

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
*A Public School - 13MN7*

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

Name of Principal: Ms. Lisa Pikop

Official School Name: Garfield Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 303 Sanstead Street East  
Box 158  
Garfield, MN 56332-0158

County: Douglas State School Code Number\*: 120

Telephone: (320) 834-2261 E-mail: lpikop@alexandria.k12.mn.us

Fax: (281) 454-6451 Web site/URL: http://www.alexandria.k12.mn.us

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\*: Mr. Rick Lahn Superintendent e-mail: rlahn@alexandria.k12.mn.us

District Name: Alexandria Public School District District Phone: (320) 762-2141

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: Mr. Dean Anderson

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**

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The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## **PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

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All data are the most recent year available.

### **DISTRICT**

1. Number of schools in the district 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
1 Middle/Junior high schools  
1 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
8 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 10062

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

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

<b>Grade</b>	<b># of Males</b>	<b># of Females</b>	<b>Grade Total</b>
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	13	10	23
<b>1</b>	10	9	19
<b>2</b>	11	11	22
<b>3</b>	11	9	20
<b>4</b>	14	9	23
<b>5</b>	12	14	26
<b>6</b>	7	12	19
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>			<b>152</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
3 % Asian  
2 % Black or African American  
0 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
94 % 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: 9%

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.	12
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	13
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	151
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.09
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	9

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31%

Total number of students who qualify: 47

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: 15%

Total number of students served: 22

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>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>9</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>1</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>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>11</u>	<u>13</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:

22:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

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

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

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university \_\_\_\_\_ %

Enrolled in a community college \_\_\_\_\_ %

Enrolled in vocational training \_\_\_\_\_ %

Found employment \_\_\_\_\_ %

Military service \_\_\_\_\_ %

Other \_\_\_\_\_ %

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

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

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Garfield Elementary School, a small, single-section educational facility, is located in the little community of Garfield, Minnesota. Garfield is a rural village of 285 people, with the majority of the students residing in country homes or on farms within the outlying townships. The school's population area offers a diverse blend of agriculture, industry, recreation activities, and tourism.

Garfield is one of six elementary schools in the Alexandria Public School system and is unique in both its physical structure and its overall environment. Classrooms for students in grades 1-6 surround an open, recessed media center and computer lab, while the kindergarten students are housed in a spacious wing of their own. The open classrooms allow students and staff to interact continually as they travel from their base classroom to other areas of the school throughout the day. This promotes a family-like feeling in which every person becomes familiar with all other members of the school community.

Approximately 160 students in grades K through 6 enjoy the opportunity to learn in a caring atmosphere where teachers, support staff, parents, and community volunteers are partners in the Garfield family. With an emphasis upon treating every person as a unique individual, the school has succeeded in fostering a close connection between the families whose children attend the school and the staff who work with them. There is very little staff turnover at Garfield due to the close connections formed between all members of the school community, and families continue to support the school long after their children have moved on to middle school and high school.

Each morning the entire school body gathers around the media center for announcements, greetings, and celebrations of achievement. Students are encouraged to participate in reading announcements at this time, as well as having the opportunity to put on musical performances, poetry readings, and a number of other similar activities. These daily interactions draw everyone together as members of the Garfield family.

Garfield's students are provided with a broad-based educational experience. Special area teachers instruct in the areas of physical education, music, art, and media/technology. Specialized instruction and assistance for students with special needs and/or talents is provided through the Title I program, Special Education, Reading Intervention, Behavior Intervention, a Gifted and Talented program, band, and orchestra. Open communication between the classroom teachers and their special area teaching partners ensure that appropriate adaptations and curricular modifications are made as needed to best accommodate individual students.

Modern technology is available to students and staff, including a full computer lab, classroom smartboards, projector and sound systems, and an iPad initiative. Through a district COF initiative, Garfield teachers and staff have access to 15 wireless laptops and teachers have received 40 hours of training. We have a Cisco ITV system which enhances collaboration within the district and allows students to attend virtual field trips.

Garfield has a strong, active PAC (Parent Advisory Council) working in partnership with the staff and administration to create outstanding educational opportunities for students in the school. Their fundraising efforts allow every class to take at least one educational field trip each year. They also bring in guest presenters to further enrich the learning opportunities for the students. The efforts of the PAC are devoted to upholding the district's mission statement: "Our mission is to achieve educational excellence and to inspire a life-long passion for learning."

An atmosphere of sharing and caring prevails throughout the school. There is a 100% staff participation in United Way donations, while students give generously to the "Pennies for Patients" fundraiser, the

annual “Stuff-a-Truck” food drive, and other programs. Older students often partner with younger children for special projects and events.

Standardized test scores of Garfield students are consistently very high. The school has been recognized by the state for its achievements, and all members of the school family take pride in these outstanding results.

It is an honor to be nominated as a National Blue Ribbon School. We believe that the educational opportunities provided at Garfield Elementary, when coupled with the high expectations for our students and the caring environment, make our school a unique and special place. The Garfield family is committed to continuing this long tradition of excellence.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

A. Garfield school uses assessments during a data retreat each summer to determine academic building goals for the year. Grades 3-6 utilize Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments for math and reading. North West Evaluation Assessments are also used for math and reading. Grades K-1 use the Observation Survey, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), running records and benchmarking to determine students' skill levels. Math Skills are assessed with AVMR (Add+Vantage Math Recovery) and SNAP (Student Numeracy Assessment Progressions). The building leadership team analyzes data and looks for areas of strength and concern. Trends are studied to compare data over the last 3-5 years. Students are continually benchmarked to track their progress.

The goal is for all students to meet or exceed the standards in math and reading and make at least one full year of growth. We set a target each year to achieve 100% proficiency by the year 2014. OLPA (Optional Local Purpose Assessment) is given twice a year to monitor students individual growth to meet the MCA standards. A mid-year assessment was given to monitor students' progress.

Students in grade 2-6 would complete the NWEA test 3 times during the year. The NWEA results provide students with a target growth score to reach by the end of the year. The mid-year assessment was given to monitor students' progress. NWEA tests were discontinued after the 2012 school year and have been replaced by STAR assessment.

Students are benchmarked to determine independent reading levels and to guide decision making for meeting individual goals by the end of the year, as we strive to help every student make at least one year's growth or more.

B. Performance trends at Garfield Elementary School show students consistently perform above the state average on the MCA's. One issue with being a small school is having small cell sizes which create huge implications. For example, if in 4th grade there are 2 special education students, they may both be proficient and we have 100% proficiency, but if they are partially proficient it would show 0% proficiency. Small cell sizes cause dramatic fluctuation in our scores.

Garfield students consistently performed higher than the state average. Even when in 2011, in the MCA IIIs, our scores decreased, yet were still 13.9% higher than the state average in math. By examining the data and refocusing our efforts, our scores rebounded the following year.

Starting in 2008, our Reading MCA scores combined from grades 3-6 school were at 83%, meeting or exceeding the standards. In 2012, our scores are at 89.7%, meeting or exceeding the standards.

Grade 3 Reading 2008 90.9% proficient to 96% proficient in 2012  
Grade 4 Reading 2008 77.8% proficient to 78.6% proficient in 2012  
Grade 5 Reading 2008 90.9% proficient to 100% proficient in 2012  
Grade 6 Reading 2008 73% proficient to 87.5% proficient in 2012

Our Math scores in 2008 were at 83%, meeting or exceeding the standards; and in 2012, they are at 87.6%, meeting or exceeding the standards.

Grade 3 Math 2008 90.9% proficient to 2012 96% proficient  
Grade 4 Math 2008 88.9% proficient to 2012 85.7% proficient

Grade 5 Math 2008 90.9% proficient to 2012 75% proficient  
Grade 6 Math 2008 65.4% proficient to 2012 91.7% proficient

We keep confidential the names of students that receive free and reduced meal benefits, meaning teachers are unaware of which students qualify for those benefits. We focus on helping all students that are not at grade level and identify interventions to help them. This has been helpful in eliminating any gap with free and reduced students, creating continual improvement.

We are excited about the growth with our special education students in reading proficiency. We have gone from 33.3% proficient in 2008 to 88.9% proficient in 2012. We have reduced the gap from over 50 percentage points to less than 1!

Our special education gap has gone from having 0% of our students being proficient to 70% proficient in five years. We continue to find ways to close the gap. We have recently started implementing AVMR (Add+Vantage Math Recovery), and we are seeing significant results.

Several years ago, special education was a pull-out program. Students in special education followed their own curriculum. Rarely did students get back into the regular grade level curriculum. Currently, these students are exposed to grade level standards in the classroom by their teacher. They receive a second and sometimes a third exposure in a pull out setting from the special education teacher. Classroom teachers and special education teachers collaborate to provide the best intervention to help the student to be proficient at grade level standards. Classroom and special education teachers monitor students to make sure they are making adequate growth. If adequate progress is not happening, a new intervention is implemented.

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

Looking through the assessment results we find areas that have been our strengths. We want to reflect on what has worked in the past and make sure we continue to keep those pieces in place. We continually look at our areas that need growth and set goals. Our building goals always come from areas that we need to grow. We plan our professional development for the year around our goals. An example of this is our implementation of AVMR (Add+Vantage Math Recovery). Our math scores were not where we wanted them. We needed a way to really pinpoint an intervention to fill in the holes that some of our students had. After much research our school district sent one of our classroom teachers to be trained in AVMR. She then became a math coach for our district. Since that time she has trained all of the teachers at Garfield in AVMR. Many of our para-professionals have also received training in implementing the interventions. We are able to assess students, see where their problem areas are, and give instruction in those areas.

Our MCAs and NWEA assessments also gave us a breakdown of math strands to help us determine what areas our teachers needed more professional development in. K-6 teachers have a building goal of the lowest strand. All of the teachers focus on that area by doing additional weekly activities. They meet frequently to discuss progress. We have included special area teachers to help us achieve this goal. For example, one year our goal was geometry. In Physical Education instead of playing four square, they referred to it as quadrangle corners. They would work in vocabulary into songs that used geometric terms during music class. We all worked as a team for the goal of improving student learning in mathematics.

Communication with our parents is very important. We work diligently to keep the lines of communication going both ways. An open house is held, inviting parents and students to come in before school to meet the teacher. Formal presentations are given by teachers so parents have a clear understanding of classroom expectations and curriculum. Teachers make phone calls and send letters and emails to parents to keep them informed about their child's progress. Parent/teacher/student conferences are held twice a year with about 98% participation. Conferences are goal setting conferences. The focus is

on strengths and challenges around which the goals are set. This is another opportunity to communicate to parents about their child's progress.

The principal provides monthly updates at the PAC (parent advisory council) meetings. She also does a Title I presentation in the fall and spring informing the parents about what is happening within the program. There is a monthly newsletter that goes home to all families highlighting celebrations and upcoming events. There is usually at least one curriculum night for parents to learn more about reading and math. Instruction in both areas has changed dramatically making it important for parents to understand this to be able to assist their children at home.

The district provides an accountability report to the entire community. Our district webpage includes information on our curriculum. We try to be as transparent as possible and provide the parents and the community with information about our school. Public meetings are held to provide information to the community. We always encourage two-way communication.

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

Garfield Staff has always been encouraged to share and acquire new ideas from other teachers and school districts. A major strength of the staff is evident at its bi-monthly PLC (Professional Learning Communities) meetings when the staff communicates openly with other teachers in our district. Meetings have a clear focus each time, as improving student learning is the goal. The teachers also have grade level meetings where they discuss curriculum, assessments, and are always evaluating the most effective ways to teach. During the summer, staff members often participate in in-depth curriculum writing that aligns the curriculum with the state standards. The Building Leadership Team (BLT), consisting of three teachers and the principal, meet bimonthly, as well as training twice a year with the entire district's BLT teams. Garfield Elementary takes PRIDE in the professional development days that are scheduled each year to enhance our teaching skills and stay current with the best practices to meet the needs of all our students.

Other shared opportunities within the district include our Mentorship program for non-tenured teachers and TCIT (Teacher Child Interaction Training), which is taught to all primary teachers and para-professionals. All primary teachers, para-professionals, social worker, special education teacher and physical education teacher have been trained in TCIT. The same training is made available to parents and other school districts. Primary teachers, para-professionals and the social worker provided the training along with our mental health coordinator.

Junior Achievement is another shared program. A community member comes in the classroom and teaches the class about real life lessons in business, using hands-on activities to bring real world economics at their level.

Units of study in literacy have been developed by our teachers and are shared within the building and across the district.

Our staff members share within the school, district and state levels through the mentorship program. We have professional development opportunities for all staff that are usually provided by our own staff members. We have three staff members that are published authors. Our principal has shared at MESPA (Minnesota Elementary School Principal Association) division meetings on progress monitoring. We have had a staff member teach a class at the local technical college on children with special needs. Another staff member has trained Reading Recovery teachers locally and from surrounding communities, presented at state and regional Reading Recovery conferences, and led numerous in-services in the teaching of guided reading.

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

Garfield school has worked diligently to ensure that parents and community members feel welcome and comfortable coming into our building. The positive family climate begins at an open house for the students and their families. Formal presentations at our open house give the families an opportunity to hear classroom expectations and ask questions. This family feel continues throughout the school year with teachers making positive phone calls to each family, newsletters from teachers, a monthly newsletter from the principal, as well as fall and spring parent-teacher conferences which include the student. At the end of the year, it is a Garfield Elementary tradition that the teachers play a game of kickball against the departing sixth graders.

Over the years, Garfield School has taken a purposed approach in engaging families by offering volunteer opportunities in the classrooms, other areas of the building and on field trips. To boost our family culture, we provide a variety of family events throughout the year, including Bingo for Books, a school-wide dance, family picnic, family fitness night, TCIT (Teacher Child Interaction Training) nights, math nights, and Donuts for Dads/Muffins for Moms mornings.

Community members are an important part of our school culture. They enrich curriculum by volunteering for Readers Theater, Masterpiece Art, Terrific Kids, Lunch Buddies, tutors, high school mentors, Foster Grandparents, and Junior Achievement.

Other community groups and businesses have had a huge impact. Groups such as the Garfield Fire Department, Garfield Lion's Club and the Data Trail have given support, supplies and generous donations to our school. Garfield Cenex Convenience Store, The Fire Station Bar and Grill, and area churches have also supported the school and given generous donations. From these donations and supplies, Garfield students are able to participate in a variety of field trips, such as Kelly Farms, Science Museum, Minnesota Zoo, Prairie Wetlands Learning Center, and Deep Portage in Hackensack, MN.

Community members are very important to our school culture and Garfield students are an important part of the community as well. The students clean up roads and ditches and do various community projects such as raking lawns for the elderly and restoring the school's baseball/kickball field. Garfield students and 100% of the staff have raised money for the United Way and Pennies for Patients. Last year Garfield raised enough money for Pennies for Patients to be named the third largest contributor in the state for schools of our size.

# **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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## **1. Curriculum:**

Garfield School follows our district curriculum which is aligned with Minnesota State standards. Our teachers have extremely high expectations of themselves and their students.

Our school has been using the Scott Foresman Reading Program and currently has trained all of the primary teachers in balanced literacy. All K-6 teachers will be trained by the end of this year. Balanced literacy allows teachers to instruct students at their developmental level, giving students exactly what they need. Interventions in reading are First Grade Interventions and Leveled Literacy Interventions provided through our ADSIS (Alternative Delivery Service) initiative and Title I. Special Education uses Fast for Word, LiPS, (Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing) Seeing Stars, and Visualizing and Verbalizing. This year we implemented Reading Corps. Our reading curriculum will also be described in detail in section V. 2.

Everyday Mathematics is Garfield's math curriculum. This program is researched based and is aligned with Minnesota State standards. This curriculum area will also be described in more detail in section V, part 3.

Macmillian/McGraw-Hill Social Studies provides standards-based content, developed from the latest research and organized around themes of Social Studies. The program integrates leveled reading support in every lesson and instills citizenship through real-life role models.

Our science curriculum was written by our Science Curriculum committee. Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards in Science, it is organized by grade level into four content strands: 1) Nature of Science and Engineering, 2) Physical Science, 3) Earth and Space Science, and 4) Life Science. Each strand has three or four substrands and the substrands contain standards and benchmarks. The benchmarks supplement the standards by specifying the academic knowledge and skills that schools must offer and students must achieve to satisfactorily complete a standard. Lessons are taught using hands-on experiments.

Art instruction is provided by an art specialist. The belief statement from the art curriculum is: 'We believe art education will enrich the lives of all students by providing them with a lifelong appreciation of diverse cultures. Students will learn to visually communicate ideas and emotions creatively through the use of various mediums.'

Physical Education is provided to all students for 90 minutes a cycle week. The belief statement for Physical Education is: 'Students will build a positive attitude toward lifelong physical fitness and wellness through exposure to a variety of activities and the development of skills, self-confidence, and motivation. Students will participate cooperatively in an active and safe environment. Students will improve their mental alertness, academic performance, and readiness and enthusiasm for learning through physical education.' Students are encouraged to run a minimum of a quarter mile each day in our Road Runner program. Students record the laps that they run and receive incentives at different increments. Road Runners is part of the Garfield tradition.

Music instruction is provided by a music specialist for 90 minutes per cycle week. The belief statement for music is: 'We believe music education develops communication, cooperation, and creativity. Students participating in music have the opportunity to build skills, enrich lives, and experience the world from a new perspective. Music provides a strong background in rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics and other musical skills.' Vocal performances occur once a year during a public concert.

Technology standards are embedded and integrated into different subjects and not taught as a standalone.

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

Use of a dynamic, standards based curriculum implemented with a balanced literacy framework allows us to see the goals for which we are striving and enables us to differentiate for individual student needs and abilities. Students are given clear concise instruction as well as modeling, constant feedback, and most importantly, time to practice new skills.

Standards are kept at the forefront and data is gathered routinely so teachers can make data-driven decisions as they personalize their instruction. Teachers daily make sure that students are working at their prime educational level while striving for grade level benchmarks. This gives the teachers a clear picture of which interventions might help increase learning and acquisition of skills.

Our curriculum utilizes a balanced literacy approach. We use the workshop model to teach both reading and writing. Balanced Literacy includes phonics, interactive read-alouds and writing workshop. Components included are reading workshop, writing workshop, small group instructions, guided reading, strategy lessons, special interventions, read-alouds, word study, and shared reading. Students are individually assessed regularly to identify their independent and instructional reading levels. Instruction is provided in small groups to meet the needs of students at the appropriate level. Whole class lessons are used to instruct students in strategies that can be applied at all instructional levels.

The framework gives the teachers easy access to webbing of their content areas, allowing students to apply their knowledge and skills throughout the day and into the future. The framework gives each student more practice in skill development, critical thinking and problem solving. The increased practice time leads to more independent learning and growth outside the classroom, and it gives the teacher more time for individual, small group, and strategic instruction.

## **3. Mathematics:**

The core curriculum used in our K-6 school is Everyday Mathematics, which was developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. We chose this curriculum for its research-based and field-tested materials focused on developing children's understanding and skills in ways that produce life-long learners.

The instructional methods used in our classrooms include the use of concrete, real-life examples that are meaningful and work well to introduce key mathematical concepts. The students also receive repeated exposure to concepts and skills to develop their ability to recall knowledge from long-term memory. We work hard to provide frequent practice of basic computation skills and build mastery of procedures and quick recall of facts through games and verbal activities. Finally, in our classrooms we use multiple methods and problem solving strategies to foster proficiency and to accommodate different learning styles.

Students acquire foundational skills through the use of our core curriculum, Everyday Mathematics, and another research-based program, Math Recovery. The staff saw the need to intervene for struggling math students so every teacher became certified in SNAP or AVMR, both Math Recovery programs. These programs provided our teachers with a formative assessment system for tracking individual, small group, and whole class growth in seven foundational instructional topics of early numeracy. This data enables teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the range of developmental needs of all students. If you walked into a classroom with a teacher utilizing Math Recovery lessons, you would see the use of five and ten frames, rek-en-reks, numeral tracks, numeral rolls, and other manipulatives. You would also notice students 'explaining their thinking' when completing a math problem.

For students performing above grade level, Everyday Mathematics provided a section of the lesson every day where teachers are able to differentiate. Some examples are adjusting the difficulty of Open Response

problems, allowing students to challenge each other by creating their own math boxes, and assigning enrichment activities from the lesson to small groups of independent workers. Students are challenged to complete math related projects that correlate with the units being taught. These projects can take from one to four weeks to complete.

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

In the area of physical education/health/nutrition, the school was awarded a SHIP Wellness Grant and a Youth Resources Grant that was written by parents, students, and several staff members as well as integral district employees. Because of our school district's vision statement that we should be an extraordinary district by working together, these grants are a perfect example of how various generations worked collaboratively for the improvement of our school. The focus was on providing more opportunities for students to be more active by supplying a variety of equipment that could be easily used in physical education class and class break times. In addition, money was used to provide a choice of healthy snacks once a week.

Research shows that when students remain active and eat healthy foods their learning is enhanced. This means improved test scores and meeting the expectations of our faculty and parents as the students continue to achieve our goal of educational excellence. An example is the small kinesthetic knobby balls that generate effective pitchers because they could grasp the balls more easily. Preparation of a new kickball field for students to use during recess and after school was accomplished. Several classes spread truckloads of agrilite around the area and raked it level. They were so dedicated that even rain didn't deter them!

Besides purchasing equipment to increase activity, the students are exposed to a variety of nutritional snacks due to the Farm to School Strategies which was part of the SHIP Grant we received. Each week a healthy snack is provided.

An undertaking like this had never been developed before in which students collaborated to select items to be purchased with the grant money. Students conducted surveys on what type of equipment was favored, gathered information from their peers, and reported the data. After they pooled their resources, the group collaboratively developed a plan to purchase some new equipment for the physical education classes to enhance movement both indoors and out with very little set up time needed. These items are stored on a cart for all the classes to use during classroom breaks. Each classroom teacher developed a plan determining when the class would use the equipment for a short 10-15 minute activity break, especially on days without a scheduled physical education class.

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

Many opportunities are provided for differentiated instruction to meet the needs of diverse subgroups of students, especially in the areas of reading, writing, math and technology. Grades K-6 teachers use data from different assessments to differentiate instruction.

In reading, the bottom 20% of first graders receive reading intervention by a trained Reading Recovery specialist. The bottom 40th percentile, of grades K-2, receive LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) services. All students achieving in the bottom 40th percentile in grades K-6 with reading and behavioral needs qualify for our Challenge Program with the school Social Worker.

Our K-2 reading program is Balanced Literacy, in which students are instructed at their reading level. Grades 3-6 students are exposed to grade level standards and use leveled reading books to meet the varied needs of all students. Special education uses Visualizing and Verbalizing, Fast for Word, and LLI programming. To follow the reading curriculum, Grades 1-6 spelling has individual spelling lists,

dependent on the needs of the students. Kindergarten students focus on high frequency words. Writing conferencing is used at all grade levels to differentiate writing instruction.

The Everyday Math curriculum provides tools for readiness, extra practice and enrichment. A cyclical approach is used to provide several opportunities to become secure with a skill. AVMR (Add+vantage Math Recovery) is used daily in all classrooms as interventions, and para-professionals provide additional AVMR support. Ground works is another resource to reteach or enhance a skill.

Technology is used to engage students and enhance instruction in many different ways. Study Island and IXL programs support classrooms lessons for each week. Classrooms also use Tech Cameras, iPads, Flipcams, Computer Projection devices, Smartboards and COWS (Computers (laptops) On Wheels) to enrich lessons, enhance learning and engage the learner.

Garfield School strongly supports mainstreaming whenever possible. The special education students spend the majority of their academic day in the classroom. The classroom teacher makes accommodations/modifications for special education students after collaborating with the special education teacher. In Kindergarten and First Grade, special education para-professionals are available all day to meet the needs of students and reinforce skills. Our students are also given opportunities to support one another in peer teaching, which brings students' levels of understanding to a higher level. All students receive individual instruction, while feeling a part of a team.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Garfield Elementary is committed to ongoing staff improvement focusing on student learning. Professional development promotes student learning in a positive way when it is sustained over time. The district has a data-driven program based on student performance. It is grounded in proven research and aligned with building goals. Another way we promote student learning is flexible and differentiated structures and resources that are connected to classroom practices to support and sustain the improvement of instruction. Professional development is provided through district-wide professional development days, late start days, new teacher orientation, conferences, in-service days, and summer institutes. Instructional coaches also provide ongoing training for all teachers and staff.

Leadership training is provided for building leaders in support of the Site Based Leadership model. One hundred percent of probationary teachers are supported in improving classroom teaching strategies through the District teacher mentorship program.

Professional development is provided to enhance the understanding and application of Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies, specifically related to Tier 1 for all teachers (providing accommodations and modifications within classrooms).

Prior to the start of the school year, new teachers attend four days of orientation facilitated by the District Teacher Mentorship Coordinator. Our district has a comprehensive induction program for new teachers. Our model is developed around the components of highly effective induction programming such as administrative support, professional development and mentoring. Through monthly seminars, coaching observations, reflective practice, and working with trained mentors we continue to support the development of new teachers throughout the entire probationary period. Our mentor training seminars are built upon research-based, time-proven strategies and programs.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Garfield Elementary has maintained the philosophy of leadership as TEAMWORK. Sharing a principal with two other buildings creates an atmosphere in which every individual plays an equal role in the success of our school.

The BLT (Building Leadership Team) model is used in our school to ensure that every member of our staff is represented and informed about decisions made for the school. Two or three members hold elected positions for three years. During each term, the BLT committee represents primary or intermediate classroom teachers, special education or special area teachers, para-professionals and other personnel. The BLT meets frequently to make decisions about Garfield School. Quarterly meetings are held with the building leadership teams throughout the district. BLT members identify targets for all staff members' learning, development, and involvement. Garfield BLT members study current and past data from MCA testing to implement building goals for each new school year in reading and math. Staff development budgets and training are then created to ensure total focus on the goals created for each new school year by the entire staff.

A PLC (Professional Learning Community) model is used twice a month to set a focus on learning, to form a collaborative culture, and to remain results-oriented. During this collaboration time we determine what we want students to learn, how we will know if students have learned it, how we will respond if students perform below expectations, and how we can extend and enrich student learning, all based on our building goals.

Garfield staff members have yearly individual goals, supported by the model 'A Framework for Teaching, Enhancing Professional Practice', by Charlotte Danielson. Staff goals help promote professionalism and focus on student achievement. Teachers plan for instruction, reflect on their instruction, and interact with colleagues to further develop and execute plans to improve staff and student learning in order to achieve high performance levels.

Additionally, all staff and students dedicate themselves to following the "Code of Conduct." The Code of Conduct fosters honesty, fairness, responsibility, respect, and kindness in students and adults to promote positive interactions throughout the school.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: MCA II or III

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	96	74	94	86	91
Exceeds	60	22	56	54	41
Number of students tested	25	27	16	28	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	100	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	30	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	9	6	8	7
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked			Masked	
Exceeds	Masked			Masked	
Number of students tested	1			1	
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	3	3	2	2
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	96	78	81	75	91
Exceeds	60	56	69	32	50
Number of students tested	25	27	16	28	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	100	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	30	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	9	6	8	7
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked			Masked	
Exceeds	Masked			Masked	
Number of students tested	1			1	
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	3	3	2	2
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: MCA II or III

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	86	79	75	83	89
Exceeds	43	42	50	21	44
Number of students tested	28	19	24	24	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	70	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	40	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	8	8	7	6
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	3	3	4	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meet or Exceeds	79	79	87	92	78
Exceeds	50	53	46	54	44
Number of students tested	28	19	24	24	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meet or Exceeds	70	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	40	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	8	8	7	6
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meet or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meet or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meet or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	3	3	4	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meet or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meet or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: MCA II or III

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	75	76	95	89	91
Exceeds	10	12	60	44	36
Number of students tested	20	25	20	18	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	70	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	0	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	6	10	6	6	7
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3	3	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	100	88	90	83	91
Exceeds	90	56	35	33	27
Number of students tested	19	25	20	18	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	90	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	50	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	6	10	6	6	7
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	3	3	1	1
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: MCA II or III

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN Dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	92	48	100	83	65
Exceeds	29	10	39	13	31
Number of students tested	24	21	18	23	26
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	9	3	7	5
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds		Masked			
Exceeds		Masked			
Number of students tested		1			
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3		1	2
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. There we no special education students in 2010 in gr. 6.					

13MN7

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: MCA II

Edition/Publication Year: Revised Annually Publisher: MN dept. of Ed (Pearson)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	88	76	78	78	73
Exceeds	63	38	56	26	46
Number of students tested	24	21	18	23	26
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	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>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	9	3	7	5
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds		Masked			
Exceeds		Masked			
Number of students tested		1			
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3		1	2
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>6.</b>					
Meets or Exceeds					
Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. In 2010 we did not have any special education students in gr. 6.					

13MN7