Revised

2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet

Type of School: X Elementary __ Middle __ High __ K-12

Name of Principal Mr. Robert F. Hanson, Jr.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name William Allen School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 23 Granite Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Rochester NH 03867-2934
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Strafford School Code Number* 54

Telephone (603)332-2280 Fax (603)335-7381

Website/URL http://www.rochesterschools.com/Allen/allen.html E-mail hanson.allen@rochesternh.net

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.

_____ Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Raymond Yeagley
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Rochester Tel. (603)332-3678

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.

_____ Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Nancy Warren
(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.

_____ Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office 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:

__8__ Elementary schools
__1__ Middle schools
_____ Junior high schools
__1__ High schools
_____ Other

__10__ TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: __$7,987.86___

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: ___$7,961.42__

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
[X] Small city or town in a rural area
[ ] Rural

4. ___8___ Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

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

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	**0**		**7**			
K	21	18	**39**		**8**			
1	31	27	**58**		**9**			
2	29	21	**50**		**10**			
3	30	29	**59**		**11**			
4	35	35	**70**		**12**			
5	29	32	**61**		**Other**			
6								
			TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →					**337**

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

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:

93 % White
3 % Black or African American
2 % Hispanic or Latino
2 % Asian/Pacific Islander
0.0 % 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: 8 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	23
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	5
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	337
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.083
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8.3

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0.02%
8 Total Number Limited English Proficient
Number of languages represented: 4
Specify languages: Yoruba, Indonesian, Greek, Korean

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 53 %

Total number students who qualify: 159

The free/reduced priced meal percentage is derived from the 298 students in grades 1-5. Kindergarten does not participate in the meal program because kindergarten is a half-day program.

10. Students receiving special education services: ___25___%
___87___Total Number of Students Served

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

_1__Autism	____Orthopedic Impairment
____Deafness	_12_Other Health Impaired
____Deaf-Blindness	_60_Specific Learning Disability
____Emotional Disturbance	_8__Speech or Language Impairment
_1__Hearing Impairment	____Traumatic Brain Injury
_5__Mental Retardation	____Visual Impairment Including Blindness
____Multiple Disabilities	

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

Number of Staff

	Full-time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	__2____	_____
Classroom teachers	__17___	_____
Special resource teachers/specialists	__8____	___8____
Paraprofessionals	__19___	___1____
Support staff	___1___	___2____
Total number	___43__	___5____

12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio: ___20 - 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.)

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	89%	96%	87%
Daily teacher attendance	94%	93%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	4%	4%	8%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)			
Student drop-off rate (high school)			

PART III - SUMMARY

William Allen School is a K-5 school of approximately 355 students nestled in the downtown area of Rochester, New Hampshire. We are one of eight elementary schools in the state's fourth largest city. Our teaching staff is as diverse as the students. The seventeen classroom teachers range from first year beginning teachers to 27-year veterans. As it is that our students are predominantly white, our teaching staff is predominantly female with only two of the seventeen members being male. Regardless of gender, the staff realizes that we are the reason that our students are going to succeed.

Four years ago we set out on the quest to make the public aware of our commitment to the students and community of Rochester. Believing that our district's mission statement did not tell about the individuality of our staff's commitment, we devised our own vision and philosophy statements.
Vision – ***At William Allen, we educate today's child for tomorrow's world.***
Philosophy – ***At William Allen School we strive to provide a safe, respectful, and encouraging environment in which children can grow and learn. Respecting that each child is an individual with particular strengths and weaknesses, it is our goal to assess the needs of each child, to maximize strengths, and to improve weaker areas.***
We feel that the process of education is as important as the product. It is essential that students learn how to learn and think critically and creatively in an ever-changing world. It is our goal to enable students to become independent, lifelong learners.
We understand that children are first members of families, then citizens of the school and community. We believe that the home, school, and community need to work together and support each other's efforts to raise responsible citizens.

Three years ago the Rochester School District set out on a bold initiative of getting 90% or better of its students to read on or above grade level by the end of third grade. The mandate was initiated from above, but was embraced by the staff of William Allen School as we realized that successful students were the key to a successful and prosperous community.

William Allen School is fortunate to have great support from many of the parents. This is evidenced by several facts. Over 99% of parents attended parent conferences in November to attain their child's report card and meet with the classroom teacher. Our local Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings are attended by anywhere from seventeen to thirty parents most months. The partnership between home and school is critical to the advancement of our students.

William Allen School is a Title One School-wide school. The process of becoming and maintaining school-wide status has allowed our staff to collaborate, dialogue, and discuss critical components of education that lead to the school and its staff being a more cohesive, adaptable unit. Utilizing Title One funds school-wide enables us to reach all students' needs from early intervention to enrichment.

Ongoing professional development is necessary for the school to grow and change with the demands placed on educational staff. The Rochester School District has provided many ongoing opportunities for our staff to continue the growth process during the school day. William Allen School has also taken the opportunity to alter faculty meetings to be professional developmentally based first and informational second. The collegial environment that this atmosphere has fostered has led to staff members that value expanding their knowledge on critical educational issues. The number of staff members who have continued their own formal education and earned their masters degrees also evidences this. We also have twelve to fourteen staff members who participate in a course, Learning through Teaching, offered by the University of New Hampshire.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1.
The state of New Hampshire used the New Hampshire Educational Improvement and Assessment Program (NHEIAP) to measure student academic progress in language arts and mathematics.
The assessment battery was administered to our third grade students each May. Students' scores were reported in four categories:

Advanced	Students functioning at this level were had a solid command of all components of Language Arts and Mathematics. They were able to converse openly about text and Mathematics.
Proficient	Students at this level had an overall understanding of Language Arts and Mathematics. They exhibited above average ability to converse around text and Mathematics.
Basic	Students at this level had a good understanding of many aspects of Language Arts and Mathematics. Although, some responses to text and Mathematics were incomplete.
Novice	Students at this level had an under developed understanding of Language Arts and Mathematics skills. Their ability to converse about text and Mathematics was incoherent or non-existing.

The following link takes you to the State of New Hampshire's Assessment Results webpage:
http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/Assessment/materials04.htm

The staff members of William Allen School have spent countless hours reviewing the data results of the NHEIAP and its implications on the delivery of educational services that we provide to our students. Grade level teams have focused on the data as well as cross sectional teams.

The NHEIAP results from the 2001-2002 school year confirmed what we had anticipated, but also delivered sub-group results that we did not anticipate. We predicted poor results from our educationally handicapped students, yet had been working hard all year to improve their basic academic function. We learned that our socio-economically disadvantaged students did not perform at the levels we had envisioned.

As a result of these findings, our instructional strategies changed. Early in the 2001-2002 school year we focused largely on early intervention strategies for the kindergarten through second grade students, in particular our potentially at-risk/special needs. The results from the low socio-economic population had us focus on improving background knowledge as well.

Raising the expectations of all students, as well as matching the instructional strategies to meet students' needs was critical in the improvement that we've accomplished to this point. Understanding our instructional needs based on research findings and our data results, we increased the phonetic development level in reading at grades kindergarten and one and the amount of reading required by the students in and out of school. In math we found that students needed a broader range of mathematics instruction and practice. Mathematics instruction grew to have a greater emphasis on problem solving, pre-algebraic skills, and probability.

As a result of a tighter focus on these areas and regular adjustments based on several data points, we have seen steady progress with our students' achievement, particularly within the subgroups that were determined to be in critical need.

2.
William Allen School is a data driven school. All staff members engage in data analysis and its implications on instruction. Through the years we've discovered that our students lacked the reading ability to decipher the alphabetic code, make inferences, and read non-fiction text to extract critical understandings. Our writing results from the NHEIAP indicated that our students lacked the presence to focus on the topic and provide details. The mathematics results indicated weaknesses in spatial relations, problem solving, and algebra.

These findings and additional analysis led grade level teams to revise the curricula to confront the deficiencies and challenge our instructional practices. In kindergarten and first grade we added a strong systematic and explicit phonetic component to our core reading instruction. In grades two through five we realized that students needed more opportunities to read text of different genres at their instructional and independent levels. They also needed to learn comprehension strategies that proficient readers use while reading. We have used strategies to double and triple the amount of reading that is completed by students each day with more effective reading strategies. As part of the district initiative, we require students to read an additional 20 minutes at home each evening. Writing was made real through a writing process that had the students using graphic organizers, measuring them with a rubric, and revising the final piece to increase their rubric score. In math student instruction expended beyond rote memory tasks in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to include complex problem solving, spatial awareness, and number sense in engaging meaningful learning activities. Additionally, the district's recent purchase of the Everyday Mathematics series proved to be an effective program for our students.

3.
Communication is a critical component when making any change. The staff of William Allen School realized that there was a need to inspect and alter our instructional tendencies, but we needed to enlist the support of our students' parents to ensure that the progress would continue its steady upward trajectory. Student academic progress or lack thereof has been shared with parents at parent data evenings, parent conferences, and Parent Teacher Association meetings. Data brochures have succinctly conveyed our triumphs and tribulations. Data PowerPoint presentations have informed parents and provided them with opportunities for questions and answers. Administrators and classroom teachers have informed the student of their progress on assessments. Students are keenly aware of how they have performed on local assessments. Many remember or ask what their previous score was in hopes that they outperform their last assessment. Students participate in setting their own achievement goals with strategies to assist in their attainment of said goals. For the last two years a team of school administrators and teachers have made data presentations to our local school board that included an update on the progress towards the school's goal of having 90% or better of the students working at or above grade level in language arts and mathematics. Our school has become transparent as our successes and failures have been documented and shared publicly.

4.
Although we don't have all the answers and have yet to be completely satisfied with student achievement, the members of William Allen School realize that our successful strategies need to be shared with other schools in our district. The administration has provided and will continue to provide insight to other district administrators and school staff as to how William Allen has made its academic gains. The principal has met with other schools for question and answer round-table discussions and will continue to be available to members of the district. The teaching staff share successful strategies at district professional development activities and meeting times with other district staff. William Allen teachers have agreed to open their classroom doors for observations and follow-up discussion with other district personnel. One of our goals is to assist other staffs and all the students of Rochester to improve their

academic standing.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1.
The Rochester School District set the curriculum that our school has used as a guide for our student instruction at William Allen School. The curricula were revised to reflect the New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks. Learning goals and objectives were aligned to address our current learning needs. Our curriculum documents provide high standards for our students to accomplish.

The staff of William Allen School has spent numerous hours in committees reviewing the curricula and established instructional strategies that all classrooms are required to include in their instruction. Among the suggestions from these committees were the addition of explicit phonemic awareness and phonological instruction, explicit vocabulary instruction, graphic organizers, and specific reading comprehension instruction. Open Court Phonemic Awareness kits were introduced in kindergarten four years ago, as were the first and second grade Open Court Phonological Awareness kits. Graphic organizers where used to manage students' thoughts for the writing process. The faculty created a leveled library with multiple copies of student books with a variety of genres and a wide range of readability levels so that all students had text they could read. Language arts instruction occurs 600 minutes or better each week.

The recent district purchase of Everyday Mathematics (EDM) proved to be a wise choice. This spiraling program makes allowances for student developmental readiness at different intervals throughout a three-year period. EDM makes learning math an active process. Students are engaged in thinking, discovering, and proving mathematics. We have a minimum 375 minutes each week dedicated to the instruction of math with this program.

Science and Social Studies instruction is delivered through the Scott Forsman and Harcourt Brace programs respectively. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce these curricula with reading in the content area materials from alternative sources, which include but are not limited to the reading series, big books, leveled library, classroom libraries, public libraries, newspapers, and magazines. Hands-on learning is used frequently to increase student understanding of concepts and principles.

Students participate weekly in the arts. Physical education, music, art, and library instruction round out the instruction our students receive. Wherever possible, the specialist teachers incorporate and integrate reading, mathematics, science, and social studies in their lessons. These connections are important to success of our students.

2a.
William Allen School has embraced current reading research says about developing young readers. Every staff member has a copy of the National Reading Panel's - Report of the Subgroups. During grade level and faculty meetings the staff has reviewed pieces of the report and have professional dialogue about its meaning and instructional implications. Instructional adjustments have been made according to the decisions the staff made through its ongoing analysis of the reading program and research.

Our district had purchase the Houghton Mifflin – Invitations to Literacy eight years ago and required all instructional staff to use this program as the core reading program. This program was not researched based, thus we had to make informed decisions to adjust it to meet the needs of our students and strengthen its weaknesses.

William Allen School decided to enhance the Houghton Mifflin program with research based practices because of the results or lack of results we had. Many of our students came from homes that did not have books or understood the value of literacy. We had to catch our students up to where other schools were with new kindergarten and first grade students. Students needed to hear and manipulate sounds efficiently before they could learn to read. Other students needed to start to think like good readers do when they were reading stories. Think aloud strategies provided the students with processes that fluent readers use when reading.

3.

William Allen School was an active participant in Rochester School District's plan to investigate and implement a successful standards based mathematics program. In cooperation with several other school districts and Plymouth State College in Plymouth New Hampshire, we spent months reviewing the research and usability behind several mathematics programs and their alignment to the New Hampshire Mathematics Curriculum Framework.

After several months of thoroughly investigating programs, we decided to pilot two programs, Everyday Mathematics and Harcourt Brace's Standards-Based Mathematics. In addition, William Allen School had previously investigated and conducted a mini-pilot of Saxon Math and Mathland the previous year. The staff had a strong background in standards based math instruction.

Our school district chose to adopt Everyday Mathematics for its core math program to meet the needs of our students and the community. William Allen had four classrooms involved in the yearlong pilot. Although there were occasional instructional challenges for the staff, the overall implementation and subsequent student learning went well. The students of William Allen School made outstanding gains during the first year of full implementation.

Our students are now getting math instruction that provides complete mathematical thinking at developmentally appropriate times and ongoing conceptual instruction that allows for differences in student readiness. The students are constantly challenged with new skills, reinstructed with previous concepts, and engaged for the start of each math lesson to the end. The combination of a rigorous curriculum, dynamic program, and teacher excellence should enable our students to achieve our goal of having 90% or better achieving mathematically on or above grade level.

4.

William Allen School's school-wide improvement plan requires teachers to use instructional strategies that provide high returns in meeting the needs of our students. We continue to review data to look for trends and anticipate needs. One need that we are aware of is that our incoming first grade students do not all attend kindergarten at William Allen School and some won't have attended any pre-school or kindergarten program at all. Data from past years shows we educate approximately 45 kindergarten students annually, yet our first grade enrollment is historically in the low to mid 60s. With a difference of about 20 incoming first grade students receiving alternative or no kindergarten experience, we must quickly and accurately assess their needs and provide early intervention where needed.

Research indicates that students have success when instructed in classrooms of small class size. Our district continues to monitor the student-to-teacher ratio and keeps the ratio manageable. The district and Title One provide support teachers, who give our struggling students double and triple doses of reading instruction. Additionally, Title One provides our school with paraprofessionals that work in the language arts blocks and thus reduces the student group size with in the classroom.

Being a data driven school, William Allen looks at all test results to improved student instruction. We use the DIBELS to measure student automaticity of key reading components at strategic points. The

information gathered enables us to make critical instructional decision early in the students' reading development. Struggling students have been and continue to be offered extended day tutoring in small learning groups. The students involved in these additional instructional times have historically made excellent progress at William Allen School. Many have made gains that far outpace their on-grade level peers.

5.

William Allen School considers ongoing professional development to be a critical component of our success. Our district has provided many opportunities for the staff to be trained during school days. Our district provides six early release days for professional development at the district or building level. For the past three years our faculty meetings have taken on a strong air of professional development. The teachers are engaged in reading journals and research articles that help build professional capacity. Activities like Jigsaws and Last Word help provide parameters through which dialogue and discussion evolve.

Collaborative team meetings are held weekly. Staff members discuss teaching strategies, curriculum issues, management techniques, and other pertinent educational issues to increase the strategic development of each learner. These collaborative meetings have brought down the proverbial walls that separate classroom instruction from one teacher to another. The empathy and respect among staff members appears to be at an all time high.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Public Schools

Subject: Language Arts/Reading Grade: 3
Test: **N**ew **H**ampshire **E**ducational **I**mprovement **A**ssessment **P**rogram (NHEIAP)
Edition/Publication Year: 2004 Publisher: Measured Progress

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	76	71	54		
% At or Above Proficient	38	25	16		
% At Advanced	13	4	0		
Mean Score	253	248	238		
Number of students tested	61	57	55		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Basic	62	62	41		
% At or Above Proficient	17	15	3		
% At Advanced	3	0	0		
Mean Score	244	242	230		
Number of students tested	29	26	29		
2. Educational Disability (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Basic	46	18	6		
% At or Above Proficient	0	0	0		
% At Advanced	0	0	0		
Mean Score	232	231	217		
Number of students tested	13	11	18		
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	73	77	76		
% At or Above Proficient	43	37	41		
% At Advanced	12	6	8		
State Mean Score	254	253	253		
STATE SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic (specify subgroup)					
Mean Score	242	243	241		
2. Educational Disability (specify subgroup)					
Mean Score	231	231	229		

Public Schools

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3
Test: **N**ew **H**ampshire **E**ducational **I**mprovement **A**ssessment **P**rogram (NHEIAP)
Edition/Publication Year: 2004 Publisher: Measured Progress

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	87	77	73		
% At or Above Proficient	52	32	26		
% At Advanced	13	9	4		
Mean Score	260	254	248		
Number of students tested	61	57	55		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Basic	85	69	59		
% At or Above Proficient	37	19	21		
% At Advanced	3	4	0		
Mean Score	254	250	243		
Number of students tested	29	26	29		
2. Educational Disability (specify subgroup)					
% At or Above Basic	61	45	28		
% At or Above Proficient	15	0	6		
% At Advanced	0	0	0		
Mean Score	245	238	230		
Number of students tested	13	11	18		
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	84	80	81		
% At or Above Proficient	50	40	39		
% At Advanced	15	15	10		
State Mean Score	259	257	255		
STATE SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic (specify subgroup)					
Mean Score	251	250	246		
2. Educational Disability (specify subgroup)					
Mean Score	246	238	239		