

U.S. Department of Education
2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Lynn Brown

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

Official School Name Scott Altman Primary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1730 Highwood Avenue

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

City Pekin State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 61554-6157

County Tazewell County State School Code Number* 530901080022010

Telephone 309-477-4715 Fax 309-477-4764

Web site/URL http://www.pekin.net/Domain/8 E-mail josh.norman@pekin.net

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Bill Link

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

E-mail: bill.link@pekin.net

Other)

District Name Pekin Public Schools District #108 Tel. 309-477-4740

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Chris Spanos

(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 and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are 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 2014-2015 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 2009 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: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.
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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

11 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. 4 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	32	18	50
1	25	23	48
2	23	27	50
3	31	25	56
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	111	93	204

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % White
 - 3 % 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 2013 - 2014 year: 12%

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, 2013 until the end of the school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	196
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.117
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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: 53 %
 Total number students who qualify: 102

Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State

The state has reported that 56 % of the students enrolled in this school are from low income or disadvantaged families based on the following subgroup(s): Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals

9. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
27 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>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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>4</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	9
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals	4
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 22:1

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

Required Information	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	96%	96%	95%
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 2014

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

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

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Scott Altman Primary School is a visionary, innovative elementary school that is committed to preparing responsible, productive, life-long learners.

PART III – SUMMARY

Scott Altman Primary School is a public elementary school located in a Pekin, Illinois, a small city of 34,000 residents in the central part of the state. It was originally named Sunset Hills Elementary School and was established in the neighborhood of Sunset Hills in 1962. It was renamed to Scott Altman Primary on September 11th, 2010 after one of Pekin's most famous sons, Scott D. Altman. Scott Altman, a former student of Pekin Public School District 108, was a United States Navy Fighter Officer who has received countless awards for his service to his country and was selected to NASA Astronaut program where he logged over 51 days in space.

Scott Altman Primary School services students in grades K-3 with an enrollment of over 200 students. Over the past decade Pekin has seen an increase of residents living in poverty due to loss of manufacturing jobs in the area. This fact has also held true for our school, with the number of students who have qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch increasing to 53%. Therefore it has been our school's priority to educate the whole child and meet both their instructional and social emotional needs.

This priority is supported by both our school and district's mission and vision which are aligned to create a culture in which our staff is committed to "preparing responsible, productive, life-long learners through active partnership with our learning community." For the past 10 years our school has formed a professional learning community with staff collaboratively working together to research best practices for student engagement, meeting individual needs by scaffolding and differentiating instruction. Staff continuously collects and analyzes data to monitor student progress and make informed decisions so all students have access to a rigorous curriculum appropriate to student needs. We also have invested numerous resources into ongoing, job embedded professional development focus on student learning and growth.

Our school improvement process also supports this goal as we use the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Model, specifically the Plan Do Study Act cycle. This process includes "quality tools" that collect data, help narrow the data to find the root cause(s) and goal(s) (similar to triangulating data). The process also creates a shared vision within our school's instructional leadership team and helps standardize processes that are developed so they can be sustained within our school. This process is used annually to establish both an instructional and social emotional goal that are written as SMART goals and are imbedded in the process.

We understand how social emotional circumstances directly affect our students lives and their academic success. If student's basic needs aren't met then learning cannot occur. Therefore, our staff has strived to create a safe learning environment. From our school improvement process we have implemented school wide expectations known as the "I CARE" rules. These expectations foster positive relationships, respect, accepting each person for who they are, and personal responsibility. As a school we recognize positive behaviors through "I CARE" awards written by staff members and presented to the student during our opening ceremony each morning. This encourages a sense of community within our school and reinforces positive behavior.

We have also established an "I CARE" council whose main goal is to promote the "I CARE" rules at Altman and in our community. Third grade students are selected for the council using a rubric identifying students who exemplify the I CARE rules. During their term responsibilities include teaching younger students the I CARE rules by leading small group read alouds, performing plays, facilitating activities at event like our "Family Fun" night. The group also does community service projects such as working at local food pantries or serving lunches to senior citizens at our Township Hall.

Through our school improvement process and learning community our school has also been able to implement and sustain quality curricula in all subject areas that allow our teachers to be responsive to our students' needs and that support their individual learning goals. This has created a history of Altman being identified by the state as a high achieving school. The school received the Academic Excellence Award from 2009-2012. This award is given to schools in which 90% of students met or exceeded state standards in both reading and math for at least 3 consecutive years on the state assessment, the Illinois Student Achievement

Test (ISAT). The academic success our students have experienced on these standardized achievement tests can be directly credited to our school's culture. At Scott Altman, our top priority is the needs of our students and we are passionate about quality instruction. Through high quality instruction and ongoing collaboration, we are able help improve students' learning across our curriculum, while forming a strong learning community for al of our stakeholders!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Our school and district are currently working toward aligning the Common Core State Standards and our curriculum. In order for this to occur we have spent the summer and fall of 2014 training all our staff on the “Understanding by Design” model (UBD). The purpose for this initiative is so our district can unpack the CCSS and design high quality units of study that identify the desired results. Since our school values our PLC, we felt it was important that all staff help in the process so they truly understand the “why” and “how” behind implementing the new rigor and the instructional shifts that are associated with the CCSS. This process is also being used with other subject areas including Social Emotional, Physical Education, and Music which are unpacking National Standards for their specialized areas.

For our ELA curriculum, all of our schools use the Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy (PCL) model. The Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy (PCL) model is a school improvement initiative dedicated to increasing student achievement and was developed by Dr. Linda Dorn at the University of Arkansas in Little Rock. As a district, we implemented this model because its vision, mission, and goals aligned to our district’s vision, mission, and goals. In addition, the research and data behind this model support that it is one of the most successful models of school reform in the nation.

This model emphasizes several key points such as a seamless transition across curriculum and assessment systems. It incorporates best practices in literacy instruction and a powerful Response to Intervention (RTI) approach called the Comprehensive Intervention Model (CIM). The model has 10 criteria for implementation, such as schools use a differentiated approach to learning. Our school addresses the needs of all students through differentiation.

Our school’s framework for literacy uses a workshop approach which allows our teachers to differentiate their instruction. We use the gradual release model and a balance between whole group, small group, and individual conferences. Teachers use mini lessons and interactive read alouds to expose students to complex text, and introduce concepts, such as making predictions or concepts about print. Then students apply these concepts during small group work by responding to text in their reading journals, engaging in word work, or literacy discussion groups. During small group work, teachers work with guided reading groups that are established using a variety of data including Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark assessments. Teachers address the needs of the students during this small group time and work on skills or concepts such as decoding, fluency, or other comprehension skills. Teachers keep running records of students’ reading behaviors and comprehension retell checklists as formative assessment to continue to monitor student progress and make adjustments to their guided reading groups. Resources, such as the Fountas and Pinnell Continuum of Literacy Learning help guide teachers’ decision making and instructional planning.

Writing workshop is another key component to our ELA curriculum. Our school uses Lucy Calkin’s Units of Study as a guide which helps our teachers implement a seamless approach that supports what they are doing in other subject areas. For example, second grade has a unit of study on science experiments and third grade has a research unit of study. Both units give students opportunities to study science and allows them to work with a variety of complex texts, including nonfiction text which is highly emphasized in the CCSS.

As stated above, we are using the UBD process to also design units of study for math that are aligned to the CCSS which include designing both formative and summative assessment to monitor student growth. Partnering with an organization called Math Solutions we used an observational survey to identify professional development needs. This resulted in a three year implementation plan for our district and school. While designing our units of study our teachers are also building a framework for math instruction similar to what we have in place for reading and writing. Key components of this framework include: number talks that build a continuum for learning, using mental math and computation strategies, using strategies like landmark numbers, making tens, or breaking numbers into place value to do addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division problems.

Other key components include a combination of problem solving and exploration lessons supported by a workshop approach. Each component allows students to build a strong number sense and fluency with numbers by putting a high emphasis on the base ten system, subtilizing numbers, hundreds chart, conceptual and procedural knowledge, and place value while supporting talk moves to increase discourse in the classroom. This framework to instruction and discourse in the classroom helps support the 8 mathematical practices which allow students to agree or disagree with how problems are solved, gives students multiple strategies to solve problems, helps create problem solvers who can apply or relate math to real life, and allows our teachers to differentiate their instruction so all students have access points to rigorous math problems.

Since we are in the infant stages of studying the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) we continue to integrate the majority of this curriculum into our reading and writing units of study and workshops. This supports our school goal of having a seamless approach to our literacy instruction. Teachers introduce concepts in science, like characteristics of mammals, through a mini lesson. They then support this concept by using literacy discussion groups using nonfiction mammal books. Another example is our 2nd grade teachers have a unit of study in writing on science experiments. Throughout the unit of study students learn how to write a science report by using hands on experiments they complete in class. For their summative assessment, our teachers use an on demand writing prompt asking students to describe steps they would use to form a hypothesis for a science experiment.

Our teachers use the same instructional approach for Social Studies. We are currently studying the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Standards as a district and the goal is to deepen our students understanding of concepts by once again using a seamless approach. Our teachers use instructional strategies that include mentor texts and turn and talks to discuss the civil rights movement. In writing, students publish “All About Books” on famous people or different events that occurred during “The Revolutionary War” as a connection to current social studies topics. Throughout the day students are able to make connections to topics being discussed in reading or writing along with what they are learning in social studies or science.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our Physical Education teachers are currently using the UBD process to align their curriculum. One of the main ideas our PE teachers is focused on is teaching students lifelong skills supporting healthy living styles. This includes discussing nutrition and affordable nutritious foods. Students are also taught skills and games that keep them active and that can be played at home without spending money. The reason for these innovative ideas is to support our students who live in poverty and don't have access to these opportunities or life styles.

Last spring our physical education department created a running program. The rationale behind the running program is that it is a fairly inexpensive sport, especially for children, and can be done just about anywhere. During a two month period students had the opportunity to run 1-2 miles per week at school during PE and recess. By the end of the training, our students had completed 25 miles and went to a local marathon and completed the last 1.2 miles. It was an amazing experience for students to participate in a race this size, receive a medal and t-shirt for their participation, and instill a love for running. We had over 60 students participate in the event and no student was turned away due to cost. The event was so successful that this year the event in Peoria was moved to the fall. Our district then decided to hold its own event with over 300 students district wide signed up for this activity, including 70 students from Altman Primary School.

Our Music curriculum has also begun the shift towards the UBD process. One focus for their units of study is connecting music to the lives of students and getting them involved in the music community outside of school. In order for these goals to be accomplished we have formed a partnership with the Pekin Civic Chorus. PCC has donated funds to help us purchase instruments to be used in classrooms. Musicians from the community have also been invited to speak to classes about their career paths, the instruments they play, and their passion for music. A performing arts group from Western Illinois University conducted a musical for our students based on the story “The Three Billy Goats Gruff.” This event not only supported our music curriculum but also connected to our social emotional curriculum because the main topic was bullying.

Our students also have the opportunity to perform for their families in a winter concert. At this performance students sing traditional and non-traditional songs that are choreographed with music and musical instruments. This year we have expanded our community involvement by taking a group of third grade volunteers to perform at our community's "Create, Cultivate, Educate Event." This event is held in downtown Pekin and allows community members to watch local performing arts groups from our schools during their lunch.

Our district has always felt that it was important to give our students access to 21st century technology. Our goal has been that this technology is integrated into all curriculum areas and support student engagement which is at the heart of all of our instructional practices. All classrooms are equipped with five computers and SmartBoard Technology. Students also have access to iPads and a computer lab. Teacher use this technology to help differentiate and enrich their curriculum. Some examples include students composing music using the app Garage Band, publishing writing pieces for a writing celebration at the end of each unit of study, creating videos to help teach concepts or recommend a book to fellow peers, or creating a presentation using multimedia software and more. Students, on average, use a computer or an iPad daily during instruction.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Since Altman is a PCL school, our staff takes pride in having a strong core curriculum in all subject areas. Our curriculum allows our teachers to differentiate their instruction through guided reading groups, conferring with individual students around personal goals, engaging students in self-reflection, exposing students to complex texts during mini lessons, having students read "just right books" at their reading level, teaching different strategies to solve problems, and giving students choice.

Through our Response to Intervention (RTI) process all grade levels have created a rubric to monitor student progress. In the past, data walls have been used and revisited during data days to systematically monitor our student growth. Through the process of creating grade level rubrics we were able to identify key assessments that provide our teachers with user friendly data that support differentiated instruction which is part of the PCL model. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System is used to acquire running records and comprehension retells to monitor student progress. This is a consistent measure used across all grade levels. In addition, The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay) is used in first grade to select and discontinue students from Reading Recovery. Other assessments used specific to grade levels include: STAR, Words Their Way, Performance Series, Foundations, checklists, and writing prompts.

Grade levels meet monthly to collaborate with our reading specialist, school psychologist, social worker, special education teacher, and district coach to review and triangulate data to get an accurate picture of students' needs. This team will discuss how to differentiate within our core instruction to meet individual student needs (Tier 1) through practices such as flexible grouping. They will also identify students who would benefit from Tier 2 interventions, and identify students who may need a more intense intervention (Tier 3).

If a child is identified as needing a tier 2 or 3 intervention then a collaborative goal form is completed with the teacher and interventionist so we can make sure skills are transferring among tiers. The teacher and interventionist then meet during the school day to discuss data to make sure they are observing the same progress. They identify common language and strategies to be used with the student to ensure transfer. If there are questions about performance, they will plan a time to observe together in the classroom setting and identify next steps. At the end of the meeting the teachers talk with the student about their personal goal for the next four weeks.

Every intervention at Scott Altman is research based and include: Reading Recovery, guided reading plus, assisted writing, and Numicon. Altman believes that early intervention is key and we have data that supports that our interventions are successful. Each year we have an internal review of our RTI system which provides us with feedback on areas of celebration and next steps. One of our celebrations has been data that we have tracked since 2011. Our data focuses on cohorts and consistently shows a decrease in interventions over the last four years for each cohort. An example is a cohort who started in kindergarten in 2011-2012

had 18 students or 29% of all students in that grade level in an early intervention. When this cohort leaves Altman in third grade this year, they will only have 4 students or 7% receiving interventions.

PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:

Scott Altman students have always had consistent performance on the Illinois Standard Achievement Test. During this four year period of time at least 86% of our students have met or exceeded on ISAT reading and at least 94% have met or exceeded on ISAT math with our highest performance of 94% for reading and 100% for math. These results correlate directly to the dedicated staff that we have at Altman, the best practices that they implement, and their ability to engage their students in their learning.

Since our students leave our building after third grade and we don't get results until the fall of the next school year, Altman has had to look at the data from the previous year to identify trends to help strengthen our instructional practice. Each of our cohorts display different strengths and areas of growth each year, so it is important for us to compare our ISAT data with more recent data, like our fall Performance Series results, to identify strategies or instructional goals that can move students from below, to meets, or meets, to exceeds. This past year, our teachers implemented a research unit of study for writing to expose our students to more non-fiction informational text due to the fact that our ISAT and Performance data showed a trend that this was an area that all of our students struggled with last year.

Our teachers have paid close attention to the performance gap for our students with special education services. Our performance scores for math have been significantly higher. In ELA, this hasn't been the case. In order to address this gap in performance, our teachers have started to expose our students with special education services to more of our core curriculum and have used a more balance between push in and pull out services. This gives them access to more complex text that can be modeled by the teacher during interactive read alouds or fellow peers modeling their thinking of text structure during turn and talks. Our teachers also co-plan with our special education teacher and use collaborative goal form to set goals with the end goal of using common language and instructional strategies that help transfer skills into the core instructional setting.

Finally, like schools across the state, our data in 2013 showed a decrease across the board in regards to performance on ISAT in math and reading. This was due to the implementation of new cut scores to align with the rigor associated with the CCSS. After seeing our results, our school and district worked on using the Understanding by Design process to create new units of study for ELA and math that are aligned to the CCSS. Our district also built in curriculum reflection meetings that allow our teachers to meet with teachers throughout the district to reflect after each unit of study, share resources that they have used to differentiate instruction, review data, and make adjustments to the unit. We understand this will be an ongoing process as we become more familiar with CCSS and get our first round of data from the PARCC assessment next fall.

2. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Teachers at Scott Altman collect a variety of assessment data to help drive and differentiate their instruction and monitor student progress throughout the year. Each grade level has developed their own grade level rubric that helps them triangulate their data to identify and set goals for their students. Assessments used on grade level rubrics in first through third grade include Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark reading level (BAS), STAR, Performance, AIMS web to measure fluency in reading and math, and on demand writing rubric scores. This rubric is completed in the fall, winter, and spring and a data and intervention wall is used to monitor individual and system growth for the year. Teachers also use other formative assessments like running records, comprehension retell checklists, and observations to monitor student progress.

In kindergarten teachers use a variety of observational checklists and inventories to monitor students' progress and to guide instruction. Individual monthly assessments are conducted to monitor letter identification, letter sounds, kindergarten sight words, number identification, and oral counting. On-going running records are used to assess students' comprehension, concepts of print, and phonemic awareness. BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) is used at the end of kindergarten to gage student progress for the year and to help prepare their first grade instruction. Developmental spelling tests are administered and

analyzed quarterly to assess phonemic awareness. Daily observational tools are used in math to track students' strengths and weaknesses. Individual task assessments are administered for the winter and spring terms.

For our benchmark assessment, all grade levels use Performance Series for reading and math. The data collected from this assessment not only identifies students' performance levels but also creates a student growth trend line. This information ensures that students are making accurate growth throughout the year and gives suggested learning goals for reading and math. In the past, this data has also helped our third grade teachers predict how a student would perform on our state assessment, The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).

Across all grade levels at Altman, teachers use the BAS to gather formative data on their students. This allows teachers to identify independent and instructional reading levels. It also helps determine guided reading groups. Teachers use the Continuum of Literacy Learning to select goals for thinking within, beyond, and about the text to support reading comprehension. This system assessment allows both teachers and parents to measure a student's growth over their four years at Altman.

Grade levels meet monthly to review their data with the principal, reading specialist, district coaches, and service team. Collaboratively, they will identify students who need tiered support through our RTI process and share instructional practices and resources that support student growth in regards to specific standards being taught in a particular Unit of Study.

Parents are updated throughout the year with progress reports and report cards. Parent/teacher conferences are formally held in the fall and spring. Teachers also send home daily parent-teacher communication logs and schedule conferences as needed. During conferences, we send home a letter asking for parents to share special topics that they are interested in discussing. This helps focus the conference, allows for open communication, and develops common goals for the student by building a collaborative relationship with their families. Teachers' share the grade level rubric and discuss what can be implemented both at home and at school so the student can reach his or her social emotional and academic goals.

Part VI School Support

1. School Climate/Culture

Scott Altman understands that it is important that students learn in a collaborative, nurturing, and safe learning environment. At Altman, students and staff are encouraged to take risks. Students and staff feel comfortable sharing their thinking, are able to agree or disagree with their peers, and use each others' strengths and talents to better our school and community. For some of our students, Altman is the only place where they feel safe and know that our staff has their best interests at heart. Staff will go the extra mile to make sure they are successful no matter how big or small the goal is to show they truly care for students.

With that in mind, Altman has always made it a priority to build a strong learning community. We start each day with our opening ceremony where the entire school comes together to start their day. Our opening ceremony serves a number of purposes by allowing our younger students to observe our older students being role models. It also allows the school to review certain "I CARE" rules, recognize "I CARE" awards and students who have accomplish academic goals in different subject areas, highlight student work displayed in the hallway, and discuss different opportunities that are available to students outside of their core curriculum. Our ceremony ends each day with a grade level picking a song that supports our students' social emotional well-being like, "Make New Friends".

Each year our school improvement team picks a theme that supports a positive school environment. This year our theme reflected the work of Richard Stiggins assessment, "FOR and OF Learning." The theme was entitled, "Helping all our students find their Winning Streak". At the beginning of the year, our staff set three goals on how they could help students in our school find their winning streak. Throughout the school year, staff revisited these goals and shared celebrations. One common goal that our staff had was making sure we were mindful of our language. Through our book study of Peter Johnston's *Opening Minds*, our staff realized that one word can make or break a student finding their winning streak.

At Altman, students have access to a social emotional curriculum that is seamlessly implemented in our core curriculum. Teachers use interactive read alouds, such as a school favorite book called, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* Teachers also use turn and talks and writing prompts that support topics like being a good friend and accepting each other for who you are. Our teachers' pedagogy and knowledge of resources allows them to be responsive if a social emotional need arises. Our Learning Center has a specific area for social emotional books categorized by topic so our teachers and students have easy access. Our counselor also provides monthly social emotional lessons that support classroom and school goals. For students who need extra support our counselor provides small group or one-on-one instruction. The majority of these students need little support by the time they leave Altman due to this tiered approach.

2. Engaging Families and Community

Over the past four years, Scott Altman has made it a priority to increase our family and community involvement. Altman has an active Parent Club that is independent from national organizations. Altman has an active Parent Club that is independent from national organizations with no dues charged to encourage more families to be involved. Our Parent Club helps support events that engage our families in their student's learning. They help our school host events like Family Nights where parents learn more about the school's curriculum, participate in activities that support our math, reading, and social emotional curriculum, and supply information to our families about opportunities in our community.

Each February we host our "For the Love of Reading" event. This encourages family members to come to school and eat lunch with their student and then read with them to show their child the importance of reading. Other events that our Parent Club helps support include spring open house, third grade day, I CARE day, spirit week, popcorn days, and the end of year cookout. Finally, they provide our school with resources and volunteers for classrooms to help support our student's learning needs.

Families have the opportunity to participate in Writers Workshop Celebrations. Family members are invited during the school day so students can share the writing process and published pieces for a particular unit of study. Families not only read their student's published pieces but also have the opportunity to provide feedback to their students. Other school and community members attend the celebrations to help show their support for writing.

Altman has also formed numerous relationships with our community that helps support our students. Police Officers and local high school students mentor Altman students. The police also offer a program called "Shop with a Cop" to help some of our students during Christmas. Churches and community members also purchase winter coats, clothing, and food for our students. Community organizations provide learning events for students. For example, students from Bradley University spent an entire day presenting the "STRETCH" program. Student in K-1 learned about being a good friend and 2-3 students learned about bullying. This program was unique allowing the students to work in small groups with hands-on activities. Family and community members serve as guest readers and speakers in our classrooms. They have included the mayor, fire fighters, and local doctors.

Another important partnership is with Cub Scout Troop 87. The scouts have done various school projects in the past two years. One project was cleaning PE equipment while learning from our school nurse about germs and proper hygiene. The scouts planted a butterfly garden so that the entire school could use it to learn about butterflies. They have even cut out the Box Tops that our school collects to raise money to purchase new books for classroom libraries.

Finally, Altman also hosts community service projects to show our appreciation for their support. They include our annual "Helping Hearts" program that help provide Christmas to ten Altman families, Red Cross and Special Olympics coin drives, a pet drive to help support a local animal shelter, and "Laps for Life" campaign to raise money for St. Jude.

3. Professional Development

Our district and school understand that the most important factor in student success is having expert teachers who are supported by a PLC with the goal of student engagement through differentiated instruction. In order for this to occur our district has invested in providing our staff with ongoing, job embedded professional development that is supported by both the Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy Model, building principal, and district coaches.

All of our professional development is aligned to our district strategic plan. Specifically, it helps align our curriculum to the new CCSS, helps teachers differentiate their instruction to meet academic and social emotional needs of their students, and is focused on student growth. Needs assessments, quality tools, and performance data are collected throughout all professional development opportunities and our district and school leadership teams evaluate effectiveness and determine next steps.

Partnerships for professional development have been key in offering ongoing job embedded PD. For our ELA curriculum we have followed the PCL model which has been supported by Dr. Dorn and the University of Arkansas and Dr. Poparad and National-Louis University. For the past four summers our district has hosted Comprehensive Literacy Model for School Improvement Institutes and, most recently, a Comprehensive Intervention Model Summer Institute. We are the only downstate district in Illinois that is certified to host these institutes. Each year, the institute builds on concepts that were taught the prior year and supported throughout the school year by building and district coaches and administrators. Data is collected through the ESAIL document to assess a school's degree of implementation of the ten features which helps determine professional development. To help with the implementation of the CCSS the most recent institutes have focused on using information text in guided reading groups, how literature discussion groups support close reading of complex text, and reading and writing interventions that support the needs of our most tangled students. Other topics included a balance literacy approach, using running records and intervention/assessment walls to monitor student growth, and implementing reading and writing into content areas such as social studies and science. The most important part to this institute is that school

leadership teams have time each day to review their learning and develop school wide goals and action plans for the upcoming school year.

We have built a similar relationship with Lucy Calkins and Teacher Colleges to help implement her Units of Study for Writing. This partnership expanded over a four year period of time. During summer PD teachers, coaches, and administrators experienced a Unit of Study from the student's perspective and then connected it to a teacher's perspective. During the school year, Teacher College supported us by modeling mini lessons, collecting data while conferring with students, and used data to determine teaching points for the next workshop. After these components were modeled, teachers, coaches, and administrators practiced them in the classroom while others observed and provided feedback to the individual. Though we no longer have training provided by Teachers College, we are still able to sustain a similar process as we implement the new Units of Study that are aligned to the CCSS.

More recently we have formed a partnership with Math Solutions to help implement the new CCSS for math. The PD plan was developed after Math Solutions did a needs assessment using an observational inventory tool similar to the ESAIL document. From there they worked with the district leadership team to develop an action plan. This plan included helping the district make sense of the standards, identifying priority and anchor standards, developing a scope and sequence, and implementing a balanced framework for math instruction. This instructional plan is similar to the workshop approach we use for reading and writing.

Similar to districts across the state of Illinois, our district's challenge has been a decrease of funds to help with the implementation of these new initiatives. Due to this decrease we have lost resources to help with the implementation of PD such as our building coach and subs for PD during the day. Fortunately Altman has a building of leaders who have creatively found ways to ensure time during the day to support ongoing job embedded professional development. The principal and district coach have taken on many of the roles that were once served by the building coach including working out of a "lab" classroom. The biggest celebration for our school and district is when our partnership comments that it is hard for them to identify the teachers and the administrators. This is because we collaboratively work together in teams during PD, have open dialogue and listen to each other, and aren't afraid to take risks so that we can learn together! To Altman and District 108 this is a true definition of a PLC and is embedded in our culture!

4. School Leadership

There is no secret to what makes Scott Altman a great school that provides the best education opportunities for all of our students. It is our school's practice of shared leadership and decision making. Our accomplishments are directly tied to our staff working collaboratively together to use our strengths to overcome challenges while keeping our students' best interest in mind. Through this practice of shared leadership and decision making our school has been able to build a common vision, mission, and core values which is supported by common language and understanding.

The principal's main belief for leadership is "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care". The principal truly cares about all of his students, parents, and staff (stakeholders) and values their opinions. He strives to keep open communication with all of his stakeholders by being visible, getting to know everyone on both a professional and personal level, and keeping an open door policy. All stakeholders feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas with him and he actively seeks input when making decisions. He trusts his teacher's professional judgment, empowers them to make decisions that best serve their students and the school, and encourages them to take risks and try new instructional best practices. The principal takes pride in being an instructional leader and is constantly striving to learn new instructional best practices. He also feels that it is important that he take his new learnings and apply them in a classroom setting. Therefore he teaches in all classrooms in the building and reflects on his experiences so he can apply them to the professional development provided to staff.

Scott Altman has an instructional leadership and school improvement team. Both of these teams review data each summer collected from the previous year, reflect upon professional development that has been

provided and develops school improvement goals and action plans for the upcoming school year. The team makes sure that the goals and plans are aligned to our vision and mission. These teams meet regularly throughout the year to analyze new data and plan and deliver professional development for staff that supports our school improvement goals. Both teams also make budget decisions that support our goals, give input to operational decisions and help create our annual building report.

There are many opportunities for Altman staff to take on leadership roles at the building and district level. The spirit committee provides emotional support, encouragement and celebrates staff successes. The technology committee researches and implements new technology and leads professional development for other staff members. The building's literacy leader leads book studies and new staff members are mentored by veteran staff. Several district committees have representation by Altman staff. Each year teachers make "spotlight" visits to observe the teaching of peers. These observations have a specific focus on best instructional practices and are followed up with discussion and reflection on implementation of these practices within their own classrooms. Finally, teachers from schools within the district and from around the state have come to Altman to observe best practices in reading and writing workshops.

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	60	40	48	37	36
Exceeds Standard	17	60	50	61	62
Number of students tested	52	45	42	46	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	58	47	55	55	58
Exceeds Standard	13	53	45	40	33
Number of students tested	24	19	22	20	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above	50	100	60	43	71
Exceeds Standard	0	0	20	43	29
Number of students tested	8	2	5	7	7
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	60	35	44	34	33
Exceeds Standard	18	65	54	64	63
Number of students tested	50	40	39	44	43
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Like many school across the country, Illinois is making the transition the past two years to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Test (PARCC). This assessment is aligned to the new CCSS. Composite ISAT scores for 2013 include only Reading and Math and are calculated using new cut scores introduced by ISBE in 2013 to align state tests with the more rigorous CCSS. The higher cut scores resulted in a decline in the number of students meeting or exceeding standards across the state. The percentage of students at Altman who met and exceeded dropped to 77% for math. This score was still higher than the average state score of 59%. The past two year we have used ISAT data and other school wide data to help us align our curriculum to meet the rigorous expectations by using the Understanding By Design (UBD) process to unpack the standards.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	38	58	60	43	47
Exceeds Standard	38	36	26	54	47
Number of students tested	52	45	42	46	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	50	68	55	45	33
Exceeds Standard	21	21	23	50	42
Number of students tested	24	19	22	20	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above	25	50	60	86	71
Exceeds Standard	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	8	2	5	7	7
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	38	53	59	41	47
Exceeds Standard	40	40	28	57	47
Number of students tested	50	40	39	44	43
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Like many school across the country, Illinois is making the transition the past two years to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Test (PARCC). This assessment is aligned to the new CCSS. Composite ISAT scores for 2013 include only Reading and Math and are calculated using new cut scores introduced by ISBE in 2013 to align state tests with the more rigorous CCSS. The higher cut scores resulted in a decline in the number of students meeting or exceeding standards across the state. The percentage of students at Altman who met and exceeded dropped to 77% for reading. This score was still higher than the average state score of 59%. The past two year we have used ISAT data and other school wide data to help us align our curriculum to meet the rigorous expectations by using the Understanding By Design (UBD) process to unpack the standards.