

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Sherrie McAllister

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

Official School Name Big A Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 289 Sorrells Dr

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

City Eastanollee State GA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 30538-9522

County Stephens County State School Code Number* 0195

Telephone 706-886-2987 Fax 706-282-4698

Web site/URL http://biga.stephens.k12.ga.us/ E-mail sherrie.mcallister@stephens.k12.ga.us

Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/BigAElement

Twitter Handle _____

arySchool

Google+ _____

YouTube/URL

www.teachertube.com/view.Video.php?vide

Other Social Media

o_id=336415

Blog _____

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* Mrs. Sherrie Whiten

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

E-mail:

sherrie.whiten@stephenscountyschools.org

District Name Stephens County Tel. 706-886-9415

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 Dr. Elizabeth Pinkerton

(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. 2 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	9	13	22
K	43	43	86
1	34	43	77
2	35	46	81
3	33	35	68
4	37	32	69
5	36	46	82
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	227	258	485

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 8 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 80 % White
 - 8 % 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: 17%

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	39
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	45
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	84
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	481
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.175
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
6 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %
 Total number students who qualify: 207

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: 9 %
44 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.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 4 Autism | 0 Orthopedic Impairment |
| 0 Deafness | 2 Other Health Impaired |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness | 7 Specific Learning Disability |
| 0 Emotional Disturbance | 12 Speech or Language Impairment |
| 0 Hearing Impairment | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 0 Mental Retardation | 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 0 Multiple Disabilities | 19 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.	7
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 18:1

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	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
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 Big A Elementary School, in cooperation with parents and community, is to nurture successful individuals by providing challenging experiences in a positive learning environment. Our motto is “Every Student Can Succeed.” We live out our mission everyday here at Big A. We are a small rural school in Stephens County. Our system is presently applying to become a charter system. We serve a diversified population of students who are homeless, students who live in motels, students who are middle class, and students from affluent families in our community. Our community is small, and most of our industry has relocated in larger cities. We are no longer growing; we seem to be getting smaller, so our tax base has declined and our economy failing. The morale of the community is very low. Families who have lived here for years are seeing their children leave and never return because there are few available jobs. The one thing that remains evident in our citizens is pride. We attempt to uplift each family through their student. Traditionally, we include the community in our teaching and welcome all to our school with our open-door policy. We believe that our stakeholders should have input. We need their support as well as help. We have twelve businesses that are “Partners In Education” with Big A.

Striving for excellence is a tradition at Big A Elementary, one that drives all we do. We know and realize that each student, regardless of culture, race, creed, or socioeconomic background is capable of excellence. Each excels in some area and we encourage them to seek that area or areas. We believe in recognizing and celebrating excellence. We have Field Day for PK-5 and a School Fun Day enjoyed by all.

We feel that our strength lies in our efforts to establish teamwork between, faculty, students and parents. We also know that each morning when we arrive we have to be flexible in order to meet the needs of our students. We offer many extras: Spanish in 1st and 2nd grade gifted program, (SEARCH-Seeking Educational Achievement & Reaching Creative Horizons) and Spanish for all 3rd,4th 5th graders, Keyboarding in 5th grade, ten minutes of exercise for all students during the day and Character Education in 3rd,4th,5th grades. Our staff is accountable, positive, and they never give up. We celebrate many milestones along the way. We think it is important when a student can tell his mom goodbye and be happy, tie his shoe, clean himself up with no help, recognize the sight words, read a book, speak in front of his class, recite the multiplication tables, or do three digit division. In 2012 86% of students entered first grade: Ready to Read. This means that they recognize letter names, sounds and parts of words and benchmarked at Guided Reading Level C. We have improved from 2011 at 80% and 2010 at 73%. We have made a gain in this area of 13% over the past 3 years. In 2012 52% of our students left 3rd grade: Reading To Learn. Students exceed the benchmark on the CRCT Reading test. This area showed gains from 2011 at 46% and 2010 at 44%. We are very proud of these accomplishments and feel that they are worth celebrating. There is no feat too small for us to try or to celebrate.

We are a Data Driven school. In an effort to increase our Exceeds category on the CRCT we departmentalized all content areas and redesigned SEARCH in grades 3-5. More importantly, we started new clubs and activities. Our 3rd grade GREEN Club (Go Recycle Everyday Everyway Now),our 4th grade GARDEN Club (Responsible for the school grounds and beautification), our 5th grade School Chorus performing once a year. Our School Garden is a school-wide project. Each grade level is responsible for selecting, planting, taking care of, and harvesting one crop. Garden fresh vegetables were given to our local homeless shelter, and vegetables were shared with our students. We teach math, reading, science research and social studies through our garden. Our 4th grade holds an annual Blood Drive as they teach Science, Math, Research, and Reading. These endeavors are sponsored voluntarily by teachers during and after school hours. Our school stops everything each day from 8:00 until 8:30 for PRIME TIME to remediate and enrich our students.

We hold in high regard each student and his overall success. We strive to educate the whole child. We know and realize we are educating students for jobs that don’t yet exist. We must help each child to “know what to do” when they “don’t know what to do.” Our students are the laughter of today and the smile of tomorrow and a gleam in the eye of success. Nothing is more important to us than our students.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Part A: In Georgia, third through eighth grade students take Georgia’s Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT’s) which are designed to measure student acquisition and understanding of the knowledge, concepts, and skills set forth by the state mandated content standards for Reading, English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The tests are given on five separate days to the students.

The number of correct answers a student gives on each section of the test is converted into a scale score. The scale score allows for the student, parents, teachers, and administrators to compare performance on the tests across different grades and with other students in different school districts. The scale scores are divided into three performance levels.

Scale scores below 800 indicate a level of performance that Does Not Meet the Standard set for the test (the state’s minimum level of proficiency). Students performing at this level may need additional instructional support.

Scale scores from 800 to 849 indicate a level of performance that Meets the Standard set for the test. Scale scores at 850 to 950 indicate a level of performance that Exceeds the Standard set for the test.

There are two criteria on which each school is graded: the percentage of students passing the CRCT (receiving a score of 800 or better) and the percentage of students exceeding the standard (scoring better than 850). In order for a subgroup to be considered for calculations, a minimum of ten tested students is required. Our school is then compared to the other schools in the state by grade and subject. This comparison gives a state average score, and we can also see compare our scores with other schools on each individual subject as well as our scores as a whole school.

Part B: For the past five years Big A Elementary students have consistently received high scores on the CRCT standardized assessments. Each year our school analyzes the results by grade level and our school performance to identify areas of focus for individual grades and for the entire school.

Beginning in the school year of 2012, the State changed the report card for each school to a new system that incorporates not only the percentage of students being proficient on each subtest but also the percentage of students exceeding each subtest. Our faculty took a proactive approach to new rule to be implemented in the school year of 2012-2013. We looked at ways to get students not only to be proficient but to exceed the subtests. The process started in the early grades where the tests are not given to enable us to see the benefits when the students do take the test. There were three major areas of focus, which implementing Saxon Phonics and Spelling, Saxon Math, and creating a “Prime Time” in the mornings.

The Saxon Phonics and Spelling program, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, is a scripted program implemented in kindergarten, first and second grade. The lessons take about forty-five minutes to complete, and they ensure that every student receives the same instruction in each classroom. Each lesson gives instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling, and fluency. The lessons also help to engage all students because of the multisensory approach to each lesson.

Saxon Math, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, is a scripted program implemented in grades kindergarten through second grade. The lessons take about thirty minutes to complete, ensures that every student receives the same instruction in each classroom. Each lesson has an incremental structure that distributes content throughout the year. This integrated and connected approach provides long-term mastery of the content and skills needed for the students to be successful in the later grades on the CRCT math subtest.

“Prime Time” is the first thirty minutes of each day. Every teacher, para pro, and support staff is involved in this time. This is the time of the day when the students are remediated and enriched on material taught

during the school day. Students that are not up to par on certain concepts are grouped together by their ability level and remediated on the concept until they have mastery. This is also the time that students can further knowledge of a concept so they can go above and beyond what is covered in class. The classes are changed daily and weekly to accommodate the needs of the students. The classes are not set for the entire year but are determined by need.

Due to this proactive approach, Big A Elementary has seen an increase in students who not only pass each subtest but also who exceed the standard. This past year 100% of the students passed the reading subtest with 61% exceeding, 99% passed the English/Language Arts subtest with 55% exceeding, and 98% passed the math subtest with 53% exceeding. This success is due to the implementation of the Saxon programs in the early grades and the use of “Prime Time” in the mornings. The other interesting fact gleaned from the test scores is the previous mentioned subtests increased but also that an increase in the passing and exceeding rate in social studies and science has occurred also.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The faculty of Big A Elementary is committed to effective use of data to inform instruction. There are two types of major assessment data that are used at Big A Elementary School in addition to several other types used by grade levels and teachers. The two major types of assessments are the Georgia’s Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT’s) and the Georgia RESA Assessment of Student Progress (GRASP).

The CRCT is given each spring to all students in grades three to five in the areas of Reading, English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The scores are usually received before school is out for the summer, and areas or subjects students may need help in are identified. Teachers also study the data to see what areas they may need to implement improvements at their grade and/or subject level. The teachers identify areas that are low, and they get together to formulate an implementation plan to improve their teaching of the standard or standards.

The next assessment is the GRASP which is administered to all students in grades 1-5 in the areas of reading fluency, reading comprehension, math concepts, and math fluency. This test is administered three times during the year fall, winter, and spring. The scores are recorded on a data base so that all teachers and administrators can see how the student has progressed throughout the year. The teachers get together to see how the students did on each portion of the assessment and how they compared to the cut score set by the program. If the student is below the cut score, then a plan is implemented to help raise the student’s score. There are worksheets and other tools provided by the program to help remediate and reteach the material to the students. The teachers also use the data ascertains if the all of the students in their class miss a certain type of question. If a pattern is seen, they seek ways to teach the concepts in a more effective way.

The teachers also get together on Wednesdays each week to address concerns about student work and grades. At this meeting the teachers also divide the students into groups who need remediation or enrichment during our “Prime Time” this is the reason that the teachers have to get together weekly to discuss students because they are changing weekly if not daily to meet the needs of each and every student.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The teachers at Big A are always together to search out means to improve student learning. For example, we have implemented Saxon Phonics and Spelling and Saxon Math in grades kindergarten through second grade. Since our school has been one of the only elementary schools in the county to implement Saxon, the teachers have been to the other elementary schools to share the teachers the benefits of implementing Saxon in the early grades.

We believe that our test scores are so high because of the solid foundation that our students get in the early grades in reading and math. Another activity our teachers have shared and collaborated with other teachers on is the development of unit plans for all grade levels. Our second grade teachers were the leaders who presented ideas to the teachers of the other elementary schools in our county. They shared their units with

other second grade teachers in the county because of the success rate of our third grade students on the CRCT. The second grade teachers do an excellent job of teaching the material in a way that is understood by the students. They incorporate several learning styles in the units to make sure that they reach all of the students. They also build remediation into each unit to make sure that all students understand the material that is being presented before moving forward.

The last example of our faculty leadership is our fifth grade teachers who have presented to our other elementary schools our plan for departmentalized focus on instruction. The students are taught by one teacher per subject and they change classes. This is procedure similar to how our middle school is run; therefore, so when our students transition to the middle school they are used to changing classes and not being in the same class with the same students for every class.

Big A is home to a dedicated group of professionals who actively share their expertise not only within the school but with other colleagues in the district.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Big A Elementary School has several ways of involving the community and families. Many of our faculty and staff members are not only current parents of Big A students but also former parents of Big A students. This connection creates a unique perspective as to the enhancement of our school community. The strategies that we have found to be very effective for maintaining and developing strong relationships between the home and school involve clear communication and an open invitation for community adults to share their skills and a variety of other family events with our faculty, staff, and students.

The means of communication we utilize is an integral part in our school culture. We have the normal parent school communications such as conferences, letters, email, and phone correspondence, but we also have unique ones. The school has an open house before the first day of school. This allows the students and parents to meet and greet their new teacher and to become familiar with the setup of the school. We have a website that is updated daily as to what is going on at Big A. Teachers send home weekly newsletters, publish blogs, and also use other forms of technology to keep parents up to date as to what is going on here at Big A.

The school also hosts a career day for all students. The school contacts several professional business leaders who spend about twenty minutes with groups of our students. This project allows the students to explore careers in the community that they may choose when they graduate.

The many family school programs we provide are based on long standing traditions and are continuously evolving in order to improve communication which will help our students. There are opportunities for families to participate in activities throughout the entire school year. For example, we host a book-fair night in the fall and spring, fall festival, a winter chorus performance, and a community blood drive. Thanksgiving and Christmas lunches with parents, 5k Eagle run, a fun day, a field day, Veterans come speak at the school, we have Jump Rope for Heart, 5th grade graduation, Mother's Day tea, and a wax museum. The goal of Big A Elementary is to continue to foster better relationships with the families of the students we serve.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Big A Elementary School is committed to giving students a high quality curriculum, varied educational opportunities, and the best pathway to success. The teaching platform is flexible here at Big A. We appreciate the different strengths of our teachers and their various teaching techniques. Our teachers demonstrate an understanding of the curriculum through collaborative meetings with other teachers in their efforts to plan the most appropriate lessons for all students. The teachers work together on activities to connect real world experiences by using current events, research, using web based programs and directing the students in gathering survey information. Instruction is based on high expectations for all students. We feel that teachers must understand intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of the students with which they work. This is important as they carry out instruction. We have focused some of our professional training around these topics. Our four computer labs are scheduled for daily use with each grade level. We go on field trips to enhance the learning of skills in selected units of study. Promethean Boards in each room enable us to go on virtual fieldtrips if needed. Following the state's Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, teachers are provided a consistent framework to prepare students for success in college and/or the 21st century workplace.

Beginning in school year 2012-2013, the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) English Language Arts and Mathematics were implemented in kindergarten through 5th grade. In our Pre K program we use HighScope Curriculum, an active participatory learning approach. The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) are adhered to closely by our program. We supplement the Common Core with an incremental spiraling curriculum in Kindergarten through second grade giving us a very firm foundation in Reading and Math. This program gives consistent practice on each skill and an adequate amount of practice. The homework component involves the parents with an explanatory piece each day. In Science it is common to see a laboratory setting in any given classroom. In Social Studies our students are able to re-enact wars or various happenings in history. This year our 5th grade classes hosted a Wax Museum for our entire student body and their parents. This production included historical figures from United States History. Regardless of curriculum, hands-on learning is the most beneficial. In every grade teachers use the Units from the Georgia Department of Education for all content areas available. Our students in 3rd and 5th grades are involved in state writing tests. Each grade level competes in the Young Georgia Authors Writing Contests. Community resource volunteers are used to help bring our teaching to life for the students. Our school garden engages students by providing a dynamic environment to observe, discover, nurture, experiment in, and learn from. The garden also provides for interdisciplinary lessons drawn from real life experience. Music, Art, Physical Education, and Life Skills teachers play key roles in interdisciplinary teaching. Our School Chorus is an extension of our daily music instruction. The Chorus performs once a year, and this outstanding performance is open to the community. A health Fitness Gram is sent by our PE instructor, and this year we incorporated a ten minute exercise time for all students before they go to Art, Music, PE, or Life Skills classes. Our students compete in community art contests. All K-5th grade students attend Art, Music, Physical Education, and Life Skills on a rotation schedule. The Art, Music, and PE programs closely follow the National Standards; in addition they align their plans to those of the regular classroom teachers. Our Life Skills class includes the following: Good Touch and Bad Touch, Key Boarding, Spanish, Bullying Education, Character Education, Interpersonal Skills, Teamwork and Career Readiness Knowledge. Our total curriculum is a well rounded one that prepares students for real life.

2. Reading/English:

Our approach to reading in kindergarten, first, and second grade is phonically based. We use Saxon Phonics and Spelling as a supplement in these foundational grades. This research-based method of explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling, and fluency gives our students a firm foundation on which to build further skills. Our method of building this foundation engages visual, auditory, and tactile senses meeting the needs of all types of learners. Guided Reading is a part of our reading as well in the early grades. We use Rigby and other series of leveled readers. The Dolch Sight

Word List is frequently used in these grades as well. We believe that students in Kindergarten must be able to recognize 100 sight words in order to be successful in the first grade. We use book buddies in kindergarten as a way to engage parents in their child's reading and in first grade this transitions to the Accelerated Reader Program which involves the parent as they both read to their child and listen to him read. We have one special paraprofessional assigned to 1st grade each day to work one-on-one or in a small group with students on specific reading skills. In grades K-5 we have Response to Intervention in our designated Prime Time, 8:00-8:30 three days each week, for the students working below grade level. Assessment data determines which students need interventions and exactly how these are to be implemented during "Prime Time." These groups are flexible and students move in and out of them as needed. Differentiated instruction takes place during this time and throughout the day. We have also incorporated enrichment sessions two days a week for those students who are working above grade level. We use Indirect and Direct Instruction techniques to meet the needs of all types of learners. Through cooperative learning we teach responsibility, patience, and understanding. We also use the Assessment For Learning approach with our students. We look at the objective, take it apart, use T Charts, and plan with the end in mind. Brainstorming is a technique that we use before units begin. We rely heavily on Thinking Maps to introduce and sum up material. We are constantly looking for ways to improve student performance in reading. We have incorporated "Reading Buddies" in Kindergarten. Each Kindergarten works with 4th or 5th grade class. We want all students to love reading.

3. Mathematics:

Our school uses many approaches to teach Math. We believe that the hands on approach and the use of manipulatives give the students a better understanding of Math Common Core Standards. We want students to realize what they already know and build on that knowledge, providing them with a long lasting mastery of the skills. We use research based programs for primary and upper grades. In grades K-2 we use a core math program that spirals skills, various computer programs, and Trade books. These approaches used together give us a firm foundation and true understanding of numbers. In grades 3-5 the teachers use units, Math computer programs, and Trade books to teach the skills. Our units in all grades are built around the Common Core Standards. Some are developed in collaboration with other teachers and some come from the SLD site on the GADOE. We are fortunate enough to have a Promeathean Board in each classroom. The answer is important, but we also focus on how we get the answer. Students are asked to make an entry in Math Journals daily. We think our students have a high level of mastery for that skill if they can explain the process to us verbally or in written form. Thinking Maps and Exemplars are used throughout the school for math. Progress is monitored through a national screener, benchmarks, informal and formal assessments. SuccessMaker Math gives valuable feedback to our teachers. These tools are also used to drive our instruction. Vertical and Horizontal collaboration for our teachers has revealed the students gaps between each grade level. We include peer tutoring and cooperative learning in Math as a regular part of our day. This year we departmentalized for content areas. We teach math living skills, estimation, measurement, time, simple math, through our school-wide garden. With our integration of math, writing, literature and gardening we hope to see more of our students score in the "exceeds" category on the state tests.

Our School Garden is a big hit! Our 5th graders can't wait to paint the wooden fence around the garden. This will happen after they have measured and estimated how much paint to buy and how much it will cost. Students enjoy being responsible for their duties. Now they see the need to learn the skills we teach them in a more meaningful light.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Opportunities for Pre-K through 5th grade students to experience meaningful and thoughtfully planned science instruction is available. It is crucial that students possess reasoning skills, critical thinking skills and understanding to compete in a global society. Students learn to question, describe, test, explain, and communicate at our school. Our science program, while driven by the Common Core Standards, encourages children's natural tendencies to explore and learn and manipulate and communicate data. As students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their own learning, inquiry science is an essential vehicle for acquiring these skills. Beginning with our Kindergarten classes we teach the fundamentals of scientific

inquiry and research. Hands-on activities are a part of our regular instruction. We use internet, reference materials, and library books to enhance our learning. We use our School Garden in all subjects, especially Science. The students in grades PK-5 research plants. They explore the root system, composting, the best climate, foliage, maintenance, and the yield. They then know the path of their food before it reached their table.

The students enjoy the garden and they love getting their hands dirty. This year we started our GREEN CLUB. This club focuses on recycling and is open to 3rd grade students. The intention of this club is to learn about decomposition, global warming, and being good stewards of our earth. We also started a GARDEN CLUB available to 4th graders. This is different from the school garden. This club focuses on the campus landscape. They plant trees and flowers, place mulch, and trim shrubs. These activities involve science content in many ways. They have really taken pride in our school grounds. Their motto is "Life's a Garden...Dig It". We are excited, we are about creating a scaled "Planet Walk" which begins on our campus and conclude at the near-by high school. Our faculty is constantly seeking innovative projects to enhance the learning experiences of our students.

5. Instructional Methods:

We believe that a student must be engaged in active learning for it to be meaningful. We build on the things that students already know. Our teachers plan with the end in mind. Universal Screeners and pre-assessment data determine our instruction. We assist students in planning their learning goals, and sometimes let them choose how they want to meet them. We use a variety of research-based strategies. We have four computer labs where students engage in interactive programs and research. Each classroom has a Promethean board. This year we began a new model for our gifted students. We use Blooms Taxonomy to encourage the students to think outside the box in all classrooms.. We believe these students need this advanced instruction. In social studies we focus not only on the Common Core Standards but also on a more in-depth teaching of those standards.

As we try to address the individual learning differences, we find differentiation to be our friend. We challenge and support each student's learning in three ways: differentiation in content, differentiation in process, and differentiation of product. On Monday through Wednesday during the Prime Time period our housekeeper, nurse, librarian, counselor, secretaries, and all the paraprofessionals assist in teaching.

These strategies served as a great vehicle in meeting the needs of our students in a systemic way. The model also serves as an instructional organizational time piece for our teachers in RTI. It is hard to find time to teach those skills one on one during the regular day, but Prime Time makes that possible. The results of Universal Screeners and classroom assessments diagnose need. Teachers in each grade implement and document interventions. We consistently do skill specific probes on students. Students flow in and out of these groups easily. When they need help, we get it for them. When they have mastered the skill we move on. On Thursday and Friday during this time everyone enjoys enrichment. We work on grade level projects involving them in discussions which answer thought-provoking questions such as, "What would I do if I were stranded on a desert island?" We have had them research the cost of building a house, how to grow a garden, how to make a boat float, and the reasons we need blood. We engage the students in authentic learning often in an effort to increase high- interest and the achievement of a well-rounded education.

6. Professional Development:

We pride ourselves in being life-long learners. We model for the students that we attend classes learning new things just like they do. We have professional development at different levels: State, District and School. Data drives choices for professional development topics. The bulk of our data comes from the Criterion Referenced Competency Test, State Writing Test, GRASP National Screener, grade level benchmarks, summative and formative assessments. This training occurs during and after school hours.

At the state level we are presently involved in the Teacher Keys Evaluation System Training and the Leader Keys Evaluation System Training from the Georgia Department of Education. This training is imperative to

understanding the standards of this new performance based evaluation. Teachers receive Professional Development Units for completion of training. We are also involved Charter System Training. The administration receives training in many areas such as Charter, School Accreditation, and Legal Advisement Sessions.

At the county level we have professional development on Charter System Preparation, Special Education Curriculum, Mindset Restraint, GRASP, Peggy Terrell Writing, Digital Curriculum Training, K Literacy Training, Media Specialists, Pre K Lead and Support Teacher, Thinking Maps, English Language Learners, Job A Lot Training, and Gifted Education. Our School has pulled in training on Student Learning Objectives, The Framework of Poverty, Assessment for Learning redelivery, Student Learning Objective Training, and GRASP.

We not only provide professional development for our teachers but for our support personnel as well. We have provided training for our paraprofessionals on two programs: Poverty in the Classroom and Stewards of Children. Training has been provided for our clerical staff on GTID, Infinite Campus, and Smart Fusion. Our school housekeeping team has been trained on Chemical Safety and care of new floors.

We feel that providing training not only gives explains procedure and lets everyone know what is expected, but also it makes them more invested stakeholders. We also believe training gives everyone a sense of confidence in their job.

We are a professional learning community at Big A. Teacher collaboration, horizontally within grade levels and vertically with other grade levels closes academic gaps assuring continuous communication in sharing new ideas. If it works well we share it, if it doesn't work, we share it as well. Our goal is the same, to help every student succeed. It takes teachers, paraprofessionals, housekeepers, clerical, and administrators working together to prepare our students to be life-long learners.

7. School Leadership

Everyone here is expected to be a leader at their own level. Our students are leaders in the classroom, Garden Club, Green Club, and Chorus. Our administration, faculty, and staff set leadership examples for all students.

Our Principal and Assistant Principal are the instructional leaders. We see this shared role as support for our students, staff, and parents. The doors are not only open to staff, but to students and parents as well. Much effort has been put forth to foster a comfortable working relationship among all involved, and this has been achieved by the administrators being available and approachable. We focus leadership efforts on student and staff safety and student and staff success. The Principal and Assistant Principal are positive, proactive, and really like to celebrate not only achieved success, but also good efforts. Under the guidance of the principal the atmosphere is a positive one. Staff and students are made to feel valued and important. Disciplinary, parental, and safety issues are handled by the administration and communicated to the staff in an appropriate and timely manner.

Our school has a CIA Team. This team deals with the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment issues. Each member of the team represents a grade level or specific group of teachers. They relay all the information from the ones they represent to the team and from the team back to the folks they represent. We also have a DOT group. This team deals with Daily Operations, lunchroom, hallways, parking lot, maintenance issues, and more. They represent each grade level and are responsible for carrying information from the meetings to the ones they represent. Our RTI, Response To Intervention, team meets about the progress or lack of progress of students after the grade level has met and planned interventions to meet specific needs of students. This team is instrumental in looking at data, probes, and determining if the student needs to move to Tier 2 interventions. Our BOOST suggests when the staff needs a "Pick me up." They may plan an activity or may asked that something be planned. They also are in charge of our publicity, through our newspaper, webpage, or our face book page. Our DATA team gathers data and enters

when needed. Each team consists of teachers, support personal, and administrators. All communication is a two way street; the team members take information back and forth as needed.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

Test: CRCT

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Publisher: Riverside

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	98	87	98	100	96
% Advanced	54	63	69	68	78
Number of students tested	65	76	65	62	82
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	1	1	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	2	2	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	84	95	97	92
% Advanced	42	53	53	69	53
Number of students tested	31	32	76	35	40
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or					

Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	98	87	98	100	96
% Advanced	59	63	69	69	78
Number of students tested	46	70	65	62	82
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: Riverside

Test: CRCT
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*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	96	96	93	89	94
% Advanced	48	51	57	42	63
Number of students tested	74	80	75	109	84
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	1	0	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	97	87	79	92
% Advanced	43	48	47	34	50
Number of students tested	35	40	30	47	26
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				1	
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	97	94	93	94
% Advanced	56		58	46	67
Number of students tested	66	66	62	91	69
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math
All Students Tested/Grade: 5
Publisher: Riverside

Test: CRCT
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*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	99	97	95	96
% Advanced	58	31	27	47	43
Number of students tested	79	78	97	83	89
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	3
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	92	96	90
% Advanced	46	32	19	48	29
Number of students tested	37	37	36	27	31
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100				
% Advanced	20				
Number of students tested	10				
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	98	98	95	96
% Advanced	63	29	30	47	44
Number of students tested	60	65	81	74	81
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

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

Test: CRCT
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*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	97	100	99	98
% Advanced	68	57	60	54	43
Number of students tested	65	76	82	74	101
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	1	1	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	1	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	97	100	97	98
% Advanced	61	47	47	40	40
Number of students tested	31	32	43	35	40
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	97	100	100	99
% Advanced	78	57	66	60	46
Number of students tested	46	70	66	62	82
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: Riverside

Test: CRCT
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*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	99	97	92	98
% Advanced	67	67	52	45	54
Number of students tested	73	81	75	109	84
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	1	0	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	97	85	96
% Advanced	57	65	37	34	38
Number of students tested	35	40	30	47	26
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	99	97	93	99
% Advanced	67	66	55	51	55
Number of students tested	66	67	62	91	69
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 5
Publisher: Riverside

Test: CRCT
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*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	96	100
% Advanced	49	44	44	37	31
Number of students tested	80	77	98	83	89
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	3
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	100	100
% Advanced	46	39	27	30	23
Number of students tested	37	36	7	27	31
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100				
% Advanced	30				
Number of students tested	10				
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	97	100
% Advanced	52	42	49	39	33
Number of students tested	61	64	82	74	81
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: