

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
**A Public School**

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice  
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mr. Jeffrey Tomasik

Official School Name: Northeast School

School Mailing Address: 425 Winthrop Drive  
Ithaca, NY 14850-8606

County: Tompkins State School Code Number: 610600010011

Telephone: (607) 257-2121 E-mail: JTomasik@icsd.k12.ny.us  
Fax: (607) 257-8157 Web URL: www.icsd.k12.ny.us/northeast

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

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

Name of Superintendent\*: Dr. Luvelle Brown Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail:  
luvelle.brown@icsd.k12.ny.us

District Name: Ithaca CSD District Phone: (607) 274-2101

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

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Robert Ainslie

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), 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.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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 one or more of 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.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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

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All data are the most recent year available.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 8 Elementary schools  
(per district designation) 2 Middle/Junior high schools  
2 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
12 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 17221

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	9	8	17		6	0	0	0
K	34	26	60		7	0	0	0
1	31	21	52		8	0	0	0
2	37	23	60		9	0	0	0
3	33	33	66		10	0	0	0
4	26	24	50		11	0	0	0
5	39	27	66		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								371

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
32 % Asian  
10 % Black or African American  
5 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
53 % White  
0 % Two or more races  
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 20%  
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <b>to</b> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	32
(2)	Number of students who transferred <b>from</b> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	49
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	81
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	398
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.20
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	20

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 16%  
 Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 65  
 Number of languages represented, not including English: 16  
 Specify languages:

Korean, Spanish, Chinese, French, Japanese, Thai, Urdu, Arabic, Hebrew, Russian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Bengali, German, Vietnamese, and Portuguese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 25%

Total number of students who qualify: 98

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 free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 9%

Total number of students served: 37

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>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>19</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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<b><u>Full-Time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>47</u>	<u>11</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 20:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	95%	95%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	93%	94%	94%	93%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	11%	9%	6%	6%	6%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Our school district does not have a database that allows us to calculate daily teacher attendance rate over the course of an entire year for a particular school. The principal of the school had clerical support gather estimates of teacher attendance based on records kept at the building on individual teacher attendance. Based on these estimates, our teacher attendance varied between 93-94% for the previous 5 years. If our school district did have a database that allowed us to calculate daily teacher attendance over the course of an entire year, it is possible that our attendance rates for teachers would be slightly higher since the estimates gathered were based on a smaller sample of staff.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size: \_\_\_\_\_

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
<b>Total</b>	<b>_____ 0%</b>

Northeast Elementary School is located in Ithaca, New York, a small city in upstate New York which is also home to Cornell University. Our mission is to provide a rigorous academic program for all of our students. In the Ithaca community, we are known for our high academic achievement and for our incredibly rich student diversity.

We are fortunate to have students come to Northeast from all over the world and the school has a reputation for language diversity, cultural diversity, and socio-economic diversity. Our international students come from all walks of life- many of their families work in local service industries such as restaurants and hotels. Many of our international students also have families who may be pursuing an advanced degree or serving as a visiting scholar or researcher at Cornell University. Our staff is conscious to allow our students to showcase the rich experiences they bring to our school. For example, in second grade, all students engage in a "Family Traditions" project which requires students to work with their families to identify important family traditions in their lives and to represent these traditions by creating posters. Students create incredible projects that illuminate the diversity at our school- individual topics of posters include celebrating Chinese New Year, visiting grandparents every summer at lakefront cottages, decorating a Christmas tree, making homemade ice cream, and celebrating Rosh Hashanah.

Our staff is also conscious to invite our international families into the school as both educational and cultural resources. Recently, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean families visited school to talk with students about the different customs surrounding Lunar new Year. However, it is important to note that we do not limit ourselves to only a multicultural holiday curriculum in honoring our diversity. Students represent their diversity regularly throughout their work at Northeast. In another well-known project, students in fifth grade create an "All About Me" project. It requires students to create displays of images, text, and objects that define who they are. Because of the incredible student diversity at Northeast, the projects serve as teaching tools about the life of an average ten year old in Central New York, in the United States, and around the world.

We are fortunate at this school to have a culture where all staff- teachers, teacher aides, teaching assistants, and all support staff - hold high expectations for our students. We teach to the New York State standards, and teachers also challenge our students to go beyond the standards in a variety of contexts. We expect all of our students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers in all content areas. In all grades, students are expected to be able to communicate about how they solved problems and to discuss multiple ways to solve the same problem. Higher level thinking skills are emphasized as students are taught how to make and confirm predictions, synthesize multiple sources of information, and make inferences about what they read and discuss.

Northeast Elementary has a long-standing focus on promoting literacy and reading both in and outside of school. Student's reading levels are assessed on an on-going basis to insure that all students have opportunities to read instructional level texts. Students receive direct instruction on how to choose instructional level texts for themselves. Northeast communicates to families about what level text their child is reading so they are able to support good book choices as well. For many years Northeast holds regular assemblies that recognize students for individual reading achievement and promote literacy. Families sometimes attend these ceremonies to see their individual child commended for reading performance. Northeast also engages in a year "Principal's Reading Challenge." Students are challenged to read a certain number of hours over the course of one week. If students meet the challenge, the principal engages in a crazy stunt. In previous years, the principal has been soaked by a fire truck hose, ran ten miles on a treadmill (while students read to him the whole time), and dressed up like Elvis Presley and held a five and a half hour dance marathon in the school gym, with different students dancing with him the whole time. At Northeast, hard work and fun are not mutually exclusive.

Northeast Elementary School realizes that student social development is the underpinning of academic success. We work very hard, but we do so within safe, supportive, and nurturing environment. Northeast Elementary School classrooms use the Responsive Classroom approach to create a healthy, supportive, and collaborative classroom community. Northeast teachers spend extra time at the beginning of the school year on creating cohesive classroom communities. Students and teachers collaboratively discuss, develop, and implement classroom routines, roles, and expectations. The first few weeks of school are heavy on community and relationship building and relatively "light" on content and academics. At Northeast, once classrooms have coalesced, the learning takes off. Classroom teachers continue using Responsive Classroom principles through morning meetings throughout the school year. These morning meetings not only strengthen the classroom community and set the stage for academic learning, but also serve as a place for students to bring up questions and concerns they may have. Classroom teachers also use the Second Step program as a tool to prevent bullying, improve impulse control among students, and teach students how to problem-solve peer disagreements in an empathetic manner.



### 1. Assessment Results:

For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English language arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or Math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents Examination.

In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, "These newly defined cut scores do not mean that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have learned less. Rather, the lower numbers of students meeting the Proficient standard reflects that we are setting the bar higher and we expect students, teachers, and parents to reach even higher to achieve these new targets."

Additional information can be found in the news release materials at:

[http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Grade3-8\\_Results07282010.html](http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Grade3-8_Results07282010.html)  
[http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Regents\\_Approve\\_Scoring\\_Changes.html](http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Regents_Approve_Scoring_Changes.html)"

If one looks at a five year average of overall student performance in ELA in Math at Northeast, overall just under 90 percent of our students were proficient (meeting standards) or advanced (exceeding standards) in math while on average approximately 84 percent of all our students were proficient or advanced in ELA. These results are consistent with Northeast's reputation for academic excellence. Also of note, in the past five years, 4 out of those 5 years we had over 50 percent of our students scoring advanced (exceeding standards) in math. We attribute these results to expert teachers, a school wide focus on high expectations, a leadership model at the building level that allows all teachers to have a voice in decision making, and commitment to use data to improve instruction.

It is also important to note that Northeast Elementary, like almost every other school in New York State, had less students reaching proficient levels in school year 2009-10 than in previous years. As explained in detail at the beginning of this section, New York State "raised the bar" last year. Northeast welcomes the raising of the bar, and is confident we will meet the new higher expectations set by the state.

It is worth examining the performance of our ESL students. It is interesting to note that their math achievement is similar to the overall math performance in the school. In fact, 3 of the previous 5 years, ESL students have slightly outperformed the school average in terms of students meeting and exceeding standards. ESL student ELA achievement, which one may expect to lag significantly due to limited opportunities to learn English, is only slightly lower than overall student achievement. Our ESL teachers have used pre-teaching of academic concepts and co-teaching in the general education classroom to help get these results. Classroom teachers have become expert at using differentiated instruction to help ESL students access the general education curriculum.

Despite our overall strong student performance for the past five years, we still have gaps in sub-group performance that we are committed to close. For example, in 2009-10, we had gaps of more than ten percentage points in terms of student achievement for both low income and special education students. Traditionally, Northeast Elementary has been a special education center within the Ithaca City School District. For many years, special education students who were not successful in their home schools were bussed to Northeast to receive intensive instruction. The setting for this instruction used to be self-contained but has changed over the past two years. Special education students who used to be bussed to Northeast are now educated in their home schools. Students with disabilities at Northeast are now served in an inclusive and integrated setting. We are committed to assessing our special education students on

state standards and over the past five years, we have averaged having only two percent of our students taking an alternate assessment (The New York State Alternate Assessment for special education students.)

To address the gaps we are engaged in multiple initiatives. All of our grade level teams use progress monitoring tools to track student performance and create interventions for students to accelerate progress. Our RTI team supports teachers in this process where both specialist teachers from the RTI team and classroom teachers share responsibility for knowing at what levels students are performing at and designing instruction accordingly. All of our teachers have undergone district training on differentiated instruction to support their ability to design varied interventions for individual students. We have significantly increased our capacity to systematically analyze student data and plan very specific interventions accordingly.

Northeast Elementary also has an extended day program where targeted students below benchmark receive further instruction in the form of pre-teaching or-re-teaching on specific skills in reading, writing, and math.

We have also embraced more inclusive instructional practices at our school and significantly reduced the amount of pull out instruction so that all students have the fullest access possible to the general education curriculum. Special education teachers, ESL teachers, and reading teachers provide services to students in the general education setting and co-teach with the classroom teacher.

Our PLC's (professional learning communities) are organized around studying teaching techniques which have proven to close achievement gaps. Our staff is currently reading, discussing, and implementing teaching techniques from Doug Lemov's Teach Like A Champion text. The author of this book studied high poverty schools with exceptional academic performance and distilled the techniques teachers used in these schools to drive performance.

Northeast Elementary is committed to eliminating the achievement gap as well as raising the bar for all of its students and will not rest until this work is done.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

The school uses student assessment results in a variety of manners. All students are assessed in reading, writing, and math using local assessments a minimum of three times a year. Every student is assessed in the areas of reading, writing, and math. After the assessments are completed, grade level teachers review the results in collaboration with a member of Northeast's RTI (Response to Intervention) team. Students who are below benchmarks receive interventions delivered by a combination of the classroom teacher and teaching specialists. Because these students are below benchmark, more frequent assessment is needed to track their progress. Students are assessed weekly or bi-weekly for growth in areas such as reading fluency, sight word identification, and automaticity with basic addition and subtraction facts. Each grade level team meets with the RTI team member on a weekly basis to review the progress of the students below benchmark and to plan further teaching interventions.

For students who are not below benchmark, assessment information is used to provide students with texts that are at their instructional level. The information is also used by teachers to differentiate the instructional program by providing enrichment and extension activities for learners ready for additional challenges.

The Northeast staff has also engaged in item analysis of New York State Math and ELA results over the past five years. The staff has identified certain sub-skills in both ELA and math where our school was under performing in those sub-skills relative to other schools in our area. Teachers asked themselves why students were underperforming on a particular sub-skill and made changes to their instructional program in order to address these gaps. Grade level teams have shared their work with each other so that there is alignment across the grade levels.

### **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

Northeast Elementary communicates regularly about student performance and educates families about both state and local assessments. In the fall at curriculum nights, teachers explain to families what their children will be learning and how that learning will be communicated on the report card. Parent teacher conferences happen throughout the year on an as needed basis. However, twice a year, students are released early from school so that all families can come in for individual parent teacher conferences. ESL families who need a translator have a translator provided for them. With the student's individual report card as a reference point, families and students review student progress. Teachers often review individual work samples and accompanying assessments with families in order to make it easy for families to see how student work is assessed. For example, teachers share student writing samples and the accompanying rubric they have used to assess student strengths and areas for growth in writing traits such as organization, voice, sentence structure, and writing conventions. Unit math tests are oftentimes reviewed so families can see concrete examples of student success and areas that need further work.

If students are performing below academic benchmarks, the classroom teacher contacts the family to attend an Response to Intervention (RtI) meeting at Northeast School. At this meeting, the classroom teacher reviews student progress and brings both work samples and data to share. With the parents input, a team of teachers brainstorm further interventions that both the classroom teacher and teaching specialists can implement to accelerate student progress. Because the parent is actually "sitting at the table" during this meeting, the family has a very clear idea of where the student is performing and how the family can support accelerated academic progress.

Students are also aware of their own progress at Northeast Elementary School. Many teachers use student self-assessments in order to have students to self-reflect on their own growth, successes, and challenges. Teachers also employ individual conferencing to review individual assignments with students. Teachers give feedback on excellent work, and also help students see where they need to continue to grow.

### **4. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Northeast Elementary shares both its best practices and challenges in a variety of manners. The principal of the school meets monthly with other Ithaca City School District elementary principals as a professional learning community. The principals work collaboratively to share best practices around student achievement. Northeast's principal has shared information about school wide implementation of RTI (Response to Intervention), school wide implementation of Everyday Math program, as well as the collaborative process used over the years to refine the school's master schedule. While Northeast's principal is eager to share some of Northeast's successes, he is just as eager to hear about successful experiences from other Ithaca City Schools. In addition to the monthly meeting with elementary principals, the entire administrative team meets twice a month and routinely a portion of the meeting is promoted to sharing best practices and successes within the school district.

Teachers at Northeast have shared lessons learned in a variety of contexts. In terms of implementing the Daily 5/CAFÉ literacy model ( a structure that promotes both student independence and differentiated instruction in ELA) Northeast teachers have been part of book studies and PLC study groups sponsored by the Ithaca City School District. Northeast teachers have also been active in sharing lessons learned around the implementation of Responsive Classroom techniques in their classroom through district sponsored study groups involving text discussions. Northeast has also shared some of its work around creating inclusive and integrated classrooms. Special education teachers from around the school district have scheduled professional visitations here so they could observe our integrated special education model in action and have discussions about the model with Northeast staff. It is important to note that while we think we have a strong integrated model, that Northeast staff has also taken visitations to schools around Central New York who are exemplars in inclusion and special education integration. In short, Northeast believes we have something good to share because we are continually learning and growing ourselves.

### 1. Curriculum:

Students at Northeast Elementary School have the opportunity to engage with significant content based on high standards. Instruction is delivered in a variety of contexts and formats, including mini-lectures and demonstrations, whole class discussion, small group activities, partner activities, and individual student activities. Higher level thinking skills, such as making inferences, making predictions, synthesizing information, and analyzing information and data are emphasized throughout the curriculum at Northeast Elementary School.

**Science-** Northeast Elementary uses an inquiry based approach to teaching science concepts. The curriculum involves students having the opportunity to explore science materials in order to generate discussion and questions about their study of science. The science curriculum will be discussed in more depth in question 4 below (additional curriculum area).

**ELA-** English Language Arts are taught throughout the day at Northeast Elementary. We have an increasing focus in our curriculum on students being able to read and write non-fiction texts at all grade levels. The ELA curriculum will be discussed in more detail in question 2 below.

**Math-** Northeast Elementary teaches students multiple strategies to solve mathematical problems in the areas of geometry, measurement, patterns, number, and numeration, and probability. Students are required to explain, both orally and in writing, how they solved mathematical problems and why they chose a certain method for solving. The math curriculum will be discussed in more length in question 3 below.

**Social Studies-** Northeast Elementary social studies curriculum focuses on different content areas in each grade level. The areas of study build upon each other. In kindergarten students study self, family, and neighborhood. In first grades students study family and immediate community. In second grade students study the extended community and the differences and similarities between urban, suburban, and rural communities. In third grade students focus on community within larger regions, such as countries and continents, with Africa being a major area of emphasis. In third grade there is an emphasis on map skills. Grade four focuses on the geography of New York State, the Iroquois, and the history of the USA with an emphasis on the history of New York state from the 1500's to the Revolutionary War. In fifth grade, students focus on The United States Constitution, immigration, geography, and Pre-Columbian civilization. Throughout the study of social studies in all grades, students are taught to analyze information and understand the world through multiple perspectives.

**Health-**Northeast's health curriculum focuses on students learning the information they need to keep themselves healthy and safe. Students learn about the importance of healthy eating and nutrition and the importance of exercise. In the past, we have had whole school programs where students tabulated the amount of miles they each walked so as a school we could collectively "walk across America." Students have also had the opportunity to keep an eating log and were challenged to eat a certain number of foods from each of the different food groups. At the upper grades, Northeast students also spend time learning about their bodies as they grow and develop through units on puberty and reproduction.

**Physical Education-** Northeast Elementary students participate in physical education class twice for forty minutes over the course of a 4 day rotational cycle. There is an emphasis on wellness and cardiovascular health for all students. Teachers design lessons where students spend the bulk of the time actively moving in order to provide students with aerobic exercise. Units taught include gymnastics, hockey, yoga, line dancing, tumbling, circus skills, and football.

**Music-** Northeast Elementary school students participate in general music class once a week for forty minute over the course of a 4 day rotational schedule. Students learn how to sing traditional American songs but also songs from around the world. In addition to singing, students learn how to listen to and appreciate music from around the world. The program also integrates movement, dance, and rhythm into the curriculum and students are physically active during the class. Students also have the opportunity to play various instruments in music class. In addition to general music class, Northeast students also have the opportunity to play a stringed instrument starting in third grade and a band instrument starting in fourth grade. Students receive group lessons once a week for twenty minutes in both band and strings. They also practice together as a full band and orchestra ensemble.

**Art-** Northeast Elementary school students participate in art class once a week for forty minutes over the course of a 4 day rotational schedule. Students use a variety of art materials, mediums, and techniques to create art pieces. They receive direct instruction on a variety of art techniques. Students traditionally work in the medium of clay and create tiles, sculptures, and functional pieces as well. Student work is traditionally displayed around the Ithaca community at such places as a local retirement community, the local co-op grocery store, as well as the local mall.

Overall, the music, art, and physical education programs are an important part of Northeast Elementary's school success.

## **2. Reading/English:**

At Northeast Elementary students have an opportunity to work on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills throughout the school day. Classroom teachers use small group instruction to teach students decoding and comprehension in the primary grades. Students are explicitly taught reading strategies in guided reading groups that are formed and re-formed based on student assessment results. Many classrooms have systems where each student has a large collection of books that are right at their instructional level. This gives students the opportunity to practice their reading fluency on texts that are at an appropriate level. Many classrooms also integrate technology using the Raz-Kids reading program and Reading A-Z in order to have students reading texts at their instructional level. In the upper grades, reading comprehension strategies continue to be explicitly taught and students who still need work on decoding, work with both classroom teachers and teaching specialists on decoding skills.

In terms of writing, students learn how to write personal narratives using the Lucy Caulkin's "small moment" approach to writing. Students learn how to write non-fiction stories that use specific details. Students also write in a wide variety of other genres and spend time writing informational text (for example, students may write a piece about a given topic such as how to make a grilled cheese sandwich), poetry, compare and contrast essays, as well as document based essays that require students to synthesize information from several documents into an essay.

Students who are identified as reading below grade level receive various levels of supports and services. It is important to note that at Northeast Elementary, every classroom teacher is actively involved in accelerating the progress of students who are behind in reading. The classroom teacher works in collaboration with reading specialists, ESL teachers, and special education teachers to design interventions for every student who is below benchmark. Students begin receiving these interventions in kindergarten, where the focus is on phonemic awareness, phonics, key sight words, letter identification, and early literacy behaviors such as left to right directionality and voice to print match. Students who are behind in reading receive extra small group instruction and individual tutoring from both classroom teachers and teaching specialists. Students receive explicit instruction on decoding and comprehension. Students who are below benchmark are assessed on a regular basis to determine reading levels. Classroom teachers and teaching specialists collaborate to ensure that students have a large amount of time to read texts at their instructional levels in order to promote reading fluency.

### **3. Mathematics:**

Northeast Elementary uses the Everyday Math Program to help teach our math curriculum. Because the program is used consistently from kindergarten through fifth grade, students benefit greatly from this consistent approach to math instruction. The curriculum includes a focus on multiple content strands including number and numeration, geometry, patterns, functions, and algebra, measurement, and data and probability. In teaching the curriculum, Northeast Elementary teachers emphasize certain principles. First, teachers focus on real life problem solving and emphasize the application of math concepts in real world situations. Numbers, skills, and concepts are not presented in isolation, but are linked to situations and contexts that are relevant to everyday lives. Teachers also are mindful in mathematics to balance their instruction so that lessons include whole group instruction, as well as small group, partner, and individual activities. These activities balance teacher-directed instruction with opportunities for open-ended, hands on explorations. Our curriculum also requires students to explain and discuss their mathematical thinking in their own words. These opportunities to verbalize their strategies and thinking give children the chance to learn from each other. Teachers emphasize basic skills practice at Northeast Elementary. Students learn multiple methods for basic skills practice and review. Students engage in written fact drills (mad minutes), mental math routines, practice with fact triangles, homework, and a wide variety of math games to master basic skills.

Students who are performing below grade level are identified based on district assessments, everyday math unit assessments, and state assessments. Students who are below grade level receive extra support from the classroom teacher. Students receive extra instruction in small groups (pre-teaching and re-teaching), and also through individual conferencing with classroom teachers. Northeast's Math Teaching Assistant and special education teachers also work to accelerate the progress of students through pre-teaching, re-teaching, and co-teaching. Northeast also offers an extended day school program three days a week for one hour after school for certain students who are in need of additional support.

### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Northeast Elementary's science curriculum supports our mission to provide a rigorous academic program for all of our students. All of our science units are inquiry based investigations that are guided by overarching questions for each unit. In pursuing answers to these questions, students usually start with an open ended exploration of the science materials for each given science unit, followed by a guided discussion about their discoveries. Teachers use FOSS science kits to teach science content and skills. The kits in kindergarten pertain to trees, woods, and paper. The kits in first grade are about plants and balance and motion. The kits in second grade relate to weather, solids and liquids, and insects. In third grade the kits used are about the human body and earth science. Grade four kits are about magnetism and electricity and the structures of life. The kits in grade five cover the topics of landforms and levers and pulleys.

In delivering the science curriculum, we incorporate multiple instructional principles. We incorporate hands on active learning as we believe that children learn science concepts best by having hands on experiences with a variety of objects and materials. These hands on activities are motivating for students and stimulate their inquiry and curiosity. Students investigate, experiment, collect data, organize and analyze their results, and develop conclusions based on the work they have done. Northeast teachers also do investigations with students that require them to use all of their five senses in order to promote greater understanding and to differentiate instruction to appeal to different student modalities. Northeast also incorporates a high degree of student to student collaboration in its science program. Students oftentimes work in groups with each member contributing to the data collection, data analysis, and the reporting of the results. Students are then challenged to discuss and reflect upon their data in both verbal and written form. This process of gathering, interpreting and analyzing, and reporting on scientific data promote the higher level thinking skills we expect at Northeast Elementary.

## **5. Instructional Methods:**

Northeast Elementary School differentiates instruction in a variety of manners. Each student is individually assessed on their instructional reading level. Teachers use this information to group students into flexible and fluid instructional groups for direct reading instruction. Students are re-assessed frequently, with some students below benchmark being assessed on a weekly basis. This allows reading groups to be re-formed on a regular basis. Spelling instruction is also differentiated, as students have different word lists, based on how they did on a pre-assessment given by the teacher. ESL students at Northeast receive differentiated instruction to meet their needs. Oftentimes the ESL teacher will pre-teach upcoming vocabulary and content to ESL students in order to increase their background knowledge so that they can better access instruction in the general education classroom. Classroom teachers and ESL teachers collaborate to integrate charts, graphic displays, physical objects, pictures, and drawings into classroom presentations in order to support comprehension for ESL students. Northeast teachers also differentiate their instruction by giving students choice in how they demonstrate their learning. For example, in order to show comprehension of a certain text, students will be able to choose from several options such as creating a PowerPoint slide and presenting it to the class, writing an essay about the text, or creating a brochure about the book, which combines art work and text. Northeast teachers also differentiate by using a wide variety of teaching formats. For example, it is common to see a teacher use a mini-lecture and demonstration, whole class discussion, small group work time, partner work time, and individual work time over the course of one day. These different learning contexts help differentiate instruction and appeal to a wide variety of learners. Also of note the use of these different contexts allows teachers to have time for individual conferences with students and to work with children in small groups on a variety of tasks. This further allows for differentiated instruction as teachers tailor their feedback, prompts, and praise to individual student needs. This structure is further enhanced by the use of co-teaching, where an ESL, reading, special education, or speech teacher is working right in the classroom so that both the classroom teacher and the teaching specialist can engage in this highly individualized form of instruction.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Northeast Elementary strives to make its professional development directly related to student achievement. There is currently two main staff development initiatives under way at Northeast Elementary tied directly to student achievement. Currently, all teachers are reading Teach Like A Champion by Doug Lemov. The book discusses specific teaching techniques that promote high expectations for all students. Schools in New York State that have embraced these techniques have consistently been among the top achieving schools in the state. Teachers read specific sections of the book and then watch videos of actual classroom lessons of teachers using the techniques discussed in the book. Teachers then are expected to try and intentionally use the techniques most powerful to them in their class. At the next faculty meeting where the text is discussed, teachers have an opportunity to share their experiences trying these techniques, in addition to studying and discussing new techniques. We also hope to integrate a peer coaching component to this process, where teachers can visit each other's classes and give feedback to each other as they implement techniques from the Teach Like A Champion book.

The other main staff development initiative at Northeast involves job embedded staff development through a data analysis and intervention project. Grade level teams at Northeast have identified skills that are fundamental and integral for students to learn at their given grade level and identified the specific students at each grade level that are not yet reaching the benchmark for the given skill. Teachers are in the process of designing interventions that they are implementing with the students below benchmark. They are also in the process of identifying progress monitoring tools to track student progress. Teachers meet regularly in teams to discuss the interventions, alter or adjust teaching techniques as needed, and review data on students. This process helps teachers further refine their use of data to inform their instruction.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Northeast Elementary School practices a "distributed leadership" model. Northeast's principal for the past eight years, Jeff Tomasik, firmly believes that collaborative leadership is the best way to get high levels of student achievement. One of the cornerstones of this collaborative relationship between administration and staff has been a once monthly "Principal's Advisory Group." This group includes the principal, one teacher from each grade level, a paraprofessional, and several specialist teachers. Membership rotates from month so over the course of the year all staff who are interested can participate in Principal's Advisory Group. During the meetings, staff have an opportunity to bring up any concern they wish- be it a curricular concern around changing district assessments and how we identify students for support, or a more logistical concern around an issue such as school clocks being fixed in a timely manner. Some concerns involving curriculum, assessment or instruction lead to the creation of ad hoc groups or lead to a larger discussion at a full faculty meeting before a decision is made.

The principal also uses this forum to get input on a variety of management and scheduling issues that impact student achievement. For example, the principal has asked for input from the Principals Advisory Group on how to best schedule all school assemblies to minimize impacts on instruction. Other examples include getting teacher input on how to best implement a school wide program that identifies selected students and works on improving their attendance at school.

Another prime example of Northeast's distributed leadership model in action is during the yearly creation of the instructional schedule. While the principal has the final say in the master schedule, the creation of a master schedule is a highly collaborative process that involves teachers from each grade level, art, music, and PE teachers, as well specialist teachers such as reading teachers. The parameters used to create the schedule are defined by the school district. It is up to the Northeast scheduling committee to create the master schedule based on the parameters.



## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: New York State Math Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	79	100	93	91	84
exceeds proficiency	49	49	57	52	60
Number of students tested	57	65	69	64	68
Percent of total students tested	98	96	96	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	4	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	58	100	62	76	54
exceeds proficiency	42	36	23	24	38
Number of students tested	12	11	13	17	13
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency			70		
exceeds proficiency			30		
Number of students tested			10		
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency		100	100		
exceeds proficiency		50	38		
Number of students tested		18	11		
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	86	100	96	100	96
exceeds proficiency	67	55	64	57	84
Number of students tested	21	31	25	21	25
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: New York State ELA Assessment Grade 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	75	89	82	82	80
exceeds proficiency	32	19	22	28	22
Number of students tested	53	62	67	61	65
Percent of total students tested	80	91	93	98	97
Number of students alternatively assessed			1	1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed			2	2	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	64	73	46	63	50
exceeds proficiency	27	0	8	19	14
Number of students tested	11	11	13	16	14
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency			33	30	20
exceeds proficiency			8	10	0
Number of students tested			12	10	10
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency		86			
exceeds proficiency		14			
Number of students tested		14			
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	90	93	86	100	91
exceeds proficiency	58	19	27	37	27
Number of students tested	19	27	22	19	22
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: New York State Math Assessment Grade 4 Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010

Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	88	94	93	87	91
exceeds proficiency	57	56	58	52	56
Number of students tested	65	71	71	61	64
Percent of total students tested	100	96	95	95	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3	0	0	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	4	0	0	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	62	89	83	79	62
exceeds proficiency	39	44	39	21	38
Number of students tested	13	18	18	14	13
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency		79	60		
exceeds proficiency		36	10		
Number of students tested		14	10		
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency	86	100	91		
exceeds proficiency	43	60	55		
Number of students tested	14	10	11		
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	100	96	100	89	95
exceeds proficiency	74	70	75	68	71
Number of students tested	27	23	24	19	21
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: New York State ELA Assessment Grade 4

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	85	79	83	88	83
exceeds proficiency	12	10	26	36	34
Number of students tested	60	68	66	56	58
Percent of total students tested	91	92	88	91	87
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	4	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	60	47	76	71	50
exceeds proficiency	0	12	18	21	8
Number of students tested	10	17	17	14	12
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency		21	30		
exceeds proficiency		0	0		
Number of students tested		14	10		
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	96	90	95	88	100
exceeds proficiency	22	15	30	50	40
Number of students tested	23	20	20	16	15
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: New York State Math Assessment Grade 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	88	92	87	87	92
exceeds proficiency	49	61	40	45	47
Number of students tested	74	62	60	67	66
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	1	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	75	67	71	65	70
exceeds proficiency	25	33	14	25	0
Number of students tested	16	12	14	20	10
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency	36			30	
exceeds proficiency	29			10	
Number of students tested	11			10	
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency	83				
exceeds proficiency	50				
Number of students tested	12				
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	91	100	94	96	100
exceeds proficiency	65	78	61	50	53
Number of students tested	23	18	18	24	15
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: New York State ELA Assessment Grade 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	73	89	84	90	87
exceeds proficiency	25	31	15	26	22
Number of students tested	67	61	61	62	60
Percent of total students tested	88	100	98	91	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	2	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	0	0	3	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	50	67	57	71	70
exceeds proficiency	21	0	7	12	0
Number of students tested	14	12	14	17	10
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency	46			42	
exceeds proficiency	15			8	
Number of students tested	13			12	
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency					
exceeds proficiency					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	82	100	79	95	100
exceeds proficiency	24	41	21	26	20
Number of students tested	17	17	19	19	10
<b>NOTES:</b>					

11NY8

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	85	95	91	88	89
exceeds proficiency	52	56	52	49	55
Number of students tested	196	198	200	193	198
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	3	4	3	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	2	2	2	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	66	85	73	71	61
exceeds proficiency	32	39	27	23	28
Number of students tested	38	41	45	52	36
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency	64	73	64	54	71
exceeds proficiency	36	33	16	21	13
Number of students tested	14	15	25	24	24
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency		100			
exceeds proficiency		40			
Number of students tested		10			
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency	47	70	52	43	38
exceeds proficiency	16	22	13	14	4
Number of students tested	19	27	31	28	24
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency	77	100	96	83	96
exceeds proficiency	40	62	36	11	59
Number of students tested	35	37	25	18	22
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	93	99	97	95	97
exceeds proficiency	69	65	67	58	72
Number of students tested	71	72	67	64	61
<b>NOTES:</b>					

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# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
meets proficiency	77	85	83	87	83
exceeds proficiency	26	20	21	30	26
Number of students tested	180	191	194	179	183
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	3	3	4	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	2	2	2	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
meets proficiency	54	60	61	68	56
exceeds proficiency	17	5	11	17	8
Number of students tested	35	40	44	47	36
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
meets proficiency	71	59	52	64	63
exceeds proficiency	29	6	4	9	8
Number of students tested	14	17	25	22	24
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
meets proficiency		100			
exceeds proficiency		10			
Number of students tested		10			
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
meets proficiency	33	22	25	34	35
exceeds proficiency	6	0	3	3	0
Number of students tested	18	27	32	29	26
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
meets proficiency	71	89	71		
exceeds proficiency	5	7	0		
Number of students tested	21	28	17		
<b>6. Asian</b>					
meets proficiency	88	94	87	94	92
exceeds proficiency	34	23	26	37	30
Number of students tested	59	64	61	54	47
<b>NOTES:</b>					

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