

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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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. 15 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	0	0	0
K	12	18	30
1	17	13	30
2	12	18	30
3	12	14	26
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	53	63	116

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 41 % Black or African American
 - 54 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 5 % White
 - 0 % 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: 2%

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	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	116
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.017
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0
 Specify non-English languages:
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 75 %
 Total number students who qualify: 88

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: 1 %
2 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.

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

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	8
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals	1
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

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 15:1

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	97%	97%	98%	98%	99%
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

In 1998, a small dedicated group of educators and community members joined together with the vision of opening an elementary school that would be a supportive, engaging school community where classes are small and personalized; where parents are partners; where teachers teach with passion and commitment; and where all the adults model—and all the students develop and live—the values of caring, courage, justice, respect, and responsibility. The school's mission is to instill in our students a lifelong love for learning, supported by an appreciation for the use of knowledge.

When a parent applies for admission to Pace Charter School of Hamilton, they are knocking on the door of a special place. It's a place where collaboration and creativity, social justice and diversity feed the intellect, body and spirit of each child who passes through our doors. As a charter school, first priority for admission is given to residents within the sending district and siblings of already enrolled students. With a 15:1 student to teacher ratio, staff create a caring and personal learning environment which fosters high student achievement. In part from the small class size, the teachers get to know each student personally including a student's interests, strengths, academic levels, as well as his or her family.

Pace has an excellent record of forging traditions that have lasted over the years and which have strengthened positive relationships among the school community. During the school year, traditions are celebrated through the efforts of the school community. At the beginning of each school year there is a "meet and greet" day where all families, new and old, spend a few hours meeting their child's teacher for that school year. Parents and students enjoy a carnival like atmosphere with inflatables, cotton candy, and games to ease the transition of the new school year. All students leave the school with a knapsack full of school supplies and a renewed excitement of what the new school year will bring. In September, parents are invited to attend a back to school presentation, where teachers present a curriculum outline and expectations for the year.

During the year, students participate in the Science Fair, robotics tournaments and show their talents at musical concerts and an annual school wide Art show. Each May we hold a school Olympics that reinforces skills learned in our physical education classes. With the end of the school year each June, comes the "moving up" for our students and is celebrated with awards for achievement and a family fun day.

Within its first three years of operation, Pace reached several milestones. First, our Kindergarten program was the first charter school Kindergarten in New Jersey to receive accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In 2003, we were one of 25 schools selected statewide for the first annual Governor's School of Excellence award. That same year, our school was featured in a documentary on top performing charter schools in NJ filmed by the Governor's Office.

Our most recent milestone was our nomination from the State of New Jersey to vie for a National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. Prior to this nomination, in 2013 we celebrated a milestone of entering our 15th year educating students. Upon our renewal we were only 2 of 16 schools to have its charter renewed with an expansion of grades. This past fall, we began educating 4th graders and will educate students in 5th grade in the 2014 school year.

Pace is a Kindergarten to Third grade elementary Title 1 school district. Over 90% of our students come from the City of Trenton. The Trenton Public School district is recognized as a Priority School District. Serving a population of students that come from a priority school district has been challenging. (A priority school is a school that has been identified as among the lowest-performing five percent of Title 1 schools in the state). We have met this challenge by setting high expectations for students and involving parents in the educational process.

Over the past 5 years we have seen a significant change in our Latino population. In 2009 our demographics were 80% African American, 15% Hispanic and 5% Caucasian. Today, our population served has shifted to 62% Hispanic, 33% African American and 5% Caucasian. With this shift we are faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of second language learners and their parents. One approach that we have had success

with is instituting a Latino Outreach Program. The program is designed to involve parents in English language development, providing them with the confidence and skills to be active participants in their child's educational development.

While understandably high test scores are what has identified Pace as a Blue Ribbon worthy school, it is the hard work of our staff and students, dedication of our Board of Trustees, administration, and involved school community that provides an enriched, educationally successful environment. Our school is a place where we are able to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students, which ultimately has led to our success and this honorable nomination.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A) The test results in the data tables included in the application show the achievement of Pace Charter School of Hamilton's 3rd grade students on the state required NJASK assessment. The assessment is administered to students in the spring of their 3rd grade year. This assessment provides the opportunity to identify how our students are performing and compare the achievement of our students to other students in sending districts as well as across the state.

NJASK results are released in the summer following the test and the school is provided with both a school summary report as well as individual student reports. Student achievement is identified as Advanced Proficient, Proficient, or Partially Proficient. A student that achieves Advanced Proficient earns a scale score that ranges from 250 – 300, a Proficient scale score range is 200-249, and a Partially Proficient scale score range is 100-199.

At both the state and school level, our expectation is for all students to achieve Proficient or Advanced Proficient with scale scores that range between 200 and 300. Individual student reports are shared with parents, and a meeting is held to help students understand individual student score reports. Annually, school reports are shared with stakeholders and analyzed by the school's administration and 3rd grade teachers. The results allow us to identify individual and school strengths and weaknesses in the areas Math and Language Arts and move individual students as well as the school towards attainment of the expectation that all students will meet Proficient or Advanced Proficient scores.

B) Over the past five years the Pace Charter School of Hamilton has made steady growth on the NJASK Assessment as reflected in our data tables. Pace has consistently either met or exceeded defined benchmarks set by NJDOE or made significant improvements from one year to the next when results were less than desired targets. This is significantly noteworthy as we are a Title 1 school, serving students who are economically disadvantaged.

Pace Charter School of Hamilton's performance can be articulated in a comparative manner against New Jersey's statewide performance, other NJ charter schools, and the resident districts that Pace Charter School of Hamilton draws its students from. In our 2012-2013 NJ School Performance Report our school's academics were rated as "very high" when compared to schools across the state. Our school outperforms 90% of schools statewide in academic achievement and 100% of schools educating students with similar demographic characteristics.

Pace has regularly met or exceeded the performance of other charter schools or comparative schools both in the percentage of students who achieve proficient or advanced proficient. The increase of improved outcomes by Pace against the benchmark from one year to the next is substantial. For example, the percentage of students proficient in Language Arts showed small growth for NJASK3 with 36.4% Proficient/Advanced 2008-2009 to 48.1% Proficient/Advanced in 2009-2010 however, the percentage of Pace students realizing proficiency from 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 more than doubled with an increase from 36.4% to 88.5%. Our school's scores have increased annually nearly tripling the percentage of Proficient/Advanced Proficient since 2008-2009.

In Math, our scores started out strong in 2008-2009 with 72.7% Advanced/Proficient and have stayed consistently high through 2012-2013 with 92.3% Advanced/Proficient. These trends are evident in both the Advanced Proficient/Proficient as well as Proficient percentages. Consistently the percentages have increased for Proficient/Advanced with the exception of 2011-2012 where there was a slight decrease to 76.9% Advanced/Proficient. While the percentage of Proficient/Advanced slightly dipped in 2011-2012 the percentage of Advanced increased nearly 20% from 34.8% in 2010-2011 to 53.8% in 2011-2012. In 2012-2013 our scores increased in both Proficient/Advanced to 92.3% and Advanced to 61%. To be noted is the small number of students that we test annually; with only 30 tested the performance of 1 or 2 students has the ability to make a large impact on our results.

Our performance data clearly indicates stronger results in the school's mathematics program, therefore our curricular focus has been on making improvements to the Language Arts program. This has been addressed through professional development provided for staff in the areas identified as needing improvement. Additionally, we began to meet across grade levels to ensure consistency of standards and ensure a streamlined approach to preparing students to successfully meet the standards on the test in grade levels preceding the tested grade level. Extra time has been allotted in teacher's schedules to allow for the analysis of data and the formulation of plans that include targeted skill instruction. Utilizing small, differentiated groups for instruction has allowed teachers the opportunity to specifically address individual needs of students and ensure that they are making that progress needed to be successful in a testing situation. The longitudinal data indicates that progress is being made on an annual basis.

Clearly our scores reflect the school's success in promoting student achievement, and more importantly, the school's capacity to address deficiencies and improve performance outcomes. Pace continues to sustain growth and improve performance year-to-year.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At the Pace Charter School of Hamilton "accountability" in regards to using assessment results have been paramount to our success. As a public school we are accountable for documenting the success of our students. Data is used to not only monitor the consistent use of standards at each grade level, but also to monitor and assure that our students are provided with the support that they need to develop into lifelong learners. It is an ongoing process of program, curricular, and pedagogy review that is used to improve instructional strategies as well as student performance.

Teachers collect data regularly through both formative and summative measures. Formative assessments help teachers monitor student learning periodically and provide ongoing feedback to improve student learning as well as improve their own teaching strategies. Data collected helps teachers hone in on specific strengths and weaknesses of individual students and address them through small group and differentiated instruction. Summative assessments are more formal and provide the teachers the opportunity to assess each student in terms of comparing it to a specific standard or benchmark.

At the start of each school year baseline assessments are administered to students at all grade levels. This allows them to determine which students will benefit from intervention or enrichment instruction. Based on results of baseline assessments and additional benchmark assessments that are administered approximately every 6 weeks across all grade levels, teachers are able to differentiate instruction for students. This ensures that all students are given the opportunity to grow and expand their learning at their individual ability levels. Additionally, DIBELS and DRA assessments are administered each trimester to identify basic early literacy skills and individual reading levels. These assessments provide teachers the additional opportunity to monitor the development of early literacy and reading skills along with their reading fluency.

NJASK reports also provide us information that is used to help guide instruction and ensure that our students are performing as well as or better than their peers across the state. Annually, our results are analyzed and information is disseminated both individually and as group data. This allows our teachers to monitor and adjust their content and strategies and also the ability to identify and provide targeted skill instruction to individual students based on their individual student scores.

As a staff we meet regularly to have conversations about assessment data and how it will guide future instruction to increase student learning. We feel that the input and discussion among staff is essential to the effective use of the data that is gathered. Analyzing assessment results also allows us to plan for professional development and determine school-wide or grade level objectives to increase student achievement. This information is shared with Stakeholders at Board meetings, as well as at special meetings that are held specifically for parents of our third graders to understand and interpret NJASK score reports.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Pace Charter School of Hamilton's professional teaching staff has a strong belief in communication, collaboration and respect for the opinions of colleagues.

Through participation in conferences, and professional development, our school shares successful strategies with other charter schools in and out of our district. Our teachers serve as host classrooms for higher education students, local teachers, administrators and staff. Annually, we welcome founders and staff of potential, new and existing charter schools, and local staff who visit our school and classrooms to observe classroom management strategies, and best practices.

On staff, we have a master technology teacher. This teacher is a host classroom for teachers, administrators and staff throughout the school and local County school districts of Mercer and Burlington. Visitors frequent her classroom to observe the use of technology in the classroom, teaching strategies, for working with small groups of students, individualizing instruction using a variety of technological resources. Monthly, she writes a blog to share technology strategies for the classroom.

Pace has a long-standing partnership with the College of New Jersey and Rider University as a professional development site for their teacher education program. Students studying Elementary education use our classrooms and teachers for observations, case studies and junior and senior practicums.

Over the past five years, teachers and administrators have participated/presented at the NJ Charter School Conference in the areas of curriculum development, using data to drive instruction and differentiating instruction. The Head of School has presented in the areas of finance and administration and serves as a mentor to other charter school lead persons and school business administrators within the State of New Jersey. She has also participated as a presenter for the New Jersey Charter School Office to provide training to newly approved Charter Schools in finance, administration and teacher evaluations.

In school year 2008, we were awarded a dissemination grant by the New Jersey Department of Education "to provide direct one on one technical assistance to charter schools which need to improve student achievement as shown on the annual state assessments." This was a school wide initiative where staff and administration worked closely with an identified school for the course of the school year. Specifically, the project linked successful and scientifically based practices through two interconnected strands: curriculum development and education best practices utilizing concurrent and converging strategies.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

At Pace Charter School of Hamilton a child's success is not contingent upon a quality education alone. It is essential to develop strong family and community partnerships by actively engaging parents and the community in the daily happenings of the school. We engage our school community regularly in open communication. Parents are kept up to date through the school's website and Facebook page. Teachers distribute weekly newsletters, providing parents the opportunity to review and address content material covered. They routinely maintain communication with parents via phone and e-mail to discuss student progress, school events, and curriculum.

Pace parents are active members of the PTO, our membership has been consistently high, ranging between 84% and 98% over the past 5 years. Parents volunteer on a regular basis in the classroom, supporting teachers during projects and activities. Monthly family nights are held which engage students and parents in collaborative activities, such as, "make and take" workshops, Cultural Fairs, as well as social gatherings that bring our families together to build and strengthen our school community.

As our Latino population has increased, we instituted a Latino Outreach Program, held on the first Friday of every month. Through this program we've hosted parenting workshops, provided ESL classes, and instituted the translation of newsletters and other school communications to keep our Latino population actively engaged. Educating our parents results in establishing better relationships with them and in turn creates a partnership resulting in increased student achievement.

As a school family we value collaborating with the community. We hosted Lemonade Stands to raise money to purchase wheelchairs for local handicapped children and participated in Anti-Bullying Walks to raise awareness. We collected donations and made cards to send with parents who are on active duty in the military. When a student at Pace was diagnosed with Cancer we partnered with the Ronald McDonald house to provide items for families who have prolonged stays in their facility. Annually, we provide Thanksgiving baskets to our needy families.

At Pace we engage parents because educating our students is a process that involves all the important adults in our student's lives. The proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" is a popular proverb with a clear message. The whole community has an essential role to play in supporting the growth and learning of its young people to ensure they become successful life-long learners.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Pace Charter School of Hamilton provides children in grades K-5 with an educational opportunity that prepares students to become independent, lifelong learners. Our curriculum is structured around the Common Core State Standards and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards to incorporate strong academics with an emphasis on higher order thinking skills. Teachers have the ability to differentiate, individualize, and personalize lessons, but the fundamental learning is measured with common assessments. The administrators monitor assessments to assure that all students are meeting or exceeding progress within their grade level.

The English language arts curriculum at Pace is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The students read a variety of genres and learn comprehension skills to enhance their reading. Early on the students learn how to verbally cite evidence from their reading to answer a question, and teachers continue building this foundation so that students have the ability to transfer their thoughts from a verbal answer to a written answer. At Pace, we believe that phonemic awareness is extremely important to build decoding skills to improve reading comprehension, as well as fluency. Vocabulary and spelling are used to improve listening and speaking, reading, and writing skills. The students are assigned vocabulary and spelling words to promote a strong working vocabulary. The writing aspect of our curriculum incorporates grammar, and encourages our students to write in a variety of genres while using their creativity and prior knowledge to begin to grow as authors. The students participate in classroom discussion, which develops as they progress into oral presentations or activities to build the speaking and listening part of our curriculum.

Our Math curriculum emphasizes strong mathematical concepts that correlate to the Common Core State Standards. These topics include, but are not limited to; counting numbers, comparing numbers, sequencing numbers, place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, multi-digit arithmetic, measurement, telling time, representing and interpret data, geometry, and solving word problems. Teachers encourage students to invent, question, model, represent, explore, learn and practice important math strategies. Our emphasis is on making math relevant to real life, and teaching the importance of math for everyday use.

The science curriculum at Pace is an inquiry-based model stressing hands-on learning, which motivates students and stimulates curiosity. Teachers encourage creative, discovery based thinking to explore the world in front of them. The students become scientists who can observe and experiment to gather data and draw conclusions. Students complete experiments that continue to build their knowledge of the scientific method.

In social studies, we extract the curiosity of the students and provide them with an assortment of learning experiences. Teachers help the students explore topics, such as, history, culture, geography, economics, and civics. At Pace, we help develop these concepts through individual work, cooperative groups, and verbal presentations. The students gather information from a variety of resources and use that information to learn, reflect, and connect times past with the present.

Technology is an integral part of the curriculum at Pace. All students engage in curriculum-related computer, iPad, iPod, and Nook activities designed by their classroom teachers. Students explore geography, math, science, language arts, technology and the world around them through interactive programs and online resources.

Pace's health and physical education curriculum promotes skills to support a healthy and active lifestyle. In health the students are introduced to personal hygiene, healthy habits, and how to stay safe. In physical education the students build their gross motor skills, and develop fundamental concepts of games, sports and physical activities by participating in age appropriate activities.

Our visual and performing arts curriculum builds the students understanding of music, art, dance, and the theatre. The music and art teacher encourages student learning by allowing students to participate in visual

and performing art activities in the classroom, as well as outside the classroom walls. The students have gone on several field trips that expand their learning, such as, trips to The Ground for Sculpture, trips to the theatre and art museums, annual art show, and school wide art and music assemblies.

Our Spanish language program is taught by a native speaker and exposes the students to culture, enrichment, and awareness.

2. Reading/English:

2a) At Pace Charter School, we believe reading is the foundation of all learning. Our school utilizes a balanced research-based approach to reading instruction within a daily 90-minute language art block. The emphasis is on “learning to read” in kindergarten through second grade and “reading to learn” in third through fifth grade. From the beginning our curriculum builds the importance of reading with a strong literacy environment of books, poems, pictures, charts, and other resources that capture the student’s interest and make them want to read for information and pleasure. The reading program scaffolds instruction to provide the students with strategies for comprehension and fluency, development of vocabulary, strategies for writing, listening and speaking skills. The program also provides a structured scope and sequence for novice teachers and acts as a springboard for the more experienced teachers.

Our reading program in the primary grades focuses on organized and precise instruction in phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness includes syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds decoding skills, and oral reading fluency with a concentration on sight word recognition. The emphasis on fluency stipulates a foundation for reading success.

The upper grades focus on content area based materials where children are encouraged to “read to learn”. Instruction includes an abundance of topics, which integrate reading, writing, science and social studies. Comprehension strategies are taught through a variety of genres. Students are taught higher order thinking skills, such as, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing text. The curriculum increases learning through novel studies, literacy groups, and research projects. It builds upon the foundation of writing skills and teaches the six traits of writing. Teachers emphasize the writing process through development of idea and content, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, elaboration, and voice. In addition, students are taught the craft of revising, editing and publishing their creative and expository writing pieces.

Differentiated instruction is a priority in teaching reading. Small group leveled reading instruction is provided for all students. This allows teachers to develop essential reading strategies while actively guiding children through their cognitive thought process. The students have access to several online applications to help refine and mold skills, such as, Reading Eggs, Starfall, Bookster, We Give Books, MeeGenius, and Scootpad. Pace Charter School has an early intervention program beginning in kindergarten. The students are assessed using the baseline assessments, DRA, Dibels, and unit benchmarks. These assessments help identify students in need of support from our Reading Specialist and Curriculum Coach. The specialist and coach provide enrichment activities for students identified as struggling and/or advanced readers. They facilitate skills through one-on one instruction, small group instruction, literature circles and special projects. Enrichment programs give students the opportunity to develop positive attitudes towards reading and increase their motivation to write.

The Pace Charter School staff strongly believes that our approach to reading creates a life-long love of reading and writing.

3. Mathematics:

Pace Charter School of Hamilton utilizes a multi-faceted approach to mathematics instruction that is in correlation with the Common Core State Standards. The school uses a researched based core program to build in depth understanding of major mathematical ideas. In grades kindergarten through second the curriculum is flexible and builds an essential background, beginning with the foundational concept of number sense and operations and algebraic thinking. The student’s knowledge is then expanded into measurement and data, geometry, and problem solving. For our third grade and fourth grade students the

core program engages them in an invigorating learning experience. The upper school students build on the foundation that was started in the lower school by: increasing their knowledge of number sense; solving problems involving multiplication and division; developing an understanding of fractions; and building skills in measurement, data, and geometry.

In the beginning of the year the students are given an inventory test, and based on those inventory tests, standardized tests, and previous year success the students are placed in small, leveled instructional groups. Throughout the year the teachers monitor the students progress by assessing the students with quick quizzes and unit benchmarks. In order for students to make improvement and show growth, bi-monthly grade level meetings are held and are used to differentiate small group instruction with; reevaluating grouping, re-teaching previously taught material, tutoring and peer-tutoring strategies, use of tactile manipulatives, adjusting visual charts, and using technology.

Technology is an integral part of differentiating math instruction at Pace Charter School. All classrooms have access to computers, iPads, and Nooks. The students use several math applications on the iPads and Nooks to boost mathematical skills, such as, Bugs and Numbers, Squeebles Math Bingo and Fractions, Times Tables Pro, and Rocket Math. The school uses several online educational websites to help enhance the student's math skills. One online common core based program that Pace Charter School has used for a couple of years is Scootpad. It offers a customized learning path for each student with concept assignments, immediate feedback and explanations, improvement opportunities, and validation of mastery with quick formal assessments. It challenges the students to go above and beyond grade level.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Additional Curriculum Area: Science

Pace Charter School provides students with skills necessary to flourish as lifelong learners, effective workers, and outstanding citizens of the 21st century. Our science curriculum allows students to exhibit "knowledge in use", understand scientific explanations, generate scientific evidence, reflect on scientific knowledge, participate in science practices, and are taught the scientific method which allows them to analyze and assess information.

Teaching science through inquiry and investigation is the core of our science model. Hands-on activities that engage students' curiosity and imagination are incorporated into our classrooms. The study of life, physical, and earth sciences begins in the primary grades and spirals through the upper elementary grades. Students are assessed with formal and informal assessment throughout the school year.

The teachers embody the importance of nature when teaching life science. For example, in the lower grades, students begin investigating life science by observing seeds as they grow into flowers and plants and discuss a plant's role in our environment. While in the upper grades, students study the life cycle of butterflies by hatching larvae to show that all living things change throughout their lives.

When teaching physical science the students in the lower grades begin to explore how the world around us works. As they enter into the upper grades, physical science becomes more intense by studying specific scientists, such as Isaac Newton, Benjamin Franklin, and Galileo. The teachers in all grades test physical science with experiments including, dancing raisins, property of air, bungee jump with eggs, and centripetal force spin the bucket.

As the students explore earth science the lower grades touch on topics, such as, weather, the moon, the sun, land, the seasons, and natural resources. The students in the upper grades expand their knowledge by studying topics in detail, such as, rocks, landforms, solar system, and the water cycle. For example, in the lower grades they are introduced to the sun and the moon, but in the upper grades they cover the entire solar system.

Students are encouraged to join our in school and after school science clubs, such as, the robotics club and mad science club. Our annual science fair allows students to initiate, create, and present an experiment

independently. Our clubs and our science fair motivate students with hands-on science activities where all students can be successful and develop best science practices.

5. Instructional Methods:

At the Pace Charter School of Hamilton our teachers utilize a variety of instructional methods to reach our students. We reach our advanced, on-level, and strategic students by differentiating instruction in all subject areas.

Modeling is an important strategy our teachers use, research shows students are more successful when in addition to being told they are shown how to do something. At Pace modeling is utilized in writing and grammar activities with students. Modeling is followed with guided-practice where our teachers take the time to ensure that students understand the concepts presented. Finally, students have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills independently. Strategies presented in this sequence provide students the support they need to be successful.

Another instructional technique that our students benefit from are “hands on” learning experiences. Math and Science curriculums lend well to this type of instruction as manipulatives and experiments are used often in these content areas. This technique emphasizes a “learn by doing” approach. The use of manipulatives has been found useful as our students begin to develop as mathematical thinkers progressing as they develop number sense, geometry, measurement, patterns, algebra, data analysis, probability, and mathematical processes.

Our teachers incorporate a mix of techniques, tailored to their individual classes and students to ensure the academic success of each student. This includes incorporating whole, small, and individual instruction that is differentiated to the needs of the students. Teachers utilize small groups for reading and math to allow all students the opportunity to work at their instructional levels to develop skills. Small and individual target skill instruction is utilized when a specific skill needs to be retaught to a specific group or individual student, to ensure mastery of the grade level appropriate concept.

As we prepare our students to be successful in the 21st Century, we have upgraded our classrooms. Each classroom is equipped with a projector and document reader to create interactive white boards. Teachers use computer based displays and visuals to enhance instruction. Teachers utilize computers, iPads, iPods and Nooks to help assist with differentiating instruction in all content areas and provide endless opportunities to master skills. Apps and computer programs allow our students to work at their independent ability levels, challenging our advanced learners and providing remedial instruction to our strategic students, providing teachers with specific data about individual students to drive instruction in the classroom.

6. Professional Development:

The purpose of professional development at the Pace Charter School of Hamilton is to train and support our teachers and administrators with the tools and knowledge they need to prepare students to meet or exceed State and local standards. Teachers participate as active, responsible members of the professional community, engaging in a wide range of reflective practices, pursuing opportunities to grow professionally and establishing collegial relationships to enhance the teaching and learning process.

At Pace, professional development is not only driven by State testing results, but by unit benchmark testing for content areas, DRA results, DIBELS, and formal teacher evaluations. Professional Development activities address best practices in enhancing techniques and teaching in reading, differentiating instruction across the curriculum and providing support and development. It is the effective planning of professional development, successful implementation of new learning and continued support of the administration that has resulted in Pace’s NJ ASK3 high academic performance scores for the past five years.

Professional Development opportunities include on-site and off-site experiences. Staff are encouraged to attend those that are State-approved and/or recommended by the Professional Standards Board and are given paid leave to attend the various training events. Our professional development focuses on supporting school

goals and is consistent with current trends and best instructional practices, which clearly ties professional development to pedagogy and student achievement. Our professional development experiences aid teachers in adjusting instructional practices, strengthening content area knowledge and ensuring teachers are able to effectively integrate instructional technology and technological resources into their classrooms.

A notable aspect of our professional development is the professional collaboration and turn-key opportunities for staff and administration. Our staff serve as mentors, formally and informally to one another for the purpose of professional growth. Collegial collaboration provides immediate and reliable feedback to teachers in a safe and supportive environment. The staff have developed a strong team teaching and cooperative learning model. Weekly grade level meetings become true professional development opportunities where teaching partners share formative assessment and discuss future instructional needs and techniques based on student performance.

Reflection is utilized to guide the professional development needs of our school. The reflective practice is based on self-reflection, assessment and the continual need for re-assessment and adjustment of teaching practices. Survey results help drive goal setting and systematic planning for the following school year.

7. School Leadership

Leadership at Pace Charter School of Hamilton is truly a collaborative effort. The school leaders (Head of School, Principal) work as a cohesive team that firmly believe when administrative and instructional staff needs and aspirations are merged, an opportunity for maximum student growth is obtained. It is with this approach in mind that the school administration drives instruction and creates a school culture and climate conducive towards the development of the whole child as a productive citizen prepared for the 21st Century.

Working together as a team, school leaders shape the core foundation of what has been a successful endeavor to meet and surpass various measures of student success. Aside from the daily open exchange of ideas, the Head of School and Principal meet in a formal setting each week to assess short and long-term goals. They ensure that policies, programs, planning and resources focus on improving student achievement, within a cycle of continuous improvement. Instruction is monitored through daily walk through observations, formal and informal, as well as three written formal observations a year using the Danielson Framework for Teaching to enhance professional practice.

An expectation for excellence has been set by the Head of School and she leads the school in a continuous cycle of improvement with a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. The week prior to the start of school, the Head of School meets with staff to review and examine student achievement data, external and internal trends, and any other concerns that may impact school improvement. Attendance, discipline and other pertinent student data are disaggregated, shared and analyzed. After examining and discussing every facet of performance, three critical areas are identified by consensus as the greatest needs and goals are articulated for the coming school year.

The Principal's role is that of an instructional leader and vision keeper who fosters collaboration and empowerment of the staff. The Principal holds grade level meetings weekly together with staff makes decisions about classroom instruction, assessment and changes needed to improve student learning. Lesson plans and curriculum maps are reviewed weekly. This helps leadership stay informed of what is happening in each classroom and ensures continuity in progression towards meeting Common Core Content Standards.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

Test: New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Publisher: Measurement Inc.

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	77	100	89	73
% Advanced	61	54	35	33	14
Number of students tested	26	26	23	27	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	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					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	78	100	82	69
% Advanced	60	56	27	19	6
Number of students tested	20	18	15	14	16
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	100	25	100
% Advanced	0	0	100	0	0
Number of students tested	0	2	1	4	1
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	82	100	90	50
% Advanced	64	55	38	20	50
Number of students tested	11	11	8	10	2
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	71	100	94	75
% Advanced	60	50	29	44	10
Number of students tested	15	14	14	16	20
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			
% Advanced		100			
Number of students tested		1			
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Unknown Ethnicity					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			100	0	
% Advanced			100	0	
Number of students tested			1	1	
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

Test: New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Publisher: Measurement Inc.

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	73	78	48	36
% Advanced	4	8	13	0	0
Number of students tested	26	26	23	27	22
Percent of total students tested	100	100	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					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	85	72	67	57	25
% Advanced	5	11	7	5	0
Number of students tested	20	18	15	14	16
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	100	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	2	1	4	1
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	73	63	50	0
% Advanced	0	0	25	0	0
Number of students tested	11	11	8	10	2
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	87	71	86	50	35
% Advanced	7	14	7	0	0
Number of students tested	15	14	14	16	20
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			
% Advanced		0			
Number of students tested		1			
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Unknown Ethnicity					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			100	0	
% Advanced			100	0	
Number of students tested			1	1	
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: