



## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

---

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

---

All data are the most recent year available.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 30 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
9 Middle/Junior high schools  
11 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
50 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7557

### 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: 5
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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	183	177	360
7	179	186	365
8	205	162	367
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>			1092

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
4 % Asian  
7 % Black or African American  
5 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
83 % 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: 4%

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.	30
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	38
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	1072
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

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

Total number of ELL students in the school: 13

Number of non-English languages represented: 3

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Korean, Chinese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10%  
 Total number of students who qualify: 108

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: 7%  
 Total number of students served: 80

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>10</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>26</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>42</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</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>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>41</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>21</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>91</u>	<u>0</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:

27:1

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	97%	96%	96%	94%	95%
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:	_____	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____	0%
Enrolled in a community college	_____	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____	0%
Found employment	_____	0%
Military service	_____	0%
Other	_____	0%
<b>Total</b>	_____	<b>0%</b>

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**

---

Weddington Middle School's mission statement declares that the school will provide, in partnership with family and community, a positive learning environment that will challenge all students to realize their full potential as lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a global society. While it is easy to post these words in each classroom and hang a banner on the front door, Weddington Middle has built a reputation of excellence by truly endorsing these words.

The community of Weddington is located in the northwestern corner of Union County, North Carolina, approximately 15 miles southeast of Charlotte. Weddington Middle School opened in 1998 to relieve the pressure of the tremendous growth experienced in the area. Even with this growth, the area has remained financially stable, with an estimated median household income of \$132,317 and an estimated house value of \$457,913. Over the years, the area's population has expanded to include many socioeconomic and cultural groups. Our school district's lines have been reconfigured three times since opening, which has affected the population of the school and has resulted in an increase in our free and reduced-price lunch numbers. However, this expanding diversity has not hindered our level of success and has helped create a dynamic learning community.

To support the mission statement, Weddington Middle strives to provide a positive learning environment and makes every effort to meet the needs of all students through diverse settings and to focus on the success of students as individuals. While students can be placed in certain classes based on testing for the Academically Intellectual and Gifted program and the Exceptional Children criteria, most teams are a heterogeneous blend of students and abilities. This still allows for individualized instruction in an environment that sets high expectations for each student, without academic labels. Our philosophy has proven successful in building positive, supportive relationships between students and teachers and is validated by our National Blue Ribbon School-worthy academic records. Each year since opening its doors in 1998, Weddington Middle School has been named an Honor School of Excellence, meaning at least 90% of students performed at grade level and the school made adequate yearly progress. For the past several years WMS's test scores have been the highest in the state among traditional public middle schools.

Beyond academic achievements, Weddington Middle provides a varied and comprehensive offering of electives and extracurricular activities. There are many sports teams that meet after school. The school also offers a club program for every student. Students choose a club based on their interests and meet with their clubs regularly throughout the year. By providing an outlet for both academic and supplementary interests, WMS aims for success for each child.

What makes the school even more worthy of National Blue Ribbon School recognition is the fact that these accomplishments were often achieved during extreme situations. During the 2005-2006 school year, our student population exceeded 1,700 (in a school designed to house 850). To accommodate this growth, thirty-eight mobile units were placed on the property, eliminating much of the school's courtyard areas and parking lots. Students traveled to classes that spanned the entire campus, and some rarely saw the inside of the building. This period demonstrated the high quality of staff and students at WMS as well as their dedication to achievement, no matter the circumstances.

The most important part of our mission is creating lifelong learners in a global society, and while Weddington's academic achievements are definitely distinct, it is our philanthropic and globalization efforts that truly prepare and educate students for their future.

The Weddington area is very transient, welcoming families from around the world. To bring all of these cultures together, the school offers three foreign language curricula, including Chinese. Our International

Committee, comprising teachers and parents, hosts festivals and International Clubs, arranges speakers and performances for the student body, and organizes student and teacher travel. These efforts have earned Weddington Middle the International School Award two years in a row.

Other projects that have become tradition at Weddington Middle School include our book drive, which has brought in over 100,000 books for high needs schools in our area and for community programs such as The Literacy Council and the Battered Women's Shelter. Each year, students also raise thousands of dollars to provide Christmas gifts for the students in high poverty areas of our county. Teachers contribute to various charities each month, and our Pennies for Patients have brought in thousands of dollars for cancer research. In collaboration with our PTSO and community, there is an annual BFF (Baskets, Food, and Fun) festival with games and shows for all ages. Last year, this event raised over \$17,000 which helped provide a Smart Board for each classroom and allowed additional staff development to aid our students' 1:1 laptop initiative.

## **PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

---

### **1. Assessment Results:**

The North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests measure achievement of curricular objectives in mathematics and reading comprehension for students in grades 3-8. The end-of-grade tests place a strong emphasis on higher-order thinking skills and are used to demonstrate individual student knowledge specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as well as the knowledge and skills attained by groups of students for school, school system, and state for the ABCs Accountability Program. With the tests' strong emphasis on academic achievement, Weddington Middle aligns instruction accordingly, and our students have always risen to the challenge.

Students taking the North Carolina End-of-Grade tests receive a percentile score, which compares a student's performance to scores taken during a "norming year", a developmental score, which compares a student's score from one year to the next to show growth, and an achievement level score. Four achievement levels (I, II, III, and IV) are reported in each subject area. Students scoring below a level III are not considered proficient in the subject tested. There has been no change in the range of cut scores over the past five years.

**Level I** (approximate cut scores are 325-347 for reading and 332-345 for math): Students performing at this level do not have sufficient mastery of knowledge and skills in the subject area to be successful at the next grade level

**Level II** (approximate cut scores are 348-355 for reading and 346-354 for math): Students performing at this level demonstrate inconsistent mastery of knowledge and skills in the subject area and are minimally prepared to be successful at the next grade level

**Level III** (approximate cut scores are 551-361 for reading and 355-366 for math): Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of the grade-level subject matter and skills and are well-prepared for the next grade level.

**Level IV** (approximate cut scores are 363-379 for reading and 367-383 for math): Students performing at this level consistently perform in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient at grade-level work.

The five year data trend at Weddington Middle is a strong indication of the academic excellence we have come to expect from our students. The school has consistently outscored the county and state on the End of Grades test, and for the past three years, has had the top percentile score of all public middle schools in the state, even as our student population has continued to diversify.

Five years ago, the State Board of Education approved the administration of an updated edition of the End-of-Grade Reading Comprehension Test. This new edition (Edition 3) eliminated the use of the cognition, interpretation, connections, and critical stance categories, embedded experimental sections, and limited the use of selection introductions. Although this new test resulted in a state-wide decrease in the percentage of students attaining Level 3 and above, our school exceeded the county's results by 23%. In the years since, Weddington Middle has worked hard to increase or maintain our achievement levels.

In 2007-2008, after the first administration of the new edition of the Reading Comprehension Test, 86.8% of our students were considered to be performing at grade level (scoring a Level 3 or higher). While these scores were lower than years past, likely due to the changes in the test, it allowed the school to show true growth over the next five years.

However, after the 2007-2008 year, we were unable to truly compare these results to future scores because the Department of Education elected, for the first time, to include all retest scores in the School Performance Data. Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the final achievement level percentiles

take into calculation scores of students who failed to achieve a Level 3 or 4 during the first test administration and were remediated and retested within ten days. With this new computation, our reading proficiency percentage jumped to 93.8% overall, and continued to increase in 2009-2010 to 96.1%, 96.5% in 2010-2011; it decreased slightly to 94.5% in 2011-2012.

When analyzing our tendencies among math scores, the only consistent trend is that while the scores may fluctuate a percentile or two in either direction, our math scores are always higher than our reading scores. In 2007-2008, 93.5% of all students were proficient in math. In 2008-2009, taking into account any retest scores, overall math scores jumped to 98.8%, 98.6% in 2009-2010, 98.8% in 2010-2011, and an incredible 99.3% in 2011-2012. These outstanding scores demonstrate the academic dedication upheld by our staff, students, and community. Last year, this dedication helped us outperform the state by 23.7% in reading and 16.5% in math.

In looking at our reading and math scores from last year, there are no subgroups whose achievement scores signify a gap of 10 percentage points or more. According to our Annual Measureable Objectives (AMOs), all of the students at Weddington Middle School met AMO Proficiency Goals. However, our staff and administration never lower expectations or take for granted our performance. Teachers regularly attend staff development sessions, provide targeted skill lessons, and analyze data to provide effective instruction across the board and while bridging the gap in reading and math skills for all students.

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

Weddington Middle School maintains and consistently uses a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures. During the summer, teachers and administrators consider End of Grade test scores, teacher recommendations, and academic performance information from the previous year for student placement. All students are then pre-assessed in reading and math at the beginning of the year with a locally developed exam derived from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) bank of released test items. (These test items undergo a screening process for bias and reliability through Accountability Services at NCDPI.) In sixth grade, every student is also assessed for aptitude through a district-wide administration of the InView Assessment for Cognitive Ability. InView, developed by McGraw-Hill, provides norm-referenced scores on verbal and non-verbal skills. The scores from this assessment, as well as the pre-tests, reveal students who may require or qualify for further testing. An intervention team is in place to determine what level of assistance may be required for students not performing at grade level. In some cases, students may be tested further for placement in a resource class through the Exceptional Children's Program. Students showing a high level of aptitude may be further screened for placement in gifted or accelerated math or reading classes. The data from pre-assessments and other data from cumulative folders are also used to group students within the core classes.

Once the school year is underway, data are continuously collected on students to inform and improve instruction and student learning. This is done using locally designed benchmark assessments in content area classes. Diagnostic assessments are given to measure student progress on specific goals and objectives of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study using the ClassScape.org Assessment System. ClassScape generates both class and individual reports on student achievement of targeted goals. Compass Learning is another online tool that evaluates student performance throughout the year. It provides lessons that align with specific standards with which students may be struggling and helps students attain greater mastery of the larger learning target. Together, both assessment systems provide comparison and trend data on student progress towards mastering goals.

Aside from using formal testing methods to evaluate student performance, formative assessment data are collected on all students at all levels and continually throughout each school week. Such formative assessments may include: frequent verbal and visual checks for understanding, reading responses, homework, student conferences, and teacher observations of student progress.

To discuss and analyze data collected from all of these types of assessments, teachers meet once a week in both interdisciplinary and content area teams. The interdisciplinary team meeting includes all four core teachers and provides a chance for teachers to discuss the students they share. The content area meeting is a planning time for subject area teachers within a grade level. Both meetings provide opportunities for multiple involved teachers to set learning targets for individual students, to identify students who may be at risk for falling below grade level expectations, and to develop interventions that support these students. Every teacher offers weekly study sessions for their class to support both struggling students and those looking for greater enrichment. There are also daily study hall and small group sessions during the school day. For students needing more remediation, an on-site specialist works with small groups and provides individual assistance for students in the areas that they need.

Through our Parent Alert Module (PAM), parents and students have real time access to students' grades and attendance data. Each parent is given a login to this online portal. Parents also receive hard copies of progress reports every three weeks. Teachers also schedule conferences during their planning periods each day to meet with parents of students who may be struggling. End-of-grade test results are provided for parents at the end of the school year. Each six weeks, as grades are posted, the school reports honor roll recipients in our weekly newsletter, our front hall bulletin board, and the local newspaper. This is a great way to recognize those students who consistently perform well.

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

Weddington Middle has never been afraid to be the first to tackle a new venture, especially when it comes to teaching methods and technology. Six years ago, the school made safety a top priority and installed a magnetic card identification system which allowed all external doors to be locked, and only those with card clearance could enter without checking in. These safeguards earned us a Safe School Award in 2007 and 2008 and was also used as a model for the rest of the district. WMS was also one of the first schools in the area to focus on the positive role of technology in the school, installing SmartBoards and wireless connectivity before many other schools. Many principals from area schools visited Weddington to see benefits of our efforts, and since then, the entire county has invested in this system.

With our technological advancements and our efficient conversion to the Common Core Standards, the administration and staff is often asked to present at workshops and events. Union County hosts an annual Total Quality Share Day where teachers present effective lessons or instructional methods. Over the years, members of our staff have provided workshops on technology integration, globalization techniques, and unique math instruction. Our guidance counselors have twice presented at the North Carolina School Counseling Conference, once on the school's STAR remediation program and once on our anti-bullying Peace-Out, Purple Out campaign. Teachers have also presented workshops throughout the district, the state middle school conference, and the North Carolina Association of Gifted Teachers on topics such as reading across the content areas and problem-based learning. Currently, one of our teachers has been asked to present at NC TIES (a conference showcasing lessons that exhibit use of educational technology and its application to the learning process). This teacher's classes have created marketing projects for a new menu item for the fast food restaurant, Bojangles. Local Bojangles management members have visited with the students and are impressed with their level of knowledge and technology integration.

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

With the support and assistance received, WMS realizes the importance of working collaboratively with families and community. Strategies used to communicate include: progress reports every three weeks, Parent Assistance Module (a computer-based application which keeps parents up-to-date on attendance and grades), regular parent conferences, current teacher websites, email and phone communication, and weekly electronic newsletters. All teachers are required to update their websites weekly with homework and important announcements, while the weekly newsletter is written by the principal and discusses school issues.

Parents are regularly invited to take part in informational sessions on issues important for middle school students. There are general meetings that assist with elementary and high school transition in addition to laptop training. A Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens session helps parents and students understand the importance of organization and effective study habits. There are also assemblies for parents explaining how to keep children safe from cyberbullying and other Internet dangers. These sessions combine the knowledge of teachers, counselors, and local law enforcement. The Curriculum Caravan invites parents to come to the school to learn about the curriculum and the standards covered in each grade level. While some of these sessions have no direct correlation to daily classroom lessons, they are opportunities for parents to gain insight and knowledge from trained professionals on issues that affect their student's learning and well-being. Our weekly newsletter features a monthly questionnaire that invites input from students' parents on issues, such as summer reading and school communication.

The WMS PTSO (Parent Teacher Student Organization) is definitely one of the school's biggest supporters and is always contributing to student success in some way. On a daily basis, PTSO mothers and fathers volunteer their time to better the school and help the students. Many times throughout the year, our parent volunteers host fund raisers, student activities, and teacher luncheons to raise funds and morale. One of our biggest traditions is BFF (Baskets, Food and Fun) a PTSO fund raiser that brings in the entire community for a night of engaging, interactive events. The \$17,000 raised last year helped greatly to meet the technology needs of our school. Local businesses, including Starr and Dickens Orthodontics, Spivey Insurance and Chick-fil-a, make this event successful. Our community truly partners with the school in a positive way that benefits our students on a daily basis.

# **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

---

## **1. Curriculum:**

Until this year, Weddington Middle had closely aligned our core curriculum to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. On June 2, 2010, North Carolina adopted the Common Core State Standards in math and language arts. This year is the first year of implementation of these standards, as well as the New Essential Standards for other core areas. Weddington Middle feels prepared for these changes due to our professional development and planning within our Professional Learning Communities.

Both our school mission statement and the Common Core Standards focus on producing global students prepared for college/career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To meet these requirements, Weddington Middle School participates in the county's 1:1 Laptop Initiative program which provides a laptop for each student and teacher in the school. While these laptops provide a wealth of information and interactive opportunities for the teachers and students, they are considered tools to supplement the school's core curriculum.

Preparing students for a global society is especially important in an area as transient as Weddington. The curriculum supports this objective by providing Chinese, French and Spanish language classes. Students have the opportunity to learn any of these three languages and to explore the culture, over three years. All students take a global awareness class that introduces them to cultures around the world.

The visual and performing arts department reinforces our comprehensive structure by exposing students to art and productions from around the world. Students demonstrate their knowledge each year through our play production, designed and orchestrated by students.

Along with our strong dedication to academics, the school works hard to bridge education and health with the support of the state's Coordinated School Health Program. This curriculum combines physical education, nutrition services, and health promotion so that students are more alert, more focused on learning, and miss less school. Weddington Middle requires health and PE classes for each student and, uniquely, added a FIT lab and Group Fitness to the rotation. The FIT lab is a one of a kind, interactive space that includes Dance, Dance Revolution mats, virtual bicycle trainers, and free-standing weights. In addition to learning about the proper usage of equipment and techniques of exercise, students also learn about the positive benefits of these fun activities. Our Group Fitness class is always popular, with students learning Zumba, CrossFit, and yoga. Even those most resistant to exercise enjoy this program.

Our counseling department also provides vital resources that support the curriculum, especially in college and career readiness. All 8th graders take the Explore test, an educational assessment tool provided by ACT that tests students on various mathematical, reading, social studies and science skills, and generates a report indicating career strengths. This information is used later in the year when the counselors help 8th graders register for the College Foundation of North Carolina. Once registered, students can see what colleges and careers would be suitable, based on their strengths and interests. The counselors also hold informational sessions alongside counselors from the high school, the county's Early College program, and Union County's Central Academy of Technology and Arts. The emphasis on career and college readiness is essential to the Common Core Standards.

Other important objectives that have emerged with the Common Core Standards include showing clear vertical progressions across grade levels and requiring literacy standards for science and social studies classes. In preparation, Weddington Middle School has spent the last few years creating school-wide literacy-based instruction. This involved creating Professional Learning Communities that meet regularly for vertical planning and assessment. By teaming the students, teachers have more opportunities for collaborative lessons that place an emphasis on reading in all subjects. While the Common Core

Assessment may only test students in mathematics and language arts, Weddington Middle expects all teachers to assist in support and preparation.

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

In English Language Arts, students are pre-assessed for their level of reading comprehension at the beginning of the school year using data collected from district assessments and running records gathered with tools from Teacher's College of Reading and Writing at Columbia University. Students are matched with books that are leveled by Lexile and Fountas and Pinnell's Guided Reading levels and frequently assessed through formative assessments. These assessments include individual and small group conferencing, writing to learn, and text annotation. As students demonstrate readiness, they are moved up a continuum of reading levels. The hallmark of this program is a heavy immersion in many types of texts to build fluency and stamina as well as provide a trajectory of continuous growth based on each individual student's needs.

To meet the needs of advanced students, classes are differentiated so students work at levels that truly engage and challenge them if they have mastered some of the content. For all classes, lessons are tiered according to students' needs as evidenced by formative and benchmark assessments. Lessons may include working in centers, book clubs based on ability and interests, cooperative groupings, and independent books and projects. For struggling learners, modifications include books matched to their level, tools such as Reader's Workshop mini-lessons and graphic organizers to break down the text in smaller chunks, and collaborative pairs for greater support. Co-teaching for special needs students also provides a layer of individualized support within the regular language arts classroom, in addition to intensive intervention pull-out programs for at-risk students.

The English Language Arts department also created a vertical scaffold to build a logical progression of curriculum coverage from grades six through eight. The department developed a plan to build on grammar, word study and vocabulary, reading strategies, and writing tasks that should be mastered at each level. As our state standards have changed to the new Common Core Standards, we continue to revisit the needs of our students at each level based on the standards they are expected to learn and know by the end of the year. Weddington Middle has also placed new emphasis on literacy across the content areas, and language arts teachers work closely with their interdisciplinary teams to incorporate collaborative reading and writing across the curriculum, particularly in informational texts.

## **3. Mathematics:**

This year our school has adopted the nation-wide Common Core curriculum which serves as the basis of our mathematics instruction. Through our instructional methods we focus on providing student-centered lessons that focus on the relevance of mathematics and the application of math concepts in the real world. Instruction in sixth grade focuses on developing foundational math skills that are reinforced and used in 7th and 8th grade so that students leave us prepared for high school with a strong knowledge of algebraic concepts. The curriculum is accelerated for students who are performing above grade level so that they can earn high school credits in Algebra and/or Geometry by the end of eighth grade. We meet the needs of students who are performing below grade level through differentiated instruction, intervention, and through our math recovery program, which targets students' deficiencies in mathematics.

All of our efforts are data driven. We use results from common assessments, EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment Systems), and Classscape Benchmarks to gauge students' learning and determine which concepts need to be retaught and who needs remediation. Both EVAAS and Classscape are online resources that show trends in performance. Through instructional approaches such as learning centers, Smart Board technologies, and online Common Core aligned resources from Compass Learning, we are able to collect data and differentiate lessons to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers build on students' foundational skills through weekly math assignments that focus on the continual review of important concepts that have been previously taught. Students are regularly asked to collaborate in class and rely on

their peers to enhance their learning experience. Student progress is continuously monitored, and teachers provide one on one and small group instruction during lunch and before and after school to remediate weaknesses. Teachers provide students with hands-on learning experiences such as maintaining mock stock market funds and managing fabricated FDIC accounts. This student engagement emphasizes the importance of math and is one reason why our 8th grade class demonstrated 100% proficiency on last year's End-of-Grade tests.

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

The Weddington Middle School mission statement expresses an aspiration to produce life-long learners in a global society. While all our subject areas promote this mission, our visual and performing arts departments go above and beyond to make sure that students acquire global skills that will make them more cultured individuals.

Eighth graders enrolled in art participate for a full semester which enables them to take part in projects such as The Art of Collaboration (AOC), established by the North Carolina Museum of Art. AOC promotes an integrated curriculum that allows students to make connections between art and other disciplines. The program provides professional development and museum resources for object-based art integration. The art teacher is allowed time for workshop attendance, collaboration among team members, and time to interact with the students involved during core class time.

The most recent AOC project involved the art teacher, as well as eighth grade language arts, math and social studies teachers. Students were asked to reflect upon art from the Revolutionary War, and then the art teacher worked with students as they explained the art's significance through written work and historical study. Using art and mathematical skills, students also imitated the artists' use of gradient colors to create depth.

In 2006, a decrease in funding eliminated our drama teaching position. Since then, our music teacher has worked hard to integrate drama into her music curriculum. The class focuses on the artistic elements of music and production but does an incredible job of incorporating critical thinking skills. When organizing our annual drama performance, students are taught how understanding a story's theme, characterization, and conflict improve their portrayal of a character. Each year, this production is performed for the community and is a wonderful way for our students' ability to demonstrate their abstract and critical thinking skills.

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

At Weddington Middle School we have multiple layers of instructional support and programs geared towards meeting the varied needs of our diverse student population. Frequent assessment informs instructional decisions, so when all students are tested in sixth grade through district administration of the Inview test, they can be appropriately placed in classrooms that accelerate learning if needed, or provide tier 1 interventions if other factors support that need. Advanced students may work in accelerated reading and math classes and take high school level math and foreign language courses for high school credit.

Struggling students who perform poorly on benchmark and district assessments are pulled out for intensive support in reading and math recovery with staff members dedicated solely to this purpose. An intervention team of teacher leaders and administrators reviews student cases frequently to evaluate these students for placement in the reading or math recovery and intervention program in addition to possible evaluation for the exceptional children's program. Other students who need more support with organization and close monitoring are entered into our STARS accountability program. This is a contractual agreement between the student, parents, and team of teachers to closely communicate classroom assignments and expectations between home and school. In addition, a Study Hall is provided at each grade level during lunch periods to give students a chance to catch up, complete homework, or receive additional individual instruction with classroom teachers. The after-school homework club offers

another dimension to the support program for students who need more structured work time in a smaller setting outside the normal classroom environment.

Within the regular classroom setting, teachers implement many practices that speak to the varied needs of the student population. All staff members have been trained to implement differentiation practices to help diversify instructional practices. A dedicated technology specialist provides instructional support to each classroom in implementing our 1:1 laptop initiative, SmartBoards, and Google applications as well as web 2.0 applications to engage students. Each year classroom teachers carefully review each student's performance and portfolios accumulated throughout the year and create recommended placement cards for the following academic year.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Professional Development at Weddington Middle School is ongoing and focused on the Union County Public Schools' strategic goals and the Weddington Middle School Improvement Plan (SIP). Professional Development takes place through three avenues: district sponsored, in-house teacher/administrator training, and out of district conference and workshop attendance.

In our district, Curriculum Coordinators, Instructional Technology Specialists, and other Central Office Staff members provide training to our teachers and administrators. Curriculum Coordinators have spent numerous hours providing content area teachers with information on the new Common Core Standards and led the effort to unpack the standards to make sure all of our teachers are well versed in and prepared for the first year of the new standards. The district Instructional Technology Specialists meets with our staff monthly to teach how to effectively use online tools used by the county, such as Google Apps and Moodle. In an effort to keep our teachers current in the world of technology and give them the needed tools to maximize their effectiveness with the UCPS 1:1 laptop initiative, the Instructional Technology Specialist also works with teachers on website evaluation and differentiation tools for students. This training is aligned with the North Carolina Information and Technology Essential Standards for students.

At Weddington Middle School we are extremely lucky to have wonderful teachers who highly skilled in their practices. WMS currently has 13 Nationally Board Certified Teachers and 41% of our staff has advanced degrees. Therefore, the principal often designates teachers to present professional development for all staff members during faculty meetings and teacher workdays. Some of the latest in-house professional development activities include a content area reading strategies workshop, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) training, and instruction in incorporating online databases.

The principal encourages teachers to attend conferences and workshops outside the district that align with the UCPS strategic goals and the Weddington Middle SIP. Teachers are required to provide in-house training once they return from attending conferences and workshops so that all staff members have the opportunity to learn about the latest instructional strategies and educational trends. For the last four years language arts teachers from WMS have attended the Readers Workshop Institute at Columbia University so that our teachers can continue building on implementation of the Readers Workshop building- wide. Teachers also attend the annual North Carolina Middle School Conference.

## **7. School Leadership:**

At Weddington Middle School, Constructivist Leadership is recognized as the driving leadership philosophy. The principal and Site-Based Management Team (SbMT) feel that it is important to build capacity among individuals so they can function individually or as a team to become leaders in their respective areas. Through the Constructivist approach, staff members, teachers, and administrators use a reciprocal approach to learn from each other in a "give and take" process of leadership that includes dialogue, reflection, and action.

One example of our Constructivist Leadership approach is the use of Professional Learning Communities throughout our building. Teachers work collaboratively in grade level content area teams to create lesson plans, develop common assessments, and review data from assessments and benchmark tests. Each department also meets monthly to discuss vertical alignment of curriculum within their content area so that a sound progression of curriculum is developed from grades six through eight. Teachers are not micro-managed in this process, but rather looked to as leaders in their respective areas by the principal and administrative team.

The Site Based Management Team is an elected leadership team of representatives from the administrative staff, grade levels and departments, non-certified staff members, and parent representatives. It meets monthly to make decisions on meeting budget requirements set forth by the county and state, instructional issues, and the day to day operation of the school. The Site Based team has been responsible for purchasing new calculators for the entire sixth grade student body, selecting the winning grant application for the \$1,000 grant awarded to WMS by the Union County Education Foundation, and purchasing classroom libraries for implementing Readers Workshops in ELA classes.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Edition Publisher: North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III or Level IV	99	99	99	99	93
Level IV	64	68	64	55	54
Number of students tested	342	335	326	480	368
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	10	8	5	16	8
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	2	2	3	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III or Level IV	95	100	93	100	81
Level IV					
Number of students tested	37	43	27	42	21
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III or Level IV	100	93	100	89	89
Level IV					
Number of students tested	33	13	18	37	18
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III or Level IV	100	100	93	100	73
Level IV					
Number of students tested	15	22	15	12	11
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III or Level IV	100	100	100	100	54
Level IV					
Number of students tested	19	12	29	27	26
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III or Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Level III or Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	124	116	112	167	113
<b>NOTES:</b>					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: Edition 2/Edition 3 Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient	97	97	98	94	89
Level IV	48	48	47	47	43
Number of students tested	344	331	321	482	369
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	12	10	14	7
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	4	3	3	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient	89	93	93	88	76
Level IV					
Number of students tested	37	42	27	41	21
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient	100	100	100	84	65
Level IV					
Number of students tested	32	13	18	38	17
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient	80	90	93	92	83
Level IV					
Number of students tested	15	20	15	13	12
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient	91	Masked	100	72	48
Level IV		Masked			
Number of students tested	21	8	15	29	27
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Proficient	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	124	116	112	167	113
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Edition Publisher: North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III and Level IV	99	98	98	99	94
Level IV	67	65	64	55	55
Number of students tested	352	341	333	471	354
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	5	12	12	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	4	3	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	95	100	100	94	67
Level IV					
Number of students tested	36	28	35	50	18
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	89	95	83	95	83
Level IV					
Number of students tested	18	19	23	39	23
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	92	100	83
Level IV					
Number of students tested	19	14	12	21	12
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	92	100	100	77
Level IV					
Number of students tested	16	24	24	20	22
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	135	117	123	146	106
<b>NOTES:</b>					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: Edition 2/Edition 3 Publisher: North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III and Level IV	92	96	95	93	84
Level IV	58	59	62	55	53
Number of students tested	346	333	328	470	354
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	10	13	17	13	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4	5	3	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	80	84	94	78	60
Level IV					
Number of students tested	35	25	31	50	17
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	83	90	86	80	74
Level IV					
Number of students tested	18	19	22	39	23
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	84	85	92	86	64
Level IV					
Number of students tested	17	13	12	21	11
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	70	79	44	68	55
Level IV					
Number of students tested	10	19	18	19	22
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	135	117	123	146	106
<b>NOTES:</b>					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Edition Publisher: North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	99	99	94
Level IV	73	72	67	53	51
Number of students tested	346	350	342	446	355
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	11	5	0	9
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	3	1	0	3
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	95	84
Level IV					
Number of students tested	39	39	43	37	19
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	77
Level IV					
Number of students tested	21	25	22	33	17
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	90
Level IV					
Number of students tested	18	13	21	18	10
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	90
Level IV					
Number of students tested	23	13	19	23	19
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	128	128	106	121	111
<b>NOTES:</b>					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8

Test: End-of-Grade Test

Edition/Publication Year: Edition 2/Edition 3 Publisher: North Carolina Department of Instruction

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III and Level IV	98	96	95	94	87
Level IV	32	38	34	27	27
Number of students tested	337	347	339	446	356
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	13	14	8	0	8
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	4	2	0	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	90	90	88	69	53
Level IV					
Number of students tested	36	41	36	36	19
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	74	88	86	88	77
Level IV					
Number of students tested	19	24	22	33	17
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	88	85	81	88	80
Level IV					
Number of students tested	17	13	21	17	10
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV	64	81	80	83	65
Level IV					
Number of students tested	14	16	10	23	20
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Academically Gifted</b>					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV					
Number of students tested	128	128	106	121	117
<b>NOTES:</b>					
There are not enough English Language Learner Students in our school for our district to consider it a subgroup. Also, there is no disaggregated data available that specifies subgroup Advanced scores.					

13NC6