

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 **Mr. Craig O. Belshe**

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

Official School Name **Willow Creek Elementary School**

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address **7855 South Willow Way**

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Centennial

City

CO

State

80112-2728

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County **Arapahoe**

State School Code Number* **0130/ School District #5**

Telephone **(720) 554-3900**

Fax **(720) 554-3988**

Website/URL **www.will.ccsd.k12.co.us**

Email **cbelshe2@cherrycreekschools.org**

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. Monte C. Moses**

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

District Name **Cherry Creek School District #5** Tel. **(720) 554-4262**

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 **Mrs. Aagje Barber, President**

(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 _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

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 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

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: **36** Elementary schools
 9 Middle schools
 N/A Junior high schools
 6 High schools
 5 Other
- 56** **TOTAL**
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: **\$ 7,462.00**

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: **\$10,592.00 ***

***Above figure is for 2003-2004. Figures for 2004-2005 are not yet available.**

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

Five 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
PreK	6	6	12	7			N/A
K	43	35	78	8			N/A
1	42	50	92	9			N/A
2	48	39	87	10			N/A
3	56	37	93	11			N/A
4	50	43	93	12			N/A
5	49	41	90	Other			N/A
6			N/A				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							545

[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- 89%** White
 - 3%** Black or African American
 - 3%** Hispanic or Latino
 - 5%** Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 0%** American Indian/Alaskan Native
 - 100% Total**

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: **7 %**

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	15
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	24
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	39
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	557
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.07
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7%

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: **0 %**
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient
 Number of languages represented: **0**
 Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: **5 %**
 Total number students who qualify: **25**

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: **8 %**
44 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.

2 Autism	1 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	4 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	17 Specific Learning Disability
2 Emotional Disturbance	14 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
4 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)	1	0
Classroom teachers	29	4
Special resource teachers/specialists	2	5
Paraprofessionals	8	18
Support staff	3	1
Total number	43	28

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: **18:1**
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	97%	97%	96%	97%	N/A
Daily teacher attendance	97%	96%	6%	N/A	N/A
Teacher turnover rate	4%	5%	15%	N/A	N/A
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Student drop-off rate (high school)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

PART III - SUMMARY

Willow Creek Elementary School is the sum of many factors equaling the perfect equation. The mission of the Cherry Creek School District, and thus of Willow Creek, is, **“To inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care.”** By honoring our following core values in the ways described, Willow Creek excels with an amazing pool of students, teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, and community supporters.

- *Students thrive in a positive school climate that is physically and psychologically safe.*
Willow Creek maintains a nurturing, supportive, and structured learning environment for students. The school and surrounding community work together, with strong support from the District, to provide students the framework of the 40 Developmental Assets, as identified by the Search Institute (www.search-institute.org). These assets are positive experiences and personal qualities that young people need, in order to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. We also work to ensure a positive learning environment with yearly instruction in “Bully-Proofing,” a program developed by our District.

Extending beyond the classroom, we offer child care services for children of working parents. During the school year, Willow Creek Cares for Kids (WCKK) operates weekdays before- and after-school. In a safe, familiar environment, children receive consistent care, healthy snacks, and an opportunity to play and do homework. Enrollment averages 95 per day. In the summer, WCKK operates on weekdays, offering the same familiar setting, coupled with an array of field trips. Summer enrollment averages 45 per day.

Additionally, kindergarten parents are offered an alternative to traditional half-day kindergarten. Kindergarten Enrichment extends for the full school day, including lunch, computer class, and activities to enrich kindergarten learning. Enrollment averages 48 per day.

- *In order to maximize their potential, students must “push their limits” in regard to their bodies, minds, and characters.*
Following is a partial listing of additional learning experiences available through extracurricular programs, with number of participants listed in parentheses: Band/ Orchestra (12), Challenge Time (60), Chess Club (35), Destination Imagination (75), French/ Spanish (50), Intramural Sports (120), MADD (Music, Art, Drama, Dance) Hatters - 4th and 5th Grade Musical (100), Multicultural Club (35), Student Council (40), Safety Patrol (14), Banking Day (100), Willow Creek’s Outreach on the World – WOW (30).
- *Students should have a solid understanding of basic knowledge, as well as thinking processes that allow them to effectively use this information.*
Willow Creek has developed a strong reputation for academic excellence. The school has earned the highest Colorado Department of Education (CDE) School Accountability Report rating of “Excellent” every year since the rating system, based on student academic achievement, was established. Willow Creek received an additional commendation from CDE in September 2005 as an “Accomplished School” by having at least 90% of students’ record results at the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on state assessments in reading and mathematics in each of the last three school years.
- *Parent partnerships are essential to students’ education.*
Parental involvement greatly supports and expands student learning opportunities through volunteerism, activity sponsorship, and fundraising. Active support is evidenced by consistently

high attendance at both Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and Accountability Committee meetings. More than 40 “Room Parents” work with teachers to coordinate activities within classrooms. In addition to chairing clubs, activities, and special events, parents annually unite to provide the following for students and the school community: Accelerated Reading Store; Annual Book Fair; Library and Main Office support; Publications: school directory, yearbook, bi-weekly newsletter; Red Ribbon Week; representation at many district and community meetings. PTO prioritizes fundraising to annually fund the salaries of additional paraprofessional employees, who provide student supervision and instructional services. In recent years, a pledge drive has been the primary fundraising tool. For 2005-2006, the amount pledged is \$44,594, representing 73% participation.

- *Students excel and achieve when we uphold high expectations and standards for them.*
Student success at Willow Creek is directly related to high expectations for student achievement. Differentiation of instruction to meet student need and to provide learning challenges for all students is an essential part of instruction in all subject areas. Providing challenging work and expectations for learning, supported by targeted assistance and intervention strategies, is an integral part of the instructional delivery program at Willow Creek.
- *We must celebrate our successes and seek continuous improvement.*
Willow Creek opened as a neighborhood school in 1977 to meet the needs of a new community. Due to neighborhood population changes, combined with desirability of the school’s learning environment, approximately 25% of students currently attending Willow Creek are non-residents of our District. An additional 10% of the current student body is comprised of “School of Choice” students, wherein Colorado state law provides options for parents to actively select school enrollment for their children within their home district. Willow Creek Elementary and its surrounding community continue to celebrate the recognition received in 1999 as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.
- *Teachers and staff are part of a professional learning community, committed to ongoing learning and development.*
As detailed in Parts IV and V of this application, Willow Creek’s teachers and staff members are high achievers themselves, directly influencing and contributing to the success of our students. Also, continuity lends an air of professionalism throughout the faculty and staff. Not only does the school have relatively low turnover, but many teachers who opened Willow Creek in 1977 have retired from teaching here after 25+ years.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results

As a public school, Willow Creek participates each year in the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), administered by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The content of the CSAP is based on Colorado Model Content Standards. Standards for student performance and learning objectives have been developed, and the CSAP is designed to assess student performance in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Initiated in 1996-97, the CSAP has expanded grade levels and subject matter assessed each year. The CSAP assesses student performance in grades 3 through 10. Students at Willow Creek were assessed in grades 3, 4, and 5 in reading, writing, and mathematics during the 2004-2005 school year. A science CSAP for 5th grade students will be implemented in 2005-2006.

The CSAP is developed collaboratively by the testing coordinator and the CDE. Teachers, curriculum

specialists, and community members across the state are involved in constructing each new assessment. The Colorado Model Content Standards are rigorous standards. Student performance on the CSAP is categorized into four levels, including “Unsatisfactory,” “Partially Proficient,” “Proficient,” and “Advanced.” Due to the challenging nature of the CSAP, students recording reading and mathematics results in three of the four levels, with the exception of “Unsatisfactory,” are judged to meet the demands of grade-level performance defined in national legislation by the No Child Left Behind Act.

In each of the past three school years, at least 94% of the Willow Creek students in grades 3, 4, and 5 scored at the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the CSAP in mathematics. In reading, at least 91% of the students performed at the “Proficient” or “Advanced” levels. In addition to this, more than 98% of the students in each year recorded grade-level performance standards in both subject areas as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Willow Creek Elementary School includes the following racial/ethnic population:

- 89% White
- 3% Black or African American
- 3% Hispanic or Latino
- 5% Asian/Pacific Islander

Due to the actual number of non-White students in each grade level, coupled with confidentiality issues, Willow Creek is not able to provide public information on the performance of groups in the Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, or Asian/Pacific Islander categories. As a school, we closely monitor the performance of non-White students in an effort to identify gaps in student performance. By combining the assessment performance of non-White students at all grade levels, we are able to track any potential gap in student achievement.

Complete information on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), including individual school results, can be accessed on the CDE website: www.cde.state.co.us.

2. Using Assessment Results

Willow Creek utilizes the results of the CSAP, additional formal measures, and informal classroom assessments to plan for student instruction. At the beginning of each school year, each teacher is provided with complete information on the academic performance of their current students, maintained in the District’s Data Access System. Information maintained in the database is accessed by the building principal and a report, titled Recent Academic Data (RAD), is provided to each teacher. The RAD report includes student performance results on the CSAP and Achievement Level Tests (ALT), an assessment developed and administered by the district. The principal meets with teachers individually, in grade-level teams, and in content-area professional learning communities, to review past results and to identify students who are in need of targeted academic support or interventions in specific sub-content areas.

Additional information gathered from the Colorado Master Miner data access project is also utilized to guide instructional improvement. Teachers are provided with an item analysis of performance from the most recent CSAP, broken down into the percentage of correct answers for specific sub-content areas. Individually, teachers are able to utilize this information to review past instructional strategies and to target areas for personal growth. As a group, teachers are able to utilize information from the Master Miner to identify potential areas for improvement and professional growth for the staff.

Teachers utilize ongoing formal, informal, and classroom assessment data to continuously update student progress on standards. Teachers are required to update student proficiency levels in reading, writing, and

mathematics three times during each school year. Intervention or support services are defined for students who are continuing to perform below the “Proficient” level.

3. Communicating Assessment Results

Willow Creek provides each parent with complete information on student performance on the CSAP and ALT. Information mailed to parents includes a detailed explanation of the assessment and contact information at school if additional explanation or information is needed. Teachers share assessment results with students to encourage individuals to take responsibility for learning and to monitor progress on state standards. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed for every student who is performing below the “Proficient” level in reading, writing, or mathematics. The ILP defines support services or interventions that will be used at school and at home to assist the student to reach the “Proficient” level of performance. The ILP is reviewed, discussed, and signed by the teacher, parent, and student. Each ILP is kept on file in the office and updated at least twice each school year.

Willow Creek mails the School Accountability Report (SAR) developed by the Colorado Department of Education to parents of all its students. The SAR provides each parent with information on school and student performance on the CSAP, staff experience, safety and school environment, and a taxpayer’s report. The SAR is made available to all school visitors and can also be accessed on the school or CDE websites.

Yearly progress is communicated to parents through the distribution of report cards three times each school year. Conferences between parents and teachers to review student progress are established on the school calendar in the fall and spring. The school regularly records nearly 100% of parent participation in conferences. Teachers also initiate and respond to parent contact for additional conferences as needed to ensure a consistent flow of communication.

Assessment data is shared and analyzed with the Willow Creek Accountability Committee. The results of student performance on the CSAP are published in a school bulletin, local news sources, and in metropolitan area newspapers.

4. Sharing Success

The District schedules meetings to facilitate the sharing of information among schools. Regular meetings are held in the district that include a variety of school-represented teams. The District’s Administrative Council (ADCO - all administrators), Elementary Principal’s Council (EPC - elementary principals), Parent’s Council (representative parents and administrators), Feeder Groups (arranged by high school feeder systems), and Gifted and Talented Council meet on a monthly basis to share information about schools and programs. Smaller teams of school principals, paired by location in the district, also meet throughout each year to exchange information on school success and programming.

Dr. Monte Moses, the Superintendent of Cherry Creek Schools, is an active member of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Western States Benchmarking Consortium. Both groups have a stated goal to join forces to improve learning for all students. Dr. Moses was selected as the 2005 National Superintendent of the Year by AASA and is a sought-after speaker and consultant on school reform.

Mr. Craig Belshe, Principal of Willow Creek Elementary School, is an active member of the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE) and the Colorado Association of Elementary School Principals (CAESP). Both groups operate as professional networks designed to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information related to school improvement. Mr. Belshe has served as a presenter at the annual CASE Conference, sharing information on school success. Mr. Belshe was selected as the 2005 National Distinguished Principal for the state of Colorado by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

Teachers on the Willow Creek staff have served as trainers and instructors for a variety of course offerings to model best instructional practices. These professional development opportunities are popular with staff members throughout the Cherry Creek School District. Willow Creek also has assigned staff members who serve as District Liaisons in the core academic areas of literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Liaisons exchange information on district and school programs with a goal to improve student instruction. Six teachers on the Willow Creek staff are currently pursuing National Board Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The stated purpose of the NBPTS is to advance educational reforms for the purpose of improving student learning. Willow Creek's Gifted and Talented coordinator, Mrs. Lisa Heaton, was recently inducted into the Colorado Academy of Gifted Educators, and she participates in monthly meetings to exchange information with other selected educators across the state.

Information on Willow Creek's programs and instructional methods are available via brochures in the main entry area of the school, in the Willow Creek Parent Handbook, and on the Willow Creek website: www.will.ccsd.k12.co.us.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum

The curriculum at Willow Creek Elementary School emphasizes the whole child. Students are expected to show growth in their mastery of basic skills and in content associated with the Colorado State Model Content Standards. Information on these standards can be accessed on the Colorado Department of Education website: www.cde.state.co.us. National media and technology standards are also interwoven throughout the curriculum, in order to teach students how to access and utilize information. These content areas and skills lay a foundation for an excellent preparation for middle school and for eventual successful adults.

Reading - To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, our school utilizes the Wilson *Foundations* program at the primary level to assist students in the development of a strong base of phonetic awareness. Our school implements a *Guided Reading* program at the primary level, and reading instruction evolves into units of novel study at the intermediate level. The novel study units include the practice of pairing students with reading experiences that correspond with their assessment and performance levels. Students are provided with the opportunity to respond to literature in both verbal and written formats, enabling students to develop the skills to construct their own meaning while reading.

Writing - To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, our school has established a belief system that students can and should write on a regular basis. We incorporate the use of effective writing programs, including *Step Up to Writing* and *Six-Traits Writing*, which involve the complete writing process. It is our belief that teachers have a responsibility to help students find real purposes to write and to assist students as they draft and revise writing pieces. We also believe that grammar and mechanics are best learned in the context of actual writing.

Mathematics - To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, our school utilizes the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project materials titled *Everyday Mathematics* as the primary resource in mathematics instruction. *Everyday Mathematics* builds on fundamental mathematical strands such as numeration and order, measures and measurement, reference frames, operations, patterns, functions, and sequences. Moreover, *Everyday Mathematics* uses more of the mathematical spectrum by exploring data and chance, geometry and spatial sense, algebra, and the uses of variables.

Science - To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, our school utilizes the Houghton Mifflin science materials titled *Discovery Works* as a primary resource in science instruction. The school believes formulated for science instruction provide a solid basis of study for students. The program emphasizes the scientific method and includes many opportunities for hands-on experiments.

Social Studies – To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, direct instruction is provided in history, geography, civics, and economics. We understand that several other disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, and sociology, have an important role within a comprehensive social studies program. In the intermediate grades, social studies curriculum is predominantly integrated with literacy instruction. The knowledge and skills provided through social studies is the key to preparing citizens to participate effectively in our democratic society and to understand international events that shape the future.

Art, Music, and Physical Education - To meet or exceed Colorado Model Content Standards, our school provides specialized instruction in art, music, and physical education to every student. Instruction is designed to actively engage students to develop an understanding and appreciation for each subject.

2. Reading

The staff at Willow Creek utilizes a wide range of research-based instructional methods to teach reading, tailored to meet all students' needs. These methods are closely aligned with five essential reading components, including phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency, addressed by Colorado Model Content Standards for teaching reading. Our reading program allows for continuity of instructional practices across all grade levels.

In the primary grades, our school utilizes multi-sensory instructional techniques focused on phonemic awareness and phonics. The Wilson *Foundations* Program is paired with *Guided Reading* instruction to provide targeted academic challenge for each student. We use oral and written retell formats at this level, which focus on the essential components of story grammar and text structure. These practices are paired with a variety of genres of text.

As students progress to intermediate grades, we focus on a skills scope and sequence of instruction that correlates with district standards and benchmarks for reading. A continuing focus on phonemic awareness occurs with the use of *Spellography*, a structured phonics, word study and spelling program. Each grade level utilizes selected novel studies as the basis for reading instruction at the intermediate level. Students are matched with novels in instructional groups arranged by assessment and performance data. We blend the use of the *Daybook of Critical Reading and Writing* published by Great Source Educational Group into our reading instruction. Programs including *Daily Language Instruction*, *Step Up to Writing*, and *Six-Traits Writing* are used to enable students to respond effectively in a written format to reading retells.

Our instructional strategies for reading comprehension have been strongly influenced by a past staff professional development study of the work of educational researcher Dr. Robert Marzano in a series describing the "Dimensions of Learning."

We believe in early identification and intervention for children who exhibit reading difficulties. Prior to reaching school age, we identify and provide service to students who are in need of support as pre-school children preparing for entrance into school. Our Pupil Services Team provides an individual readiness assessment to each child upon entrance into Kindergarten. Our school's Problem Solving Team, a group of professionals including the principal, Special Education personnel, program specialists, and classroom

teachers, meets each week to discuss student referrals and to develop assistance strategies in a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Our school has a speech pathologist, learning disabilities specialist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychologist, and a reading specialist who work together to provide support services and interventions for students.

Our school's licensed librarian has assembled an extensive collection of books in our library, supplemented by Renaissance Learning's *Accelerated Reader* program. Parent involvement is considered to be an essential component of our reading program, and the library coordinates school-wide efforts to encourage active student reading on a daily basis.

3. Mathematics

The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project curricular materials, titled *Everyday Mathematics*, provide the foundation for mathematics instruction in Kindergarten through 5th grade. *Everyday Mathematics* is a National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) approved curriculum that promotes a balanced approach to mathematics. Computational skill, conceptual understanding, and reasoning develop together during meaningful activities that emphasize problem solving and real-life applications. In addition to this curriculum, the Willow Creek teachers supplement with a variety of research-based best practice materials to enhance written communication, application, and depth of understanding of mathematical content. We assess and compact curriculum to maximize achievement in each child. Flexible groups are formed within grade levels to differentiate individual pacing needs and learning styles. Specialized small group instruction, provided by mathematics specialists, is utilized to assist students not meeting grade-level benchmarks. Currently, a building-level math committee and study team are working as a professional learning community to refine instruction in order to increase student learning in mathematics.

4. Instructional Methods

Reading instruction for students at Willow Creek could best be described as comprehensive and balanced.

At the primary levels, teachers utilize the Wilson *Foundations* program to assist students with an understanding of phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling. The *Foundations* program is a multi-sensory approach developed to enable students to acquire an understanding of letters and sounds in relation to reading words and spelling. The *Guided Reading* program also is used throughout the primary levels as a method to differentiate instruction for students as they progress as readers. Our reading specialist provides extended programming for primary students in need of additional service in small group settings, utilizing *Foundations* and patterned readers for direct instruction.

In the intermediate levels, teachers work to individualize and differentiate instruction through the use of written response in novel study format. Intermediate level teachers sponsor before or after-school Proficiency Centers to provide guided instruction for students who are not performing at the "Proficient" level. Beginning in 3rd grade, Willow Creek uses the *Spellography* phonics, word study, and spelling program as a means to increase student competency. The learning disability specialist provides small group instruction for intermediate level students utilizing the Denver *FAST* program. *FAST* is a program designed to assist students in developing vocabulary, comprehension, and decoding skills in reading. The Gifted and Talented specialist utilizes a word etymology-based spelling program for advanced level 5th grade students.

Willow Creek relies on the use of flexible grouping patterns to differentiate student instruction in mathematics. Based on assessment results, students are placed in math groups designed to provide academic challenge. Intervention services for students, utilizing small group instruction, begins in 2nd

grade and extends through 4th grade. Fast-paced challenge groups are organized in 3rd grade. In the 4th and 5th grades, students are grouped in a continuum based on student progress. Instruction in 4th grade includes a nine-week *Hands on Algebra* unit taught by the Gifted and Talented specialist for advanced students. Math instruction at the 5th grade level culminates with the addition of the Gifted and Talented specialist to the instructional rotation. The Gifted and Talented teacher provides above grade-level instruction to a group of students. The additional teacher in the rotation allows for the reduction in class size for students who are in need of additional instructional support.

5. Professional Development

Members of the teaching staff at Willow Creek are organized into professional learning communities by subject matter or category. Current professional communities include literacy/reading, writing/ Professional Educators Business Coalition (PEBC), mathematics, technology, assets/safety, and the Problem Solving Team. Each group meets every two weeks to review assessment results, discuss current practices, and to develop improvement goals and strategies. Each community includes grade-level teachers and learning specialist representatives who share information and updates with members of their teaching team. Each learning community is focused on improving student service and increasing academic achievement.

Study teams of staff members who work to research best educational practices are formed each year. In recent years, study teams have been focused on improving student writing instruction. A math study team was recently formed and meets for extended sessions on a regular basis.

Professional growth is encouraged and financially rewarded for teachers in Cherry Creek Schools. The District offers a wide range of growth opportunities designed to improve professional skills for staff members in all job categories. Specific certificate programs for elementary teachers designed to improve instructional methods in reading and writing are offered by the district. Specialized training in mathematics also is available.

The majority of the staff members at Willow Creek have earned advanced degrees in education. Currently, six teachers on the staff are pursuing National Board Certification.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Public Schools

Willow Creek Elementary School Cherry Creek School District #5 Assessment Data

Subject **Reading**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade **3**

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	February	February	February
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	100 %	100 %	100%
% At or Above "Proficient"	92 %	99 %	97 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	29 %	23 %	32 %
Number of students tested	98	87	96
Percent of total students tested	99 %	100 %	99 %
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	3	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0 %	3 %	0 %
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	91 %	92 %	93 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	71 %	74 %	74 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	7 %	8 %	10 %

Subject **Mathematics**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade **3**

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	March	N/A	N/A
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	99 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Proficient"	95 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Advanced"	69 %	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	96	N/A	N/A
Percent of total students tested	99 %	N/A	N/A
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	N/A	N/A
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0 %	N/A	N/A
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	90 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Proficient"	63 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Advanced"	27 %	N/A	N/A

* Students performing at or above, "Partially Proficient," meet grade level performance standards for the No Child Left Behind Act. Students performing at or above the, "Proficient," level meet performance expectations for the State of Colorado.

**Willow Creek Elementary School
Cherry Creek School District #5
Assessment Data**

Subject **Reading**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade 4

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	99 %	99 %	98 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	91 %	95 %	94 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	8 %	17 %	16 %
Number of students tested	86	104	96
Percent of total students tested	100 %	100 %	100 %
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3 %	0 %	0 %
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	87 %	89 %	88 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	64 %	63 %	63 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	7 %	5 %	7 %

Subject **Mathematics**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade 4

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	March	N/A	N/A
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	99 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Proficient"	94 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Advanced"	53 %	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	86	N/A	N/A
Percent of total students tested	100 %	N/A	N/A
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	N/A	N/A
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3 %	N/A	N/A
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	91 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Proficient"	66 %	N/A	N/A
% At or Above "Advanced"	22 %	N/A	N/A

* Students performing at or above, "Partially Proficient," meet grade level performance standards for the No Child Left Behind Act. Students performing at or above the, "Proficient," level meet performance expectations for the State of Colorado.

**Willow Creek Elementary School
Cherry Creek School District #5
Assessment Data**

Subject **Reading**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade 5

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	98 %	99 %	100 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	95 %	92 %	97 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	36 %	25 %	23 %
Number of students tested	99	85	90
Percent of total students tested	99 %	100 %	98 %
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0 %	1 %	2 %
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	89 %	89 %	87 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	69 %	69 %	66 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	9 %	9 %	8 %

Subject **Mathematics**
Test **Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)**

Grade 5

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	100 %	100 %	100 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	96 %	96 %	95 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	74 %	60 %	81 %
Number of students tested	99	85	88
Percent of total students tested	99 %	100 %	99 %
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0 %	1 %	2 %
STATE SCORES *			
% At or Above "Partially Proficient"	90 %	89 %	88 %
% At or Above "Proficient"	63 %	59 %	56 %
% At or Above "Advanced"	27 %	22 %	20 %

* Students performing at or above, "Partially Proficient," meet grade level performance standards for the No Child Left Behind Act. Students performing at or above the, "Proficient," level meet performance expectations for the State of Colorado.