

Revised May 23, 2006

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

U.S. Department of Education Revised 5/22/2006

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 115 Main Street

Waterville Iowa 52170-0115
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Allamakee State School Code Number* 0135

Telephone (563) 535-7245 Fax (563) 535-7110

Website/URL www.allamakee.k12.ia.us E-mail gdevore@allamakee.k12.ia.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* Mr. John Speer
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Allamakee Community School District Tel. (563) 568-3409

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. Tom Baxter
(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: __3__ Elementary schools
 ____ Middle schools
 __1__ Junior high schools
 __1__ High schools
 ____ Other
- __5__ TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,766.71
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,082.73

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. __1__ Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
- __2__ 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				7			
K	8	5	13	8			
1	7	12	19	9			
2	6	7	13	10			
3	6	5	11	11			
4	12	10	22	12			
5	10	9	19	Other			
6	8	11	19				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							116

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

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 100 | % White |
| | % Black or African American |
| | % Hispanic or Latino |
| | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| | % 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.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	137
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.007
(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: 1
 Specify languages: English

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %

Total number students who qualify: 55

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: 12 %
 14 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.

 0 Autism 0 Orthopedic Impairment
 0 Deafness 0 Other Health Impaired
 0 Deaf-Blindness 11 Specific Learning Disability
 2 Emotional Disturbance 3 Speech or Language Impairment
 0 Hearing Impairment 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
 0 Mental Retardation 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
 1 Multiple Disabilities

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

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>
Classroom teachers	<u> 7 </u>	<u> </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u> 2 </u>	<u> 2 </u>
Support staff	<u> 2 </u>	<u> </u>
Total number	<u> 13 </u>	<u> 3 </u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 16:1

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%	95%	97%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	94%	94%	93%	85%	92%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	7%	18%	8%	0%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Student drop-off rate (high school)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

PART III - SUMMARY

Waterville Elementary is a small humble rural school in Allamakee County with a student population of 116. We encompass several little northeast Iowa town and farm families as part of a larger school district. We are located in the very northeast corner of the state next to the Mississippi River and Yellow River Forest. Our land is high cliffs and rolling pastures where both beef and dairy cattle roam. Almost half of our students come from lower socio-economic backgrounds with parents who have multiple jobs to help make ends meet. Even with the hardships about 65% of the parents participate with the Parents for Progress activities to help the school with needed materials and supplies. These are dedicated people!

Our district vision is to serve all students fairly and equitably as we facilitate their educational experience. We do this with class sizes of less than 24 at each grade level and a full team of special teachers for art, music, physical education, talented and gifted, special education, guidance, and Title 1 reading. A majority of the professionals in this building have grown-up and currently live with their families in this area. They know the students, their parents and grandparents. This special connection provides teachers and parents with an open communication system to reach each and every child. This also adds to our ability to facilitate each student's educational path to success.

We cherish the past with all school reunions each summer, and reach toward the future with a multitude of technology infusion and quality after-school programming available for all students. We take it to heart that all children can and will learn to the best of their ability. You will find educational professionals here early in the morning and late in the afternoon and evening preparing for lessons in a socio-economically diversified classroom environment. We strive to provide the best environment for high academic standards and the support necessary for each child to achieve these standards.

We have special motivating activities to promote high success. Our students who meet their reading goals for the year are treated to a variety of activities during the last few days of the school year. Our fifth grade class takes a self-supported multiple day adventure to the capital city of Des Moines each summer to culminate their study of Iowa history. The third grade classroom maintains a beautiful historical prairie in the front of the school and gathers seeds as part of the process. All classrooms regularly plant new trees as part of a weather break for the playground area.

Each spring, during the month of April, we celebrate reading with several special multi-cultural events. This is highlighted with a variety of international reading guests. All students take part in learning activities that bring diverse cultures into our small low socio-economic Anglo community. Cross grade level partnerships highlight reading with a special emphasis on the arts, physical activities and food of the cultures presented. Drama presentations from various grades enhance the reading curriculum. We also celebrate the hero's of our culture with community presentations for Veteran's Day, winter and spring music and art events.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Assessment Results: We, at Allamakee schools, use a variety of standardized tests to take a snapshot picture of where our students are academically at different times of the year. The most well know of these is the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The ITBS are given to students in K-8 and are used as our comparison at the local, state and federal levels. We test each student in the reading/language arts, math and science areas. Other assessments are used throughout the year as well to help us make sound educational decisions on what we can do to provide students with the best learning climate and instructional strategies.

We look at the following groups of data; whole group by grade level, gender, socio-economic and special education. The state of Iowa has set the 41st percentile as the level of proficiency for each student in each tested area. It is our goal to have each student meet this level on a yearly basis. Iowa has a trajectory chart to help schools set goals for student success. Waterville students consistently do very well on these assessments. There has been consistent growth over the past 5 years in the 4th grade groups assessed, from 64% proficient to 78%. We, as all schools do, have some disparities among some subgroups in the scores they achieve. Our special education, lower socio-economic and at-risk students have a harder time reaching the proficiency level. However, our students with Individual Education Plans have shown tremendous growth in this same time frame from 0% proficient to 57%. This is a tribute to the hard working professionals who look at individual students and help them maximize their potential.

We have established content area standards, which means identifying the skills, knowledge and abilities in all content areas that the school district believes should drive the focus of instruction and student learning at each grade level. We use the Iowa Test of Basic Skills as one measure to determine the extent to which the students are achieving these core content standards.

All students participate in the testing and no subgroups are excluded. A student must meet the state's full academic year of attendance requirement to be included in the reported results. The testing takes place each January with results returned and reviewed in early March. These results are disaggregated for subgroup reporting but only groups of ten or more are reported out to the public.

Using Assessment Results: The purpose of assessment is to drive instruction for academic success for all students. Educational professionals check for understanding multiple times daily as they present lessons in all content areas. When looking at assessment results we look for areas of strength and weaknesses in each content area and each subgroup. By looking at trends over time we can determine if there are gaps in the curriculum or what areas need additional attention for the next school year. Next year's teachers look at the class data and form conclusions on areas of need and direct their attention to improve those areas through increased instruction.

The district has a comprehensive assessment plan using both standardized and curriculum based measures throughout the school year. We use technology based assessments such as Accelerated Reader and A+ Learning, which are monitored on a weekly basis. The combination of all district assessments are reviewed by the administrative team, building level teams, curriculum development teams and the school improvement advisory committee. The district professional development team also looks closely at this data to determine what direction district and building wide professional development learning should go.

Assessment results are as important to the educators as they are to the students. Educational professionals use their time in professional development to study, review and implement instructional strategies to help children achieve high success in all areas. Teachers and administrators can monitor implementation through student assessment results on tests such as the ITBS.

Communicating Assessment Results: Allamakee Community School sends home report-cards four times a year with daily curriculum based assessments recorded. At the twice yearly conferences parents are given a detailed explanation of the scores achieved on all standardized assessments given during that time frame. In addition to these scheduled times monthly newsletters with assessment information are sent home and articles appear in the local newspaper explaining what each assessment is and why we give them. Because of our educational staff's close connection with its community members communication happens during non-school structured times as well; examples would include the grocery store and church fellowship halls. All yearly assessment data is shared in the Annual Progress Report to the State Department of Education. This document also goes to the Area Education Agency and the community.

Sharing Success: We love to share our story with the world. There are monthly newsletters with success stories of all kinds. Articles written by teachers and students are placed in the local newspaper and pieces of good news sprinkled on the district web page. Our daily announcements include the names of students who have reached academic goals and other celebrations in their lives.

We would share this success with local media including television and radio. Several individuals are planning a celebration assembly for the community with the presentation of the award to the whole school. We will seek locations to share our success so others can learn from it as well, such as the state school board convention, the School Administrators of Iowa convention and area schools. It has already been an honor to be nominated.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Curriculum: The Allamakee Community schools offer a comprehensive curriculum that includes language arts (reading, phonics, spelling, grammar, writing), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art and physical education. The curriculum is built on quality standards and benchmarks that are aligned with the assessments. It is our standards and benchmarks that drive our instruction and determine the essential components of our curriculum. To support the needs of individual learning we have support for students through special education, Title 1 and talented and gifted programming. Technology is infused throughout the content areas as computer lab space is available for the grade levels. Teachers collaborate with like grade levels, subject areas and mixed learning communities to ensure fidelity in the implementation of instructional strategies across the district. The elementary teachers and para-educators have been receiving and will continued with Reading First professional development while the secondary professionals have be researching and implementing the instructional strategies researched by Marzano.

Our district works with K-12 teams to review and revise an area of study each year as per a seven year cycle. As part of the Mid-Iowa School Improvement Consortium we maintain rigorous standards and benchmarks in the core areas of reading, math and science. During this process we are also crosswalking topics that fit into multiple areas. By having a district goal that all teachers are teachers of reading we are stressing the importance of quality instructional strategies for all areas.

The students at Waterville Elementary enjoy not only the core curriculum set by the district but also enriched hands-on activities our school environment and small class size allow us to do. For example when researching and studying the rainforest our teachers and students took an old art room and turned it into the rainforest, complete with plants and animals. When working with the life cycle of plants we designed and landscaped areas around the school grounds. To culminate a year long program on sportsmanship and anti-bullying we will have a field day and all school picnic. Our curriculum goes beyond paper, pencil and research; we bring as much as possible to life. Our sixth graders really do bring their research to life with a reenactment of famous people museum presented to the school and public in the spring each year.

Reading: Reading is the key to all academic and future success. By having a solid foundation in reading, students will be able to build all their academic skills to their fullest potential. A comprehensive reading program includes quality instruction in vocabulary, phonemic awareness, comprehension, phonics and fluency. These are the key components in the three stages of reading; learning to read, reading to learn and loving to read.

Students start with letter sight and sound recognition in kindergarten. Jolly Phonics adds a motor skill element to each letter sound. We want to reach students' multiple learning styles at a young age to promote learning as a positive adventure. Sight word recognition is carried into first grade and small reading group instruction is key during a daily scheduled time. These groupings are flexible and students move frequently throughout the year. Second grade is a year of transition from teacher selected materials to self-selection. The four key block of reading; guided reading, writing, shared reading and phonics are the strength in this year of growth. Students are grouped based on diagnostic assessments given at least three times a year. Vocabulary development is the highlighted element in third grade along with fluency and comprehension. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade bring it all together to foster the love of reading for both information and pleasure. The transfer and internalization of these skills is what makes each of us life-long readers.

As the students progress through upper elementary their reading lessons become literature based with time spent with individual students on specific skills. We use Accelerated Reading in first through sixth grade as a motivating tool to promote reading fluency and comprehension.

Allamakee Schools have adopted the Reading First strategies as an intricate part of the reading curriculum before having it be required by the state. We have had two years of training and implementation for Think Alouds, Talk Alouds, and Read Alouds. Our educational professionals are also being trained in the use of PWIM (picture, word, induction model) for all classrooms at the elementary level to develop stronger vocabulary and pre-reading skills.

Kids Club: In order to meet the needs of our student population we, Allamakee Community Schools, wrote a million dollar grant for Community Connections. Through this grant Waterville Elementary is able to provide an after-school program with small group tutoring, a variety of academically based clubs, physical activities, snacks and periodically adventures to educational locations. This is the only way many of our students can learn about different cultures, foods and sports activities hands-on. We have over 70% participation throughout the school year for this program. Since we are a rural school there is transportation available for neighboring communities after Kid's Club. We make it as "user friendly" as possible. Parents and community members are invited in at the end of each club session for a student presentation on what they have learned.

Instructional Methods: The educational staff uses best practice strategies to teach each curriculum area. We have had training in the Reading First strategies from the Area Education Agency and will begin learning community conversations using Robert Marzano's Instructional Strategies that Works book. Technology integration takes the students to the next level of instruction throughout the district. Students have the ability to do drill and skill practice specific to their area of weakness both at home and at school. Teachers enrich their student's lessons with extended activities, and literally bring the world into our small school.

Waterville teachers are very aware of the importance culture and climate play in each student's ability to learn. We have a social skills curriculum of classroom meetings, whole school assemblies and counselor

directed discussion. This strategy of open and quality communication between staff and parents helps to maintain positive classroom environments as part of the classroom management methods of the school.

Professional Development: It is the goal of the Allamakee Community Schools and the state of Iowa to use professional development for the betterment of student achievement. We have dedicated 90% of our teacher in-service time to district and building level activities using research—based strategies to promote student success. Our professional development team using the data from district assessments creates a year long plan to address the needs of our students using quality research-based information.

The board of education has dedicated several early-out afternoons for the purpose of teacher professional development. Teachers use this valued in-service time to review, coach, learn and evaluate data and strategies to best help each and every one of their students. Allamakee Schools has adopted the Iowa Professional Development Model as the basis for their professional in-service regiment.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject **Reading** Grade **4** Test **Iowa Test of Basic Skills**

Edition/Publication Year **1993/2000** Publisher **Riverside Publishing Company**

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	January	January	January	January	January
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards*	96	77	81	71	57
Number of students tested	23	17	31	24	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	90		69		
Number of students tested	10		16		

Subject **Mathematics** Grade **4** Test **Iowa Test of Basic Skills**

Edition/Publication Year **1993/2000** Publisher **Riverside Publishing Company**

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	January	January	January	January	January
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99	94	68	79	73
Number of students tested	23	17	31	24	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	10		16		
Number of students tested					