

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13NH5

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

Name of Principal: Mrs. Elizabeth Allen

Official School Name: Hollis Primary School

School Mailing Address: 36 Silver Lake Road
Hollis, NH 03049-6286

County: Hillsborough State School Code Number*: 21815

Telephone: (603) 324-5995 E-mail: elizabeth.allen@sau41.org

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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*: Mrs. Susan Hodgdon Superintendent e-mail: susan.hodgdon@sau41.org

District Name: Hollis School District District Phone: (603) 324-5999

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. Robert Mann

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 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 0 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 2 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 14467

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: 5
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	15	9	24
K	33	29	62
1	38	40	78
2	37	49	86
3	45	40	85
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
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
Total in Applying School:			335

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
4 % Asian
2 % Black or African American
2 % Hispanic or Latino
2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
90 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

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

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 4%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	10
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	5
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	15
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	340
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 3
Number of non-English languages represented: 2
Specify non-English languages:

Russian (2) and Chinese (1)

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 8%
 Total number of students who qualify: 26

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: 12%
 Total number of students served: 39

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>6</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>12</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>16</u>	<u>3</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>11</u>
Total number	<u>55</u>	<u>24</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:

18:1

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	96%	96%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

Graduating class size:	_____	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____	0%
Enrolled in a community college	_____	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____	0%
Found employment	_____	0%
Military service	_____	0%
Other	_____	0%
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

The mission of Hollis Primary School is to ensure a strong, supportive learning environment focused on academic excellence. What sets this vision apart from that of so many other schools is not the eloquence of its descriptors, but the totality with which this community embraces its spirit. Teachers, administrators, specialists, and students together are secure in the conviction that all children are capable of learning at very high levels. Therefore, it is with shared senses of purpose and vitality that this community strives to aid and support students as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and emotional understandings that will help them to lead meaningful lives.

The administration and staff of Hollis Primary School have done a great deal to align the academic structures of our learning community in order to maximize our students' successes. Though it would be easy to view the awards, accolades, and impressive test results received as the due of our dedicated staff, the Hollis community understands that these are, in fact, student successes. In that vein, we at Hollis Primary School base our work on the understanding that students are why we do what we do. Decisions, initiatives, instructional techniques, and community efforts begin, end, and are judged in relation to their effect on student wellness and learning.

Parent participation plays a major role in maintaining this student-centric culture as well as in ensuring its continued success. Hollis Primary School has received Partners in Education awards each of the last twenty years. This recognition is awarded to schools by the state of New Hampshire to honor communities that support their schools through outstanding volunteerism. PTA sponsored fundraising events, such as the annual auction, raise more than \$30,000.00 in support of our community schools each year. Annually, over \$15,000.00 of this money is spent on providing supplementary programming to our students, e.g., the artist in residence program, visiting scholar and scientist programs, guest author programs, the annual science fair, writing and art competitions, etc. In addition to providing students with supplementary educational programming, the PTA also supports the needs of individual teachers and manages many of the school/community events that serve as the cultural foundation for our learning community's impressive cohesion.

Located among the rolling hills of southern New Hampshire, Hollis is a picturesque town that boasts a town center listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Hollis' 7,684 residents serve in a wide variety of professional capacities. Many families belong to the professional ranks of Boston, Nashua, Manchester, and the surrounding communities; while, others work or manage the many active farms, which dot the surrounding landscape. Regardless of this vocational diversity, Hollis families are united in their commitment to excellent schools and wide-reaching educational opportunities for their children.

The caring, capable, and focused staff at Hollis Primary School shares in and helps to realize the community's ambitious educational goals. This spirit of teamwork is evidenced by the staff's continued commitment to working as an effective and communicative Professional Learning Community. Grade-level teams of educators meet twice weekly regarding shared lesson planning, problem solving, data analysis, and best practices. This collaborative structure and dedication to ongoing improvement are key factors in the continuing successes of our students. These successes serve further to evidence the effectiveness of our educators' commitment to data-driven decision-making and individualized instruction. Hollis Primary School's schedule is designed to provide common planning time for all teachers each day as well as designated time for PLC meetings and "flex time" for targeted instruction across the student population. In addition, we are pleased not only to offer the traditional fine arts specialists to our students, but also to offer Spanish and a fully integrated Environmental Science program that students participate in for three consecutive years. These efforts have helped approximately 90% of our students to achieve in the proficient or above range in each of the last three years.

Parents, volunteers, substitute teachers, and guests have consistently commented upon the almost palpable sense of convergent energy at Hollis Primary School. We are proud of the community effort that has generated this focused enthusiasm for learning. The impressive and ongoing efforts of our staff as well as their unwavering commitment to student-focused, research-based instruction has produced results worthy of our school's consideration for the National Blue Ribbon Award. Similarly, the heartfelt passions of the students and educators have created an environment worthy of our sacred task. We will continue to strive to ensure that every student's hunger for knowledge be met with meaningful, individual attention and celebrated in an environment worthy of its inherent magic.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A.

The Common Core Standards define what students must know and be able to do at each grade level in the area of reading and mathematics. In the areas of science and social studies the state of New Hampshire provides Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), which serve as a guide to student outcomes for spans of grade levels, e.g., grades 3-4. In addition to the standards, we have local expectations that far exceed the published standards for student performance.

Each fall, students in grades 3-8 are assessed in the areas of reading and mathematics by participating in state assessments, most notably the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). Each year the Hollis Primary School has met the state level benchmarks as well as the benchmarks defined under the No Child Left Behind Act for proficiency. We firmly believe that all students can learn and achieve at high levels and, to accomplish this, that professionals must change their practices to ensure student success.

We are committed to setting ambitious school standards. To that end, we expect that all students will reach Proficient or Proficient with Distinction – the two highest levels of achievement delineated on the NECAP. On our supplementary assessments, such as the Measure of Academic Progress published by the North West Evaluative Association (NWEA), we strive to have all students perform at or above the 50th percentile. This standard is extended to include other evaluative tools as well. For example, AIMSweb Benchmark Assessments, which provide the formative data necessary to manage a dynamic RTI model. We carefully monitor percentile rankings to ensure growth for all students, even those who perform at consistently high levels.

B.

The resolution to do whatever it takes to meet each child's needs has fueled our ongoing commitment to analyze student data carefully and thoroughly, especially for those who do not perform at proficient or above as defined by state assessments. As a student body, we consistently perform amongst the top elementary schools in New Hampshire. One area that our analyses have led us to target for improvement is constructed response writing. We have observed consistently lower scores on these items, in both mathematics and reading, than desired. In response, we are spending significant time critiquing student writing as well as requiring additional writing to open response questions of our students with the aim of solidifying student understandings in these areas. Initiatives of this type are being carried out at both the building and grade-specific levels.

Over the last four years, in the area of mathematics, the range of students who scored in the proficient or above ranges has been consistently between 90% and 94%. This represents a significant improvement over the previous years and is directly attributable to a renewed focus on mathematics during the corresponding time period. This was, in fact, the first area of focus for our then newly formed PLC. In the Proficient with Distinction category for mathematics the range is from 34% to 44% of all students tested over the last five years, with the most recent four years being markedly stronger than the fifth. These numbers continue to improve, and we are pleased to report that the data just received for 2012 indicates that our students, now in third and fourth grades, scored a combined 95% proficient in mathematics.

In the area of reading, our third-grade students achieved within the proficient and proficient with distinction ranges at an average of 96% over the last four years. Again, this represents a remarkable improvement over the fifth year. The ongoing adjustments to instruction based on formative assessment

data as well as the communicative nature of our PLC model are responsible for this growth. Additionally, within the third grade data set, there has been steady improvement in student scores within the proficient range despite variances within sub-groups. Finally, the combined third and fourth grade scores from the new 2012 data set indicate that students are reading in the proficient range at a rate of 90%. This improved combined score was made possible by the fact that the fourth grade scores have stabilized significantly over the last three years due to the adoption of new pedagogy.

In the data set from 2011, we see the largest gap within our subgroups of special education and limited English proficient students in the areas of reading and math. To close this achievement gap, we are carefully analyzing student data and progress monitoring students in reading and math. In addition, we are examining instructional tools and adjusting methods to ensure that each student continues to grow.

All students who scored below the proficient level on the state assessment, as well as those who scored below the 50th percentile on other normative assessments, are provided with careful oversight and additional targeted instruction. Ongoing progress monitoring provides educators with current data on which to base these continuing efforts. We often look at the child's schedule to determine creative times in which to provide them individualized guidance. To sustain our students' growth within our various subgroups, we offer a full support program for four weeks in the summer. The summer program allows students to maintain the skills they have gained with no cost to the family.

2. Using Assessment Results:

A)

Each teacher at the Hollis Primary School is part of a data team that carefully analyzes the results of our state testing, e.g., The New England Common Assessment (NECAP). Teams of teachers are provided with all of the data files that come to our school from the state of NH, including released items, for question-by-question analysis. In addition to the data from state assessments, each teacher is involved in the review of data from local assessments and other normed benchmarking measures, which are given three times per year. We do not believe that there should be a team of data gurus that provide a summary of the data to each educational team, but rather that each teacher must become an expert in data analysis.

After careful review of the data from both reading and math assessments, the teams come together to share their observations of the data and make specific suggestions to adapt or revise our instruction. These specific suggestions often create the basis for a larger plan and serve to assist each grade level team in setting goals for instructional improvement. The newly defined goals for instruction and student improvement serve as a guide for planning and provide areas of focus for all grade level teachers. It is important to us that the information gained via these analyses be used to guide instruction in meaningful and verifiable ways, rather than simply be filed away.

Our collective district and school goal is to see each student secure a rating of Proficient or Proficient with Distinction on our statewide assessments. In terms of our other benchmarking assessments, we strive to make certain each child is afforded at least a full year of growth regardless of where they started - even if they had been achieving beyond grade level expectations. We carefully monitor the percentile rankings and provide intervention to students achieving below the 50th percentile as well as intensive intervention to those scoring in the lowest 25%. In any given year, the lowest 25% may be achieving in the average range; however, we want to continue to provide support to these students in order to ensure as much growth as possible. To achieve our goal we monitor each student carefully using not only data from our statewide assessments, but also data from local assessments and other nationally normed assessments such as the NWEA test.

Through the use of diverse, research-based intervention and data analysis techniques, our grade level teams continuously reevaluate student learning based on an ever-growing pool of data and apply what

they have learned to their instructional plans. This process is continued and supplemented during our monthly faculty meetings and periodical professional days. During these times, data from local assessments are compared with those from standardized tests.

Our teachers make it a point to respond not only to instructional deficits, but also to those students who are performing well above grade level in order to provide the support students need. The daily intervention block provides the venue for much of this targeted instruction. This block of time has been instituted at all grade levels so that student may receive the support they need without missing new instruction. Our benchmarking assessments and local data provide for initial groupings, and diagnostic assessments as well as progress monitoring to provide feedback and data on the progress of students within these groups. Students move fluidly among the groups and teachers will form new groups as the data suggests.

B)

The educators, students, and families of Hollis Primary School comprise a vital learning community. It is the shared belief of this community that educational strategies are most effective when informed by ongoing assessment. Therefore, it is a primary consideration of both administration and teachers to communicate these data, as well as the results of the related analyses, to the community as thoughtfully and completely as possible. Consequently, families are provided the opportunity to conference with school leaders and staff regarding their students' progress. As a rule, families meet with teachers during the first and second trimesters. Subsequent meetings, to discuss the results of standardized assessments (e.g., NWEA, NECAP, AIMSweb, etc.), the unification of these data with other sources of information, and potential implications regarding future instructional options, are offered throughout the year. Additionally, families are provided with individualized NWEA and NECAP reports, which detail how their student tested in comparison to their peers, as well as any emerging trends made clear by the addition of the most recent data. Furthermore, assessment results are communicated to the student population obliquely via informed adjustments to instructional approaches and content emphases. Finally, these data and shifts in instructional approach are communicated to the community at large through televised presentations to the school board by the local principals and published in the Annual Report.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The Hollis Primary School is often selected as a site visitation for other school districts in our state and for other schools in our school administrative unit. Many surrounding school districts inquire about visiting due to our excellent state test scores. We welcome guests to review all of our core curriculum programs including mathematics, reading, word study, environmental science, early elementary Spanish, and our Tier II programs.

We have had several surrounding districts send representatives to learn about our Extended Day Kindergarten Program (EDK). Our EDK program provides Tier II intervention for students who we feel are at risk in the area of literacy. We provide a full-day program for our eligible students versus the traditional half-day program. We welcome other school districts to review our data, visit our classroom, and meet with our Kindergarten team to learn about the structure and focus of this program. Several other area districts have now adopted this model to benefit their young learners and to provide them with a boost before entering first grade.

We also serve as a visitation site for schools looking to implement an integrated Pre-School Program. We are in our eighth year of a program that serves three and four year old students with special needs while reserving 50% of the placements for typical peers. Other districts will visit to help assist them in their application to the state to begin an integrated preschool. We are able to provide them with a glimpse of programming as well as information on staffing and costs for materials and furniture to help them get their programs started.

The Hollis Primary School enthusiastically shared with colleagues in our district our success with the Wilson Reading Foundations Program as well as our Readers' and Writers' Workshop Programs. We have hosted grade level colleagues for a full day to observe teachers using the tools and methods mentioned above. Our other early elementary school in our school administrative unit has now adopted all three programs and they lean on our professionals to be their peer mentors.

Our administrative team shares and presents at various organizations in the state to help other districts transition to a school model that can effectively provide an organized Response to Intervention program. We are proud to share the data analyses, master schedules, and strategies that helped to shift our school culture to a professional learning community focused on student learning.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

We believe that parent and community involvement are key components in providing a quality education to every student. Our community carefully monitors our student assessment data. This dialogue is facilitated by the school's consistent efforts to publish data in Principal Reports to the School Board and the Annual School District Report. Community members eagerly await the results of our data analyses and listen carefully to the recommendations of our administrative team regarding suggested methods to boost student performance as well as areas that may need additional focus. There are always requests for us to explore innovative new programs, invest in technology, and provide our students with the latest research-based tools for learning. We are extremely fortunate that our community members understand the reciprocal nature of financial support for education and its direct link to student learning.

Our community is comprised of many professionals that will often volunteer their time in our school to serve as writing coaches, math mentors, and guest instructors that would like to bring authentic science experiences to our classrooms. In addition to providing academic support and expertise, our community members and families volunteer to host many enrichment activities to extend the students' learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Each year, we have a PTA sponsored Science Fair and a Reflections Challenge, which engages students in a competition that focuses on the visual and performing arts. We receive support from our local organizations, such as the Rotary and local women's club, to provide funding for innovative projects and literacy programs. For the last eight school years, we have also been fortunate to participate in the foster grandparent program and, consequently, have senior citizens who volunteer in our school to provide both academic and social support to our students.

Our school community, inclusive of parent volunteers, teachers and community members, provides an after school writing club and Author's Mic Night for our students. We also have many students that participate in Destination Imagination and Lego League programs to further their investigative and critical thinking skills. Additionally, we host a school-wide family reading night sponsored by our Parent Teacher Group and staff. Together as a school community of staff members, residents, students and their families we maintain an outdoor classroom and community garden. For each of the last 20 school years, the Hollis Primary School has received an award to recognize the amazing participation of its volunteers.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The core curriculum of the Hollis Primary School, grades pre-K through third, emphasizes literacy and mathematics, and our learning standards come directly from the Common Core. Science and social studies are taught on an integration model. This means that, while conceptual and hands-on elements are taught during discrete scheduling blocks, the majority of the factual content is communicated through informational texts and data organizing tools as part of our comprehensive literacy and mathematics initiatives. Additionally, science and social studies standards are met, in part, via our ongoing and fully integrated Environmental Science Program - a unique learning experience provided to all students grades first through third. In keeping with this model, students are expected to express themselves effectively in writing across all content areas. Writing to explain and writing to communicate understandings are the dual lynchpins of this approach, which allows us to expand literacy expectations beyond their traditional confines. Finally, our curriculum is heavily focused on the arts and humanities.

In addition to the traditional “specials” (e.g., Music, Art, PE, Library), students are provided with two learning opportunities notable for their underrepresentation at these grade levels: Spanish and Environmental Science. These classes also provide supplementary instruction in core content areas; as a result, these instructors regularly consult with the grade-level teams. The Environmental Science teacher oversees an impressive, multi-year program that covers many of the science expectations at each grade level. In addition, many of these lessons help students to explore the ethical and societal implications of science and technology. Similarly, the Spanish teacher coordinates with classroom teachers to adjust her instruction to include vocabulary from relevant science and social studies units. Efforts such as these are representative of the integrated approach our staff employs, and are responsible for the fact that our students view the specialist areas as extensions of the regular classroom.

Common Core literacy standards are met at each grade level by following a model based on the pedagogy of Lucy Calkins and utilizing Readers’ Workshop, Writers’ Workshop, and Wilson Language Systems’ ‘Foundations’ word study program as instructional tools. These programs provide room for meaningful differentiation based on shared analyses of data, while still providing the structural consistency to work well within a dynamic RTI model. Within this system, formative assessment data is collected via AIMSweb, running records, DRA, and observation. The careful analysis of these data allows educational teams to create and manage variable RTI groups in order better to meet students’ needs in a targeted manner. The shared nature of these groups, which meet during a dedicated thirty-minute block and contain students from multiple classes, serves to engender a sense of shared responsibility for each student amongst the grade-level teachers.

In mathematics we use the EnVision math program, which is designed for the Common Core. There are heavy emphases on language and writing within this program and students are encouraged to share conceptual understandings in this way. Each grade level provides common assessments, analyzes the data, and forms RTI groups across the grade level to meet students’ needs. Some students need additional support, others grade level practice, and some need extensions. Again, the use of a dedicated time block provides for support, practice, or extension of material for all students in a grade level.

Our students complete each grade level with a solid foundation of skills, which prepares them to further expand their skills and knowledge base in the next grade. Each grade level mirrors the program delivery of the previous grade. This provides a consistent experience of support for each child on his or her educational journey.

2. Reading/English:

We believe that an effective literacy curriculum is one that encompasses the broad range of skills inherent to successful communication and ensures that these areas of focus are thoughtfully and consistently stressed across all subjects of instruction. To this end, the literacy team at Hollis Primary School spent two years researching, piloting, and formalizing a new, balanced literacy curriculum that empowers teachers to incorporate reading, writing, speaking, and listening as foci within all areas of study. In consultation with the Child Development Team (LRR) at Tufts University, the curriculum team determined that such an approach would be most effective within a dynamic RTI model if anchored by three core components. These foundational elements are word study, Readers' Workshop, and Writers' Workshop. Within this framework, teachers utilize explicit instruction, whole and small group guided learning, and meaningfully differentiated individual plans to expose students to quality writing and literary concepts that will empower them to pursue life-long interests in reading and enjoy ongoing successes as communicators.

All three components of Hollis Primary School's Balanced Literacy Curriculum are research-based, data-driven, and fully aligned with the Common Core. Furthermore, each of these constituent elements offers the flexibility and support to allow teachers to differentiate instruction meaningfully based on the shared analyses of team data. Readers' and Writers' Workshops provide the cultural features necessary to enable students to access information, experiment, and share free from the worry and stresses inherent in some traditional pedagogies. However, each also incorporates enough flexibility to allow for meaningful changes to be made at the point of contact, e.g., the use of informational texts to supplement other instructional efforts, and targeted differentiation. Wilson Language Systems' 'Foundations' program functions as the basis for Hollis Primary's word study initiative. Wilson's phonics-based approach to spelling and word solving strategies is well supported by research and dovetails effectively into methodologies employed by our large team of reading specialists and literacy professionals as they support the learning of tier II and III students. Consequently, as educational teams meet to share information and make instructional choices within our RTI model, student learning is buttressed by the consistency of tier I instruction with the more targeted strategies employed by seemingly discrete literacy skill-groups. These curriculum choices, skillfully made, empower classroom teachers and subject experts to work together effectively in pursuit of their shared goal: the development of engaged, fluent, and effective readers and writers.

3. Mathematics:

Within this curriculum area, *EnVision Mathematics* is Hollis Primary School's core instructional tool. Teachers implement this program skillfully and with the depth of conceptual integration encouraged by the structural format of the Common Core. Teachers use guided questioning, group and independent practice, explicit instruction in problem solving skills, and conceptual models that move from the concrete to the abstract in order to facilitate student learning within this system. The key to the effectiveness of this approach is meaningful, ongoing formative assessment. The data gleaned from these assessments, both formal and informal, empower teachers and students better to identify and address areas warranting greater attention. Tools, such as Envision online and IXL online, allow for this authentic approach to flexible learning to be extended beyond the classroom. Finally, the responsiveness that quality formative assessment data affords teachers at Hollis Primary School allows students who quickly demonstrate firm conceptual understandings opportunities to advance their developments further within the same instructional model as their peers.

The faculty of Hollis Primary School takes pride in treating each student as an individual. Teachers and professional staff habitually share data regarding student progress and effective instructional strategies, as well as anecdotal information relevant to ensuring each student's success. Teams comprised of classroom teachers, special educators, and math professionals meet regularly to discuss these data and to adjust the dynamic tier II preparatory groups that meet daily to supplement core instruction. Additionally, tier III instruction is provided, as needed, by special educators and math professionals in cooperation with the

greater educational team. Though ambitious, the effectiveness of this collaborative and flexible instructional model is evidenced by documented improvement in targeted mathematical skills, cogent student writing samples in the area of mathematics, and excellent results across common and standardized assessments. Furthermore, the excitement engendered by these successes has helped to galvanize staff and students in their shared commitment to building a positive and inclusive math culture at Hollis Primary School.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

At Hollis Primary School, our mission of ensuring a strong and supportive learning environment for our students is rooted in the certainty that academic, social, and emotional successes are prerequisites for living one's life as a citizen fully and meaningfully. Therefore, we are proud to offer all of our students, grades first through third, the opportunity to participate in an ongoing environmental science program. This program, run by a dedicated teacher trained in science instruction, welcomes each classroom section into the lab for forty-five minutes on a bi-weekly schedule. There, students engage with a fully realized, independent environmental science curriculum based on instructional techniques supported by the latest research, e.g., inquiry-based learning, authentic contact with the natural environment, and explorations of the ethical and social ramifications of science and technology.

These environmental science lessons are aligned with the New Hampshire Life Science Content and Process Standards and, whenever possible, are extended by the classroom teachers who also continue to teach science units that include these standards. This unique "special" allows us to offer our students an incredible array of authentic learning experiences. Some of these opportunities include: growing seedlings and transplanting them into cold frames in our school garden; indoor composting using vermicomposting bins, and outdoor composting via worm-free tumblers; access to a system of eco-trails maintained by the local Boy Scouts; and the use of a planned outdoor learning space surrounding one of our vernal pools. This system of outdoor educational resources provides our students the chance to eat lunches that they have grown themselves, get up-close looks at aquatic invertebrates, and to track local wildlife in order to determine how they survive harsh New Hampshire winters. Additionally, our third graders voluntarily manage our robust recycling program. They oversee the "upcycling" of juice and applesauce pouches, plastic lunch trays, empty glue sticks, plastic bottles, and paper.

Inquiry-based instruction lies at the heart of this innovative program. Every student is given a science notebook in which they record observations, learn to read and create data tables, document their "wonder questions", and, eventually, design their own experiments. These notebooks are used consistently during the three-year experience at Hollis Primary School and are an invaluable tool for helping students to recall lessons, practice writing new words, make predictions, and draw pictures of their observations. In the future, we hope to expand these efforts to encourage our students to become thoughtful citizen scientists.

5. Instructional Methods:

Students in grades K through three participate in literacy and mathematics benchmarking assessments three times per year. Additionally, Hollis Primary School maintains an extensive bank of data for each student that aids educators in creating profiles of students' progress within and across grade levels. The Hollis School District has very high expectations of our professionals and requires that they view each child as an individual and deliver instruction that meets each child's needs. Leadership and faculty alike are committed to this vision and, therefore, work together to shape instruction guided by the understanding that a failure to learn is, in reality, a failure to teach.

Grade-level teams begin to identify learning goals and plan instructional strategies well before students arrive to begin the school year. In late June, educators begin reviewing the accumulated data on their incoming students. This groundwork allows for programs such as flex groups to begin in earnest within the first thirty days of school. These flex groups fit within the RTI model by providing students with

thirty guaranteed minutes of targeted instruction per day. The most visible and vibrant aspect of our RTI program, these groups are changed regularly in response to ongoing formative assessment and are comprised of students from each of the grade-level classrooms. During these blocks of time, there can be as many as eight to ten different groups working on skills and concepts particular to each set of students and supported by the classroom teachers, professional staff, and subject specialists.

As a primary school, we believe that early and effective interventions are the key to ensuring students' future successes. Therefore, we employ three dedicated reading specialists and a math specialist to provide support and extensions to students and teachers. Furthermore, each of these specialists are available to "push in" during tier I instruction and each participates in tier II flex grouping and tier III targeted interventions.

To support teachers as they strive to meet their shared goal of meaningful differentiation during all tier I instructional blocks, literacy and mathematics coaches are available to them at all times. Resources such as these, in conjunction with shared data analysis initiatives, help educational teams to ensure a full year of academic growth to each student in all areas of instruction, whether they are performing beyond grade-level expectations or require additional supports to make appropriate progress.

6. Professional Development:

It is the shared expectation in SAU 41 that each school will function as a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Additionally, it is expected that, within each school, grade-level teams will function as smaller, cooperative units inside that larger framework. One of our widest reaching professional development initiatives during the past three years has been the establishment of these communities and the training of staff to ensure that these collaborative ventures are effective. To that end, we have committed to sending each of our educators to a three-day summit with Rick and Becky Dufour so that they may receive instruction on how to excel within this model. The vast majority of teachers have now completed this training and have brought their understandings and impressive enthusiasms to bear as we have strived to create teams with established leaders, effective goals, accurate data analysis models, and clear plans for intervention. With regard to RTI, we have contracted Dr. Art Mearlender to assist administration and faculty in the refinement of our data analysis techniques and delivery of supports to students within this model.

At Hollis Primary School, we believe that professional development is a critical component in the effort to ensure the continued advancement of student achievement and professional capacities. District leadership has created a five-year strategic plan, which enumerates key goals in this regard as well as describes clear paths to achieve these ends. Funding approval for professional development is contingent upon each specific request's relation to those stated goals, e.g., building leadership capacity, ensuring student learning, and aligning curriculum. Each professional staff member at the Hollis Primary School, including administration, is allotted \$1150.00 annually to be used toward professional development. In addition to each educator's personal fund, the school maintains an annual pool of approximately \$10,000.00 to use toward initiatives deemed likely to improve the educational community's effectiveness. There is an additional pool of \$10,000.00 used to fund stipends for teachers and staff who take on leadership roles such as mentoring a colleague, serving as team leader, or organizing professional workshops. These incentives are designed to reward the assumption of leadership roles and the sharing of professional practices. Finally, in addition to this fiduciary commitment, Hollis Primary School provides six early release days to allow for team collaboration, two full professional development days to strategize and refine curricula, and professional days for teams in need of time to collaborate.

7. School Leadership:

The school leadership team at Hollis Primary School is comprised of a school principal and an assistant principal/special education coordinator. In addition to the two administrators, the community benefits

from the guidance of grade-level team leaders and a Response to Intervention Team made up of volunteers from across the faculty.

The leadership philosophy at the Hollis Primary School is one of teamwork. Administrators serve as catalysts, managers, and mentors to the teaching staff, while also striving to foster leadership capacity within the professional ranks. Foremost among the responsibilities of the administrative team is the necessity of ensuring that the staff is comprised of the right people to meet the needs of our students. The shifting of personnel, weeding out of staff members not wholly focused on student needs, and hiring of talented and dedicated new teachers are some of the most important functions administrators perform in pursuit of our community's goals. At their best, administrators are the curators of our shared ideals and the custodians of our professional relationships.

The administrative team, in consultation with the grade-level and specialist team leaders, is directly responsible for drafting the annual school budget. This is one very concrete example of how leadership can affect change better to serve the student population. Funding choices related to staffing and resource procurement directly influence student success. In addition, the freedom to adjust the extents to which mandates are funded or defunded is a de facto prioritization of learning goals and policy initiatives. Leaders involved with this process are also engaged in policy making at the district level via participation on policy subcommittees. These leaders use the results of shared data analyses to allocate funds to professional development, intensive intervention programs, and instructional resources.

Both the Principal and Assistant Principal are actively involved with the evaluation and adoption of all learning materials. The administrative team manages pilot programs, evaluates the efficacy of new materials and instructional measures, and approves or rejects proposed programming changes. The administrative team also serves in an evaluative role. Teachers and professional staff are assessed using the Danielson Model, and suggestions are made with the intention of improving all aspects of performance that affect student learning. As a Professional Learning Community (PLC), school leadership at Hollis Primary School is a shared responsibility. Led by the Principal, all stakeholders feel a collective responsibility for ensuring student achievement.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: NECAP - New England Common Assessment Test Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Each Year as Stated 2007 - 2011

Publisher: Measured Progress

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	93	90	92	94	88
Proficient with Distinction	41	39	40	44	34
Number of students tested	90	80	95	84	120
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Proficient with Distinction	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4		2	1	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked			Masked	Masked
Proficient with Distinction	Masked			Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1			1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked				
Proficient with Distinction	Masked				
Number of students tested	1				
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	83	Masked	71
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	8	Masked	14
Number of students tested	6	7	12	3	21
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	1	2	2	1	
6. Asian based on 2011 data					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Number of students tested	5	4		1	
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. NH Alternate Assessment Program (NH-ALPS) is available for students with disabilities in grades 3-8 and grade 11. Students submit evidence in the same subject areas as required of their non-disabled peers on alternative standards written for students with severe cognitive disabilities.					

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STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: Test: NECAP - New England Common
3 Assessment Test Reading

Edition/Publication Year: Each Year as Stated
2007-2011

Publisher: Measured Progress

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	94	98	96	98	83
Proficient with Distinction	38	24	34	35	15
Number of students tested	90	80	95	84	120
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	1	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Proficient with Distinction	Masked		Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4		2	1	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked			Masked	Masked
Proficient with Distinction	Masked			Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1			1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked				
Proficient with Distinction	Masked				
Number of students tested	1				
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	83	Masked	57
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	0	Masked	0
Number of students tested	6	7	12	3	21
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	1	2	2	1	
6. Asian based on 2011 data					
Proficient; Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Proficient with Distinction	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Number of students tested	4	4		1	
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. NH Alternate Assessment Program (NH-ALPS) is available for students with disabilities in grades 3-8 and grade 11. Students submit evidence in the same subject areas as required of their non-disabled peers on alternative standards written for students with severe cognitive disabilities.					

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