



## **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 configuration 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 (AYP) or its equivalent 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 AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be 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 foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. 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.
11. 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 54 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
20 Middle/Junior high schools  
15 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
89 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 8625

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

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	56	53	109
1	60	41	101
2	58	67	125
3	50	61	111
4	43	65	108
5	42	56	98
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>			<b>652</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
3 % Asian  
56 % Black or African American  
2 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
38 % White  
1 % 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 2011-2012 school year: 5%

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

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	33
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	33
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	652
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.05
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	5

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 6

Number of non-English languages represented: 4

Specify non-English languages:

1. Vietnamese, 2. Dinka, 3. Spanish, 4. Kiswahili

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 50%  
 Total number of students who qualify: 327

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.

The calculation above was based on enrollment as of October 1, 2012. Presently, the student enrollment is 619 and the free/reduced count is 53%.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 0%  
 Total number of students served: 0

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	<u><b>Full-Time</b></u>	<u><b>Part-Time</b></u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>31</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>55</u>	<u>7</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:

21:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

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 \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_ **0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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W. H. Council Traditional School is located in Mobile, Alabama on the southern end of the state, bordering Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. The school is nestled in a community approximately one mile from downtown Mobile and the state docks, near the global shipbuilding giant, Austal USA. Mobile has a population of over 400,000 people, and our school system is the largest in the state, serving over 60,000 students. Council has been an elementary school for 102 years; however, the school was reconstituted as a magnet school 24 years ago. Council was established as a magnet school to attract a diverse culture of students to a program with high academic standards and excellent enrichment opportunities. The presence of Council Traditional Magnet School was a turning point for a community undergoing vast economic and cultural challenges. Council has become a beacon of hope for an African-American community that is affectionately referred to as “Down the Bay.” The economic structure of the community has improved, and businesses both large and small have begun to return to the area. Recently, Airbus, a leading aircraft manufacturer has made our community in Mobile its home. There is a sense of pride surrounding the area and school that has served such great legends as Henry “Hank” Aaron. The community has embraced the high standards set by Council School and supports the school’s educational efforts.

In January of each year magnet school applications become available online on the Mobile County Public School’s website. Parents are notified by mail if their children have been selected to attend Council. The Council community is very proud of its legacy as a school of academic excellence and boasts the motto: “Choose the challenge, choose excellence, choose Council.” Council has been an International Baccalaureate (IB) school since December, 2008. IB is an international education program designed to help students develop into inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who support the school’s overall mission: “Council Traditional School is a school of choice that generates students who excel academically and are responsible, courteous citizens. This will be accomplished by providing a challenging curriculum in an atmosphere of high expectations. With the fulfillment of this mission, W. H. Council Traditional School will generate a community of global learners.”

Council was re-authorized in 2011 as the only primary years (K-5) IB World School in Mobile County. On October 1, 2012, the enrollment at Council was 652, with approximately 52% of our students qualifying for free or reduced-priced meals. The average class size is 21 students. All of the teachers are highly-qualified. Staff development is ongoing and integral to continued professional growth. Teachers are required to receive at least 30 hours of IB training every three years. The majority of our teachers acquire a total of 50 hours of training in core subjects each year. Additionally, staff development is embedded in the school’s operations as each grade level has one hour of collaborative meeting time each week.

We firmly believe in providing students with data-driven instruction, and therefore, we hold regular data and problem-solving team (PST) meetings to implement the strategies of Response to Instruction (RtI). Council teachers use an inquiry-based approach to instruction, which is the foundation of the IB Primary Years Programme (IBPYP). Inquiry-driven education begins with basic knowledge and looks for possible ways to enhance learning. The innovative approach encourages students to explore, wonder, question, experiment, and play with possibilities.

Students’ educational experiences are further enhanced through several enrichment programs that take place during the school day: the Spanish language program, comprehensive science lab, art program, and orchestral strings program. To showcase talented students, we sponsor several school-wide events including our geography tour, a community-driven holiday Read-A-Thon, a Talents Unlimited writing fair, geography bee, spelling bee, Black History month activities, and family nights for Spanish, science, and math programs. We recognize student leadership and academic excellence through quarterly honor

roll assemblies, student council, and National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS). Extracurricular activities include musical keyboarding, dance, Coastal Kids, Girl Scouts, Council soccer, math team, Engaging Youth in Engineering (EYE), chess, geology, geography, spelling, First Light marathon, and extended day care, which further engage our students.

Council parents receive state and county recognition for their commitment to our school. For the past 23 years, we acquired 100% parent and teacher PTA enrollment. The PTA program recently received one of only three national grants awarded in the state, entitled "Take Your Family to School Week." Parents are highly visible and eagerly participate as Rolling Readers, classroom coordinators, members of committees, volunteers, and chaperones to enhance the school culture.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

A. The Alabama Reading and Math Test Plus (ARMT Plus) is a criterion-referenced test developed by the Alabama State Department of Education to measure student achievement toward skills presented in the Alabama Courses of Study, which define minimal mastery curricular standards at each grade level. ARMT Plus is administered system-wide in grades three through eight, to assess student progress in reading and math. In addition, students in grades five and seven must take the science component. The test includes selected items from the *Stanford Achievement Test* (SAT 10), which correlate to Alabama state content standards in reading and mathematics. The primary purpose of the ARMT Plus is to report individual and subgroup performance, to report relative strengths and weaknesses of individuals and subgroups, and to provide data to study changes in performance over time.

ARMT Plus performance is reported with the following achievement scale:

- Level I—Does not meet academic content standards;
- Level II—Partially meets academic content standards;
- Level III—Meets academic content standards; and
- Level IV—Exceeds academic content standards.

Our school system uses test results for accountability purposes in meeting part of the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

Traditionally, Council students score well above the state standards, and as a faculty and staff, we attribute success to the fact that teachers, parents, and students are committed to adhering to high levels of academic rigor. We strive for excellence and continue to raise the bar from year to year. We disaggregate data, analyze opportunities for improvement, strategize and plan for interventions, and implement strategies to meet the needs of each student.

B. Based on our school status report, W. H. Council Traditional School has met adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading, math, and attendance. This includes African American, white, and disadvantaged student subgroups, who met 100% of the progress goals for the last five years.

Council Traditional School's standardized assessment scores for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade reading has shown that 98-100% of students achieved or exceeded the proficiency level since the 2007-2008 school year. Third-grade students exceeding proficiency ranged from 75-86%, with the lowest results posted during the 2008-2009 school year. Seventy-eight percent of fourth-grade students exceeded proficiency in 2007-2008; however, after a steady yearly increase, 96% of fourth-grade students exceeded proficiency in the 2011-2012 school year. Of our fifth-grade students, 89% exceeded proficiency in 2007-2008 and the percentage rose to 96% in 2011-2012. For third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade reading, between 96-100% of all subgroups met or exceeded proficiency.

Assessment scores for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade math have shown 89-100% of students achieving, or exceeding proficiency since 2007-2008. The percentage of third grade students exceeding proficiency ranged from 60-82% with the lowest results occurring during the 2007-2008 school year. Seventy-three to eighty-seven percent of fourth-grade students exceeded proficiency in math. There was a 21% increase in the number of fifth-grade students exceeding math proficiency between 2007 and 2012. From 2009 until

2012, 100% of the third-grade, disadvantaged subgroup met or exceeded proficiency. Also, 100% of the black subgroup met or exceeded proficiency for two years from 2009-2011. In 2012, 100% of the fourth-grade, disadvantaged and African American subgroups met or exceeded math proficiency. From 2007 until 2011, 100% of the disadvantaged students met or exceeded proficiency. In addition, from 2008-2011, 100% of the black subgroup met or exceeded proficiency.

In 2012, there was a 13.9% gap between the white and African American students in fourth-grade math. General education teachers have developed resources and teaching strategies to incorporate use of manipulatives and real-life situations. These strategies have been shown to bridge gaps in students' mathematical thinking. Each teacher shares his or her accomplishments and challenges with coworkers. Team collaboration and planning helps overcome obstacles to teaching and learning. Our school's math intervention teacher identified students who would benefit from intervention and tutoring. Intervention students meet four times each week for 30-45 minutes daily. Students who receive intervention or tutoring assistance make gains due to extra opportunities to master course objectives. In addition, students benefit from the 8:1 student-teacher ratio. Every two weeks, at-risk students take the STAR math and reading assessments. This assessment identifies reading and math skills that students have or have not mastered. Information derived from the tests is then used to guide intervention and classroom instruction.

Tutoring students met three days per week during first semester and twice per week during second semester. Students in tutoring classes receive one hour of needs-based, intensive instruction with a certified teacher. Tutoring classes have an average student-to-teacher ratio of 10:1, which allows teachers to maximize instructional time. General education teachers collaborate with tutoring teachers by completing needs checklists based upon classroom performance. The checklists assist tutoring teachers in creating individualized plans for their students. Parents receive progress reports for their children (child) every two weeks and are encouraged to regularly conference with teachers to monitor progress. Monthly data meetings are held with supervisors, teachers, intervention teachers, and specialists to brainstorm and analyze deficits and develop appropriate and effective strategies to overcome them. The three-way communication has shown to be rewarding and instrumental in the tutoring program's success.

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

Collecting and analyzing student achievement data is critical to our instructional practices at W. H. Council Traditional School. Council Traditional School strives to move students beyond county-established EQT expectations. Every professional at Council uses assessment data to analyze student performance and drive instruction to meet the needs of all students. Council uses system-created and mandated End of Quarter Tests (EQTs) as an academic indicator to measure quarterly academic progress toward state and local standards. The EQTs contain questions relating to the objectives teachers taught each quarter for a specific course. Item analysis of objectives mastered and those needing improvement prompts us to share instructional strategies across grade levels. EQTs are administered according to the MCPSS county-wide schedule at the end of each quarter. Students in kindergarten through grade five are tested in reading and mathematics, and students in grades four and five test in science as well. In grades kindergarten through three, the EQT counts as 10% of the final quarter average; in grades four and five, the EQT counts as 20% of the final quarter average. The EQT results are used to improve student achievement by:

- providing teachers with data regarding students who did not master specific skills and require intervention;
- focusing re-teaching and tutoring efforts by using test-specific information;
- providing principals with comprehensive assessment information about specific courses in their schools;

- providing central office staff with information regarding curriculum development and revisions;
- providing principals with information needed to develop appropriate staff development opportunities;
- providing parents with information regarding their child's level of proficiency on objectives taught;
- providing teachers with formative assessment results;
- assessing the effectiveness of the strategies contained in the Continuous Improvement Plan;
- identifying potential gaps in instruction for the school/grade/content areas;
- benchmarking/comparing the proficiency of schools with similar demographics; and
- providing a standardized objective score for all students across the system on the same assessment.

All teachers participate in data meetings with our principal, guidance counselor, reading coach, and math coach to assess student progress and determine strategies to enhance student achievement. During data meetings, we review EQT objectives, STAR Reading and Math results, DIBELS (K-2) scores, ARMT Plus test results, classroom activities and tests, progress reports, report card grades, and individual student progress. Disaggregating the data helps us identify struggling students and provide them opportunities to participate in reading and math intervention, academic assistance through after-school tutoring, and Extended Day Program. The Extended Day program is unlike any other program offered in the county. It is an extension of Council's school day offering academic assistance, help with homework, and enrichment activities from certified professionals. Due to the popular academic extensions, Extended Day maintains an extensive enrollment waiting list. Student achievement is communicated to parents at conferences and meetings, through personal telephone conversations and emails, through regular progress reports, and through quarterly report card distribution. In addition, all parents of students in MCPSS schools can access student grades through iNow, the system grade book software. Our school maintains a reputation of honoring an open-door policy with students, parents, and community.

Parents and community stakeholders are frequently and systematically informed of academic achievement, goals, and testing data. At the beginning of each year, our administrator communicates AYP status and celebrates the academic successes with all stakeholders. Information is communicated through regular parent bulletins, open house events, a school dashboard displayed in the main entrance, and various parent meetings. The school's eCIP (electronic Continuous Improvement Plan) is available to all stakeholders. Parents of students in testing grades meet with each child's teacher to receive copies of the student testing reports from the previous year's administration. Before spring testing, the intervention teachers, school-system specialists, administrator, and counselor meet with parents to explain ARMT Plus testing procedures and their importance.

W. H. Council students learn the genuine rewards of working hard to reach and exceed goals. The expectations for learners are high. The rigorous academics, coupled with IBPYP and our Extended Day program, result in many rich learning experiences which Council students, parents, and teachers proudly share and celebrate.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Council teachers seize opportunities to share lessons, ideas, and strategies within the school, the system, and in the national education arena in an effort to improve the academic success of students and to expand the professional knowledge base of the faculty. Teachers possess expertise in many academic areas. The state of Alabama adopted national math Common Core standards this year. The local adoption process,

led by a team of teachers representing each grade level, developed a professional learning community in which they read and analyzed professional literature and demonstrated and critiqued lessons, which aimed to improve the efficacy of classroom instruction. Information garnered from the group experiences was imparted to our staff through faculty and grade-level meetings.

Council has been an authorized IB school for the past four years, and this authorization has piqued the interest of other schools in our system and state. Consequently, Council has become a school where principals and educators come to learn more about the IB program and processes through demonstration lessons and open discussions. The IBPYP supports ongoing staff development and requires each teacher to participate through inquiry-based teaching methods. Additionally, teachers participate in weekly meetings to discuss IB-related concepts, and they freely share successful IB lessons on the Online Curriculum Center (OCC) website.

We invite community members and other schools to join us for events including a yearly Talents Fair and fifth-grade IB Exhibition. Talents Unlimited is a nationally recognized critical and creative skills model developed within the Mobile County Public School System. Our school, a demonstration site, houses two national trainers. Through the IB Exhibition process, fifth-grade students develop and present their own units of inquiry, each with global significance. Exhibition is a comprehensive and collaborative project-based model, facilitated by the fifth-grade teachers with the support of the entire staff.

Council educators maintain memberships in a variety of local, state, and national professional organizations including the Alabama Education Association, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Science Teacher Association, local and international reading associations, and the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. Experiences within professional organizations allows faculty members the opportunity to share benefits gained with the school's stakeholders.

#### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

Faculty and staff at Council Traditional School engage families and community in our academic and social programs to enrich student success. Teachers work diligently to build strong connections between home and school and to provide the communication and support necessary for each student to reach his or her educational potential. Parents receive regular classroom newsletters that offer insight into objectives presented at school and parental suggestions for providing additional support and practice at home. Council's principal also distributes a monthly newsletter containing the month's academic focus and recommendations for parental involvement to further promote student success.

During the first month of the school year, W. H. Council Traditional School holds an annual meeting for all parents. The leadership and staff at Council strongly believe in the importance of parental involvement, and therefore, we establish measures to offer flexibly scheduled parent meetings. Through meetings, parents will learn several curricular areas, including: reading, math, language, science, social studies, physical education, art, Spanish, music, and computer science. In addition, parents learn procedures for scheduling parent-teacher conferences, and gain information about participating in decisions related to their children's education.

In 2011, Council students participated in the "Nickels for Nails" campaign, a youth engagement coin collection drive to support the local efforts of Habitat for Humanity. Student contributions enabled Habitat for Humanity to build a home in the Hillsdale community. During National Food Bank Week, Council partners with the Bay Area Food Bank to collect and donate canned goods to needy families. Our school also hosts the annual Karen B. Chapman Penny Drive to honor the memory of a former teacher, and the proceeds are donated to the Southern Cancer Center Foundation. In addition, students participate in the annual St. Jude's Math-A-Thon, the proceeds of which are donated to cancer research. Finally, each spring, students recruit blood donors for the annual Red Cross Blood Drive held in the school gymnasium.

Service projects play an important role in molding our students into caring world citizens, who contribute to those in need. Through the dedication and determination of the entire Council community, we have created an atmosphere that honors a long history of developing students who exceed academically and are responsible, courteous citizens.

# **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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## **1. Curriculum:**

The Council Traditional School curriculum adheres to the Core Curriculum as specified in the Alabama State Courses of Study and expands to incorporate the five essential elements of the IBPYP. Teachers strive to move students through a challenging program to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and reflective individuals who will create a better world for themselves and future generations.

The language arts program centers around the Alabama Language Arts Course of Study to incorporate IB thinking skills that include acquisition of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, dialectical thought and meta-cognition in reading, grammar, spelling, handwriting, and writing. Teachers develop lessons and use a variety of instructional techniques to encourage students to learn, explore, and progress through the learning continuum.

The Council faculty is committed to mathematical instruction that teaches students to think and reason effectively, solve problems accurately, flexibly, and efficiently. We encourage students to apply mathematical concepts to solve real-life situations and communicate clearly using mathematical language and representations. Lesson plans include activities that build critical-thinking skills and address the national Common Core Curriculum standards.

Council's social studies curriculum focuses on history, geography, economics, and daily living activities. Instructional activities provide students opportunities to connect their world to the larger world community. We emphasize acquisition of new skills and promote higher-order thinking skills. Patriotism, courtesy, respect for others, responsibility, and citizenship are integral parts of the curriculum.

The science lab enhances our classroom science curriculum by focusing on hands-on inquiry using the scientific method to drive instruction. The curriculum, based on the Mobile County Public School System's pacing guides and the Alabama State's Science Courses of Study, encompasses a variety of instructional strategies. All students (K-5) receive weekly instruction in a designated science lab with a dedicated teacher, where the hands-on, inquiry-based experiences enrich classroom instruction. IB units of inquiry are supported by activities within the lab curriculum. Fifth-grade students compete in a formal Science Fair with judges from throughout the county. Families are encouraged to participate in Family Science Night, when we showcase our comprehensive science program. Science-related extracurricular activities include Engaging Youth through Engineering (EYE); a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) initiative; and Alabama Coastal Foundation's Coastal Kids Quiz, an academic competition between area schools to promote lifelong conservation and environmental awareness. Our science lab teacher applied for and recently received a \$1,000 Toshiba America Foundation grant to establish a K-5 composting program.

The visual and performing arts components of our curriculum espouse the belief that students are multi-talented. Students are encouraged to participate and explore individual talents through artistic endeavors with activities designed to develop the students' appreciation of the wonder and beauty of the world and its people.

Students in grades kindergarten through four receive music instruction through a school system music teacher. Music classes meet weekly and cover a wide range of musical topics that familiarize students with rhythm, melody, orchestral instruments, singing, and matching pitch. In addition, since 2002, Council has enjoyed a partnership with the Mobile Symphony Orchestra (MSO), who sponsors professional MSO musicians to provide students with a wide variety of musical experiences, including stringed instruments.

Council's P. E. program centers on developing the whole child, academically, emotionally, and physically. Students are taught to live a healthy lifestyle, to exhibit sportsmanship, and are exposed to various lifelong activities in recreational game units. Units on health and nutrition are designed to ensure that students make healthy choices and maintain a balanced lifestyle. Rock wall activities promote problem-solving and decision-making skills. Our P. E. program involves students and their families in local charity and community events.

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

Implementation of the *Reading Street* textbook series is the system-mandated core of our reading curriculum. Teachers develop and display concept boards for weekly reading selections that serve as comprehensive overviews for each text unit and detail vocabulary and skill or strategy objectives. In addition, teachers in kindergarten through grade two display sound and spelling wall charts use as instructional tools. Instructional activities, often in the form of interactive centers, promote phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development. Upper-grade teachers incorporate novel studies to promote collaboration, an appreciation of authentic literature, and reinforcement of reading skills and behaviors outlined in the local and state curricula. Writing is routinely integrated into the instructional program at Council, and teachers expect students to read and write daily to apply skills taught. Students are regularly afforded opportunities to compose written pieces to respond to material read.

The Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) stresses the importance of developing fluent and proficient readers. Teachers develop fluency through solid instruction, high expectations, positive practice, and ongoing progress monitoring. Teachers employ large- and small-group methods to deliver instruction, and incorporate essential vocabulary and graphic organizers into follow-up activities. Extension activities, including IB units of inquiry and Talents Unlimited exercises, promote transfer of knowledge and synthesis and build vocabulary and language skills. Teachers also incorporate listening, speaking, and non-verbal communication into the reading program. In addition, we encourage student participation in extracurricular activities including the annual Young Author's Conference and the PTA Reflections program.

We collect data to analyze student achievement and diagnose students in need of intervention and/or enrichment. Students receive intensive intervention through a combination of in-class and pull-out models to differentiate instruction. A gifted education specialist provides indirect services to over 100 identified Council students. Services include independent studies that address underachievement strategies and social and emotional development of the gifted. A strong foundation of early literacy skills and comprehension strategies provide all students opportunities to successfully develop the skills, attitudes, concepts, and knowledge needed to become internationally minded, life-long learners.

## **3. Mathematics:**

At Council Traditional School, teachers utilize a balanced approach in math instruction. The Alabama Course of Study, which embraces the Common Core Standards, provides the framework for the mathematics curriculum. The standards are fundamental and specific and include additional content standards that reflect the philosophy and mission of Council. Mastery of the standards enables students to build a solid foundation of knowledge, skills, and understanding that prepares them for higher-level instruction.

The mathematics curriculum implemented at Council embraces The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards: problem solving, reasoning, proof, connections, and representation. Activities using manipulatives provide an opportunity for inquiry, analytical thinking, and independent problem-solving. Number sense, computation, measurement, and problem solving are addressed through hands-on activities that advance critical-thinking and reasoning skills. Using inquiry as a tool for success, students are challenged to solve problems in large- and small-group activities.

Technology is a key component of the mathematics program at Council. Teachers effectively use technology as a tool to assist students in mastery. *Math in Focus* online products are utilized by students for practice and reinforcement of concepts. Understanding that each group of students possesses a wide range of mathematical aptitude, instructional differentiation is critical. Council teachers assess progress on a regular basis to identify students needing remediation, enrichment, and acceleration.

Students with high aptitudes, who achieve at an accelerated pace are challenged to move beyond the norm to higher levels of mathematics. Participation by fifth graders in the system's Math Team competition, allows high-performing students opportunities for enrichment. Fifth-grade students typically score among the top three schools in the system-wide event.

Instruction is geared toward mastery of standards enabling students to build a solid foundation of knowledge, skills, and understanding in mathematics. Teachers set high expectations for students and are mindful of the needs, interests, and abilities of individual students as they plan lessons, design activities, and provide accommodations to meet the needs of every student.

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

Learning to speak and understand a foreign language benefits higher-order, abstract, and creative-thinking skills, and second-language acquisition is vital to global success and communication. Council Traditional School places strong emphasis on the Spanish language in Kindergarten through fifth grade. Classes are taught by two teachers who are fluent in the language and meet with students twice per week. Students participate in lessons, which are aligned to the Alabama State Curriculum, related to vocabulary, conversation, grammar, and fluency. Spanish classes take place in two different venues: a classroom and a computer laboratory. To enhance the established Spanish curriculum, Talents Unlimited activities and the IB learner profile and attitudes are emphasized. In addition, Spanish is integrated into the regular elementary curriculum with objectives that include the development of listening and speaking skills, and to a lesser degree, reading and writing in Spanish. Our Spanish teachers reinforce basic skills in Spanish and promote cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Students recognize the importance of bilingual education and develop an appreciation for different cultures. Through the efforts and personal experiences of our Spanish teachers, students explore various Spanish-language cultures. Students in all grade levels have opportunities to share the school's mission and motto in Spanish during morning announcements, to speak Spanish throughout the school day, and to perform customary Spanish songs and dances during the culminating language celebration, Family Spanish Night.

In the computer laboratory setting, students participate in the extensive use of the world-renowned Rosetta Stone language-acquisition software. Students are assigned goals to achieve based on grade-appropriate foreign language standards, and they work independently to achieve those goals. The use of technology in Spanish lab classes provides an engaging vehicle to reinforce the language lessons taught in the Spanish language classroom.

To assist our fifth-grade students in transitioning to middle school where they will receive instruction on multiple languages during sixth grade, we invite foreign language teachers to visit with selected students from their school to share foreign-language experiences with our students.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

The mission of Council Traditional School states: "The mission of W. H. Council Traditional School is to be a school of choice that generates students who excel academically and are responsible, courteous citizens. This will be accomplished by providing a challenging curriculum in an atmosphere of high expectations. With the fulfillment of this mission, W. H. Council Traditional School will generate a community of global learners." This mission is the driving force of instructional methodology at Council.

As an IB school, Council teachers adhere to the premise that we are responsible for providing students with a variety of learning strategies. Inquiry is a widely used instructional method and an important component of the teaching and learning process. Inquiry, initiated by students or teachers, moves the learner from his or her current level of understanding to a new and deeper level. This can be done through exploring, wondering, questioning, experimenting and playing with possibilities, researching and seeking information, or collecting data and reporting findings. Inquiry involves active engagement with the environment in an effort to make sense of the world. Teacher-directed activities explore eight IB-developed key questions: 1) What is it like? 2) How does it work? 3) Why is it like it is? 4) How is it changing? 5) How is it connected to other things? 6) What are the points of view? 7) What is our responsibility? 8) How do we know? Through the exploration of the key questions, we can promote understanding and challenge students to consider relevant and important ideas.

Instructional methodology at Council is based on the understanding that students learn through knowledge acquisition, interaction, and application. Meeting the needs of individual learners as they strive for academic excellence is the goal of every teacher at Council. Academic activities take place in a variety of settings which include one-on-one instruction; peer tutoring; small, flexible groupings; and whole-group instruction. Although Council is a high performing magnet school, teachers are still held to the requirements under RtI. Screening tests are not given to the students that enter this magnet school. Our goals are to provide a successful education for all our students. Students are exposed to high quality classroom instruction as monitored by our school's administration. Universal screening, which is included in Alabama's entire student curriculum, is used three times per year. Students falling below average are referred to the Problem Solving Team for instructional collaboration. Research based interventions are provided, and parents of the students are actively involved in all stages of the instructional interventions. If further evaluation is necessary, the system provides the experts to assist the school. The school's intervention program has been very successful in helping to provide the support and foundation needed by the students.

Technology, a vital learning tool, is integrated across the curriculum. Teachers use interactive white boards to provide instruction and engagement. Students access computers to research, publish student writing, practice math concepts, assess comprehension of independent reading through the Accelerated Reader program, participate in virtual field trips, and for testing and data collection. Fifth-grade students utilize 21<sup>st</sup> century Web 2.0 tools (email, message boards, chat rooms, blogs, etc.) to collaborate and communicate within their peer groups and to participate in classroom activities.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Teachers and staff at Council Traditional School are cognizant of the need for professional growth to ensure students receive a sound education. The ever-changing global community, research on brain development, a diverse population, and advances in technology make it imperative that teachers empower themselves to prepare students to be successful and productive world citizens.

The state-mandated professional educators' evaluation process provides a framework for Council's professional development approach, which includes administrator's classroom observations. Following observations, the teacher and supervisor collaborate to assess instructional performance, celebrate strengths, and identify areas in need of improvement. At the beginning of each year, teachers design a professional learning plan (PLP), complete with specific goals, objectives, activities, and assessment procedures. The PLP process can include opportunities for teachers to participate in large- and/or small-group workshops, demonstrate strengths to peers, lead in-school or system-wide in-service programs, and pursue research and study of instructional techniques. Goals, objectives, and assessment in areas of improvement are monitored, and assistance is provided when needs are identified. The process encourages peer observation of lessons, with opportunities to give and receive constructive feedback.

To grow and develop, the Council staff engages in regular faculty meetings and workshops during the year, including faculty-choice book studies, Talents Unlimited lesson- building sessions, IB debriefings,

and cross-grade level curriculum alignment meetings. The school system and the local in-service center through the University of South Alabama offer workshops geared toward enhancing academic achievement for all students.

The faculty and staff at Council met the rigorous requirements to authorize the school as an IBPYP school. The requirements are designed to ensure that schools are well prepared to implement the program successfully, and once authorized, schools are required to participate in an ongoing process of review and development. Council's staff participates in a wide range of high-quality professional development activities that help support and successfully deliver the six transdisciplinary themes of the Primary Years Programme: 1) Who We Are; 2) Where We Are in Place and Time, 3) How We Express Ourselves; 4) How the World Works; 5) How We Organize Ourselves; and 6) Sharing the Planet. Training in the six themes assists teachers in developing expertise in the method of instructional inquiry. Teachers access information on the IBPYP website to stay abreast of current practices, trends, and policies. The Council staff is committed to lifelong professional growth and development.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Council maintains an inviting and academically challenging learning atmosphere. An understanding that home, school, and community must collaborate to ensure student success is embraced by the faculty. Council immerses students in the academic curriculum and helps them acquire the skills necessary to flourish in a global environment.

Council Traditional School's principal strives to facilitate teacher leaders within the staff. She forms committees using staff leaders in different areas, including serving as an IB coordinator; as math, reading, science, and writing lead teachers; and as national and local trainers, mentors, and advisory professionals. All staff members actively participate throughout the year to preserve Council's phenomenal academic, social, and extracurricular programs.

The principal facilitates the leadership team and monitors the Continuous Improvement Plan three times per year for effectiveness. The team, consisting of teachers, parents, and central-office personnel, recently implemented peer teacher observations to ensure all instructional strategies effectively promote student success.

The principal predicates an open-door policy, and she actively participates in all levels of the educational process. Readily available and highly visible to students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders on a daily basis, the principal models lessons, provides parent and staff in-services, rewards achievements, and resolves conflicts in a professional manner.

During our tenure as the only IBPYP school in Mobile County, teachers have participated in exemplary staff development. Council teachers meet during the summer months to align the IB unit of inquiry planners with the local and state reading, science, and social studies curricula. The staff works on weekends, through holidays, and during summers to ensure that Council's programs continue to challenge and engage students. Our teachers' unwavering diligence is an example of the team spirit and sense of community established at Council Traditional School.

The principal leads with integrity and is determined that all stakeholders participate in the educational process. As a Principal Leader in the school system, presently involved in training other principals on curriculum-related concepts, she attends conferences and workshops to remain current on curriculum, legal and ethical issues, technology, and feeder-pattern activities. The principal is truly absorbed in each student's achievement, and her love for education is evident.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	100	89	90
Level 4	75	82	71	65	60
Number of students tested	100	90	97	104	93
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	100	100	88	85
Level 4	80	76	58	51	38
Number of students tested	50	41	40	41	34
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	100	87	86
Level 4	70	77	57	50	47
Number of students tested	53	48	52	54	49
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					

13AL1

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	99	99	98	98
Level 4	86	76	87	75	80
Number of students tested	100	90	97	104	92
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	98	98	100	96
Level 4	88	71	83	71	67
Number of students tested	50	41	40	41	33
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	98	98	96	98
Level 4	87	63	81	65	73
Number of students tested	53	48	52	54	48
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	98	98	96	95
Level 4	87	80	83	73	75
Number of students tested	89	95	92	86	87
Percent of total students tested	100	99	97	99	97
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	94	97	97	86
Level 4	84	68	74	68	68
Number of students tested	43	38	39	28	28
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	96	96	93	91
Level 4	81	71	74	63	71
Number of students tested	47	50	46	43	45
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4      Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	99	100	98	100
Level 4	96	85	85	90	78
Number of students tested	89	96	94	87	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	98	100	97	100
Level 4	93	80	78	86	62
Number of students tested	43	39	40	28	29
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	100	100	98	100
Level 4	91	82	72	84	65
Number of students tested	47	49	47	43	46
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					

13AL1

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	99	100	100	100	99
Level 4	97	97	98	92	76
Number of students tested	92	91	92	86	92
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	100	100	100
Level 4	93	96	97	81	78
Number of students tested	41	46	32	27	36
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	100	100	98
Level 4	94	96	98	86	66
Number of students tested	49	47	44	43	47
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: ARMT/ARMT Plus

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2011/2011-2012

Publisher: Harcourt-Pearson/Data Recognition Corporation

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	99	100	99	100	100
Level 4	96	93	96	93	89
Number of students tested	92	91	92	86	91
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	97	100	100
Level 4	93	87	91	89	86
Number of students tested	41	46	32	27	36
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	100	98	100	100
Level 4	92	87	93	91	85
Number of students tested	49	47	44	43	46
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b>					