cognitive

Coaching, Assessment for Learning, Word Study, and Kagan's Cooperative Learning. Teachers bring back their newly acquired knowledge and share with teams. When teachers receive coaching from peers following presentations or demonstrations, the application of the new learning rises dramatically in the classroom.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (E) Grade 3 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 83 | 73 | 51 | 49 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 25 | 23 | 12 | 4 | 2 |
| Number of students tested | 33 | 42 | 60 | 52 | 44 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 98 | 96 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 12 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 81 | 75 | 54 | 50 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 32 | 23 | 9 | 0 | 4 |
| Number of students tested | 22 | 33 | 52 | 32 | 30 |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 93 | 83 | 76 | 48 | 47 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 22 | 28 | 10 | 8 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 28 | 31 | 51 | 25 | 34 |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 71 | 71 | 55 | 33 | 33 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 14 | 43 | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | | | 11 | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Math Grade 3 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 90 | 84 | 89 | 72 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 58 | 46 | 45 | 56 | 21 |
| Number of students tested | 34 | 42 | 60 | 52 | 44 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 98 | 96 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 3 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 87 | 88 | 100 | 68 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 52 | 47 | 48 | 58 | 14 |
| Number of students tested | 23 | 33 | 52 | 32 | 30 |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 93 | 90 | 81 | 87 | 71 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 56 | 41 | 43 | 50 | 15 |
| Number of students tested | 28 | 32 | 52 | 33 | 34 |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 88 | 100 | 77 | 67 | 67 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 25 | 43 | 23 | 33 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | | | 13 | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Reading (E) Grade 4 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 70 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 54 | 16 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 35 | 49 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 11 | 3 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 31 | 6 | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 92 | 72 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 52 | 17 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 25 | 33 | | | |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 90 | 66 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 52 | 13 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 29 | 43 | | | |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 62 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 86 | 15 | | | |
| Number of students tested | | 13 | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Math Grade 4 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment, Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | | | |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>Pass Proficient Plus Pass Advanced | 71 | 62 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>Pass Advanced | 26 | 17 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 35 | 49 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 3 | 2 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 9 | 4 | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>Pass Proficient Plus Pass Advanced | 68 | 57 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>Pass Advanced | 24 | 18 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 25 | 33 | | | |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>Pass Proficient Plus Pass Advanced | 69 | 57 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>Pass Advanced | 24 | 14 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 29 | 43 | | | |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>Pass Proficient Plus Pass Advanced | 71 | 31 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>Pass Advanced | 29 | 15 | | | |
| Number of students tested | | 14 | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Reading (E) Grade 5 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment, Inc/Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 98 | 79 | 75 | 82 | 71 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 47 | 33 | 3 | 18 | 17 |
| Number of students tested | 45 | 44 | 37 | 43 | 41 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 87 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 16 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 36 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 81 | 75 | 81 | 55 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 67 | 19 | 4 | 22 | 5 |
| Number of students tested | 27 | 27 | 31 | 35 | 24 |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 97 | 82 | 73 | 78 | 68 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 47 | 33 | 4 | 30 | 11 |
| Number of students tested | 38 | 34 | 29 | 25 | 29 |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 78 | 50 | 25 | 40 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 60 | 44 | 0 | 25 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 10 | | | | 12 |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Math Grade 5 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | May | May | May |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 74 | 72 | 68 | 49 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 73 | 33 | 9 | 8 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 46 | 45 | 37 | 43 | 41 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 87 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 69 | 71 | 70 | 35 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 78 | 23 | 11 | 10 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 28 | 28 | 31 | 35 | 24 |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 73 | 67 | 64 | 43 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 70 | 33 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 39 | 34 | 30 | 26 | 29 |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 78 | 25 | 14 | 20 |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 80 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 10 | | | | 12 |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Reading (E) Grade 6 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | | | |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 97 | 85 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 39 | 21 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 38 | 36 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 9 | 0 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 24 | 0 | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 100 | 86 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 23 | 10 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 22 | 23 | | | |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 97 | 84 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 41 | 8 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 29 | 27 | | | |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 90 | 33 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 50 | 0 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Subject Math Grade 6 Test Virginia Standards of Learning

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2006/200 Publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc./Pearson

| | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Testing Month | May | May | | | |
| **SCHOOL SCORES*** | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 95 | 55 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 32 | 15 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 41 | 36 | | | |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | | | |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 5 | 1 | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 12 | 3 | | | |
| **SUBGROUP SCORES** | | | | | |
| 1. Limited English Proficient | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 91 | 52 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 27 | 14 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 25 | 23 | | | |
| 2. Students Identified as Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 93 | 52 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 38 | 12 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 32 | 27 | | | |
| 3. Students with Disabilities | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard<br>% Pass Proficient plus % Pass Advanced | 90 | 0 | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards<br>% Pass Advanced | 60 | 0 | | | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| % "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard | | | | | |
| % "Exceeding" State Standards | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |