

# ***2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

## ***U.S. Department of Education***

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Cori McKenzie

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

Official School Name Central Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 525 Middle Road

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

Belmont

City

CA

State

94002-2191

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County San Mateo

State School Code Number\* 41-68866-6043434

Telephone ( 650 ) 637-4820

Fax ( 650 ) 637-4827

Web site/URL http://www.belmont.k12.ca.us/main/central/

E-mail cmckenzie@belmont.k12.ca.us

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Emerita Orta-Camilleri

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

District Name Belmont-Redwood Shores School District

Tel. ( 650 ) 637-4800

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

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

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Cathy Wright

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

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(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 on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not 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 2006-2007 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 2001 and has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. 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 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:        5   Elementary schools  
      1   Middle schools  
      0   Junior high schools  
      0   High schools  
      0   Other  
      6   TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:      \$8,250  
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,127

**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.   7   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	30	30	60		8			
1	33	29	62		9			
2	27	22	49		10			
3	22	28	50		11			
4	22	20	42		12			
5	28	34	62		Other			
6								
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →								325

***[Throughout the document, round numbers 1 or higher to the nearest whole number.  
Use decimals to one place only if the number is below 1.]***

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |             |                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 62          | % White                          |
| 2           | % Black or African American      |
| 9           | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| 26          | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| 1           | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100%</b> | <b>Total</b>                     |

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

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 4 %

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	3
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	10
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	13
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	325
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.04
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 5 %  
16 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 7

Specify languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Hungarian, Cantonese, Russian, Indonesian and Arabic

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %

Total number students who qualify: 19

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services:  $\frac{12}{39}$  %  
Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>4</u> Autism	<u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>    </u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>    </u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>20</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>    </u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>	
	<b><u>Full-time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1
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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	97%	98%	99%	99%	NA%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	96%	96%	95%	NA%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	13%	0%	0%	NA%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	NA%	NA%	NA%	NA%	NA%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	NA%	NA%	NA%	NA%	NA%

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Central Elementary, a 2006 California Distinguished School, is a small K-5 neighborhood school of 325 students tucked into the beautiful hills of Belmont, California. The population tends to be stable, with most students coming from comfortable middle-class backgrounds whose parents are committed to their children's education.

Central maintains high expectations for all in a warm, safe and nurturing environment. Parents and teachers partner in raising each child together. While it is not uncommon for parents and teachers to be united in their desire for students to meet and exceed standards, what is uncommon is the way in which Central goes about fulfilling its charter. Many observers comment on the atmosphere of enthusiasm and welcome that is endemic to the school, as well as the high level of trust, cooperation and approval that exists among staff, parents, and students.

As soon as students arrive in the morning they are reminded that they are valued, as parent and fifth grade Kiddy Valet volunteers greet them and help them from their cars. Their days are action packed, with focus on high academic standards and enriching activities. Even a casual stroll around campus will convince a visitor that students and adults alike are excited about being here. A day may kick off with Monday Morning Meeting, an all school assembly emphasizing community and the school's Culture of Courtesy, or Boot Camp, the exercise class for grades 3-5. Enter the library in the early morning and you will observe tutoring taking place in one corner, while in another, parents are busy stuffing Tuesday Envelopes (Central's informal postal system between home and school). Peek in a kindergarten classroom and find students having a spirited debate over whether Monet or Van Gogh is the best painter, while over in Room C, you might see a fourth grade buddy reading his "Healthy You Guide", that he wrote for his first grade partner. Visit fifth grade, and you'll hear teacher and students discussing partial products strategy in multiplication and its connection to place value. While in second grade, you will see students pensively at work on adding ideas and voice to their writing as they refer to their kid-friendly rubrics.

As the bell rings for recess, kids spill onto the schoolyard to play on the community-built play structure which was funded by Central's nationally acclaimed recycling program, "Getting Green." Others head for the library for reading, drawing or playing chess while enjoying classical music. It is "Mozart Month" at Central and speakers all over campus pipe out Mozart's piano concerto, *Elvira Madigan*. Displays of student work from our Art in Action program fill the hallway and classroom walls with color, and validate Central's commitment to the arts. Parents are everywhere: facilitating in the computer lab, leading a class in Music for Minors, assisting in the classrooms, or working behind the scenes on Central's disaster preparedness.

Central School's vision, *"To educate the whole child, to value each individual within a safe nurturing environment, and to support every student in achieving or surpassing the California State Standards"* exemplifies the school community's values and serves as a guide to empower every student. It is even woven into our rich relationships with local universities and business partnerships. Whether it is our new (2005-06) District Special Education classes or our GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) students, Central prides itself on providing all students with a comprehensive support system to ensure their ongoing success.

We are proud of our school, and we recognize that success at Central is not an accident. The consistent academic growth of our students' achievement is due to an exemplary staff, rich, standardized instruction, huge parent involvement, and a safe and nurturing environment where all students are valued and fully included.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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**1. Assessment Results:** Each fall Central's staff gathers to review the new data that has been collected through our assessment system: student achievement data from the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests, as well as local assessments in reading, writing and math. The STAR test is a criterion-referenced test developed specifically for California public schools. It measures student progress in meeting California's Content Standards, which describe what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level. English language arts (ELA) and mathematics are tested for students in grades 2-11. Performance standards are reported in five performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic. All California students should be at the Proficient level or above. Students in Grade 3 also are tested on the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey). This test is a norm-referenced test which compares students to a national sample of students in the same grade level tested at a comparable time.

Central Elementary School has shown consistent growth in the percent of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in both language arts and math over the past four years (our data base goes back only four years). For example, the following is a summary of ELA scores of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in STAR testing from 2003-2006: 66% in 2003, 67% in 2004, 75% in 2005, and 78% in 2006. This represents an 18 % increase in the school performance of all grades in language arts over the four year period.

Likewise, in a summary of math scores of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in STAR testing, results from 2003-2006 were: 65% in 2003, 71% in 2004, 80% in 2005 and 81 % in 2006, an overall 25% increase school wide.

The Academic Performance index (API) is the cornerstone of California public school's accountability Act of 1999. It measures academic performance and growth of schools on a variety of academic measures.

All state assessment results are combined to create the API for each school. Since the API is a growth model, all schools are expected to show an increase in their API each year. Schools are expected to meet their annual API growth targets by using a numeric index ranging from a low of 200 to the high of 1,000. The growth target for a school is 5 percent of the difference between the school's API Base and the statewide performance target of 800.

Central's API score has shown steady, consistent growth and progress yearly. In 2002, Central Elementary School's API was 841; in 2003 the API was 854; 2004's API was 866. In 2005 our API surpassed the 900 mark for the first time ever with 901.

In the fall of the 2005-06 school year, Belmont-Redwood Shores School District established the District's Special Day class at Central Elementary School with District students from grades 1-4. At that time the state, for the first time, folded Special Day students' test scores into the host school's data. Our 2006 STAR tests scores reflect that change causing a not unexpected drop in Central's 2006 API score to 893 (from 901 in 2005). Although the addition of the District's Special Day class may have brought Central School's STAR scores down slightly, more importantly, we are bringing the newly acquired Special Day class' scores up, which is also one of our focus goals for 2007. The school's API scores increased 52 points from 2002-2006 including the addition of Special Day class scores. This was a 6% increase overall.

Beyond STAR data, Central's ongoing assessment measures include:

- State Writing exam administered to grade 4
- District standards-aligned Math Assessments (3x/yr)
- Benchmark Reading assessments (3x/yr)
- District standards-aligned direct writing assessments (2x/yr), collaboratively scored and calibrated
- Ongoing use of Running Records at all grade levels
- Grade level specific assessment tools including: anecdotal records, unit tests, student portfolios of improvement and progress, and students engaged in assessing their own work

**2. Using Assessment Results:** Using assessment data to inform decision making is key at Central Elementary. From the first staff meeting in the fall, data is presented to diagnose areas of strengths and weaknesses, and to identify areas of improvement. The multiple measures reporting tool used is the Longitudinal Assessment Reporting System (LARS), which allows the staff to track student performance and to measure and report trends toward proficiency. An analysis of student data leads to focused goal setting and strategic action. Teachers (grades 2-5) work in grade level teams at faculty meetings and minimum day Wednesdays to identify strands of weakness by grade level and by special needs. They use this information to modify instruction. Using students' testing profiles, individual interventions are planned, including referrals to Student Study Team (SST), the Reading Specialist, individual tutoring, and Homework Club. Strategies such as scheduling of School Improvement Program (SIP) aides to provide greater support in needy classes are implemented. Further actions may include small group assistance, modified assignments and preferential seating. At the same time, teachers in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grades examine 2<sup>nd</sup> grade test scores to identify problem areas and plan programs to better prepare their students accordingly.

This year using test data, we identified each student who scored Basic or Below Basic on the 2006 STAR test. As a faculty, we discussed the students' academic strengths and weaknesses and identified what services, if any, they were currently receiving. We determined that intensive small group instruction of basic skills would most benefit these underperforming students. Our goal is to help targeted students, including Special Day students, to move up one quintile on the 2007 STAR test. Using funds from a state Discretionary Block grant allowed us to establish an after school Learning Club. This intervention, manned after school each week by our most qualified teachers, provides two hours of intense remediation on basic skills for designated students in language arts and math. Pretest and post test assessments have been established to determine growth. The pretest is being used as a baseline to assist teachers in pinpointing students' strengths and challenges. In the spring a post test will be administered to reflect expected growth from this intervention.

**3. Communicating Assessment Results:** At Central, we believe that regular communication between our staff and the school community is vital to success. Both teachers and principal regularly communicate with parents about school progress toward standards and other indicators of student achievement using monthly newsletters, our school website, teacher websites, notes home, phone calls, *The Centraletter* (a monthly PTA publication), and email. Spontaneous mini-conferences occur daily as parents and teachers partner together in helping students move forward. Our school also sends a weekly envelope home with our students called the Tuesday Envelope, which communicates school news, community flyers and weekly calendars.

Parents are informed of individual student progress toward standards through a variety of ways. Parents receive their students' STAR results before school begins. The principal addresses student progress and goals in a Back to School letter and provides a detailed analysis of the STAR test results to faculty, parent groups and the Board of Education. Achievement throughout the year is tracked by progress reports, District and classroom assessment results, feedback on class work and homework, standards-based report cards each trimester, and twice-yearly parent teacher conferences. Progress in behavior, social and emotional growth is also shared. Teachers brief parents on California State Standards and other academic indicators at Back to School Night and give each parent a copy of the California State Standards. In the spring, Central hosts an Open House to allow parents and families to share in their students' successes and celebrate their accomplishments.

We regularly update our school marquee and outdoor bulletin boards and frequently contribute to local news services about school news. We use our School Site Council and PTA meetings to share STAR data and other assessment results, and we post our School Accountability Report Card (SARC) on the school web site. Parents of students participating in school interventions receive frequent feedback via phone calls, emails and conferences. Each fall Central distributes an information-packed Parent Handbook and parents are provided with a school directory with staff and parent contact information. Time after time, our parents cite the close communication of our school as a determining factor in their ability to assist in their child's progress.



**4. Sharing Success:** Being a part of a small school district (5 elementary, 1 middle school) is particularly advantageous to building rapport and sharing interests among schools and administrators. Twice monthly the district administration meets to discuss common District concerns. At that time, principals share data, ideas, instructional programs, and best practices at their sites. We work collaboratively, discussing student achievement and successful strategies. At the beginning of each school year, site principals present STAR data to the Board of Education, sharing their established goals and how they will be met. For example, this fall Central's principal outlined the Learning Club, the after school tutoring program, and how Central's staff will use this concept to close the achievement gap of our underperforming students. Central teachers and staff are encouraged to present at district staff development meetings and beyond. This fall for instance, the principal served on a panel for the San Mateo County Office of Education to provide support and professional development to county practicing principals. Central participates in the Noyce Foundation. This foundation's goal is to establish, through teacher training, sustainable math and literacy programs within core districts in the region, to serve as exemplary models, and to inspire additional schools and districts to replicate these programs. We currently have three teachers going through the training. New teachers participate in the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program (BTSA). This program encourages sharing of information, strategies and instructional materials among the new teachers, as well as receiving support from their coaches. Each year Central serves as a host school for students of Education from area universities, most notably, Notre Dame de Namur University. A number of our teachers serve as Master teachers for student teachers, interns, and student observers. Our Master teachers assume responsibility for assisting each participant in becoming a highly-qualified teacher. In San Mateo County, the J. Russell Kent Awards are given each year to acknowledge schools with innovative programs. Central is proud to have received this award three times in recent few years and has shared their winning programs throughout the county.

## PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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**1. Curriculum:** Central’s core curriculum is designed to be inclusive, sequential and aligned with District/State standards – all while challenging our students to think critically. We provide standards-based curriculum and materials to all students in all subject areas. We are pleased to watch our curriculum be validated by ongoing student progress as evidenced in the improvement in STAR testing scores between 2002 and 2006.

Central’s teachers and support staff work together to provide a rigorous and engaging program aligned to California State Standards, particularly in the school’s two areas of curricular focus: math and ELA. We adopted our current math program in 2002, after intensive research by the district-wide curriculum committee, consisting of teachers, parents and administrators. We selected *Everyday Mathematics*, a research-based, spiraling balanced program because of its rigor and focus on critical thinking skills. *Math Steps* is also used to enhance computational skills, a skill set vital to reaching State Standards. Our grade level groups discussed the adoption at staff meetings to link the math standards with *Everyday Math* and plan a continuum for instruction throughout the grades. In 2003 the District used the same process to adopt a new ELA program, *Houghton Mifflin Reading: California*. This program aligns with state standards and integrates history/social science and science for each grade level. It also incorporates stories of diverse populations to help students develop an appreciation for all cultures and all people. Students with special needs at Central work along side other students in core curriculum areas. Our adopted text has reading help for students not proficient built into each theme.

In the past year, our staff targeted writing as a school focus, based upon STAR data and local assessments. We adopted *6 Traits Writing* as a catalyst to better writing. It defines six areas: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency and conventions as critical components of writing. Teaching the 6 traits of writing links reading with writing and provides a common language for teaching and assessing student writing. *Six Traits Writing* is an instruction component to the Noyce Training of *Every Child a Reader and Writer* (ECRW), focusing on writer’s workshop. This research based program builds on 6 traits. By using these complementing programs our students are becoming significantly better writers.

Central’s social science-history aligns with the California State Content Standards offering an enriched and challenging curriculum. Grade level teams design standards based units of study which include rich and varied educational experiences. For example, California is the focus of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade history and social studies curriculum. Through textbooks, supplementary materials, projects and field trips, students learn about the historical and cultural development of their state. Hands-on experiences extend student knowledge of the past. By creating projects using *Power Point* presentations they develop a sense of how far civilization has advanced, as well as an appreciation of the past.

In science, Central has implemented the district-adopted Full Option Science Systems (FOSS) method. This approach combines direct instruction with the hands-on, inquiry based method of teaching science, encouraging students to learn through experimentation. If you visit Central’s classrooms, you will see 3<sup>rd</sup> graders raising crayfish and 1<sup>st</sup> graders tending a “pizza garden”, as they learn how plants grow. Houghton Mifflin *Discovery Works* textbooks supplement our science curriculum.

Central’s PE program is designed to make fitness fun in noncompetitive ways. Students participate in *Spark* (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids), which emphasizes health enhancing movements, and developmentally appropriate skills for all grades. This program augments Central’s award-winning Boot Camp, a twice weekly morning exercise program for grades 3-5 that prepares students for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Presidential Physical Fitness test. At Central, our fifth graders attend Outdoor Education, a rigorous yet re-energizing mind-body week long camp experience of hiking and communing with nature. Thanks to our school community’s belief in the arts, our PTA-sponsored *Art in Action* (AiA) has allowed students to blossom through art activities that support our vision of “educating the whole child.” AiA is a standards-based art program promoting and giving multi-cultural expressions of art taught by trained parent/docents to grades 2-5. Kindergarten and first grade students learn about the works of artists such as

Matisse, Van Gogh, Monet, then create their own masterpieces on paper and in the computer lab. *Music for Minors* (MFM) provides standards-aligned music enrichment in grades K-3. Grades 4 and 5 also participate in band and chorus and perform at site assemblies.

**2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:** In reading, Central uses the elementary state approved text, *Houghton Mifflin Reading: California*, as a base of instruction and a springboard to core literature works and supplemental lessons. Its focus on comprehensive sequential instruction in the five strands of reading allows teachers to stress each particular skill appropriately throughout the grade levels. Moreover, its featured Universal Access includes four individual handbooks to provide access to the core curriculum through differentiation for all students. Accommodations for special needs students are written in their IEPs and are customized for each student. As described earlier, the staff, including the principal, has been trained in *Six Traits Writing* and currently is being trained in the Noyce Training of *Every Child a Reader and Writer* (ECRW), focusing on reader's and writer's workshops. The emphasis on reading and writing is evident throughout the school. Central's classrooms are print-rich, encouraging reading and writing – and all boast colorful displays of student work on the walls. Every classroom also has its own library corner containing books which match students' individual reading levels. Some classrooms have Theme/Focus walls that align with our ELA adoption and include Title, Author, Genre, Purpose, etc. supporting their daily reading activities. Children consult *Rebecca Sitton's 100 Most Used Words* posted on their desks as they write stories, poems and shared experiences such as field trips. Students check spelling with individual *Quik Word* (a modified dictionary). Fourth and fifth graders use *Mountain Language* for weekly reinforcement and practice of basic skills. *Accelerated Reader*, a reading support program, is used throughout the grade levels.

To help students meet the rigorous ELA standards, grade level teams use collaborative time to review standards and plan instruction. They share sample writing “anchor papers,” assessment strategies, and integrate instruction. Teachers assess student writing and then analyze work samples to find common areas for further instruction. By modifying instruction based on this collaborative assessment process, more students demonstrate the standards necessary to meet or exceed grade level expectations, STAR, and the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Writing Test administered annually in March. Students needing additional reading support are referred to our Reading Specialist, the Learning Club, ELL Specialist, Homework Club, Friends of Central Tutoring, or an SST. The SST, made up of teachers and specialists, work collaboratively with parents of struggling students to develop new interventions that may be as simple as a classroom accommodation, or as intensive as a referral to special education for individual assessment.

**3. Additional Curriculum Area: Mathematics:** Central's *Everyday Math* program was adopted after diligent research by education stakeholders across the District. The goal was to provide a comprehensive, standards-aligned mathematics curriculum to help students understand math concepts while mastering math facts and algorithms. Students participate in a wide assortment of activities to promote understanding of basic facts in many different ways. For example, a question might ask the student to name 4 in three different ways. A student may answer:  $1+1+1+1$ ,  $1+3$ ,  $2+2$  or  $2^2$ , IV, or  $2 \times 5 - 6$ . The problems are often open-ended, allowing students to work at their level of comfort and promote very different levels of understanding. While playing games, inventing algorithms, writing number stories and solving problems through math exercises, students develop their strengths and improve in the weak areas. Instruction is based upon a spiral model, by integrating concepts throughout the year from early intuition and concrete operations to abstractions and skills with symbols. Applying fact knowledge to higher order thinking activities is acquired through continued practice and use of previously learned content. As students see how mathematic skills build on each other, they begin to understand the importance of mastering a current skill in order to move on to the next activity. This concept of repeated practice while building on previously learned content happens across grade levels. The math program includes direct instructional components with the teacher presenting math concepts to the entire class. For example, in a fifth grade class during an introductory math lesson on fractions, the teacher presents, models and demonstrates the material to students. The follow-up is an independent, pair-share, triads, cooperative groups, or workshop

activity where the teacher facilitates, checking in with the groups. Teachers modify or adjust program material according to student needs, including extensions for students who can benefit from additional challenges.

Central also believes in connecting what our students learn in school to real-life situations. Our Kids Helping Kids project encourages students to develop and appreciate learning with a commitment to responsible citizenship. For example, our fifth graders collected coins for the Indonesian tsunami victims, sorting, totaling and posting funds the students collected. Such activities empower students and help them see themselves as contributing members of a larger world community.

**4. Instructional Methods:** Central adheres to Marzano's positive philosophy, as stated in *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*: All students can learn when provided with ample opportunities. Central School provides a systematic, dynamic educational program that builds on students' prior knowledge and interests to make content meaningful. Our balanced and comprehensive curriculum motivates students to make connections with what they know and their desire to learn. In all grades teachers use a combination of strategies to meet the standards and the needs of each student, including: direct instruction, independent, pair-share, triads, cooperative groups or workshop activities. For example, in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade during an introductory math lesson on two-place numbers, the teacher presents the lesson to the whole group first, and then has students pair-share using white boards and base 10 blocks to reinforce understanding. On a daily basis, homework assignments are differentiated to fit a student's ability rather than the student's grade level, such as independent studies in high interest areas to extend a lesson. Teachers at Central use a variety of inputs, including the integration of technology, to develop their classroom strategies. They refer to assessment data, classroom observations, and information from other colleagues – while always keeping the variety of student capabilities in mind. Year after year, teachers work to match student needs with teacher strengths and create balanced, heterogeneous classrooms that benefit all. Teachers rely on information from previous teachers as detailed on our student placement cards. On "Minimum Wednesdays," teachers collaborate to meet the needs of all their students. Working in grade level and cross-age teams, Minimum Wednesdays afford teachers the time to design units of study that use the best talents of each teacher. Central also believes in connecting what our students learn in school to real-life situations. Each year our school sponsors a Kids Helping Kids project, which focuses on students less fortunate and encourages students to care about others and take action. Last year, for example Central responded to the U.S. hurricane disasters by personalizing their efforts toward a small Louisiana town similar in size to our own community. Through a multi-faceted fund raising drive that even included students voluntarily donating their own ice cream money, Central was able to raise and present \$6,500 to DeRidder, Louisiana schools and teach an invaluable lesson to our students about empathy and charity.

**5. Professional Development:** Central's professional development starts and ends with our students' needs. In our small district, the superintendent and assistant superintendent work closely with the five elementary principals to plan staff development that will most impact student achievement. Over the past few years, we have focused on the use of student assessment data as a foundation for our professional development. That process revealed a need to focus on reading and writing. Our entire district is participating in a standards-aligned reading and writing professional development, centered on our state adopted text. At Central, we retained an ELA consultant to provide additional on-site staff development sessions on targeted areas of reading and writing. We were thrilled when our comprehensive efforts improved our students' proficiency in 2005 STAR testing and ELA scores spiked 8%. Moreover, our 4<sup>th</sup> graders (student writing in California is assessed in 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade only) increased their STAR writing scores (on a proficiency scale from 2 to 8) from 2% scoring a 5 and above in 2004, to 50% scoring a 5 and above in 2005! We expect that percentage to grow as our commitment to rigor in reading and writing continues. We support our teachers in their personal pursuit of knowledge through on-site and off-site professional development such as Noyce training, Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) authorization, GATE and Special Education training to meet the needs of all our students. We

offer all teachers the opportunity to attend workshops and trainings and to observe in other classrooms in and out of the district to learn new strategies. The entire staff learns new strategies from professional development de-briefings at staff meetings, and we often purchase new instructional materials as a result of teachers attending these sessions. Staff is encouraged to pursue personal professional education. Currently, we have four teachers who are enrolled or have recently completed advanced degrees. Central's staff passionately believes the best professional development occurs when teachers have an opportunity to reflect and set goals for their teaching. Our District uses a teacher evaluation program designed by teachers, which incorporates the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP). Teachers use the CSTP to both self-assess their areas of strength and of growth and to collaborate with their colleagues in setting goals. The principal uses CSTP during observations and in the summative evaluation. Professional development also includes peer coaching, particularly when teachers have specific expertise. Two of our staff members are certified in Technology Education. Ongoing staff training in technology comes from these staff members, as well as outside sources. For example, our teacher/Tech Coordinator provided the initial training to all staff members for new classroom and lab computers, as well as on-going trainings for both group and individual needs. The efficiency of the new computers has allowed the teachers to continue their integration of technology within the curriculum standards with less frustration.

## PART VII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following are the tables showing California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) criterion –referenced test data for English/language arts and mathematics for the past four years for grades 2 through 5.\*\*

A statistically significant socioeconomic subgroup does not exist. Also, there is not a statistically significant ethnic subgroup for which data could be collected. No groups were excluded from testing. No students were alternatively assessed nor tested out of level for the 2003, 2004, 2005, or 2006 assessments, as per state of California suggested guidelines.

Central Elementary School's CAT/6 Survey a norm-referenced test given in California to grades 3 and 7 only is also available at: <http://star.cde.ca.gov/star>, as is the STAR California Standards Writing Scores administered in California to grades 4 and 7.

\*\* **Included in all testing data** is the Belmont-Redwood Shores District Special Day Class. These special education students in grades 1-4 attend Central Elementary from throughout the district. Students qualify for this program based on assessments that place them below grade level, testing at Far Below Basic, or Below Basic on State tests. Goals written in each student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP), which guides classroom instruction, focus on raising each student's academic level. As progress is made, students are mainstreamed and if progress continues may be returned to their home school's Resource program. In 2006, for the first time, these students' STAR scores were included in data of the host school (Central Elementary).

The following are Central's school-wide testing statistics:

**Table 1**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: English-Language Arts      Grade: 2      Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual      Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	46	47	33	25
% At Proficient + Advanced	71	76	62	72
Number of students tested	52	38	63	36
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 2**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 2

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	65	66	60	51
% At Proficient + Advanced	84	74	82	75
Number of students tested	52	38	63	37
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 3**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: English-Language Arts

Grade: 3

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	35	34	17	31
% At Proficient + Advanced	63	68	57	60
Number of students tested	45	62	35	48
Percent of total students tested	98%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 4**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	50	63	46	33
% At Proficient + Advanced	83	84	83	71
Number of students tested	46	62	35	48
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 5**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: English-Language Arts

Grade: 4

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	60	40	37	34
% At Proficient + Advanced	85	74	70	73
Number of students tested	61	34	46	60
Percent of total students tested	97%	97%	100%	98%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



**Table 6**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	40	37	33	39
% At Proficient + Advanced	72	71	68	67
Number of students tested	63	35	46	61
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 7**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: English-Language Arts

Grade: 5

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	47	45	39	17
% At Proficient + Advanced	92	81	76	59
Number of students tested	38	47	59	51
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	98%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Table 8**  
**Central Elementary School**  
**State Standards Assessment Data**

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: Annual

Publisher: Educational Testing Service

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April/May	April/May	April/May	April/May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>				
% At Advanced	66	43	8	8
% At Proficient + Advanced	90	79	55	48
Number of students tested	37	47	59	50
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students alternately addressed	0	0	0	0
Percent of student alternately addressed	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>				
1. All subgroups N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A