

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
**A Public School - 13FL5**

School Type (Public Schools): Charter  Title 1  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Debra Richards

Official School Name: Hartridge Academy

School Mailing Address: 1400 US Highway 92 West  
Winter Haven, FL 33881-8137

County: Polk State School Code Number\*: 53 8121

Telephone: (863) 956-4434 E-mail: debra.richards@polk-fl.net

Fax: (863) 956-3267 Web site/URL: http://hartridgeacademy.com/

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

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

Name of Superintendent\*: Dr. John Stewart Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail: john.stewart@polk-fl.net

District Name: Polk County Public Schools District Phone: (863) 534-0500

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

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Ms. Sherry Kelley

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

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

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

---

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 83 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
29 Middle/Junior high schools  
18 High schools  
14 K-12 schools  
144 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 6481

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

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 12
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	27	40	67
1	24	25	49
2	15	17	32
3	14	14	28
4	10	12	22
5	8	11	19
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>			217

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
3 % Asian  
8 % Black or African American  
23 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
62 % White  
4 % 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: 12%  
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.	15
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	12
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	27
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	217
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.12
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	12

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 16%  
Total number of ELL students in the school: 35  
Number of non-English languages represented: 7  
Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Haitian-Creole, Vietnamese, Arabic, Gujarati, Telegu, Russian

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 65%

Total number of students who qualify: 140

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: 6%

Total number of students served: 14

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>14</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>12</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>14</u>	<u>5</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:

17:1

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

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	96%
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:	<u>0</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>0%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>0%</u></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**

---

Hartridge Academy is a small student-focused school in rural Winter Haven, Florida, with the majority (65% 2012-2013) of its students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Its journey began as a startup charter school in 2001. The founders were asked by parents and community leaders to open a school in an area with overcrowded schools, a limited number of highly qualified teachers, and a diverse population of students whose parents desired more than what their district schools offered. With a very limited start-up grant and no tangible assets, the community and founders planned a program that would focus on student achievement for every child. The school mission statement has since been simplified from a long detailed paragraph to, "Hartridge Academy will provide a high quality education for each of its students."

During the past five years, Hartridge has met No Child Left Behind (NCLB) adequate yearly progress (AYP). Our school has taken its vision to fruition as 100% of our students in grades 3-5 were reported to have made adequate yearly gains in reading and math based upon Florida's annual school reports (2011-2012) In addition, 93% and 91% of those students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test in Reading and Math, respectively. These achievements of high performance and gains across all subgroups resulted in our school's ranking #1 among Florida's 1833 elementary (K-5) schools, with a score of 782 of a possible 800. These accomplishments are among those that make our school worthy of Blue Ribbon status this year.

Our journey to student success for all began with 86 students in 2001 from nine surrounding schools. While our enrollment, student scores, student gains, and staff have risen over time, many things that have led to our students' success and our school's viability as a stand-alone charter remain unchanged. For example, every one of our 224 students and their parents receive weekly one on one time (OOOT) with their teacher. The cost and scheduling of this vital before and after school service has been a priority and continues to result in measurable gains and priceless relationships. We receive no Title I funding or services even though we serve 65%-70% children who receive free or reduced priced meals. The cost and time devoted to OOOT leaves us short of funds for amenities that other schools offer their students and staff. There is no staff lounge, no principal office, and no planning time while students are here. Tasks that do not require face time with students are completed after children are dismissed for the day.

Data driven instruction and decision making have resulted in student success and student gains well above our state and district requirements. Computer based assessment data provide teachers with timely information that is applied to planning for whole group and individual students' lessons. Decisions regarding where and when to spend funds, place instructors, supplemental materials, or contracted services all revolve around current reliable data.

The focal point of all decision making and policies answers the question, "How does this impact student learning?" For example, our school-wide uniform and supply policy positively impacts the students' learning environment. The school shirt—one color one style—identifies students as a team on and off campus. By providing all supplies for all students, they are equally prepared with identical tangible tools they need daily. Parents and students arrive at school free of stress from not having what others have or not having what they need. Our students do not lose their identities; each is known by his or her character strengths and personality.

Notable changes that we have adapted to well over the ten years include our expanding Hispanic community and our use of technology. We have added bilingual staff members to serve our new population. We require all instruction staff to have their ESOL endorsement or subject area before hiring them as classroom teachers. This provides new students with a teacher who is prepared with strategies to better serve them upon arrival. Another adaptation was going from a handful of desktop computers shared by staff and students to full class sets of mini computers, Smartboards, iPads and Kindles. Staff and

students alike receive timely training to apply effectively new technology for student progress. Students are able to track their progress, create projects to show what they know, and communicate with a world of learners and family members far from here.

Hartridge students and staff have demonstrated a commitment to each student's success and has reached the milestone of exemplary performance and exemplary gains for all. Hartridge is eager to share our experiences and strategies with other learning communities as a National Blue Ribbon School nominee.

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

---

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

Assessment Results: A: From 2007-2012, Hartridge surpassed its District's (Polk County #53) and State's average score on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in Reading, Mathematics, and Science and exceeded District and State percentages of students scoring Proficient or Above on each test. Hartridge received a letter grade of "A" (2011-2012) by earning a point for each percentage of students scoring Proficiency or Above in reading, mathematics, writing and science, plus adequate gains among the lowest quartile of reading and math students and the overall percentage of students making gains in reading and math. The high percentages of student success on the FCAT tests resulted in Hartridge's ranking #1 of the 1833 public elementary (K-5) schools in Florida (2012 ranking) with a total 782 of a possible 800 points.

While the score itself is a strong indicator of our students' academic success, our economically disadvantaged students (free and reduced-price meals) comprised 65% of our student body whereas the runner-up had only 9% of its students in the same subgroup. The same year we exceeded the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) requirements measuring proficiency and improvements from year to year among subgroups of students. Having a high percentage of students' scoring Proficient or Above is the standard used to measure academic success at the state level. Our district considers and requires that a higher percentage of students at our school score Proficient or Above than those attending demographically comparable district schools. The acceptable standard we hold ourselves accountable to is that our students make adequate yearly progress (AYP) as measured by No Child Left Behind or the AMO.

B. The State Criterion Assessment Results table shows a trend of high scores in the Proficient plus Advanced category in both Reading and Mathematics over the past five years. Our Reading percentage scores from the most recent year 2012 descending to 2007 in that category were as follows: 93, 96, 95, 96, 100 (grade 3), 94, 100, 81, 100, 100 (grade 4) and 94, 83, 92, 67, 100 (grade 5). In Mathematics similar high scores were: 89, 100, 84, 100, 100 (grade 3), 100, 87, 88, 100, 100 (grade 4), and 88, 94, 100, 67, 88 (grade 5) over the same time period.

The factor that the Hartridge team knows will most effectively result in significant gains for all of our students is the scheduling of weekly one on one time (OOOT - our principal's acronym). Each student has a weekly appointment with his or her teacher before or after regular classes, all school year (approximately 20 minutes x 36 weeks), or 12 hours of OOOT annually. While this may sound like a small number of minutes per week, its power cannot be overstated. While OOOT is used for many purposes, the priority during this time is on the student's continuous progress. Students are able to communicate their understanding of new skills or request assistance on difficult material without an audience. Students and teachers are adamant about the success of OOOT. Over the six year period (grades K-5), making time each week for OOOT, results in steady measurable gains by each student.

Another contributing factor has been our small school size. We opened with 86 students in 2001 and now serve 224 (2012/2013). Every staff member, from the administrator to the bus driver, knows every child. Though students spend most of their day with one teacher, all teachers participate in routine duties such as greetings at arrival, lunchroom supervision, parent conferences, and assisting with dismissal as we place each car rider in the vehicles ourselves. These brief moments daily that all staff spend with all students build relationships before the child promotes up to each teacher over six years.

Teachers are not afraid to seek input or advice from peers or the principal. All instructional staff members serve on all school teams, another factor contributing to gains over time. With only 15 instructional staff members, we have a group large enough to be effective but small enough that all

participants have an opportunity to contribute in each meeting. The instructional team is part of any child's Intervention Team, English Language Learners Team, Response to Intervention Team, and any new team required or desired. Being on teams across the board, keeps all teachers, students, and their parents familiar with the needs of our students. Addressing needs as a team results in gains.

The most recent year's data shows that 100% of our students made gains. Data are collected on the following subgroups: Free/Reduced-price Meals/Socio-economic disadvantaged; Africa American; Hispanic; Special Education Students; English Language Learners: and White. The FCAT data shows that 100% of our subgroups made gains in both Reading and Math.

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

Assessment data are used to analyze and improve student and school performance. Baseline assessments are given in the summer or beginning of the school year to measure reading and mathematics. It is important to us that we have a current assessment and not rely solely on year end standardized tests from the previous year because: 1. Many students do not retain everything over the summer, 2. Annual standardized tests are often multiple choice, one day snapshots given in March - which is six months prior to the new year. Nonetheless, we do compare the new assessment to the previous year end assessment. We make a plan and timeline with the parent and staff to bridge the six month gap for students whose data indicates a decline from the previous year. In some instances, enrichment is required for the few students who may have used summer to advance. Baseline data (whether from year-end or new year baseline data) are also used for school improvement at a specific grade level or subject area. For example, if we see that the previous year's grade 3 students scored lower than classes before them, we apply this information to prevent the same the next year. Our school is able to move a different teacher to that group, schedule more time to a subject area, or purchase supplemental materials. Data helps us realize that it is not always the students who performed lower than expected; data sometimes show that we may need to improve or change what teachers do or how teachers do it. That systematic analysis of data improves school and student performance. Once year-end and new baseline data provides us with where to begin and who needs to bridge the summer gap, we use the data to plan for the new school year and for continuous improvement all year.

Data are used systematically for student learning and to improve instruction. Teachers target a skill that most of their class has not mastered, based on the most recent data. For example, if using long division is the new skill which we plan to focus on, a mini pre-test checks for mastery of basic multiplication facts. Students who have not mastered those facts will receive small group time or OOOT (one on one time) for instruction and practice in the prerequisite skill. A mini pre-test on the new skill is then given (usually computer based in grades 2 - 5 for immediate feedback). Students who show mastery on the pre-test will be given a time to work on a personal enrichment project, join a higher level math lesson with another group to gain new above-grade level knowledge (vertical enrichment), or remain to facilitate their classmates' learning.

A lesson plan is developed for the new standards based objective with consideration given to learning styles and accommodations. After the teacher confirms that the majority of the students have mastery of the new skill, a post-test is given. The data are analyzed by administration and teachers to measure the teacher's lesson successes based upon student success. If data show that many students did not master the skill, our teaching team enhances the lesson, uses another approach or, in rare instances, employs another teacher to re-teach the lesson. Next the data are analyzed for individual student success and growth. For students who did not show mastery via the post-test, authentic assessment takes place during OOOT. An individualized plan (usually computer based) is developed for those not mastering the skill and students are re-tested upon completion of the plan. The data are compared - pretest, post-test, and re-test with expectation of continuous growth, if not mastery. When a large majority of the class masters a skill, the pretest for a new standards-based objective takes place. This systematic approach provides current meaningful data which is applied for instruction, growth, and informing parents. It is available online or in a file for students to see their personal growth and successes in a graph form.

We use data regularly to show parents their child's current academic standing, successes, and areas needing improvement. Data are easily turned into graphs or charts that are much easier for parents to understand than educational jargon, making it easier for our parents to review assessment data rather than recall or interpret exactly what a teacher puts into words. Data provides our instructors with credibility in conferences with parents and other stakeholders. We use data from assessments when applying for grants from community members and when communicating with the media.

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

Our principal participates as a member of the local Winter Haven Chamber of Commerce Education Committee composed of community leaders and educators. This provided opportunities to share information about our successful strategies and to receive input from non-educational professionals in our community. The community was unaware that a school with 65% of its students receiving free or reduced-priced meals had made adequate yearly progress in reading and math annually without the benefit of Title I funding. Sharing how, what, and why resulted in many community members offering to volunteer, mentor, and serve on our school's advisory committee. Members shared our strategies and policies with their employees who subsequently shared with their school or sought enrollment for their children.

As a charter school, a public annual accountability report and academic audit is kept at the district Office of Magnet, Choice, and Charter Schools. This information is available anytime to any school without schools' finding time to interact. These reports show disaggregated assessment data as well as curriculum choices and policies and are shared formally and informally among the district departments and other school leaders. Hartridge Academy also shares successful strategies with other school leaders in our district directly when approached. Our teachers and principal have opportunities to share ideas with the district teachers and principals at district wide trainings and community events. The most successful strategy that is often asked about is our OOOT (one on one time) with each student. It continues to result in a high percentage of our students making measurable adequate yearly progress. We have shared how it is possible to schedule this time regardless of school size since each teacher serves only her or his homeroom students. We have provided an example of how we schedule our staff and students to build in this time while maintaining the required amount of class time and no overtime required of teachers.

Our principal has had several conversations with the Polk County School Board District Senior Coordinator of Accountability to share: how we analyze data for student success for our School Improvement Plan, continue to make adequate yearly gains in subgroups, and our Science curriculum. For example, we have shared that we use leveled reading material, an illustrated journal, field trips, and current events through credible websites such as National Geographic and NASA in science classes instead of a textbook.

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

We have near 100% parent participation because we have offered options that are noncompetitive, personal, and doable. Our parents know they are a valued piece of THEIR child's success at Hartridge. Like most schools, Hartridge Academy believes that parent involvement in their child's education is important. However, our expectations, strategies, and results differ from many neighboring schools.

As a student focused school, we expect that parental involvement should focus on THEIR child. Our principal meets with each new student's family prior to enrollment to listen to their concerns and hopes for their child. A weekly one on one time (OOOT) is scheduled for each student and or the parent to use all year. This totals approximately 700 minutes per year of private time which is not possible via traditional open houses, orientations, or conferences by invitation. Our commitment to making time for each student and parent is to be reciprocated by the parent giving the same devotion to their child's education. Parental involvement expectations are discussed and agreed upon during enrollment. We require that parents stay involved by: 1. reading and signing the school provided daily agenda 2. preparing

the child daily with their school agenda and uniform 3. having their child in attendance and on time 4. having an adult available to come for the child if called to do so for any reason 5. acknowledging their child's progress (or lack of) in person during OOOT, via agenda, or via phone 6. complying with school policies 7. providing time and a quiet place for the child to read or study each school night.

We do not do fund raisers. The majority of our students receive free and reduced-price meals at school. Embarrassing parents by expecting them to raise money and taking time that could be spent on their child's progress is not an option at Hartridge.

Because we build in weekly private time for each family, parents respect our policy of not allowing parents in the class room during whole class time. We want and expect parental involvement with THEIR own child. However, we safeguard the children's learning environment as a place where they can take chances and make mistakes, receive 100% of the teacher's attention, and be free of distraction from volunteers. Classmates' academic levels, learning disabilities, or misbehavior will not be oogled or shared with others. Thus, there is no parent involvement during class time.

During the weekly OOOT each parent is able to spend time in the classroom because no other students are there and no work is displayed with names. Parents can use that time to confer with the teacher, watch their child apply a new skill, or perform a helpful task such as prepping material. Community members such as firefighters are invited to be mentors, give a demonstration, or show support by being present on campus.

# **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

---

## **1. Curriculum:**

Our current state standards, New Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), and Common Core standards are the objectives of most lesson plans created by instructional staff. First, teachers analyze assessment data to determine what will be taught next. Like elementary schools, most students are with one classroom teacher for core subjects. Teachers integrate curriculum to the extent possible, with an importance on reading in almost all lessons. For example, a teacher may have a thematic unit on Japan but the state standards addressed will be embedded in the activities explored: author's purpose (reading) with the book *Paper Crane*, haiku writing lessons (language arts), Sudoku (math), volcanoes (science), water colors (art), and map skills locating Japan (geography/social studies). The teacher will still base a lesson on data from a pretest and cover actual skills from the state standards-not knowledge of Japan. Students receive direct instruction in skills then practice through planned activities that take into consideration each child's learning styles; accommodations, prior knowledge or experiences, and reading level. The same content information is provided in a variety of reading levels. Teachers check for understanding and then have students "show what they know" to each other. Technology plays a major role during the learning stage of the lesson and for authentic assessment of understanding the content or demonstrating a new skill. Paper tests are not the preferred method of assessing except when collateral is needed for third parties such as parents. When the majority of students demonstrate mastery, the teacher will implement the posttests of the many standards based skills or content taught in the lesson or thematic unit.

In addition to thematic units and curriculum integration, teachers schedule a minimum of 90 minutes for uninterrupted language art instruction and 60 minutes of mathematics. Most science is inquiry based. An initial question is posed from a science area. Exploration, research, and hands-on activities lead to the answer. Students become teachers to classmates as they share results. Any standard not covered through inquiry receives direct instruction from the teacher if a project-based activity or field trip is not doable. Currently, pretests and posttests are given for science (grade 5), reading and math standards (all grades 1-5).

Field trips with pre-research and post activities are used to meet many of the art and music standards, making for a more memorable experience than a text book and often spark an interest in the arts unrecognized earlier. As a charter, we have our own old buses which become classrooms on wheels because we may use them as needed without scheduling through the district. Teachers are trained to drive buses so we do not need to depend on outside drivers.

Our small campus is nestled in an orange grove. Most of the year we are able to hold physical education for at least thirty minutes daily outside on campus. During high pollen season and on rainy days, we use virtual physical education in the classroom. Today's students thrive on the interactive Smartboard for academics and physical education. We also take the bus to use community assets such as the city soccer field and basketball court to meet specific physical education standards. Health and nutrition standards are often included during science or physical education units.

Students are not graded on foreign language. However, Spanish is integrated into weekly cultural experiences and modeled by some of the staff. We encourage students to communicate in English and Spanish thus chunking is often heard from speakers of both languages. Latin lessons are integrated into language arts, science, social studies, and sometimes mathematics because it offers rich vocabulary with common roots, prefixes, and suffixes.

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

Reading instruction begins before students start their educational journey at Hartridge. We provide parents of registering kindergarten students with: an application to the local library, a county-wide calendar of Family Reading activities, a list of suggested Read Aloud books to begin a habit of reading to or with the child, a list of the 100 most common words in children's books, and an application to a free summer VPK program hosted on our site during the summer. We aim to have all kindergarten children successful at proficient or advanced level before first grade. We have found that when children are confident readers at age 5, they continue to excel in all subjects. Struggling readers get time during OOOT (one on one time) to take chances with reading aloud when they may hesitate in class among peers. During the 90 minute Language Arts period in grades K-5, teachers introduce a teacher read aloud book from which new vocabulary will derive. Book selection depends on the grade taught, class interest, or a Social Studies or Science topic.

Lesson plans are created to implement the Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and Common Core State Standards with the book as the focal point. This involves direct instruction followed by active learning in a student-centered learning environment. Direct instruction includes teacher-led demonstrations to teach new skills explicitly. Active learning strategies are used to increase student retention of knowledge and skills. Science and social studies standards are integrated into literacy using varying contexts. Classic culturally-diverse literature including Newberry and Caldecott award-winning stories include traditions and folk-lore. Technology is applied through e-books, interactive websites, and online ordering of library books from our countywide system. Teachers pose higher order questions to engage students and promote higher order thinking skills. Text complexity and Lexile measures are used to match readers to reading material with appropriate difficulty and to monitor a reader's growth over time. Teachers use formal and informal observations to monitor students' acquisition of foundational reading skills. Formative, interim, and summative assessments are used to guide instructional decision-making and track students' progress in reading.

### **3. Mathematics:**

Mathematics instruction at Hartridge Academy centers on meeting individual student needs using standards based instruction of Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and Common Core State Standards. These needs are met through various instructional methods such as hands on learning with manipulatives, problem-solving strategies, and the use of interactive technology in the classroom. Acquisition of foundational math skills occurs in a student centered learning environment using evidence-based instruction and interventions. Hands-on learning helps students make connections between math concepts and real world applications. Manipulatives and problem-solving strategies engage students in purposeful lessons that reinforce learning of new math skills in meaningful ways. This research-based approach to teaching mathematics provides evidence of mastery for individual students. Consistent use of instructional technology promotes active learning and increases students' retention of math skills and concepts. Formative assessments made by the instructor and software publishers offer the student and teacher immediate feedback on comprehension of the skill or content taught.

Compass Learning Odyssey is one example of instructional technology used to meet students' diverse needs. Compass Learning Odyssey meets NGSSS and Common Core State Standards while tracking student progress and modifying instruction based on individual student needs and assessment data. The Odyssey program is used for direct instruction in the classroom and for individual student mastery. Assessment data drive instruction and provide evidence of increased student learning gains. Software provides parent reports on paper or online that contain results of their child's progress as frequently as daily. Data are also communicated to parents during one on one time (OOOT) where parents can receive modeling from the teacher on how to work specific math problems. Data are also used to determine the needs of all students, including those working below or above grade level. Small group instruction and OOOT provide additional time for interventions to target a specific math skill or concept.

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

By integrating curricula, our students have multiple opportunities to apply skills they have learned in one subject area to another subject area. Communication is an essential skill that improves with each lesson we offer in any area. Some communication skills are taught directly, such as proper English grammar and writing. However, most improvement in communications comes from experiences. By requiring that students discuss what they already know before we teach a new lesson, we are able to assess their use of skills they have been taught and what new vocabulary they could acquire with the new lesson. For example, the new unit may be about the Civil War. When we ask a student what they already know about it, they share in complete sentences. We are able to model the correct grammar by restating their input in the correct manner without "correcting" them. Later when the information comes up again by the teacher calling on a student to share what he or she knows, he is likely to communicate thoughtfully about applying what he heard his teacher model. If the child uses low level vocabulary, we are able to teach richer words that can be used or additional words that can be added for detail. For example, if a child states that he already knows that Lincoln was "kinda tall and very skinny", we can model back that, "yes, Lincoln was lanky or slender." Later when the child shares with others the teacher will listen for the new vocabulary. Our teachers use every conversation with or between students for student improvement, especially in communication skills that are necessary in all subjects and real world situations. These unplanned moments are still systematic ways for students to acquire essential communication skills that are part of our school's mission of a high quality education for all students.

## **5. Instructional Methods:**

Hartridge Academy's primary instructional method is differentiated instruction. 100% of our students made gains in (2011-2012), thus all subgroups made adequate gains. Using differentiated instruction for teaching and learning gives students multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas and showing what they know or have just learned. Students are regrouped by academic needs, not by the diverse subgroups used in data collection as described because we have found it to work for all students when subgroups are not a factor in academic abilities or needs. We have not found that one method works better than another on a particular *subgroup* but some strategies work better on specific *students* regardless of subgroup labels. Standards-based instruction is implemented in order to plan, deliver, monitor and improve instruction in the classroom. The student-centered learning environment provides differentiated instruction and opportunities for students to do different things during instructional time, based on their own progress and educational needs. Data are analyzed to assure that our approach to instruction is resulting in gains among *all* subgroups. We monitor for gaps between the whole group and each subgroup. There have been no substantial gaps this year as 100% of our students made gains, according to the State's reports.

We do not teach to a subgroup because we believe students' learning styles and abilities are not directly related to their race, economic position, or culture. We have not found that learning styles are unique to any specific subgroup. Data, teacher teams, students, and parent input guide teachers to specific direct instruction, followed by active learning, which leads to mastery of state standards skills. Evidence-based instruction is used to increase and document student learning gains. Higher order questioning and higher order thinking skills teach students to analyze, solve problems, and think critically in all subject areas. Scientific research-based instruction and interventions are implemented within the school to justify conclusions and obtain reliable and valid knowledge. Instructional Technology is implemented throughout the school with Smart Boards, document cameras, and netbook computers in classrooms and common areas. ESOL strategies and accommodations are implemented for English Language Learners.

However, all students benefit from comprehensible instruction through to the presentation format. Quality teaching practices ensure that differentiated instruction meets or exceeds learning expectations for every student. Teachers and administrators use reflective practices to objectively assess and guide our instructional practices. The flexible nature of our school allows us to make changes and modify curriculum based on the needs of our students. We have found our most effective strategy is one on one time (OOOT) for every student to meet individual student needs.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Hartridge is a student-focused school. As a charter, we have the opportunity to hire teachers for one year at a time and require that our instructional team reapply for teaching positions each year. This may sound harsh but decisions are made according to the students' needs, not teachers' tenure. Our principal analyzes the needs of each class each new year. Teachers apply for a position in any class that interests them for which they are highly qualified. This competitive process drives our teachers to seek new certifications, gain new skills, stay abreast of technology, build rapport with students, work well as a team, and have great attendance. They are aware that new applicants could possibly be a better fit. Because of these high expectations, seldom is a new applicant a better fit for our students than our existing team members. We have high teacher retention and continue to receive new applications each year.

We believe teachers should possess the skills necessary to serve students as students arrive. The Hispanic population in our community is growing. Thus, all are teachers are required to have English for Speaker of Other Languages (ESOL) certification before they are hired here. The majority of our staff also has Exceptional Student Education (ESE) certification in order to have the skill set necessary to serve a subgroup which may be in any class at any time due to our random lottery process for new students and our inclusion policy. All of our instructional staff have exceeded the requirements of highly qualified. No teachers teach out of field.

All of our teachers with Master's degrees pursued them during employment here, a further indication that teachers continuously develop in directions that support their awareness of what Hartridge expects of its staff. We have also convinced former non-instructional staff and parents of our students to pursue education degrees.

Diversity is important in our teaching team. Due to the low number of minority applicants in the teacher application pool, we offered our school for internship opportunities for the HBSC (Historically Black Schools and Colleges) Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College. Over ten years we have hired all six of the interns after successful completion of their certification process and additional ESOL and ESE certification.

Hartridge also participates in district opportunities for professional development, including hands-on professional development as well as online opportunities. PD choices may be of a "needs now" nature, such as a classroom management strategies. Local colleges also provide credit-bearing classes that together may meet requirements for adding a subject area such as Music after testing.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Hartridge's leader has been principal since the school opened in 2001. A leader by example, she believes that we are first public servants in education for the entire community and models the same. Calls and visits from outsiders are frequent because we have a reputation as a school that helps. Parents making requests or voicing concerns about education are never turned away until a competent public servant at the district or an applicable agency is put on the phone with the parent. The principal believes that all of our students' parents want the best education possible for their children as evidenced their parents seeking an alternative to the traditional school to which their children are assigned by the district. Her expectations of the staff as highly qualified teachers and continuous professional development are clear and again modeled. She currently has certification in seven areas. As sole administrator, she models expectations as an active team member by wearing many hats and expects the teaching team to add certifications, participate on all instructional teams and committees, and favorably represent our school or education in general to the community. She is an active member of the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee and attends Harvard's Principal Center for courses with an international group of educators and leaders who share ideas and successful strategies.

Decisions made in all areas of her responsibilities reflect Hartridge's student focus. Each decision must first answer, "How will this decision impact student progress?" For example, finances and space are not spent on teacher or leader amenities. There is no teacher lounge; there is no principal office. Armed with a degree in Business as well as in Educational Leadership, the principal is a good steward of resources. Annual audits from an independent auditor have been favorable.

Our principal uses community resources. We use the public library for a rich supply of current literature and area parks and recreation properties for a variety of physical education opportunities. Janitorial services, food services, human resource services, accounting services, and therapists are contracted so as to not require full time employment costs and benefits, leaving funds available to pay the highly qualified instructional staff more money than the district would pay the teachers. This also leaves less staff for the leader to manage and more time to serve students, parents, teachers, and the community. Input from students, parents, and teachers is sought and valued. All staff are expected to value the same.

The principal reviews and comments on lesson plans, observes, and facilitates teaching based on data driven planning. The leader uses and requires staff to use technology for instruction, research, communication, and management as we prepare students to be contributors in today's and tomorrow's real life experiences.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	89	100	84	100	100
% scoring Level 4 and above	11	50	42	56	77
Number of students tested	27	26	19	25	13
Percent of total students tested	96	96	90	93	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	86	100	79	100	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	5	40	35	38	Masked
Number of students tested	21	15	14	16	8
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3	4	3	2
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	4	2	2	2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above		Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above		Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested		4	2	3	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3		1	1	1
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	86	100	92	100	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	21	47	58	61	Masked
Number of students tested	14	17	12	18	9
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2.0

Publisher: PEARSON

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	93	96	95	96	100
% scoring Level 4 and above	55	58	42	36	70
Number of students tested	27	26	19	25	13
Percent of total students tested	96	96	90	93	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	91	93	93	94	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	45	54	35	38	Masked
Number of students tested	22	15	14	16	8
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	3	3	4	3	
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	4	2	2	2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above		Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above		Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested		4	2	3	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked		Masked	Masked	
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked		Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	3		1	1	
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	93	100	100	100	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	64	59	50	39	Masked
Number of students tested	14	17	12	18	9
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: PEARSON

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	100	87	88	100	100
% scoring Level 4 and above	50	40	50	33	59
Number of students tested	16	15	16	12	12
Percent of total students tested	84	100	84	100	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	9	6	8	4
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked		Masked		Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked		Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	1		1		3
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	3	2	4	1	
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	1	1	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above			Masked		
% scoring Level 4 and above			Masked		
Number of students tested			1		
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	100	90	100	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	55	50	50	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	11	10	10	9	8
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	94	100	81	100	100
% scoring Level 4 or above	76	80	32	66	42
Number of students tested	16	15	16	12	12
Percent of total students tested	84	100	84	100	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	9	6	8	4
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	Masked		Masked		Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked		Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	1		1		3
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	3	2	4	1	
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	1	1	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above			Masked		
% scoring Level 4 or above			Masked		
Number of students tested			1		
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
5 scoring Level 3 or above	91	100	100	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	73	80	40	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	11	10	10	9	8
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	88	94	100	67	88
% scoring Level 4 and above	63	45	84	44	59
Number of students tested	16	18	12	9	16
Percent of total students tested	100	100	92	90	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	83	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	50	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	12	7	9	7	6
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	2		3	2
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	1	3	1		2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1		2	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked			
% scoring Level 4 and above	Masked	Masked			
Number of students tested	1	1			
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	90	100	100	Masked	92
% scoring Level 4 and above	80	45	91	Masked	58
Number of students tested	10	11	11	5	12
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: FCAT

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: PEARSON

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	94	83	92	67	100
% scoring Level 4 or above	82	45	66	33	62
Number of students tested	16	18	12	9	16
Percent of total students tested	100	100	92	90	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	92	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	75	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	12	7	9	7	6
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	2		3	2
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	1	3	1		2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1		2	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	Masked	Masked			
% scoring Level 4 or above	Masked	Masked			
Number of students tested	1	1			
<b>6. White, Non-Hispanic</b>					
% Scoring Level 3 and Above	100	91	Masked	Masked	Masked
% scoring Level 4 or above	90	54	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	11	2	5	1
<b>NOTES:</b>					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13FL5