



## 2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

### U.S. Department of Education

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply)  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  Charter

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

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

School Mailing Address 828 Chestnut Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

San Carlos California 94070-3802  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County San Mateo State School Code Number\* 41-69021-6044747

Telephone (650) 508-7321 Fax (650) 508-7342 \*

Website/URL www.central.sancarlos.k12.ca.us E-mail jwelch@central.sancarlos.k12.ca.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Patricia Wool \*  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name San Carlos Elementary School District Tel. (650) 508-7337 \*

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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 with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or 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 2005-2006 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has 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 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The 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 the 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

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 4     | Elementary schools                                       |
| 2     | Middle schools   |
| _____ | Junior high schools                                      |
| _____ | High schools   |
| 1     | Other - San Carlos Charter Learning Center<br>K-8 School |
| 7     | TOTAL  |
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$4,932
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,643

**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 area
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural
4. 3 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, 2005 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
PreK				7	62	65	127
K				8	68	43	111
1				9			
2				10			
3				11			
4				12			
5	90	71	161	Other			
6	59	61	120				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>519</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- |   |
|---|
| <u>77</u> % White                         |
| <u>2</u> % Black or African American      |
| <u>10</u> % Hispanic or Latino            |
| <u>10</u> % Asian/Pacific Islander        |
| <u>1</u> % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100% Total</b>                         |

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: 3%

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	7
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	9
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	497
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.0321
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school:  $\frac{1\%}{28}$  Total Number Limited English Proficient  
 Number of languages represented: 9  
 Specify languages: Spanish, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Turkish, Russian, Farsi, Arabic & Vietnamese.

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1%  
 Total number students who qualify: 10

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:  $\frac{8\%}{40}$  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.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>27</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>    </u> Hearing Impairment	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>    </u> Mental Retardation	<u>    </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>    </u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>5</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>30</u>	<u>7</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 28:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. 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 between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	No data%	No data%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	11%	19%	0%	11%	14%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Students are greeted by the sound of music over the public address system each morning, signaling that it is time to be in newly created homerooms. Backpacks and all electronic equipment are safely stowed in lockers, but binder reminders and Monday Mustang Mail pouches are required as teacher advocates check both. Homeroom is more than a place to take roll and pass out notices. Students participate in whole child activities based on The Forty Developmental Assets, as well as prepare for the exciting day that awaits each of them. Homeroom houses 18 to 22 students, affording the teacher the opportunity to make personal connections with each student.

Central, a 2005 California Distinguished School, is a 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school housing 519 students and is located mid-peninsula between San Francisco and San Jose in San Carlos, California. Central has a rich history, having been founded in 1939. Education is a valued priority with high parental involvement. Central follows a middle school organization plan with a lower house for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, and a more traditional upper house structure for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Each plan provides a standards-based common core curriculum and a range of elective choices. Class sizes average 28:1 and two-hour core classes are provided to allow teachers to incorporate interdisciplinary units, as well as help students feel a deeper connection to the core teachers. The CMS staff provides a warm and caring environment to help all students attain their personal best, utilizing best practices in teaching and learning. Instruction is carefully sequenced to develop learning skills, independence, and responsibility. Projects and activities appeal to different learning modalities. Students are challenged to explore topics from various points of view. Strong core academic focus is enhanced by quality co-curricular activities. About 75% of the students participate in a variety of 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade after school athletic offerings each season, which even includes a tennis and golf team. Over half the student body plays a musical instrument, participating in either band or orchestra. Central is a selected CASS school, (Creating A Safe School), participating in the national Ophelia Project to address the whole child.

Central's mission is to create an exemplary middle school for all students by providing a rich curriculum with well-defined standards that empower students to develop and appreciate lifelong learning and a commitment to responsible citizenship. CMS is committed to academic excellence by engaging all students in a rigorous, powerful curriculum and instruction, assessment, technology, community service and decision-making. CMS enables students to be problem solvers, to employ critical, reflective, creative thinking, and to collaborate, as they prepare for high school and the years beyond through a challenging course of study. Students are encouraged to enroll in Spanish in the lower house and are offered high school Spanish in the upper house. Algebra is offered in the eighth grade, and required for all AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) students. To encourage students to explore and to discover a passion, Central offers a variety of electives, noted for our outstanding music program, multiple fine arts classes, and two state-of-the-art technology labs, a PC lab and an eMAC lab. Labs are utilized by classes, as well as for electives or lower house "elective wheel" offerings. Both labs are monitored by a full time Technology Coordinator. Jazz band is offered zero (0) period or after school so that students may also enroll in Symphonic Band. Upper house students may enroll in zero (0) period Physical Education to allow them two elective choices. Other electives are offered to strengthen academic skills, such as Math Magic and Reading Revolution, or to develop leadership and independence by enrolling in Publications – Yearbook. An active ASB, student government, promotes student participation to create an atmosphere of spirit and collegiality. Staff and students participate in spirit weeks, special assemblies, and service projects, such as canned food drives, warm coat collections and community projects.

Central prides itself on serving all students to include Special Education, Special Day Classes for grades 5-8 for the District, and an evolving Gifted and Talented program. A partnership with the Kiwanis Club allows 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to volunteer in the community through the Builders Club. The city of San Carlos partnership allows us to offer Healthy Cities tutors for students who need extra academic support.

The quality of Central is built upon a strong foundation that includes teamwork between all aspects of the community. An active PTA and San Carlos Education Foundation are a great source of support for CMS, along with civic organizations. We encourage participation and welcome open communication.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results: Scores may be found at <http://star.cde.ca.gov/star>

Central Middle school uses a variety of assessment strategies to monitor student learning and determine proficiency. Three summative tests are given annually to gauge the school's instructional strengths and weaknesses. The three tests are: 1) the **California Achievement Test, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (CAT 6)**, which is a national norm referenced test. In 2004-2005 the test was only administered in grades 3 and 7; 2) the **California Standards Test (CST)**, a criterion-referenced test developed specifically for California public schools aligned to state-adopted standards for each grade level; and 3) **District** proficiency tests in Writing and Mathematics Assessment Resource (MARS) as part of the Silicon Valley Math Initiative. The District tests were designed to provide an alternative, immediate assessment that would guide instruction toward improvement targets. The **CAT6** ranks students and measures their achievement against other students across the nation. The **CAT6** replaced the Stanford Achievement Test, ninth edition in the 2003 testing cycle. No direct comparisons between the tests can be made as the tests are published by two different companies, were developed at different times, and use different national groups of students as the comparison groups. For that reason, the assessment results that are most useful for identifying students for support and informing instruction are the **CST** in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

The **CST**, a state mandated test for our 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, yields a percent score for each student. **CST** proficiency is reported in five categories: Far Below Basic, Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. This assessment shows how well students performed in comparison to the Content Standards. The **CST** in English Language Arts reports on five clusters: Word Analysis and Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, Literary Response and Analysis, Written Conventions, and Writing Strategies. State criteria for having mastered the Standards require students to score in the Proficient and Advanced categories. Statewide averages for grades 5 through 8 were 60%, 58%, 58% & 57% respectively. Central's students far exceeded the state averages, with 72% of 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 61% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders, 76% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, & 68% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders scoring in the Proficient and Advanced categories. Based on cluster reports, measures were taken so that students would receive extra instruction in Written Conventions and Writing Strategies. Because the State administers the Writing Applications only in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, additional data were analyzed from CMS's District writing assessments. A longitudinal study led to work with the District Curriculum Specialist, and scoring rubrics and prompts were rewritten to be in alignment with the State's. By consensus, the Central staff began working with the District 5-8 schools. Staff development focus is on individual teacher coaching and demonstration lessons provided by the Bay Area Writing Project and collaboration time for professional reading and lesson strategies. The **District** Writing Assessment for March 2005 showed 71% of 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 82% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders, 73% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, & 81% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders at or above grade level. To guide student progress, scores were plotted for those remaining below grade level or approaching grade level for use during Writer's Workshop individual conferences.

As in Language Arts, Central's performance in mathematics far exceeded the State average of 63%, 59%, 54% & 47% for grades 5-8. Central's Algebra score was 100% for 2004 and 2005 & the statewide average was 42%. 8<sup>th</sup> grade math scores for 2003 were 65%, showing a gain to 72% in 2004. Dropping to 69% in 2005 merited class placement changes for the 2005-2006 school year. An additional Algebra class was added, allowing General Math 8 students to be placed in smaller classes to address individual assessment data. A cluster highlighted for strengthening after analysis of data was in the area of Measurement and Geometry in all but 7<sup>th</sup> grade. **MARS** tests: 5<sup>th</sup> grade was 84%, 6<sup>th</sup> grade 83%, 7<sup>th</sup> grade 72%, and the Collaborative scores were 62%, 62% & 56% respectively. Grades 5-8 met Standards at 84%, 83% & 72%. **MARS** scores in the fall are utilized to diagnose areas of student weakness to inform instruction. Spring scores evaluate student progress and District program effectiveness. **MARS** assessments are aimed at higher-level thinking skills and problem solving. Significant improvements can be attributed to emphasis upon using student work to analyze instructional needs and meaningful professional development. CMS's Academic Performance Index (API) showed a gain of 38 points from 808 in 2004 to 846 in 2005. The results from all assessments drive CMS's Single Plan for Student Achievement decision-making process and play a vital role in shaping curriculum to respond to students' needs.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Central uses data from multiple assessments: standardized test results, District writing samples, multiple MARS data, which is also compared to data from 43 participating schools in the Silicon Valley Collaborative, math computation and algebra readiness tests, and various forms of performance based assessments. Assessment is on-going, occurring regularly and incrementally in order to monitor student progress and guide teaching strategies and lesson content. Data are disaggregated for trends, patterns, or profiles, with teachers setting goals, identifying what will be needed in order to achieve those goals, and setting measurements to assess progress. Upon arrival of standardized test scores, the principal presents the data to the staff and creates individual copies for grade level team usage. Analysis is done at the site or department level, as well as by individual teachers. As a school, we determine the school's trends, strengths, and weaknesses and form school-wide goals. Identifying what will be needed in order to achieve those goals and setting measurements to assess progress is determined at faculty meetings and early dismissal Wednesday meetings. Data analysis is available through IDMS, an electronic data collection system that is purchased by the District for all schools and is accessible from any school computer. Teachers also incorporate instructional goals into individual Stull goals and objectives utilized in the professional evaluation process. Data are used to shape curriculum, staff development, and professional reading. Based on the results of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade State writing assessment, English teachers analyzed District rubrics and prompts before administering the District's spring writing assessment. The goal was to be in alignment with State standards. Each student's performance and growth are analyzed and used by English teachers to shape the writing curriculum for the upcoming year. In mathematics in the spring, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders are given the Berkeley Readiness Exam to determine accelerated math or Algebra placement for the next school year. 8<sup>th</sup> graders take the Step II Test for appropriate placement in high school. All assessment data is scrutinized by the administration and staff to identify areas of improvement and plan guided instruction. No student population or subgroup is left unmonitored; collaborative opportunities for staff to discuss student work and teaching strategies is a priority.

## **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

Communicating student performance is a high priority at Central and is integral in ensuring that students are making progress, meeting standards, and maturing socially and emotionally. Throughout the school year, the principal addresses student progress and goals at parent meetings and School Site Council on school-wide areas of academic focus based on assessment data. The Superintendent, Curriculum Specialist, Math Trainer/Coach and District Principals provide a detailed analysis of standardized and District test results to the faculty, parent groups, and at school board meetings. Teachers address parents initially at Back-To-School-Night. Ongoing communication continues through scheduled fall and winter conferences, three formal progress reports and a report card each trimester, telephone conversations, email, and the CMS website. School Loop, an electronic parent/school communication tool, is utilized by 74%, 384 of our families, to check daily assignments, communicate with teachers, and check grades to date for those teachers utilizing the feature. Binder Reminders are required for all students as they allow daily school - home communication. ALEKS, an online mathematics learning and assessment program, is utilized by 51% of the students, primarily with 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders, based on assessment studies. Pupils take a pretest and are placed at their individualized learning level. A parent can easily monitor progress with their child. Equally important is the belief that students possess a sense of personal responsibility for their education. Besides ALEKS, many opportunities for self-reflection and evaluation are built into assignments. The use of rubrics, writing conferences through Writers' Workshop, and portfolios allow for students to reflect on and take ownership for their educational process, products, and growth. Open House is held every spring to allow parents to celebrate student accomplishments. To enhance and support the overall well being of children, discussions on healthy physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development occur through assemblies, panel discussions, speakers and monthly Parent Teacher Association meetings. A partnership with a local hospital provides monthly parent education speakers. The principal creates a bi-monthly, one page Administrative Newsletter that highlights events and areas of focus. The reverse is the monthly calendar to better inform our families. The PONY, a monthly PTA bulletin, is filled with updates and announcements. The District quarterly brochure keeps the community well informed.



#### 4. **Sharing Success:**

San Carlos residents chose to create a second middle school in 2000, affording Central and the reopened Tierra Linda to be smaller schools designed to meet the needs of adolescents. Shared decision-making, professional development and goal setting is the norm. San Carlos Charter Learning Center, a K-8 school now 10 years old, is the first Independent Charter School in California. Working closely with SCCLC, Tierra Linda Middle and Central Middle discuss interventions, methodologies, professional opportunities and staff trainings. It is the practice at Central Middle School to share successes with schools outside our district as well. As a member of the San Mateo County Office of Education Middle Grades Study Group, the principal meets monthly with other principals at alternating sites to discuss agenda items pertinent to adolescents, tour the school, and share best practices. Recent topics include literacy to close the achievement gap, improving writing scores on STAR assessments or how to build a better master schedule. Central participates in the Silicon Valley Math Initiative along with 43 other schools. Professional training for teachers and administrators, national speakers, and site visitations to watch demonstration lessons are a focus. Problem solving and higher order thinking skills are utilized to progress through such lessons as Number Talks or Problem of the Month. Teachers are encouraged to present at conferences, including California League of Middle Schools and National League of Middle Schools. Our technology teacher presents at Computer Users in Education, Silicon Valley and LINC conferences to share integrated units of study. Central teachers and administrators regularly attend articulation meetings with the local public high school district and are currently working to develop more in-depth collaboration with our 4 elementary schools. 5<sup>th</sup> graders visit elementary sites to talk to 4<sup>th</sup> graders about the transition to Central. Another example is our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade pen pal program. Central also works closely with the teacher education departments at Notre Dame de Namur University and University of San Francisco to provide mentors for student teachers and counselor interns. New teachers participate in the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program (BTSA). This program allows for sharing of information, strategies and materials. Beginning teachers find working with a coach and other beginning teachers an excellent opportunity to improve and share effective lessons and strategies. CMS is an open campus for educators, parents and community members to observe our innovative programs and discuss our successes.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

Central offers an enriched, developmentally appropriate, sequentially rigorous educational program that provides each student with the necessary foundations and skills for learning. Grade level teams design standards-based units of study that are rich in varied educational experiences and appeal to the diverse learning styles of the student population. Students are enrolled in a double Core for English/Language Arts and Social Studies for 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade. 5<sup>th</sup> graders have a double math/science core. 5<sup>th</sup> graders have physical education and an elective choice of orchestra, band or Spanish every other day. A second elective rotates to include: computers, speech, math art, Shakespeare & Art In Action. 6<sup>th</sup> graders take Physical Education daily and choose from Spanish, pre fine arts, band or orchestra. 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders may enroll in zero period physical education to allow them to take two of the following electives: fine arts, advanced fine arts, art ceramics, Spanish I & II (high school equivalent), conversational Spanish, advanced computers, AVID-Advancement via Individual Determination, publications, orchestra & band. Band students may participate in Jazz zero period or Wednesdays after school. 8<sup>th</sup> graders have departmentalized classes to better prepare them for high school. Our master schedule reflects developmentally appropriate programs for 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Resource Support and Special Day classes for the District are offered at CMS.

The standards in English reflect the belief that all students should be able to communicate effectively, appropriately, and articulately through reading, writing, speaking and listening. The specific skills taught and the depth and complexity of the subject matter dealt with, increase with each grade level and are developmentally appropriate. Students must read a broad variety of quality texts, fiction and non-fiction, available from our library, to develop proficiency in, and pleasure from reading. Students write often across all disciplines and receive instruction in 6Traits Writing and Writers Workshop, utilizing a literacy-based writing process, taught in their English classes. Skills are taught in context and in relation to one

another. Teachers guide students' development through a rich, substantive curriculum and assess progress in a variety of ways.

Mathematics instruction follows the California standards using state approved texts. Students are diagnostically tested for advancement to an appropriate placement. All 6<sup>th</sup> graders are tested in the spring for placement in Math 7 or Accelerated Math 7. 8<sup>th</sup> graders take Algebra, Algebra with support for AVID students or Pre-Algebra. Support and practice in basic skills are individualized and assessed for progress throughout the year. Math Magic, an elective, is geared to help students improve skills. ALEKS is also utilized across all grade levels. Collaborative planning ensures that all students are equipped with a set of common essential experiences, including MARS problem solving and higher order thinking. Problems of the Week, (POW's), and open-ended solutions are stressed.

Central's social studies curriculum is rich and challenging, emphasizing the critical analysis of world cultures over time. Social studies teachers employ interdisciplinary units within the English Core to teach research and report of information writing skills. 6<sup>th</sup> graders expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major western and non-western ancient civilizations. Grade 7 students study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa and Asia from 500-1789 AD. Students in grade 8 study the issues and events from the framing of the Constitution up to World War I, with an emphasis on America's development as a nation.

There is a rich array of electives from which students may choose. The Fine Arts department offers orchestra, band and advanced instrumentation jazz. Over one-half the student body takes music and participates in school and community-based concerts and events. Superior, the highest ranking, is earned at local music festivals. Many art courses that spiral in depth and breadth from pre-fine arts to advanced fine arts and art-ceramics cover drawing, painting and sculpture. The curriculum is designed for students to gain an understanding of art styles, technique, media and materials through direct instruction, demonstrations, practice and critique. Art vocabulary is utilized in written and oral critiques. 8<sup>th</sup> graders paint murals and complete a masterpiece, suitable for framing. They also pair with a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader to create a piece of sculpture during a field trip to CMS. Grade 5 art classes employ Art In Action lessons. Art classes on the elective wheel use science and math as a basis for the curriculum. New this year, 6<sup>th</sup> graders take a semester of art and a semester of Spanish. Spanish I & II instruction is offered to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, which qualifies them for second-year high school Spanish. Conversational Spanish, an introductory course, is also offered, as is 5<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish. Publications, a class that creates the yearbook, focuses on English skills and photography. Leadership is an integral part of this elective, as students have to be highly responsible and independent. Technology skills are integrated. The advanced technology elective utilizes the computer to create higher order thinking projects through power point presentations, creating CD's using animation and research and robotics. All elective offerings hold students to rigorous standards, yet encourage them to develop a life-long skill.

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

The English standards based curriculum provides students with a level of literacy and fluency that prepares them to become informed and responsible citizens, proficient and flourishing members of the work force, and critical, analytical individuals within our society. Classroom instruction provides each student with the necessary foundations and skills for improving his/her ability to communicate effectively through speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Through whole class and small group discussions, students demonstrate appropriate tone of voice and use suitable vocabulary, grammar and non-verbal techniques. Additionally, student activities demand a variety of speaking situations and provide opportunities for formal speeches and individual and group presentations. For example, 8<sup>th</sup> graders often culminate a unit of study with a presentation for an audience, including their parents and administrators. Studying about the 13 original colonies in history and reading non-fiction in English, student groups wrote original songs, utilizing facts about Native American tribes. Lessons such as these motivate students to want to read to gain knowledge. Students write regularly through various writing domains, including narrative, expository, persuasive, literary response, and technical writing. Writing assignments include opportunities for self-reflection and evaluation. For instance, students across all grade levels create a portfolio to celebrate their successes and to help teachers assess growth over time.

In reading, CMS 5<sup>th</sup> graders use the elementary state approved text, Houghton Mifflin Reading as a base of instruction and a springboard to core literature works and supplemental lessons. Accelerated Reader is used by the younger students. 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers create lessons that follow a vertical continuum using state adopted anthology texts, core literature works, and differentiated instruction in order to address the varied reading levels of each student. Activities develop and strengthen the strategies one needs to make meaning from reading, to make connections with literature, and to read for different purposes. Through book reports, projects, and reading logs, students are expected to independently read good literature and expository works that are reading-level appropriate. Various support systems are in place to assist students who read below grade level. For some students, books-on-tape are made available and for others, guided reading and/or reciprocal reading strategies may be employed. A further example is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade elective, Reading Revolution, created to help students raise personal standardized scores prior to entering the Upper House. Strengths and needs are identified, allowing students to remediate weaknesses and challenge strengths. To meet the needs of other students reading below level, RSP, SDC, and ELL programs are available, as appropriate. These students may receive placement, monitoring, accommodations and/or modifications specific to IEP's, Section 504's, and/or language-acquisition assessments.

The rich language arts curriculum, tailored to the needs of each student, enables all students to apply their acquired skills toward their future educational endeavors and life-long learning.

### **3. Science**

High expectations for achievement are paramount to the school's mission, which is to create an exemplary middle school for all students by providing a rich curriculum with well-defined standards that empower students to develop and appreciate learning and a commitment to responsible citizenship. Central's standards-based science program strives to attain that level of instruction through real life lessons and experiences. A 7<sup>th</sup> grade example is the study of fungi through readings, labs and classroom activities. Students and their parents culminate the unit with a Sunday morning mushroom hike at a local open space park. The science curriculum is designed to meet the intellectual, developmental and emotional needs of young adolescents. Parents are often included, for example, to help during dissection labs or to drive on field trips. Hands-on labs are conducted for individual use, partners or teams. However, tests are taken individually. Teams help students learn to effectively communicate ideas, solve problems and collaborate. Labs are frontloaded so the students can perform experiments and do write-ups independently. Guest speakers or resources are highly utilized. One example is the "bat people" who visit each grade 5 science core to not only instruct, but let students see up close a wide variety of bats. A second, more involved example is environmentally based and meets the goal of our mission to create responsible citizens. Redwood City is the San Mateo county seat and houses civic resources. A close relationship developed with our local garbage provider and an environmental specialist. All 6<sup>th</sup> graders began instruction in waste management. A grant was written and the funds awarded were used to develop a school-wide recycling program. The past two years the 6<sup>th</sup> graders conducted a hands-on waste collection, a weighing and analyzing experiment, to track CMS's wet and dry garbage. Be it earth science, life science, or physical science, the curriculum effectively instills a strong foundation and love of exploration, as well as strengthens interpersonal and communication skills. Students are provided with critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for successful participation as contributing members of our world community.

### **4. Instructional Methods:**

Teachers take great pride in using an array of traditional and contemporary instructional methods to impart a demanding curriculum. Employing a variety of instructional methods addresses the diverse learning styles of the students. Standards are explored through lecture, discussion, student-based research, discovery, and experimentation. For example, 8<sup>th</sup> grade cooperative teams researched primary source documents, texts and the internet to prepare a historical power point presentation. The jigsaw style included individual accountability. Technology is consistently integrated into lessons and projects, from multimedia presentations to interactive exercises, such as the 7<sup>th</sup> grade book reviews. Differentiated instruction is employed to meet the varied needs of all students by challenging their strengths and working to remediate their weaknesses. Activities that afford choice are often offered, and students do an excellent job of self-selecting and taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, students select a

scientific topic based on individual strengths, conduct research and prepare a presentation. Some of the projects are chosen for the District Science Fair. Central consistently sends winning projects to the San Mateo County Science Fair, and/or to the state-wide competition in Los Angeles, California. Working closely with special education teachers, general education teachers meet the needs of Resource students by adapting class assignments and by supporting students through individualized programs and contracts. Tests may be modified, extra time may be allowed for test taking, notes may be taken by others, and/or regular assignments may be shortened so that the same work is experienced but in more time manageable units. District Special Day students for grades 5-8 attend Central. Students are mainstreamed according to individual strengths, and afforded accommodations as needed. They also participate in the rich elective offerings and physical education. Conventional tests, alternative assessments, rubrics, as well as portfolios, projects and presentations are used to determine subject mastery.

## **5. Professional Development:**

Central Middle School and the other District middle school, Tierra Linda, entered into a three year Middle School Initiative in 2003. Administrators chose three focus areas based on assessment analysis: writing, mathematics, school climate and culture. Work with the Silicon Valley Math Initiative, MARS, provided training for principals and teachers. Demonstration lessons and coaching led to improved District scores, well above those of the other collaborative schools. Student focus on problem solving and higher order thinking coupled with strengthening basic skills took students to a new level. Algorithms took on deeper meanings. This work is on-going. Writing was chosen as the focus in 2004-2005 and commenced with the Curriculum Specialist guiding our professional reading, The Writing Workshop, by Katie Wood Ray, and In the Middle, by Nancie Atwell. Specific discussions centered on student performance, writing test results on 7<sup>th</sup> grade state testing, as well as the district writing assessment that led to a committee to change writing prompts, the scoring rubric, and raise the acceptable ranking levels. Literary Response and Analysis was a targeted area, especially for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, based on the California Standards Test. It was decided that employing Writers Workshop along with 6 Traits Writing would afford rich opportunities to embed writing assignments within the context of a wide variety of literature. Giving students a strong vocabulary and multiple literary experiences would strengthen their writers' voice. Teachers would role model being a writer. Professional development for 2005-2006 focuses on non-fiction writing and includes working with a coach from the Bay Area Writing Project, to observe teachers in the classroom, do demonstration lessons and individually guide teachers through specific lessons and discussions on early dismissal Wednesdays. The professional reading this year is Thinking Through Genre, by Heather Lattimer. The heart of the school is the teacher and the classroom, so prescriptive instruction allows teachers the artistry of the lesson plan within the standardized program. Learning in this collaborative model also lets each teacher's expertise and personality come through in the delivery and planning of each lesson. Rich professional development guides this instruction as a catalyst for student growth. Faculty meetings at the start of the school year are devoted to analyzing standardized test data to best inform instruction. Central applied and was accepted as a CASS School (Creating A Safe School) through the Ophelia Project based in Erie, Pennsylvania. Our primary goal is to continue to improve the climate and culture by addressing the needs of the adolescent. Focus is on Relational Aggression. We have completed Phase I – Research and are currently in Phase II – Mentoring. Working in collaboration with Carlmont High School, our primary feeder school, students come to Central to conduct the lessons with teachers and parents who have also taken the training. Future additions will be parent education evenings and continued participation in the national surveys being studied at Pennsylvania State University. New teachers participate in Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) to receive support and guidance in standards-based instruction, frameworks and classroom management. The faculty meets to reflect on the year and to review goals that were established. Discussion is centered on student performance, test results, a review of the Single Plan for Achievement, cycles of inquiry, District directions for the next year, and evaluation of current programs. From this meeting, new goals are established and the means by which those goals will be met are identified. The past two years, these meetings have been part of our Staff Retreat, held off-site to include bonding activities that allow us to celebrate our successes and enjoy being together as a faculty.

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Following are the tables showing California Standards Test (CST) criterion-referenced test data for English/language arts and mathematics for the last three years for grades 5 through 8. \*\*

A statistically significant socioeconomic subgroup does not exist. Also, there is not a statistically significant ethnic subgroup for which data could be collected.

No groups were excluded from testing. The only students who did not take the test were students whose parents had specifically requested a waiver from testing. The following are Central's school-wide testing statistics:

2003 = 100%; 2004 = 99.4%; 2005 = 99.2%

**\*\* Included in all testing data** is the District Special Day Class, special education students who attend Central Middle School for grades 5 through 8. These students qualify for this program based on assessments that place them below grade level, testing at Far Below Basic, or Below Basic on State tests. Goals written in each student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP), which guides classroom instruction, focus on raising each student's academic level. As progress is made, students are mainstreamed and then moved to Central's Resource program, to offer them an equal education in the least restrictive environment.

**\*\*** No students were alternatively assessed nor tested out of level for the 2005, 2004, or 2003 assessments, as per state of California suggested guidelines.

CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CAT/6, CALIFORNIA CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST, as well as San Carlos School District Writing and MARS mathematics data available upon request. Current CAT/6 data is also available at: [http://star.cde.ca.gov/star\\_2005](http://star.cde.ca.gov/star_2005) for 7th grade only. The state of California only administered CAT/6 to grades 3 and 7 in 2005.

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: English-Language Arts Grade: 5 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	109	126	116
	2004- 2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	72%	71%	69%
% At Advanced	30%	41%	30%
% At Proficient	42%	30%	39%
% At Basic	19%	22%	22%
% At Below Basic	8%	4%	6%
% At Far Below Basic	1%	2%	3%
Number of students tested	106	126	116
Percent of total students tested	97%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: English-Language Arts Grade: 6 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	125	122	150
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	61%	65%	65%
% At Advanced	27%	31%	25%
% At Proficient	34%	34%	40%
% At Basic	34%	21%	25%
% At Below Basic	4%	11%	6%
% At Far Below Basic	1%	3%	5%
Number of students tested	125	118	150
Percent of total students tested	100%	97%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: English-Language Arts Grade: 7 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	116	151	147
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	76%	55%	55%
% At Advanced	28%	19%	16%
% At Proficient	48%	36%	39%
% At Basic	16%	30%	33%
% At Below Basic	4%	11%	8%
% At Far Below Basic	4%	4%	3%
Number of students tested	115	151	147
Percent of total students tested	99%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A



**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: English-Language Arts Grade: 8 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	147	140	147
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>48%</b>
% At Advanced	29%	21%	15%
% At Proficient	39%	29%	33%
% At Basic	24%	38%	30%
% At Below Basic	4%	9%	14%
% At Far Below Basic	4%	3%	7%
Number of students tested	147	140	147
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: 5      Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual      Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:                      109                      126                      116

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	54%	61%	66%
% At Advanced	20%	16%	16%
% At Proficient	34%	45%	50%
% At Basic	32%	26%	19%
% At Below Basic	8%	10%	13%
% At Far Below Basic	7%	2%	3%
Number of students tested	106	125	116
Percent of total students tested	97%	99%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	125	122	150
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	61%	52%	56%
% At Advanced	27%	25%	13%
% At Proficient	34%	27%	43%
% At Basic	26%	29%	29%
% At Below Basic	11%	16%	13%
% At Far Below Basic	2%	3%	3%
Number of students tested	125	119	150
Percent of total students tested	100%	98%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: 7      Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual      Publisher: Educational Testing Service

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	116	151	147
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>48%</b>
% At Advanced	25%	14%	10%
% At Proficient	43%	38%	38%
% At Basic	18%	31%	33%
% At Below Basic	11%	12%	15%
% Far Below Basic	2%	5%	3%
Number of students tested	115	151	147
Percent of total students tested	99%	100%	100%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

**Total 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics Percent Proficient:**

**2005: 69%**

**2004: 72%**

**2003: 65%**

Subject: General Mathematics \* Grade: 8 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publisher: Educational Testing Service

**\* Also see Algebra**

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	147	140	147
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>56%</b>
% At Advanced	19%	11%	11%
% At Proficient	42%	47%	45%
% At Basic	27%	26%	23%
% At Below Basic	11%	9%	8%
% At Far Below Basic	2%	7%	14%
Number of students tested	113	57	65
Percent of total students tested	77%	41%	44%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Central Middle School**  
**STATE STANDARDS ASSESSMENT DATA**

Subject: Algebra \*      Grade: 8      Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual      Publisher: Educational Testing Service

**\* Also see General Mathematics 8**

Total Number of Students Enrolled:	147	140	147
	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>			
<b>Total % At or Above Proficient</b>	100%	100%	76%
% At Advanced	42%	27%	19%
% At Proficient	58%	73%	57%
% At Basic	0%	0%	24%
% At Below Basic	0%	0%	0%
% At Far Below Basic	0%	0%	0%
Number of students tested	31	30	54
Percent of total students tested	21%	21%	37%
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>			
1. <u>N/A</u> (specify subgroup)	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At or Above Meets State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
% At Exceeds State Standards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	N/A	N/A	N/A