

Revised March 13, 2006

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

U.S. Department of Education

### Cover Sheet

Type of School:  Elementary \_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_ High \_\_\_ K-12

Name of Principal Dr. Peggie Grant

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

Official School Name Brown's Ferry Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7292 Brown's Ferry Road

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

Georgetown, South Carolina 29440-2063

City

State

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Georgetown

School Code Number\*

2201009

Telephone (843) 527-1325

Fax (843) 546-2138

Website/URL [www.bfe.gcsd.k12.sc.us](http://www.bfe.gcsd.k12.sc.us)

E-mail [pgrant@bfe.gcsd.k12.sc.us](mailto:pgrant@bfe.gcsd.k12.sc.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. H. Randall Dozier

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

District Name Georgetown County School District

Tel. (843) 436-7175

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. Joe Crosby

(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**

**[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 of 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 2004-2005 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 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *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:       9   Elementary schools  
   4   Middle schools  
   0   Junior high schools  
   4   High schools  
   1   Other  
  
    18  TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:        \$8,400   
  
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:  \$7,434

**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.   6   Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
     \_\_\_\_\_ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	16	13	29
K	21	22	43
1	17	17	34
2	21	18	39
3	18	18	36
4	18	15	33
5	23	15	38
6			
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>			<b>252</b>

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

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school: 1 % White  
99 % 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: 6 %

(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.	<b>6</b>
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	<b>8</b>
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	<b>14</b>
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1 (same as in #5 above)	<b>252</b>
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	<b>.06</b>
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<b>6%</b>

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: 87 %

Total number students who qualify: 230

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: 22 %  
56 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>35</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>	
	<b><u>Full-time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	_____
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	_____
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>6</u>	_____
Support staff	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>41</u>	<u>4</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 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	96 %	99 %	96 %	98 %	97 %
Daily teacher attendance	93 %	90 %	93 %	94 %	93 %
Teacher turnover rate	14 %	21 %	24 %	26 %	31 %
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**

Brown's Ferry Elementary is a small, rural Title I school that serves five unincorporated communities in the western section of Georgetown County. The school's enrollment is 252 students in grades Pre-k through Fifth, 99% of whom are African-American, 1% Caucasian, and 87% receive free or reduced lunch. Many of the students live in single-parent homes, in foster homes, or with grandparents which causes many students to arrive at school with many diverse needs and challenges. These challenges are met by having a warm and inviting school climate where each child feels comfortable and welcomed. This climate also enables the staff and stakeholders to meet the mission of Brown's Ferry Elementary, which is to challenge and prepare children academically to achieve success as independent learners in a culturally diverse society. Success is not an option at Brown's Ferry Elementary; it is an expectation. All children are expected to meet the "basic" measure on the South Carolina State Standards; the only question is, "How many children will score 'proficient' or 'advanced'?" Small class size, dedicated teachers who "believe," tutorial help, technological and "hands-on" experiences combine to create the active learning environment that facilitates excellence. The master schedule provides common planning time each day, as well as, enables itinerant personnel the time to work with small groups in assigned classrooms. Vertical planning takes place regularly to reinforce the curriculum goals across all grade levels. The parents and other caregivers are provided parenting sessions that address many topics such as: grade level expectations, appropriate student behavior, and specific strategies designed to help children to succeed at a high level. Counseling services also provide valued support for the well-being of all students.

Staff development is an integral part of the instructional program at Brown's Ferry Elementary. Over the past four years, the staff has participated in training that focuses on reading and writing literacy. Classroom instruction includes "best practices" that have been identified and incorporated into the classroom to increase student achievement. Among them are three daily *read alouds* using books from the classroom libraries. A literature-rich environment creates numerous opportunities to extend writing skills. Technology is used to enhance and to encourage active learning. Teachers use *Promethean Boards* to stimulate students' imagination through streaming videos to launch writing activities. Digital cameras provide students with the opportunity to create pictures to support writing and extend learning in all areas. Each student is afforded an opportunity to use the 25-station computer lab and the 12-station lab in the media center to reinforce and to extend prior learning. Student success is expected at Brown's Ferry Elementary. Data derived from the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) in grades 3-5 are used for initial placement in the fall. Teacher assessments, observations, and quarterly testing using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) provide ongoing documentation to ensure students' quest for academic success. Additionally, the school conducts "Early Bird" sessions from 7:00-7:30 a.m. that focus on reading and math remediation and reinforcement. After-school homework assistance is provided through the collaborative efforts of the YMCA and local churches through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant. Area churches play a major role in the support of the school. Each year a Pastors' Luncheon recognizes students' efforts and encourages families to take an active role in their child's education. Families are kept informed about the program at Brown's Ferry Elementary through regular newsletters from teachers, the principal, curriculum specialist, and guidance counselor. Learning packets have been created for the students to complete over holidays so that their learning will not be interrupted. A new voice-mail system enables parents to keep informed of current activities at school. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is very active and supports the school by hosting a number of fundraisers that provide monies for projects not in the regular budget. Parents actively support the School Improvement Council (SIC) and all special student programs. Brown's Ferry Elementary has been designated as a "Palmetto Gold School" for the past three years, and has met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for three consecutive years. Additionally, the school has been nominated as "Palmetto's Finest." The staff firmly believes that no child at Brown's Ferry Elementary should be left behind.

## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

### **Part IV #1 Assessment Results**

Students in grades 3-8 in South Carolina, as a result of the South Carolina Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA), are mandated to take the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test annually. This rigorous assessment provides information about the students' mastery of the South Carolina Curriculum Standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. As a result, standards form the basis for all teaching and learning. Below are the performance level indicators for each core subject assessed on PACT:

**Advanced:** The student has exceeded grade-level expectations and is ready for accelerated work at the next grade level.

**Proficient:** The student has met expectations for the grade level and is well prepared for success at the next grade level. A score of Proficient is the long-term goal for student performance in South Carolina and a requirement of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

**Basic:** The student has passed the assessment and is minimally prepared for work at the next grade level.

**Below Basic:** The student has not met the minimum grade level expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards set by the State Board of Education. The student is not prepared for work at the next grade level. A Student Academic Assistance Plan is developed to define the academic steps needed to ensure students' success at the next grade level.

The PACT is also administered to students with disabilities. The student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) highlights any accommodations or modifications necessary for success. Accommodations may include extra time, oral administration, small group settings, and the use of technology for extended responses.

State-wide testing is administered in early May and continues for approximately two weeks. One day is allowed per core subject with additional time allocated for make-up testing. All students in grades 3-5 are required to participate.

Testing data is sent to the schools during the summer. When teachers return, the data analysis is conducted by the administrators and teachers to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, to plan for instruction, to differentiate instruction, and to plan professional development activities.

PACT scores in 2001 revealed 70% of third graders scored at or above Basic in ELA and 78% in mathematics. Seventy-six percent of fourth graders scored at or above Basic in ELA and 58% in mathematics. Fifty-three percent of fifth graders scored at or above Basic in ELA and 26% in mathematics. While ELA test scores increased for all grade levels, math test scores declined for third and fourth graders in 2002. The staff revisited and adjusted instructional practices, resources, and materials. Curriculum calibration (review and alignment of student work and standards), instructional pacing, additional manipulatives, and focused staff development resulted in significant test gains in mathematics in 2003: (third—97% at or above Basic in ELA and 100% in mathematics; fourth—93% at or above Basic in ELA and 95% in mathematics; fifth—71% at or above Basic in ELA and 95% in mathematics). Continued improvement in test scores indicate 95% or higher of all third, fourth, and fifth graders scored at or above Basic in ELA and mathematics in 2005.

For the past three years, Brown's Ferry Elementary has received the "Palmetto Gold" Award from the State Board of Education for exceptional student academic performance. Brown's Ferry Elementary also received the "Closing the Achievement Gap" Award for the past two years. Students made significant gains and also scored at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher in mathematics on PACT for African-American students and students receiving free/reduced lunches. It should be noted that the Princeton Review (2001) ranked the South Carolina assessment system as one of the best (ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states). Additionally, Brown's Ferry Elementary has met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the past three years. High expectations for learning are set for all students at Brown's Ferry Elementary. Data can be reviewed on the state's website which is located at [www.myschools.com](http://www.myschools.com).

## **Part IV #2 Using Assessment Results**

At Brown's Ferry Elementary there is continual dialogue and review of students' progress. In order to obtain a clear "picture" of students' successes and challenges, test results from multiple sources are used throughout the year to assess performance and growth. Instructional planning and delivery are based on current assessment data. Students are clustered so that small group and whole group activities focus on the identified needs.

PACT data for students in grades three through five is the main source used to document school performance, areas of strengths and weaknesses, and the necessary instructional focus. When teachers return to school following summer break, grade-level discussions regarding the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) identify strengths and weaknesses for the specific grade-level groups. On-going staff development provides teachers with opportunities to strengthen their understanding and application of the South Carolina State Standards in all four core areas. Goal setting for individual students and small groups provides the focus for instructional planning, resource utilization, and monitoring. Students in grades K-2 are not directly involved in statewide testing. Therefore, appropriate on-going informal assessments are used to identify students' academic needs. DIAL-R assessment is used to test cognitive and developmental skills in Child Development. The South Carolina Readiness Assessment Portfolio Initiative (SCRAPI) assesses academic growth for kindergarten and first grade students, three times annually. The Dominie Kit provides leveled resources to use in assessing concepts about print, reading levels, and spelling development. Students in grades 2-5 are administered the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in reading, language arts, and mathematics. First graders are tested in reading and mathematics on MAP.

Flexible grouping and differentiated instruction allow for appropriate interventions that will impact student achievement. Focus groups are created based on MAP data in ELA and mathematics. Early Bird remediation/acceleration groups are held prior to the beginning of the school day. Itinerant teachers, regular classroom teachers, administrators, and instructional assistants work with small groups to improve math and reading achievement. Utilization of technology, *LightSpan* software, games, and small group tutoring address identified needs in mathematics and reading. Collaboration among staff members and utilization of multiple resources contribute to academic success. At Brown's Ferry Elementary, data analysis contributes to a blueprint for increased student achievement.

## **Part IV #3 Communicating Assessment Results**

Educating a child in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century requires collaborative efforts to form a successful home-school-community partnership. Since Brown's Ferry Elementary is the "hub" of five rural communities, efforts to inform all stakeholders are made. A "Back to School" event is hosted by a local church. The principal and a key teacher discuss the importance of the upcoming school year and the mandated grade-level expectations. Parents receive copies of information regarding grade-level expectations, activities, and necessary school supplies. Each child in grades 1-5 receives an Agenda in which to record homework assignments throughout the year. The Agenda includes important information about the policies regarding attendance, grades, etc., as well as, a Title I Parent Involvement Compact. Open House/PTO meetings launch the new school year. Parents meet with teachers to learn grade-level expectations, procedures, and curriculum.

The school district publishes an Annual School Report in which all schools' assessment information, school goals, and demographics are highlighted. The school district also publishes a parent handbook that outlines policies related to curricular and procedural information. In the fall, the South Carolina Department of Education releases an Annual School Report Card for parents, businesses, and the local newspaper. District and state websites also highlight this information. The report card provides the school's absolute and improvement rating, statistical information about attendance, teacher qualifications, subgroup performance, and results of parent/teacher surveys. The school report card reflects whether or



not a school has met Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

Parents receive pertinent information from many sources. The Parent Teacher Organization meets four times per year. During those PTO meetings, updates are provided on curricular issues, fundraising projects, school performance goals, and the NCLB requirements. Parenting sessions provide strategies for helping students to meet grade-level expectations. A bi-monthly newsletter, *The Brown's Ferry Chronicle*, provides insight into classroom activities and information related to the safety and emotional well-being of students. Student progress is reported through interim reports, report cards, and student Academic Plan conferences. Home visits are made for academic and/or health concerns. Accountability standards require that the school, students, parents, and community work together to help each child reach his/her potential. At Brown's Ferry Elementary, the staff works zealously to involve all stakeholders to ensure that all students succeed.

#### **Part IV #4 Sharing Success**

Brown's Ferry Elementary has collaborated locally with schools of similar demographics to identify and share strategies that are effective with African-American students. The principal has encouraged teachers to visit schools that utilize advanced technology. As a result, teachers' interests were ignited and technology use for instructional purposes has increased. *Promethean Boards* are interactive boards that encourage student participation. These special tools are now being used in 12 classrooms and the media center. As a result of expanding school technology (*Promethean Boards* and *Classroom Performance Systems*), teams from other schools within our district, and teams from across the state visit to observe daily routines and implementation of technology within instruction.

A team of staff members and the principal has presented at state conferences on strategies to support student achievement. The principal is viewed as a strong instructional leader by her peers at the district level. The administrator collaborated with community members and successfully secured a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant to provide homework assistance and a summer program for third, fourth, fifth, and identified middle school students. Last summer, the principal was invited to share strategies that work in a "Closing the Achievement Gap" session for other state administrators at the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. Grade-specific meetings occur at the district level to promote common understandings of state standards and curricular implementations. Brown's Ferry Elementary has been at the forefront in implementing new programs, especially technology, in the district.

Collaborative efforts between the high school, middle school, and the three elementary school administrators for our attendance zone are on-going. Open dialogue about academic weaknesses from MAP results encouraged the identification of appropriate strategies to address specific curricular standards. Most recently, the five schools provided musical presentations for a collaborative "Christmas on the Bay" program. The overall goal is to help parents to see themselves as part of a bigger educational community beyond the elementary school. Collaborative efforts continue with the high school to provide student "teaching" cadets who tutor students or listen to individuals read. These efforts help young children to become more fluent in reading. In addition, the administrators and teachers collaborate with institutions of higher learning to provide practicum and student teaching experiences. Brown's Ferry Elementary will continue to pursue opportunities to collaborate with educators at the local, district, state, and regional levels.

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

#### **Part V # 1 School's Curriculum**

Success for all students is the major focus at Brown's Ferry Elementary. The mission of our school is to academically challenge students and to prepare them for success in a diverse society. Expectations that all students work at grade level never waiver. However, staff members realize that our students' lack of background experiences requires more "hands-on" activities and opportunities to experience real-world

activities in order for students to learn. As a result, field trips, interactive studies with streaming video resources, visiting authors and musicians are often an integral part of the learning environment. The South Carolina State Standards in language arts, math, social studies, science, and special area programs guide students' learning. Analysis of formal and informal test data provides information for creating instructional groups and aligning instructional methodologies.

All curriculum areas are defined by the appropriate state standards which form the structure for each subject. Language arts address reading, writing, communication, and research. A minimum of two hours is devoted to language arts daily. Students hear *three read-alouds* daily that promote understanding and appreciation of different genres. Classroom libraries, reading comprehension games, writing instruction using the *6 + 1 Trait Writing Model*, guided reading groups, novel studies and the Harcourt Reading Series support students' learning of state standards. Monthly school-wide writing prompts and evaluation encourage the writing development of all students. "Best practices" in reading strategies are used to promote phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Whole group, small group and individual reading sessions occur throughout the day. Teachers realize the importance of helping students to see relationships between subject areas, therefore, integration across the curriculum is stressed daily, especially between math/science and language arts/social studies. Students practice communication skills through participation in the morning news announcements, various school programs, and integrated learning projects.

The social studies curriculum addresses the state standards of history, government, geography, and economics. Social studies provides a rich forum for incorporating writing and reading skills within the context of history and government. Character Education is used to reinforce the concept of citizenship.

The math curriculum addresses the process skills and content strands: number and operations, geometry, algebra, measurement, and data analysis/probability. A minimum of one hour is devoted to math daily. Real-world applications are provided through mental math activities, learning games, problem-solving activities, and direct instruction. Technology is used to both remediate and extend math knowledge in all students. Students also keep math journals that not only reinforce "writing across the curriculum" but also strengthen the students' understanding of the various math functions.

The science curriculum addresses the understanding of the process skills of observing, classifying, communicating, predicting, and inferring. Science kits provide "hands-on" experiences to support the content learning. Guided reading groups, *read-alouds* using science content, and field trips enhance the science curriculum. Science inquiry, with appropriate field experiences, allows the students to better understand the scientific method for investigation. *Alpha Smarts* (wireless keyboards), *Promethean Boards* and *Classroom Performance Systems* are technological resources that enhance the learning in science.

Art, music, and physical education are taught by specialists using the state standards for each area. Students extend their ability to appreciate and to cooperate with others while recognizing and practicing fundamental skills in art, music, and movement.

High expectations and standards form the foundation for students' future successes. Student participation in cooperative activities promotes acceptance of and appreciation for diverse thinking and project development.

## **Part V #2 The Reading Curriculum**

Brown's Ferry Elementary realizes that reading is a very complex process that must be taught through a myriad of strategies. Comprehension is the ultimate learning goal for our students. "Best practices" indicate that students must see a connection to what is read either through a personal experience, another book, or a world experience. Reading requires higher-order thinking skills. In an effort to teach all components of the reading curriculum (reading, writing, communication, and research), "best practice" strategies are utilized daily. A minimum of two hours is devoted to appropriate grade-level activities. The *Formula Three Reading Model* is used each morning for thirty minutes. During this time students learn, practice, and apply skills to help them with reading, spelling, and learning applications. Inviting classrooms provide cozy reading nooks for students to

read quietly. Trade books, novels, magazines, newspapers, and noted author materials invite students to broaden their experiences through books. A well-stocked *Literacy Resource Room* with leveled books exposes students to a variety of genres and fuels students' interest in reading.

Brown's Ferry Elementary realizes that many of the families do not have reading materials at home. Therefore, library books and classroom materials are sent home to be read nightly. Reading logs are to be completed and signed by the parent each night. Parenting sessions provide suggested resources and strategies for helping a child to learn to read. Guided reading groups, individual, partner, and whole group reading are strategies utilized for reading development. *Accelerated Reader* books and tests encourage students' reading development. Teacher directed and shared reading time provides strategies to help students to break the comprehension code. Guided reading groups allow students with similar needs to be addressed through common reading materials. Teachers model fluency, increase vocabulary, develop background knowledge, and support comprehension by providing *three read-alouds* each day. Writing is taught through mini lessons, opportunities to write, and the use of rubrics to guide the improvement of writing. The *Harcourt Brace website* reinforces students' learning at home and school.

Research is an important component of language arts. The media specialist, in cooperation with the classroom teachers, assists students in learning the *Big6 Research Model*. This model requires students to systematically analyze necessary tasks and to utilize specific steps in the completion of a project. Brown's Ferry Elementary provides students with strategies to promote academic achievement and to set the tone for success as lifelong readers and learner

### **Part V #3 The Math Curriculum**

The math curriculum for Brown's Ferry Elementary is based on the South Carolina Mathematics Standards. Using real-world experiences and problems, students apply skills focused on the five core strands: numbers and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability. Daily opportunities to apply problem-solving skills with real-world experiences are provided. Reduction of rote "skill and drill" activities encourage successful mathematical achievement. The Harcourt Brace materials and website are basic resources for teachers. However, a variety of additional resources/materials are used to help students meet South Carolina State Standards: *Fantastic Five*; *Activities to Integrate Math and Science* (AIMS); technology, such as, *Promethean Boards* and *Classroom Performance Systems*; calculators; specific manipulatives; math dictionaries; problem solving booklets and math journals. Tuesdays are set aside for specific vocabulary development and PACT practice-taking skills. Resources such as *Challenge the PACT*, *Achieve Now*, and *PACT Coach* are used to provide help for identified weaknesses. Math instruction occurs within a one-hour session. The teacher may introduce the concept by providing model lessons with the whole group. Small group activities, games, and software may follow so that students can practice a skill.

Staff development for teachers is ongoing. *AIMS* sessions, *Project M.I.N.D. (Math Is Not Difficult)*, *Understanding by Design (UBD)*, and linking literature across the curriculum are example of training for teachers. *Project M.I.N.D.* is a program developed to meet the challenge of a need for accelerated mathematics content for students. Teachers learn to incorporate unprecedented curriculum using innovative teaching strategies. As a result, teachers use strategies to eliminate fear of mathematics, spark interest, stimulate creativity, and enhance students' abilities to become effective problem solvers. Students gain self-confidence, enjoy mathematics through teamwork and competitions, and improve math scores. Grade-level planning with the curriculum specialist identifies pacing issues and resources available for support.

Parents are encouraged to visit and observe in the math classes. Homework activities are ways to assist parents in monitoring and understanding what is being taught. Newsletters are sent home by the classroom teacher to identify the math curricular focus. Family Learning Nights provide strategies parents can use to help with math. PACT data validates the strong emphasis placed on mathematics for the past four years.

#### **Part V #4 Instructional Methods**

Each student who enters Brown's Ferry Elementary deserves an opportunity to learn through strategies that best meet individual needs. Characteristically, the very young child is a kinesthetic learner who requires movement in the learning process. Therefore, teachers use music, games, manipulatives, movement, and technology to "hook" the learner. Child Development and kindergarten classrooms create an environment in which learning stations are established. Student choice and utilization of varied learning materials such as CD's/audio tapes, computer software, painting supplies, games, and puzzles support the young child's learning.

Instructional planning and discussions by grade levels direct the development of upcoming lessons. Teachers must know the interest and academic levels of the students in order to best meet their needs. By using appropriate testing and observation results, the teachers provide specific strategies to meet the various learning challenges. Some instructional methodologies include: whole and small group instruction, cooperative groups, field trips, modeling/demonstrations, exploratory and inquiry-based learning, interactive learning using computers, *Classroom Performance Systems*, and *Promethean Boards* utilization.

Higher order thinking skills are integrated throughout the core subject areas. Teachers model using different types of graphic organizers to assist the students in assembling information. Graphic organizers are important in the process of teaching across the curriculum.

Real-world experiences are incorporated through field trips, authentic models, and visiting artists in storytelling, music, and drama. Learning extends beyond the classroom when storytellers, musical presentations, authors, and a NASA educational specialist bring artifacts reflective of diverse careers into the school setting.

Technology is integrated throughout the curriculum. Three times per week, students participate in the *Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) Lab* for math and reading reinforcement. Identified Gifted/Talented students participate in the *Broad Educational and Creative Happenings (BEACH) Program* each week. Accelerated instruction promotes critical thinking skills and advanced learning. Identified resource students receive instruction in the regular classroom setting with the assistance of the resource teacher. Collaboration occurs so that all students' learning needs are addressed and met. No child is to be left behind at Brown's Ferry Elementary.

#### **Part V #5 Professional Development**

Student achievement is the top priority at Brown's Ferry Elementary. Staff development opportunities are designed to let teachers take an in-depth look at effective instructional strategies and "best practices." Critical to students' success is a teacher who understands and instructs the state standards in the four core areas using "best practices." Teamwork is essential in fostering school success. Teachers engage in grade level and vertical planning to discuss instructional approaches to better meet the needs of the students and to review academic concerns. The staff utilizes a bi-weekly planning session to share and further develop strategies successful in increasing student achievement. Staff development supports instruction. Currently, there is ongoing dialogue and implementation of data received from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. Teachers practice flexible grouping and differentiation of instruction based on data. Grade-level sessions devoted to discussions about state standards, monitoring and pacing of the curriculum, and curriculum calibration provide the uniform focus for instruction. Decisions based on data are made through a process called Data Driven Decision Making. As a South Carolina Reading Excellence Act Demonstration Site (SC READS) school for four (4) years, teachers have been involved in year-long study groups focused on literacy development. As a group, teachers and administrators have read, studied, and implemented "best practices" from books such as: On Solid Ground, Interactive Writing, Reading Comprehension: Strategies that Work, and Literature Circles -Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups. This year, the focus is on writing development throughout the grades. Monthly writing prompts, scored with rubrics, are utilized as an instructional tool to document students' growth in writing. On-going training and dialogue about the effective use of *Promethean Boards* help teachers in their efforts to integrate technology into the classroom.

Staff members attend conferences and district-sponsored sessions. District-sponsored workshops address strategies to positively impact student achievement: science kit utilization; *AIMS*; *Understanding by Design (UBD)*; *Climbing the Data Ladder*; *Extending the Second Grade Curriculum*; and *Social Studies Standards* and the *Revised Bloom's Taxonomy*. Teachers and administrators attend sessions and share ideas with the entire staff. An over-arching staff development this year is Ruby Payne's *Understanding the Framework of Poverty*. Common knowledge about the "culture" of poverty needs to be understood and acknowledged by professionals. Families living in poverty often respond to events differently due to circumstances. Working in a school of over 87% free/reduced lunch students, teachers can use this knowledge while planning for and responding to students, and ultimately create more positive connections between the students and learning. Staff development will continue to be the catalyst for optimizing instructional strategies that increase student learning and achievement at Brown's Ferry Elementary.

## **Part VII—Assessment Results**

### **Grade 3, 4 and 5**

**Test: Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test-English Language Arts and Mathematics**

Edition/Publication Year 2001-2005      Publisher: South Carolina Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed?

There were no students exempted from the PACT at Brown's Ferry Elementary School. However, in year 2002, the data will reflect there was a score in the subgroup White. That year, we tested one White student. Brown's Ferry Elementary School's population was 100% African-American in 2001, 2003, and 2004. In 2005, the student population is 99% African-American, without any White students in the grades for PACT.

### **Performance Levels**

Four performance levels are identified on PACT: Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. Each level identifies the students' understanding and level of performance based on the curriculum standards assessed by the PACT.

#### **Advanced**

Advanced scores are very high. A student who performs at the Advanced Level has exceeded grade-level expectations and is very well prepared to work at the next grade level.

#### **Proficient**

Proficient scores are meeting expectations. A student who performs at the Proficient Level has met grade-level expectations and is well prepared to work at the next grade.

#### **Basic**

Basic scores indicate minimum expectations are met. A student who performs at the Basic Level has met standards, is minimally prepared, and can go to the next grade level.

#### **Below Basic**

Below Basic scores indicate minimum standards are not met. A student who performs at the Below Basic level is not prepared for work at the next grade. Below Basic students must also have an academic assistance plan.

**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 3 – ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>97</b>	72	70
% At or Above Proficient	83	80	60	34	26
% At Advanced	24	31	17	0	0
Number of students tested	44	39	35	32	46
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>97</b>	72	68
% At or Above Proficient	83	78	57	36	24
% At Advanced	21	25	15	0	0
<b>2. No Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	**	<b>100</b>	**	71	0
% At or Above Proficient	**	86	**	29	0
% At Advanced	**	57	**	0	0
<b>3. African American</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>97</b>	72	68
% At or Above Proficient	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	60	34	27
% At Advanced	48	31	17	0	0
<b>4. White</b>					
% At or Above Basic	0	0	0	0	0
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	87	85	81	80	78
% At or Above Proficient	57	54	44	42	41
% At Advanced	9	10	5	4	3

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information not disseminated for groups less than 6.

**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 3--MATHEMATICS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>	39	78
% At or Above Proficient	38	45	38	7	24
% At Advanced	7	7	11	0	4
Number of students tested	42	42	37	31	46
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	85	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>	50	78
% At or Above Proficient	32	40	34	8	18
% At Advanced	4	3	11	0	4
<b>2. No Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	**	<b>100</b>	**	0	0
% At or Above Proficient	**	72	**	0	0
% At Advanced	**	29	**	0	0
<b>3. African American</b>					
% At or Above Basic	86	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>	39	80
% At or Above Proficient	31	45	38	7	23
% At Advanced	4	7	11	0	5
<b>4. White</b>					
% At or Above Basic	87	0	0	0	0
% At or Above Proficient	47	0	0	0	0
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	83	82	70	74	72
% At or Above Proficient	31	29	29	32	33
% At Advanced	10	2	11	12	16

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information not disseminated for groups less than 6.



**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 4—ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	81	76
% At or Above Proficient	70	39	57	12	10
% At Advanced	3	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	36	28	28	41	61
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	82	74
% At or Above Proficient	69	33	57	13	7
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
<b>2. No Free / Reduced Lunch</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	**	**	**	**
% At or Above Proficient	70	**	**	**	**
% At Advanced	10	**	**	**	**
<b>3. African American</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	82	76
% At or Above Proficient	70	39	57	13	10
% At Advanced	3	0	0	0	0
<b>4. White</b>					
% At or Above Basic	0	0	0	**	0
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	0	**	0
% At Advanced	0	0	0	**	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	80	80	76	80	80
% At or Above Proficient	36	36	31	34	37
% At Advanced	3	3	2	2	2

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information is not provided for categories with fewer than 6.

**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 4--MATHEMATICS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>97</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	49	58
% At or Above Proficient	39	66	74	16	13
% At Advanced	6	38	37	7	2
Number of students tested	36	32	27	45	62
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	<b>96</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>91</b>	49	58
% At or Above Proficient	39	64	68	14	15
% At Advanced	8	32	36	5	2
2. No Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	**	**	**	**
% At or Above Proficient	40	**	**	**	**
% At Advanced	0	**	**	**	**
3. African American					
% At or Above Basic	<b>97</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	48	58
% At or Above Proficient	39	66	74	14	13
% At Advanced	6	38	37	7	2
4. White					
% At or Above Basic	0	0	0	**	0
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	0	**	0
% At Advanced	0	0	0	**	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	79	79	74	74	67
% At or Above Proficient	41	35	36	36	26
% At Advanced	14	14	15	15	10

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information is not provided for categories with fewer than 6.

**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 5—ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>97</b>	89	77	65	53
% At or Above Proficient	59	36	12	9	8
% At Advanced	7	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	29	28	34	57	51
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	<b>96</b>	88	76	65	51
% At or Above Proficient	56	42	9	10	7
% At Advanced	4	0	0	0	0
2. No Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	**	**	**	67	**
% At or Above Proficient	**	**	**	0	**
% At Advanced	**	**	**	0	**
3. African American					
% At or Above Basic	<b>97</b>	89	77	65	53
% At or Above Proficient	59	36	12	10	8
% At Advanced	7	0	0	0	0
4. White					
% At or Above Basic	0	0	0	0	0
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	77	76	67	74	74
% At or Above Proficient	30	25	20	25	28
% At Advanced	2	2	1	1	2

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information is not provided for categories with fewer than 6.

**Assessment Data**  
**Brown's Ferry Elementary School**  
**PALMETTO ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE TEST**  
**GRADE 5--MATHEMATICS**

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing month	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>	48	26
% At or Above Proficient	70	59	17	6	2
% At Advanced	27	14	6	2	2
Number of students tested	30	29	38	57	51
Percent of total students tested	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>	48	26
% At or Above Proficient	63	56	15	6	4
% At Advanced	24	8	3	2	2
2. No Free / Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	**	**	**	56	**
% At or Above Proficient	**	**	**	11	**
% At Advanced	**	**	**	0	**
3. African American					
% At or Above Basic	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>	49	26
% At or Above Proficient	70	59	17	5	4
% At Advanced	27	14	6	2	2
4. White					
% At or Above Basic	0	0	**	0	0
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	**	0	0
% At Advanced	0	0	**	0	0
<b>STATE SCORES</b>					
% At or Above Basic	77	75	74	70	63
% At or Above Proficient	32	25	31	29	28
% At Advanced	15	2	12	11	11

- **No Free/Reduced Lunch:** This information is not provided for categories with fewer than 6.