

U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Laura S. Lands

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Lake Forest North Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 319 East Main St

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Felton State DE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19943-0296

County Kent County State School Code Number* S690

Telephone 302-284-9611 Fax 302-284-5820

Web site/URL http://www.lf.k12.de.us/north/ E-mail Islands@lf.k12.de.us

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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 _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Daniel Curry E-mail: ddcurry@lf.k12.de.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lake Forest School District Tel. 302-284-3020

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. Christopher Baker
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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 _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) 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 a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 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, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any 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.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
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 (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. 1 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	22	8	30
K	58	60	118
1	57	54	111
2	62	71	133
3	54	44	98
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 Students	253	237	490

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 24 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report 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.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 16%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	26
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	53
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	79
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	486
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.163
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
5 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 56 %
 Total number students who qualify: 248

If this method is not 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.

9. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
59 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 Autism | 0 Orthopedic Impairment |
| 0 Deafness | 1 Other Health Impaired |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness | 19 Specific Learning Disability |
| 2 Emotional Disturbance | 0 Speech or Language Impairment |
| 0 Hearing Impairment | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 3 Mental Retardation | 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 0 Multiple Disabilities | 33 Developmentally Delayed |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	24
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	12
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

PART III – SUMMARY

The mission of Lake Forest North Elementary School is to provide educational experiences that encourage and challenge all children to develop to their fullest potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. We will use quality staff, community involvement, and technological resources to help our students achieve. In accordance with this mission, we believe that every child is born with great potential and deserves the opportunity to reach that potential. We acknowledge that each child has individual needs which need to be identified and provided for so that they can learn at their own academic pace. This could not be achieved without the full support of the administration, educational staff and family members.

Lake Forest North is situated in Historic Felton, Delaware. Felton was founded in 1856 when the railroad arrived in Delaware. It is a small, rural community with a strong agricultural base. Many residents are active participants in the Delaware State Fair, which occurs in nearby Harrington. The community of Felton is proud of its history and has strong traditional ties. Lake Forest North operates in the building that was once Felton High School. The building was built in 1920 and was used as a high school until 1969. During those years, the students excelled in academics, as well as extra-curricular activities to include sports and band. The marching band even performed in the New York World's Fair and the Cherry Blossom Parade in Washington, D.C. The past laid the foundation of the school being acknowledged on a national level and its pride and tradition of excellence.

As an elementary school, we pride ourselves in continuing this tradition of excellence. From 2006 – 2012, North Elementary has had a Superior Rating by Delaware Department of Education. This recognition was given to schools that exceeded the state standards in overall student achievement, as well as in the following subgroups: African Americans, Special Education, ELL and low income. In 2009, North received the DOE Parent Involvement Partnership Award. The school was recognized for engaging the parents and community in instruction and student achievement.

In 2009, North received the Delaware Department of Education-Focus Monitoring Report. This report is produced after representatives from DOE meet with parents, students and staff members to discuss instruction, planning, parent involvement and various other components. Lake Forest North received one of the highest scores ever given. We received a four in parent involvement section. Very few fours have been given in the ten years of the monitoring. In 2010, we received the U.S. Department of Education, Doing What Works Initiative Award. We were one out of six schools were selected in the nation. North Elementary was featured in their work book and the website for one year for researched based practices in reading comprehension.

In 2010 and 2012 we received the Delaware Title I Distinguished School, awarded to schools who have met state targets and closed the achievement gap. Only three schools were selected in the state. In 2011 and 2013, we received the National Title I Distinguished School. This is awarded to schools who have exceeded state targets and closed the achievement gap. Only two schools are selected in the state to receive the National award.

The school itself has a strong tie to the community and its residents, many of whom are graduates from either Felton High or the current Lake Forest High School. It is a close knit community, with strong ties to community groups, businesses, and government agencies. The Felton Little League Park is located on the school grounds, further strengthening our community bonds.

North's strengths and accomplishments stem from strong leadership and branches out to every member of the staff. As a dedicated and devoted team, our primary focus is always on the students. Not only do we focus on their academic success, we continue to recognize the importance of developing the whole child.

North has proven to be both creative and adaptive in its efforts to meet the ever changing needs of our students. Undeterred by changes in testing, lesson planning and implementation, North has consistently

shown an ability to adapt in order to achieve success. Over the past several years we have shown both dramatic improvement and high performance, as measured by our state assessments, despite having over 50% of our students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. National recognitions, along with our State recognitions, conveys to the community and school personnel the high quality of education provided to the students. This, in turn, sparks the dedication and commitment to further the success of our well deserving students.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

a. The two standardized assessments North primarily uses are the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) and STAR (a reading and math test). DCAS is the statewide, adaptive test that students first take at the end of second grade. Starting in third grade, students take this test at the beginning and end of each school year, up through eleventh grade. The levels of performance on this test are: 1 – Well Below, 2 – Below, 3 – Meets, 4 – Exceeds (students need a ‘3’ or ‘4’ in order to meet the standard). Delaware’s DoE sets a standard each year that each school in the state must meet. Through the use of the School Improvement Team (which is comprised of administration, teaching staff, the literacy coach, parents, and community members), North also sets local goals, aligned with the previous year’s performance, creating our atmosphere of high expectations. The state’s proficiency standard for third grade reading in the 2012-2013 school year, was 70% of the students needing to meet or exceed the state standard. The school set a goal of 87% of the students meeting or exceeding the standard. In math, the state proficiency goal was 70.2% and the school required a goal of 91%. The state’s proficiency standard for second grade reading in the 2012-2013 school year, was 70% of the students needed to meet or exceed the state standard. The school set a goal of 87% of the students meeting or exceeding the standard. In math, the state’s proficiency goal was set at 70.2% and the school required a goal of 91%. Another standardized, adaptive (but non-statewide) assessment that is implemented to track student achievement is the STAR test (reading and math). The school requires that 80% of the students in grades K-3 are scoring within the 50th percentile or higher in both subjects.

b. Analyzing the school’s assessment data, it is evident that North’s personal goals, which are set to reflect our high expectations for the school, may not have been met consistently; however, the state goals were always exceeded. Beginning in 2009, North’s data has trended upward, with the exception of the 2010 and 2011 school years when the state shifted from the DSTP to DCAS protocol. From North’s high expectations, the number of students that are exceeding the state standards in reading has steadily increased, from 28% in 2008-2009 to 75% in 2012-2013. This growth is due to data driven interventions such as Meet the Challenge, Reading Specialists, a Literacy Coach, innovative support staff, and various tutoring opportunities before, during and after school.

Meet the Challenge is a program based on student needs according to the Spring 1 DCAS data. The uniqueness of this program is the differentiation of instruction and the pairing of the teacher best suited to meet these needs. This may mean that students work with a different homeroom teacher. A block of time is designated for students to work on activities that will enhance their specific deficits. The Literacy Coach collects student data and works with the Reading Specialists to develop small groups, targeting areas of need. The support staff, which includes the Related Arts Specialists, paraprofessionals, and foster grandparents, assist the teachers by pushing into the classrooms and working either with targeted interventions.

North offers tutoring sessions through various avenues. There is a morning computer session, based on needs, and provided through Lexia, Read Naturally, and Odyssey. During school, students are pulled out two to three times a week, on a rotating basis, to work on numeric, algebraic, and geometric reasoning. Immediately after Fall DCAS testing, students who were “below” the standard are tutored after school in reading and/or math. In the beginning of January, students who were “well below” the standards are also added. Students are re-evaluated after they complete their Spring I DCAS assessment and all students who did not meet the standards are offered after school tutoring. Even with all of these intervention opportunities mentioned above, the school is continuously working on developing new strategies to close the achievement gap.

Testing accommodations and procedures for students receiving special education services have become more stringent (such as losing the ability to read to the students) since transferring from DSTP to DCAS in 2010. Delaware’s Department of Education projected a decline in all populations meeting the standards. This realization has prompted the teaching staff to attend to the importance of incorporating test taking

strategies into instruction. There is a 14% achievement gap in math between special education students and typical students. These students are strongly encouraged to attend morning tutoring in the computer lab for twenty minutes, five days a week. That provides each special education student with an additional one hundred minutes of intervention for math. Other interventions include small group instruction in the classroom and the opportunity to attend after school tutoring. North takes pride in making data-driven decisions to improve student achievement.

Regarding the shift from DSTP to DCAS, Delaware was looking for a new test that better reflected its changing standards. DCAS was selected because it was a paperless, rigorous, adaptive test that could be taken online, and used multiple times throughout the school year. It also provided immediate feedback to students and staff that would help direct instruction and student support. Furthermore, this immediate feedback was also integral to the implementation of a new component in Delaware's teacher appraisal system, which evaluates teacher effectiveness based on student growth.

2. Using Assessment Results:

We use a variety of assessment data to analyze and improve student and school performance. Starting at the end of second grade, administrative staff, Reading specialists, Literacy Coach, and the Special Education Coordinator, along with the second grade teachers, meet to analyze standardized and common assessment scores. These include DCAS and STAR reading and math, and unit and quarterly assessments. This data is triangulated to strategically place students into their third grade classrooms, as well as Summer School and JumpStart programs. The Literacy Coach prepares a detailed spreadsheet that tiers students into "Intensive", "Strategic", and "Benchmark".

North implemented a "JumpStart" program in order to prepare students for the upcoming school year. This two week program, offered prior to the start of the actual school year, gives students a preview of the first units of instruction in Math and Reading. Based on the cumulative data provided by the Literacy Coach, students who would benefit from this program are identified. The students from the program, along with the data spreadsheet, allow third grade teachers to make data driven decisions on students that need small group instruction before new assessment data is gathered.

Once the school year is underway, the students complete the first round of DCAS and STAR testing as baselines. This information provides more detailed data to use for the formation of student groups. North groups students in a variety of ways to improve instruction and student learning, such as small groups within the classrooms. A unique component of North's grouping process is the use of the Related Arts teachers. These teachers push-in to the classrooms, in all grades, during small group time and provide additional instructional support for a minimum of 120 minutes a week.

Students are also referred to the Instructional Support Team. This team reviews student data each marking period to determine which students will get additional support with the Reading Specialist. Students receive a minimum of 150 minutes, per week, of additional reading instruction. Students are also offered before and after school tutoring, which includes computer-based learning programs, interactive SmartBoard activities, and small group teacher instruction.

Finally, North implements an innovative instructional needs based program entitled, Meet the Challenge. This program uses information gathered from the students' strengths and weaknesses, as identified from the Spring I DCAS assessment. Teachers within the grade level target specific conceptual deficiencies for 30 minutes a day, for six weeks.

North strives on communicating the school's academic achievement to the parents, students, and community. Parents are made aware of their student's academic needs and achievements through parent conferences, interims, report cards, assemblies, newsletters, and principal/teacher phone calls. The community is aware of achievement through our School Improvement Team, and various press releases such as the Lake Forest Reporter, that are distributed quarterly. Student academic achievements are communicated internally by teacher-student conferences, administrative-student conferences, and reward

assemblies such as Reading Counts and Honor Roll. The school also celebrates student success/growth by hosting a DCAS dance party.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Our school has shared successful strategies with other schools and districts in a variety of ways. One way the school shares with other schools within the district is through the curriculum planning sessions. These monthly sessions consist of grade level teachers, from each school, sharing strategies used within the classrooms to develop units and assessments. Based on data obtained from each assessment, North's team analyzes and revises those common assessments to increase student learning. Administrators from each building meet monthly where the Curriculum Instruction and Assessment (CIA) Team shares instructional development relating to the Common Core. This forum allows administrators to collaborate and discuss strategies for learning that are aiding, or hindering, student success.

The district administrators also meet each summer for a "retreat" to strategically plan for the upcoming school year. Topics include professional development for the staff and new initiatives. Data sharing is an intricate portion of the retreat because each school receives the opportunity to share strengths and weaknesses which provide avenues of support within the district. We have had numerous schools from out of district, as well as out of state, visit our school to observe effective teaching strategies. These walk-throughs enlightened the visitors on how to drive student success. Recently, an elementary school principal contacted our administrator to gather more information about what strategies we use to excel in student achievement. Through the discussions, their principal was particularly interested in our "Meet the Challenge" program. As a result, a team from their school asked to observe a Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting while data was reviewed to determine student groups.

North was also showcased by "Doing What Works" on their website. This company interviewed and recorded various staff members and administrators to highlight key teaching and leadership tactics. North's successes have been promoted on a national level with presentations in St. Louis at a National Reading First Conference and the Principal's Academy Conference in New Orleans.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Lake Forest North understands that family involvement is a key component for student success. As a result, a parent and a community member are part of our School Improvement Team. This reflects that parent and community input is an active part of our school-wide initiative. Community involvement also occurs in four major areas: Curriculum nights, in-school programs, special events and fund raisers.

North provides six annual curriculum nights. These events focus on DCAS, Reading/Math, Literacy and the Visual and Performing Arts. In preparation for each night, teachers develop activities for the parents and children that focus on upcoming curriculum content areas. This information may include study packets, additional reference materials and resources. These events also showcase student work and curriculum units.

North also provides in-school special events and programs to encourage community involvement and provide additional educational opportunities. These events can be classified as educational events or community outreach events. The educational events include Veteran's Day, Black History and Fire Prevention. The Veteran's Day program is held with the support of our local VFW troop and American Legion, along with active duty personnel from the Dover Air Force Base. The Black History program highlights key African American figures from American History and also includes keynote speakers from the community and local colleges. The Fire Prevention program is supported by the Felton Fire Department. The outreach events include our Granola for Grandparents, Muffins for Moms, and Danishes for Dads. During these events, we take the time to acknowledge and thank these family members for all they do.

North also holds several special events to provide families with additional support. These activities involve our Family Relief Night and Musical Adventures. The family relief night was started to provide families

with an opportunity to shop, without their children, to prepare for the holiday season. Staff members provide activities and games for this event. The school also holds bi-monthly musical adventures which consist of dancing and games afterschool. All proceeds raised from these events are used to support PTO and educational needs.

Finally, North also provides a variety of support and fundraising programs which include, Pennies for Pasta, Jump Rope for Heart and Wounded Warrior. In addition, our Family Crisis Therapist helps provide backpacks, coats and uniforms for needy families. These events ensure that North is not only a positive learning environment but also part of a healthy and active community.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

At North we use the Common Core State Standards to drive our instruction. These standards, along with data, are used to plan horizontally and vertically creating an effective scope and sequence for planning. Our goal is to present the information effectively and to provide seamless and consistent learning from grade to grade.

In reading and math, we differentiate by developing learning units based on these standards using research-based resources. We also supplement our curriculum with multiple programs and technology resources. These programs present the material in an exciting and hands on format. They also provide additional opportunities for small group, individual exploration, and tutoring. Grade level teachers meet monthly to design, analyze and refine these plans to adapt them to the students' needs.

Step-up to Writing and Handwriting Without Tears allows our teachers to enhance the Common Core Writing Standards, thus developing our school- wide writing plan.

In Science, we use Smithsonian and FOSS Science Kits, which offer interesting and kinesthetic opportunities for the students to engage with the concepts and skills being taught. They also introduce the students to living creatures and real world experiences.

Our visual arts, technology, physical education, and music education teachers support the curriculum by integrating the Common Core State Standards with their own State and National Content Area Standards. This ensures that our students' education is balanced and adaptive.

In Computer class, it is understood that advocacy is key for continued success in our ever-changing and advancing society. Students focus on developing keyboarding skills and fine motor skills. They also use selected software to chart and graph information, create text documents, and present materials by creating PowerPoint presentations.

In order to instill the importance of reading, the Librarian exposes our students to books that aide in developing their background knowledge. In cooperation with the Imagination Library Program, district families with children from birth to age five have the opportunity to receive a book monthly in the mail.

Music class provides a balanced education for all students through vocal and instrumental performances and aesthetic awareness of the basic music elements. Students learn these concepts through collaboration and teacher input to incorporate school and community events.

In Physical Education, the students focus on developing physically and mentally. They work on exercises to develop coordination and balance while refining fine motor skills. They also focus on team building, strategic planning and spatial awareness. In conjunction with physical education, students receive thirty minutes of daily recess.

It is understood that a healthy art community consists of art creators, art critics and educated viewers. The goal is to provide every child the understanding of the technical, critical and visual aspects of art. They focus on fine art methods and techniques, basic creative expression and visual communication skills, cultural and historical insight and influence and the ability to use critical analysis and aesthetic reflection in everyday life. It is through these practices that students develop a full appreciation of the fine arts.

ESL provides differentiated English language instruction to support the content areas for students with English as their second language. Collaboration with teachers ensures that educational plans are specifically tailored to meet the needs of each English Language Learner. The ESL teacher also develops strategies that teachers can implement within the regular classroom.

As demonstrated by the focus of our curriculum content areas, Lake Forest North is dedicated to making education a driving force in the lives of our students. We focus on providing the knowledge, attitudes and abilities that will enable them to succeed in higher education and the work place. By encouraging our students to be lifelong learners, we try to inspire them to become active, engaged, and healthy members of society.

2. Reading/English:

North's reading curriculum is immersed fully in the Common Core State Standards. We implement the use of a research based curriculum, and supplemental resources to encompass the five major areas of Reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Learning Focused provides an innovative guideline to align our curriculum with the Common Core Standards. This curriculum was chosen because it is one of the top researched based curriculums as well as its ability to meet the needs of the students. We have found it to be a strong base on which to build with supplements, enrichments, and the implementation of Learning Focused Strategies. Our staff's buy-in and familiarity with the curriculum has helped the transition into the Common Core Standards and its ELA shifts seamless.

Ensuring that students acquire foundational reading skills begins with our school-wide assessments, STAR Reading and DIBELS. Every student takes the STAR at the beginning of the year and that data drives each student's instruction in the five components of reading. For those students that show fluency to be an issue they are further assessed with DIBELS. This data then drives the instruction during all grade levels' 90 minute reading block. During this time students receive whole group instruction using Scott Foresman Reading Street as well as other supplements such as Smartboard Activities, Learning A-Z, Brain Pop Jr., and Odyssey Learning. Small group instruction is used for differentiation and is tailored to meet the student's needs in the areas of Reading. The interventions can range from the scripted Horizons Discovery for our 25th percentile and lower to independent book studies for our 75th percentile and higher. During the small group time Related Arts teachers push in to the classroom, and our Reading Specialists pull-out Tier 3 students. We make use of various computer based learning such as Lexia, Read Naturally, Earobics, Odyssey, and Reading Counts.

Outside of the classroom, various intervention programs are offered for those students who need to make improvement as well as for those students who need to be challenged. We offer our unique Meet the Challenge time, before school tutoring, and after school tutoring. At the end of each RTI cycle students are reassessed with STAR Reading, and the data is reviewed to once again drive the formation of our differentiated small groups. This process assures that our students are constantly working in their areas of need to ensure success.

3. Mathematics:

North's mathematics curriculum, until school year 2012-2013, was Math Investigations. Our planning methods include using Common Core State Standards to drive instruction through district-created units and assessments using Learning Focused Strategies. These units are created at the previously mentioned CIA meetings where teacher representatives from each school get together, with curriculum specialists, in order to develop a cohesive curriculum reinforced and supported by a research-based curriculum. It is through this unique style of planning, making the curriculum work for us as a resource rather than forcing the curriculum to fit our model, which guides North's success.

Students acquire foundational mathematics skills through a variety of ways. Students use manipulatives for many concepts, such as the representation of patterns, numbers, counting, operations, telling time, and money. Classrooms also use small-group learning for initial, differentiated instruction. Following assessments, both formative and summative, customized small groups are created to reteach students that require additional help with a concept, and accelerate those that are ready to explore and show deeper understanding.

North improves mathematics skills of students who are performing below level by offering after school tutoring, math pull-out, and a targeted Meet the Challenge program. Math pull-out and Meet the Challenge allow us to meet with very specialized groups of students that show specific conceptual deficiencies in order to meet the diverse needs of every student and ensure student success. Tutoring is also a modified flexible grouping program where students are given the opportunity to work in a small group on specific skills, and they are able to “test out” when future assessments show acceptable growth.

In all grade levels, teachers have higher level math groups that they meet with to do extended thinking activities based on the skills being learned in class. For students that show success in mathematical concepts above grade level at the end of second grade, North offers an accelerated class in third grade in order to allow those students the opportunity to further their mathematical abilities beyond their current grade level.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

a. The Visual Arts Department focuses on supporting the district’s mission to provide every student with knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them become successful and responsible citizens. For this to occur, it is vital that every student not only have the essential knowledge to create art, but also the ability to critique and express ideas to ensure understanding and appreciation of art in society. Rather than focusing on every child becoming an artist, it is important to focus on how the visual arts can be of value to every child.

Visual Arts Learning Focused Units are directly drawn from State and National Standards. Through collaborative planning, elements from Common Core Math and ELA standards have been implemented in every lesson. The lessons center on media techniques/processes, knowledge of structure/function and cultural/historical connections with themes from our local community. Each lesson has elements which can be linked to personal insights and interests of the child, promoting individuality and ownership. Each lesson is designed to introduce information, while building and reinforcing prior knowledge and skills. Concepts are taught in an appropriate format with differentiation occurring as needed. Teacher collaboration provides opportunities to use new technologies in art, such as computer graphics.

In Kindergarten, students are introduced to shape manipulation and geometric form applying a variety of drawing media. Through observation, they gather important information and use it to create works of art. As their skills develop, they progress from two dimensional to three dimensional constructions. First Grade students expand their skills through investigating the Elements and Principles of Art and Design. They explore how each component promotes art creation and how they have been implemented by others. They also begin to explore the arts’ close relationship with history and culture. Second Grade students continue exploring various advanced art styles and techniques. These lessons span multiple class periods and require more advanced insight and development. The students practice the process of creating art from brainstorming, to planning and construction. Third Grade students work with Visual Communication and Commercial Design. These lessons have more innovative themes and ideas. The students understand that art is a powerful and influential communication tool and artists have an important responsibility for the messages they send. Students also focus on story sequencing, text details, character and setting through illustration.

Through these investigations, the students are able to explore, refine and expand their art abilities. They learn to express their ideas in creative and healthy ways. While not every child may choose to pursue a career in the visual arts, it ensures that the visual arts can have a healthy place in his or her life. This is evident in the success our students have been able to achieve in the visual arts as they continue their education.

b. Our district provides a preschool program for four year old students with developmental or speech delays. A lottery system has been developed to place additional students as peer models into our program. These students serve as age appropriate models for language and social skills.

The Delaware Department of Education has developed The Early Learning Foundations for School Success. The Foundations serve as a curriculum guide and the instructional outcomes are linked to K-3 standards.

The core curriculum areas addressed in our preschool program are language development, mathematics, approaches to learning, emotional and social development, science, creative arts, and physical health and development. Using the Scott Foresman Reading Street program and the Early Learning Foundations, many of the curriculum areas are incorporated into daily routine and learning activities. Our purpose is to provide instructional experiences that are essential to facilitate children's development to reach the instructional outcomes targeted.

Our preschool program has a diverse population of students learning at many different levels. To enhance learning and to be sure we capitalize on the broad range of abilities, we utilize our paraprofessionals in the classroom. We also tailor small group instruction to meet the needs of the students and technology is used to target learning skills. Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Physical Therapy are provided to help our students who need additional support in making gains with language development and/or motor development.

While we do not have any indicators of the impact of early education on school readiness, the kindergarten teachers have said that there is a marked difference between those students who have been enrolled in our preschool program and those who have not. Students who have been enrolled in our program are more often able to sit for an extended period of time, recognize letters of the alphabet, count to 20 or higher, recognize numerals 0-10, work independently, write their name, follow two and three-step directions, answer questions related to a story, and demonstrate positive social skills.

5. Instructional Methods:

North differentiates in all classrooms by using small group instruction. Data is used to place students into small groups for reading, writing and math. The data is reviewed throughout the school year and changes to the small groups are made as needed. All classrooms have student computers, interactive white boards, document cameras and access to numerous computer programs and websites. The technologies, computer programs and websites help to differentiate both small group and large group instruction.

Odyssey allows teachers to differentiate by choosing activities based on both level and the Common Core Standards. The computer programs Lexia and Earobics can be modified for individual student needs. These programs can be used independently, as well as being accessible from home. Reading A to Z is used in all classrooms to develop phonics, fluency, and comprehension. These are informational readers to help build background knowledge that gives the students a stronger foundation for learning.

An example of differentiated instruction in an inclusion classroom would be to base their learning on their modalities. Lessons are modified to include manipulatives, songs/rhymes, scaffolding, and visuals. Depending on the lesson, students may be taught in whole group, small group, or individually. Some students require direct, scripted instruction such as repetitive rote learning.

The more intensive special needs students receive services for ELA and math in a smaller setting. The teacher, along with a paraprofessional, provide direct instruction for primarily individual and/or two or three students at a time. Lesson goals for these students are individualized and based specifically on their Individual Education Plans. The majority of these students also receive services through occupational therapy and/or speech. Instruction for these students relies on a lot of repetition and routine. A primary focus is basic letter, sound, and number recognition. Visuals are utilized through all subjects with support from the interactive white board.

On the other end of the spectrum, students with higher ability levels are placed in our accelerated program. These students are exposed to the grade level content and are expected to be consistently challenged with activities that fall within a higher depth of knowledge. Third grade students placed in the accelerated program begin to learn fourth grade content by March of each year.

6. Professional Development:

Professional Development, as with all academic elements, is data driven to support our students' ever changing academic needs. Our Professional Development opportunities primarily consist of collaborative planning time and key note topic/special presenters. This not only provides staff with key data and instructional methods but also provides them with time to develop, plan and implement lessons.

Collaborative planning sessions provide opportunity for horizontal and vertical planning to occur within an individual grade level, as well as across grade levels. This helps to develop a solid framework from which lessons can be developed for classroom implementation. These sessions also provide for integration opportunities with our related arts teachers and support staff. This enables Common Core alignment for all subject and content areas.

The presenters and focus areas are selected based on our individual school data to provide the needs of our teachers to ensure they can effectively plan for student success. These opportunities are constantly being adapted and changed to align with our staff's developmental needs. For example, last year's evidence showed that there was a need for specific training on Common Core alignment. As a result, consultants from Southern Delaware Professional Development Center, as well as other key note presenters, were contacted to provide training. Previous presenters have included consultants from Max Thompson for Learning Focused Strategies and Ruby Payne for guidance in closing the achievement gap.

North also uses Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and School Improvement Team (SIT) meetings to provide additional growth opportunities. PLC meetings are used to preview key learning strategies and highlight individual areas of focus. These bi-monthly meetings allow opportunities to reflect and provide teachers with follow-up on specific goals. We also use these meetings to develop a deeper understanding of the Common Core Standards and the shifts that drive instruction in our classroom. North also utilizes the efforts of the SIT team to provide the grade level chairs with additional topics of interest which they share with their individual grade levels. These opportunities combined provide our staff with the professional development needed to align the standards and support student achievement.

7. School Leadership

The leadership philosophy and structure for the past several years has been "Climb the Mountain." Every staff member, including principals, are aware of the role they play in ensuring that the students are achieving at the highest standards. Each year, staff and students are expected to continue their academic climb to reach their highest potential. The principal's role is a facilitator. Surrounding herself with people who have knowledge and experience in vast areas of the educational process is a must. Everyone should have input so that it is "our" school, not just the principal's.

The primary staff members who assist with decision making are the assistant principal, the literacy coach, the special education coordinator, and the grade level chairs. The assistant principal's role is to collaborate with the principal on all major decisions so that the staff and students realize that it is a partnership when it comes to managing an effective learning environment.

The Literacy Coach is unique to this school. We choose to maintain a coach because of the vital role she plays in data collection and implementation. The Literacy Coach facilitates PLC meetings, both in reading and math, and is the driving force for the school improvement team.

Our Special Education Coordinator ensures all special needs students' IEP's are completed in compliance with State and Federal regulations and implemented in the classrooms. She also holds monthly meetings with all special education staff in the building to ensure any new or ongoing policies and regulations are reviewed and adhered to.

Grade level chairs are imperative in relaying valuable data, instructional practices, strategies, and any or all information that needs to be conveyed to their individual grade levels. Grade level meetings are held

weekly and information is shared, implemented, and discussed with the principal. The grade level chairs drive weekly curriculum planning.

The collaborative effort of the team ensures that our students are our number one focus. The principal does not expect anything from the staff that she would not be willing to do herself. She tries to set the example so that everyone sees that she is willing to do whatever it takes for the school to be successful. The staff needs to feel appreciated, and they need to know that the principal values all of the hard-work that they do for their students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

Test: DCAS

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Publisher: AIR

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	93	87	85	92	74
% Exceeds	47	30	31	50	18
Number of students tested	97	123	117	131	136
Percent of total students tested	99	98	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	91	83	81	90	61
% Exceeds	35	22	25	43	8
Number of students tested	57	78	63	67	74
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	55	44	36	81	39
% Exceeds	0	0	14	43	0
Number of students tested	11	16	14	21	13
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds		100		100	70
% Exceeds		50		0	0
Number of students tested		2		1	4
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	100	100	100	100	70
% Exceeds	0	33	0	67	0
Number of students tested	4	3	3	9	10
5. African- American Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	83	70	68	84	59
% Exceeds	29	7	16	48	6
Number of students tested	24	27	19	31	34
6. Asian Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	100	100			
% Exceeds	50	50			
Number of students tested	2	2			
7. American Indian or					

Alaska Native Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds				100	75
% Exceeds				100	0
Number of students tested				2	4
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	96	92	88	96	78
% Exceeds	54	36	34	52	23
Number of students tested	71	94	98	88	87
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds				90	82
% Exceeds				30	18
Number of students tested				10	11
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: The state of Delaware changed its standardized testing program from the DSTP (final round SY2009-2010) to the DCAS (Initial round SY2010-2011). This saw a dip in scores between those school years as students adjusted to the new program. From that switch, North has shown steady growth and achievement each subsequent year of consistent testing with DCAS.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 3
Publisher: AIR

Test: DCAS
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	93	87	81	90	79
% Exceeds	75	55	51	41	28
Number of students tested	96	121	114	123	125
Percent of total students tested	100	98	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	91	80	82	89	71
% Exceeds	64	46	52	28	15
Number of students tested	56	76	60	61	66
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	64	56	46	92	50
% Exceeds	55	13	18	46	0
Number of students tested	11	16	11	13	2
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	75	67	67	100	60
% Exceeds	75	33	67	11	20
Number of students tested	4	3	3	9	10
5. African- American Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	92	77	78	90	61
% Exceeds	63	27	39	37	14
Number of students tested	24	26	18	30	28
6. Asian Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	100	100			
% Exceeds	50	100			
Number of students tested	2	1			
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds				100	100
% Exceeds				0	25

Number of students tested				2	4
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds	93	89	81	91	84
% Exceeds	80	63	53	42	29
Number of students tested	70	94	96	81	83
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Meets plus % Exceeds					
% Exceeds					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: The state of Delaware changed its standardized testing program from the DSTP (final round SY2009-2010) to the DCAS (Initial round SY2010-2011). This saw a dip in scores between those school years as students adjusted to the new program. From that switch, North has shown steady growth and achievement each subsequent year of consistent testing with DCAS.