



Douglas MacArthur Year-Round School

Cleveland Municipal School District
Cleveland, Ohio

Principal: Mrs. Julie Bergstue-Hall
<http://www.cmsdnet.net/>

Cleveland’s Douglas MacArthur Elementary School (grades kindergarten through five) was a Title I school that operated a year-round schedule from 1997-1998 to 2004-2005. The school year started in July and ended the following year in June for a total of 200 days of instruction (20 extra days of instruction). In 2005 Cleveland Municipal School District closed the school due to its small size and the conversion of elementary schools to grades kindergarten through eighth.

| 2004-2005 Douglas MacArthur School Profile | |
|---|------------------------|
| 2004-2005 Building Rating | Continuous Improvement |
| Student enrollment | 154 |
| Grade Levels | Kindergarten – five |
| Economically Disadvantaged Students | 100% |
| African American Students | 52.2% |
| White Students | 29.1% |
| Hispanic Students | 8.4% |
| Multi-racial Students | 7.0% |
| Students with disabilities | 25.3% |
| Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2004-2005 School Year Report Card for Douglas MacArthur Elementary School | |

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) recognized the Douglas MacArthur School as a *School of Promise (SOP)* for the last four years (2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005) for performance in reading and/or mathematics. To meet the *SOP* criteria, the school had to enroll at least 40 percent or more of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and meet or exceed the State standard of 75 percent passage on the Ohio Achievement Tests or Ohio Proficiency Tests in reading and/or mathematics (overall and for each racial/ethnic subgroup).

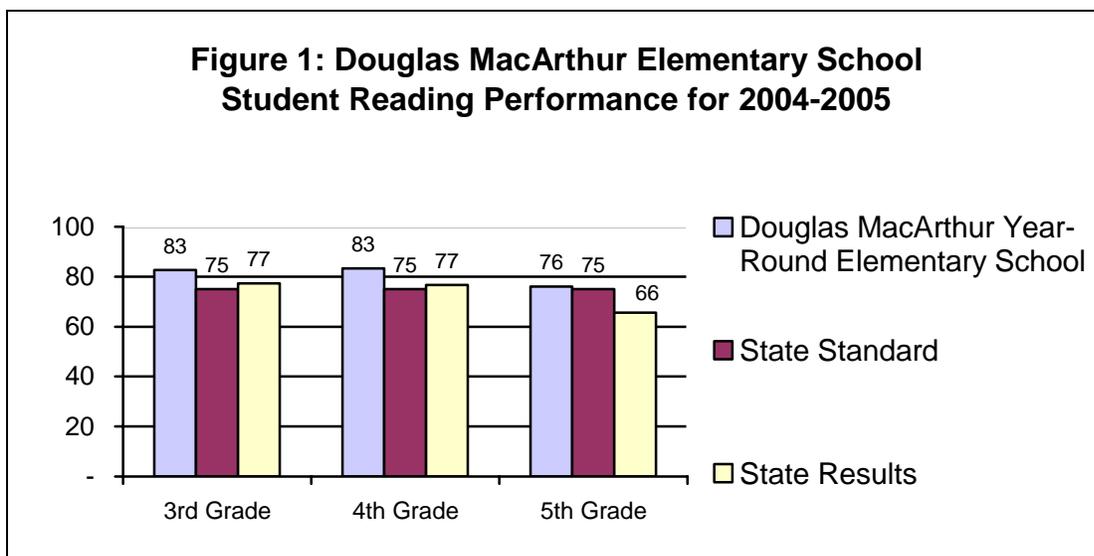
ODE recognized Douglas MacArthur school for mathematics performance in 2001-2002, reading and mathematics performance in 2002-2003, mathematics in 2003-2004, and reading in

2004-2005. In 2004-2005, over 75 percent or more of MacArthur’s students scored proficient or above at each grade level (three, four, and five) on the Ohio Achievement Tests (OATs) in reading.

In 2003-2004 the MacArthur School was one of fourteen elementary schools that received special recognition from ODE for improving the performance of students with disabilities on state assessments. (View that case study on www.ohioschoolleaders.org).

Comparison of Douglas MacArthur Elementary School’s Aggregated Student Performance to State Standards and Results for 2004-2005

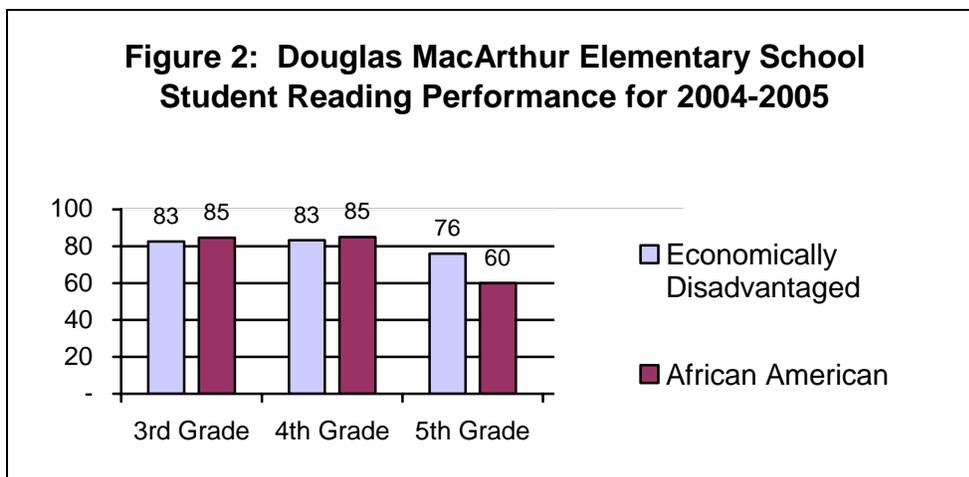
Figure 1 visually displays the reading performance of Douglas MacArthur students in grades three through five in comparison to the State standard of 75 percent and State results on the OAT. Eighty-three percent of MacArthur’s third-grade students scored proficient or above on the OAT in reading compared to 77 percent statewide. On the fourth-grade OAT in reading, 83 percent of MacArthur’s students scored proficient or above compared to 77 percent statewide. Eighty-one percent of MacArthur’s fifth-grade students scored proficient or above on the OAT in reading compared to 66 percent statewide average.



Sources: Ohio Department of Education, 2004-2005 School Year Report Card for Douglas MacArthur Elementary School; Ohio Department of Education, 2004-2005 Annual Report on Educational Progress in Ohio

MacArthur's Disaggregated Student Performance by Student Groups in 2004-2005

The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires states to report student performance on state assessments in reading and mathematics by student groups. Figure 2 displays the reading performance of MacArthur's economically disadvantaged students and African-American students in grades three through five on the OAT in reading in 2004-2005. The scores of other racial/ethnic groups and those for students with disabilities were not reported as there were fewer than 10 students in a student group at each grade level. Eighty-three percent of MacArthur's third-graders identified as economically disadvantaged and 85 percent of African American students scored proficient or above on the OAT in reading. On the fourth-grade OAT in reading, 83 percent of MacArthur's students identified as economically disadvantaged and 85 percent of African American students scored proficient or above. Seventy-six percent of MacArthur's fifth-graders identified as economically disadvantaged and 60 percent of African American students scored proficient or above on the OAT in reading.



Sources: Ohio Department of Education, 2004-2005 School Year Report Card for Douglas MacArthur Elementary School

Closing of MacArthur School and Opening of Memorial School in 2005

Cleveland Municipal School District closed MacArthur school because of its small size and the decision to change the configuration of grades in elementary schools from kindergarten through fifth grade to kindergarten through eighth grade. The district relocated MacArthur's principal and teachers, and transferred some of the MacArthur students during the summer of 2005 to a new school, Memorial. Cleveland Memorial School is a high-poverty, Title I school (grades preschool through eight) in its first year of operation. Eight percent of the students enrolled at Memorial were former students of Douglas MacArthur. Memorial has 35 certified teachers, many of whom transferred to Memorial from MacArthur. In 2005-2006, Memorial had a student enrollment of 550 students who transferred from three elementary and three middle schools to Memorial. Memorial is primarily a neighborhood school.

| Memorial School Profile for 2005-2006 | |
|--|---------------|
| Student enrollment | 550 |
| Grade Levels | Preschool-8th |
| Economically Disadvantaged Students | 100% |
| African American Students | 96.9% |
| White Students | 2.5% |
| Hispanic Students | 0.2% |
| Multi-racial Students | 0.2% |
| Students with disabilities | 13.1% |
| <i>Source: Cleveland Municipal School District</i> | |

Memorial's Modified School Schedule

For 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years, Memorial's schedule includes 10 extra days for instruction in comparison to the district calendar. Memorial's school year starts in August and ends in June. The daily school schedule operates from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and includes eight periods, each lasting 50 minutes.

Methodology

The purpose of the *Schools of Promise* Multiple Case Study is to highlight and document effective research-based strategies used by selected urban schools according to the research-based *SOP Framework of Practice* (a review of research and literature organized around five themes) and the *SOP Implementation Inventory*. The study focused on the schools piloting the *SOP Implementation Inventory*, which is a tool designed to help a school examine and document its practices using the *SOP Framework of Practice*.

The Ohio Department of Education selected six urban schools for the study based on student performance on state assessments in either, or both, reading or mathematics.

Once the principal of Memorial School agreed to participate in the study, a researcher from RMC Research Corporation visited Memorial and conducted a one-day training of the principal and the school team designated by the principal in the use of the *SOP Framework of Practice* and the *SOP Implementation Inventory*. The school principal and a team s/he appointed completed the *SOP Implementation Inventory* and submitted the completed Inventory with supporting documentation to RMC Research. Additional records were obtained from the school, the Ohio Department of Education's Web site, the district's Web site, and the school's Web site. The researchers reviewed and analyzed the completed inventory and documentation according to each theme and sub-theme of the *SOP Framework of Practice*. They identified additional questions to be asked during validation site visits. Two researchers conducted two day validation site visits in February 2006 that included: nine classroom observations and one-hour individual interviews with the principal, parent liaison, and six teachers. The researchers collected data on the classroom observations using a standard protocol. The interview questions were open-ended and specific to the school based on the *SOP Implementation Inventory*. The researchers reviewed and qualitatively analyzed all collected data using the five themes and sub-themes of *SOP Framework of Practice*.

Organization of Case Study

The case study report is organized according to the five *Schools of Promise* themes which include delivery of rigorous instruction aligned to the state's academic content standards, leadership that leads to continuous improvement, instruction designed to ensure every student succeeds, engagement of parents and the community in supporting student success, and the creation of cultures where each individual feels valued.

Rigorous Instruction Aligned to State Standards

The first of five *SOP* themes is: Ohio *Schools of Promise* deliver rigorous instruction aligned to the state's academic content standards. According to the interviewed principal, Mrs. Bergstue-Hall, who was also principal of MacArthur, the mission and vision of Memorial School is similar to Douglas MacArthur's. The mission of Memorial School is to provide quality standards-based instruction with a focus on literacy. Memorial has implemented many of the curriculum and instructional approaches that were evidenced at MacArthur.

For the English Language Arts curriculum, the school uses the district's curriculum guides and quarterly pacing charts that are aligned to the state's standards. The school expects students to master the state standards, benchmarks, and indicators in reading and writing at each specific grade level. One-hundred minutes of instruction in reading and writing are scheduled each day. This compares to a recommendation from *Reading First* for a minimum of 90 minutes of English Language Arts instruction.

The *Cleveland Literacy System* (CLS) is the school's blueprint for literacy instruction. The System is a standards-based, cohesive, coordinated delivery system for literacy. The system allows teachers to do intra-grade level planning as well as across grade levels. Memorial has integrated the *Four Block Literacy Framework* into the CLS. The *Four Block Literacy Framework* includes: (1) guided reading in fluency and comprehension; (2) self-

selected reading for comprehension; (3) working with words for phonics and phonemic awareness; and (4) vocabulary and writing. Instructional activities include whole group, small group, cooperative group, one-on-one tutors, and independent learning. The school purchased the *Leapfrog Schoolhouse* program through an *OhioReads* grant. For students in grades kindergarten through third, the *Leapfrog Schoolhouse* multi-sensory curriculum provides teachers a structured approach to teaching early literacy skills through technology. The *Leapfrog Schoolhouse* program provides kits and computers, called LeapPads, for students, as well as libraries of materials that remain at the school.

Memorial is involved in a comprehensive district assessment system. The district's benchmark assessments in reading and mathematics are given three times a year (September, December, and May) in grades three through five. The assessments mirror *the Ohio Achievement Tests* and provide reliable and valid student performance data during the year. In addition, the district has generated *SchoolNet* short-cycle benchmark assessments in reading and mathematics for grades three through six on an ongoing basis. The short-cycle assessments measure children's progress on a particular indicator with eight to 10 questions. A teacher serves as the *SchoolNet* Liaison and provides whole class and small group instruction in the computer lab to reinforce academic skills. Teachers receive on-line class reports on the results of the benchmark assessments.

In addition to the above, students in grades three through eight are assessed with the *Scorebooster Program*, an on-line computerized test preparation program that is aligned with the state's Ohio Achievement Tests in grades three through eight. It is administered at the beginning of the school year as a diagnostic measure. The class results are analyzed for teachers so they have a printout of students' strengths and weaknesses. Remediation worksheets are supplied for each indicator. The school compiles a book of worksheets tailored specifically to each child's needs for mastery. The school purchased the *Scorebooster Program*

using Title I funds. The students take a *Scorebooster* post-test at the end of the school year to identify students' progress in comparison to the pre-test.

Yearly, the school analyzes state assessment results according to the student groups identified under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, grade levels, performance level, and by items. Staff use this information to identify which reading and mathematics benchmarks and indicators have not been mastered by students. Teachers and administrators review all the assessment results in reading and mathematics on a monthly basis. They conduct an item analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of students and determine whether students need to be regrouped for instruction within grade levels. Based on the assessment results, the school compiles a series of tasks for each student to master. Remediation worksheets are available for teachers to use to assist students mastering grade level indicators.

The next section describes how Memorial approaches school performance goals and the types of activities the school has implemented to ensure every student meets those goals.

Providing Leadership that Leads to Continuous Improvement

The second *SOP* theme is: *Schools of Promise* have leadership that leads to the continuous improvement of the school. Memorial has a principal and assistant principal. Memorial's Principal, Mrs. Julie Bergstue-Hall described the 2005-2006 school year as a transition year for Memorial School as new staff and students become acclimated to a new school building, culture, and neighborhood.

The principal believes "you lead by example." She promotes a shared leadership approach in which decisions are made by different organizational teams. Among the school's committees and teams are: Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) Core Team, Literacy Team, and Grade Level Teams.

The AAP Core Team includes the principal, assistant principal, the AAP facilitator, grade level teachers, a special education teacher, family liaison, parents, and community

representatives. The AAP Core Team meets at least monthly. They develop and monitor the Academic Achievement Plan on a quarterly basis, including the review of the school's progress toward meeting school goals and targets identified by the district in the Academic Achievement Plan.

Mrs. Bergstue-Hall, former principal of MacArthur, uses the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Learning's *Principles of Learning* as a framework for improvement. Mrs. Bergstue-Hall and the staff from Douglas MacArthur were previously trained in the research-based *Principles of Learning*. The school uses the University of Pittsburgh's *Learning Walks* self-assessment protocol to identify the staff needs for improvement and professional development.

Memorial's Literacy Team includes the grade level team leaders (teachers who serve as liaisons between administration and teaching staff), the English Language Arts specialist, and the librarian. The purpose of the School Literacy Team is to promote literacy and provide professional development.

The interviewed Memorial staff considers professional development critical for improvement. The district provides eight professional development days per year. In addition, the school provides 12 hours of voluntary paid professional development as well. The district and the school's AAP teams identify professional development topics for school staff. For example, in the 2004-2005 school year, professional development for MacArthur staff addressed curriculum, instructional, and assessment topics, such as the *Cleveland Literary System*, *Four Blocks Literacy Framework*, *Leapfrog Schoolhouse*, testing and data analysis (e.g. *Scorebooster Program* and *SchoolNet*), and discipline. For Memorial's 2005-2006 school year, professional development addressed such topics as student discipline, technology, and student work.

Providing Instruction to Ensure Every Student's Success

Theme three of *SOP* is: *Schools of Promise* design instruction to ensure every student's success. Memorial staff, including the principal and teachers, set instructional targets for each grade level based on those identified by the state and district. For example, a goal for 2005-2006 is that Memorial will increase the percentages of students passing state-mandated reading tests at each grade level.

Grade level teams are organized by the following grades: pre-kindergarten to first; second through third; fourth through fifth; and sixth through eighth. They meet on a weekly basis. Sometimes, the teams review the monthly student progress reports; in other meetings they may review student work.

Memorial teachers meet weekly in team meetings with the principal and assistant principal to review results of informal and formal assessments, student work, and student progress. Monthly, teachers complete progress reports on individual students in reading and mathematics for the principal, and the principal and homeroom teachers review the progress reports of students in reading and mathematics.

Each teacher has five planning periods a week (50 minutes per period) and two assigned team planning periods. Teams use the planning periods to coordinate instruction, review student assessment data, and determine interventions for students.

Quarterly, the principal and teachers review students identified at-risk of failure or demonstrating low performance and plan interventions. If a student receives a failing grade in a content area, the school staff meets with the child's parent(s).

Memorial has created a variety of interventions for students who need assistance. Depending on the needs of students, the teacher teams may form new flexible groups of students for classroom instruction. Students may be assigned to work in small groups with the Reading Intervention Specialist or with volunteer tutors. The Reading Specialist works with each classroom once a week. Tutoring is available during school hours and after school. An

OhioReads grant funds the position of a Tutor Coordinator. The Coordinator organizes the schedule of volunteer tutors. The Reading Specialist trains the volunteer tutors. Some of the tutors are recruited from the Case Western Reserve School of Nursing and the Cleveland Scholarship Program.

If a student does not make progress in the general classroom with interventions, the student is referred to the Intervention Based Assessment (IBA) Team for more intensive interventions. The IBA Team includes the principal, grade level and special education teachers, parents, psychologist, and sometimes the school nurse. During IBA Team meetings, staff discusses and determines additional interventions to be implemented. After the interventions have been implemented, the IBA Team reconvenes to determine if the interventions have made a difference in student progress. Should a student not make sufficient progress, the student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services.

Approximately 13 percent of Memorial's population was composed of students with disabilities in 2005-2006. The school has a preschool special education class, three classes of students with cross-categorical disabilities, one class for students with multiple disabilities, and one class for students with autism. In addition, there are three inclusion teachers, each serving two grade levels of students with disabilities in general education classes. For example, one inclusion teacher is the lead for mathematics in fourth and fifth grades while a second teacher serves students in third and fourth grade. Inclusion teachers meet once a week with general education teachers in team meetings to coordinate instruction and exchange ideas.

The next section describes how Memorial is engaging parents and community organizations in supporting the school's programs.

Engaging Parents and the Community to Support Student Performance

The fourth *SOP* theme is: *Schools of Promise* engage parents and the community to support student success. Memorial staff is engaging in a variety of activities to promote parent

and community involvement with the new school. Memorial's vision is "Reaching school goals with school, family and community partnerships." To reach that vision, Memorial's family liaison, a non-teaching staff member, prepares the Title I School/Parent/Student Compacts each year, arranges for parent meetings, and facilitates parent workshops and other family events.

Memorial Elementary has personalized the Title Compact with its mission and values. There are three different versions of the compact: one each for parents, teachers, and students. For example, the student compact includes such items as a student must agree that he/she will attend school and be on time, participate in class, and abide by all school rules and expectations. The parent compact includes such items as the parent will establish a time and place for homework and verify student homework is completed. The school mandates parent and student signatures on the compacts. Parents keep copies of the signed compact and the other copy is returned and filed at the school. The school uses the compacts as a contract with the students and parents. If there are any issues, the school can show the signed compact to a student or to a parent. Although the compact is non-binding, it creates and identifies expectations for the roles of parents, teachers, and children.

The school maintains weekly contact with parents. For example, each week, parents receive a Friday folder with student work, as well as a report on the student's progress, participation, and behavior for the week. In addition, there are monthly school newsletters, classroom newsletters, and phone calls.

Memorial has held Proficiency Workshops to teach parents how to help their children at home. Parents are given ready-made materials and problems to use in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and mathematics. Other parent workshops have addressed: children's literature, community resources, girl scouts and boy scouts, and homework tips.

The School Parent Organization (SPO) meets monthly. Parent volunteers typically come from the SPO. The SPO serves as a parent governing group which also follows established district guidelines for fundraising.

During the school year, the school sponsors events such as an Open House, a Science Fair, Awards Assemblies, Career Day, Grandparents Day, and Promotion Ceremonies. During Career Day, community guests explain their careers to students.

Since the opening of the new Memorial Elementary School, the principal has worked to create new community partnerships. The location is so far from the former site of Douglas MacArthur that former community organizations do not reflect the current Memorial community. There is now a liaison for the Cleveland Botanical Gardens to develop a school garden. Members of the local Junior Achievement are providing lessons on science and social studies or citizenship. The school has a partnership with John Carroll University in which teachers in kindergarten through third grades have received over 100 books for their classroom libraries. Other new community partners include the Euclid-St. Clair Development Corporation and Arts Collinwood which were involved in the planning of Memorial School. Both of these community partners have representatives on the Memorial Elementary Academic Achievement Plan Core Team. In addition, two people from these organizations participate on the staff interview teams. The principal's ultimate goal is for the new school community to be broadly represented in the daily life of the school.

Besides creating parent and community partnerships, Memorial staff is focused on creating a positive school culture for the new school. The next section describes some of their strategies.

Creating a Culture Where Individuals are Valued

The fifth *SOP* theme is: the school creates a culture where each individual feels valued. Given the recent opening of the school, Memorial staff is focused on creating a common school culture for staff, students, parents, and the community. One challenge is to blend the cultures from six previous schools (staff and students from three elementary and three middle schools) into the new Memorial School. Another challenge is to blend staff and students from elementary

and middle school into a new kindergarten through grade eight configuration. The principal is focused on developing staff cohesiveness and creating a climate and culture of success. She wants to learn the strengths and abilities of staff and parents and build community support. A third challenge is for staff and students to adjust to a larger school building that many are not used to.

This year, Memorial staff is working on the development of policies and procedures that everyone will understand. For example, discipline expectations and procedures are very different for middle school students than for early primary children as are those for dismissal and transportation. Memorial staff wants students to clearly understand the school's academic and behavioral expectations. Interviewed staff also talked about how they needed to work on students taking pride in and feeling a part of the new school. The staff would also like to establish a student dress code.

One challenge is creating a school culture in which students, from preschool ages to 14 years old, respect each other and socially interact with each other in appropriate ways. Memorial staff is using a variety of strategies to teach students appropriate behavior and promote positive student relationships. When students demonstrate kindness to others, teachers recognize students' behavior with Kindness Coupons. Students accumulate the Kindness Coupons monthly and receive recognition and rewards. In its first year, Memorial has developed a variety of organizations for students, including: drill teams, cheerleading squad, basketball team, chess team, and a student peer mediation program. Recently, Memorial created a peer tutoring program within and across grade levels so that older students may assist younger students.

To recognize students who meet Memorial's academic and behavioral expectations, there are Monthly Citizenship Assemblies where good citizens in each class and students with perfect attendance are identified. Each month, the school draws the names of 30 students who receive prizes (e.g., school supplies). In addition, the school holds quarterly award assemblies

to recognize student achievement in academics, citizenship, and attendance. Students receive certificates for Honor Roll, Merit Roll, Good Citizenship, and Perfect Attendance. Hallway showcases display pictures of good citizens and list names of students with perfect monthly attendance.

Conclusions

From 2001-2002 to 2004-2005, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) recognized Cleveland's Douglas MacArthur Year-Round School as a high poverty, high performing *School of Promise* in elementary reading and/or mathematics each school year. The school provided 20 additional instructional days each year. In 2003-2004, the school was recognized by ODE for the high performance of students with disabilities on state assessments.

At the end of the 2004-2005 school year, Cleveland closed MacArthur School and opened a new school building, Memorial School with grades prekindergarten through eight, in a new location. MacArthur's principal and about 45 percent of the MacArthur staff transferred to Memorial. Memorial drew other staff and students from three elementary and three middle schools.

Memorial School is implementing many of the research-based practices that proved effective at MacArthur. For example, the principal and staff continue to use the *Principles of Learning* from the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning as a framework for improvement efforts. Memorial is providing standards-based instruction by integrating the *Cleveland Literacy System* with the *Four Block* Literacy Framework. One hundred minutes of instruction in English Language Arts is provided daily. The district and school are implementing an extensive student assessment system to monitor student performance. The system includes informal (benchmark, short-cycle, and on-line computerized assessments that are scheduled throughout the year) and formal assessments (standardized district and state assessments). Teachers and administrators meet weekly and monthly to review student work and progress and

determine appropriate interventions. Memorial has created a variety of interventions for students who need additional assistance. To facilitate the involvement of parents and the community, the school employs a family liaison who has tailored the School/Parent/Student compacts to Memorial's mission and values, arranges parent meetings, and facilitates parent workshops and events. Memorial is creating new partnerships with community organizations, some of which were involved in planning the school and now have representation on staff interview teams and the Academic Achievement Plan Core Team.

In conclusion, in its first year of operation, the Memorial School Principal and staff are in the process of establishing the school's culture, integrating staff and students from six different schools into one school, and developing policies and procedures. State assessments administered in the 2005-2006 school year will become the baseline data for Memorial School. While, it is too early at this time to determine the impact of the above efforts on student performance this year, staff is hopeful that within two to three years they will have a high performing school culture similar to Douglas MacArthur's. By the end of the 2005-2006, the staff of Memorial hope to establish good working relationships with each other, establish good teaching learning relationships with students, reach consensus on behavioral expectations and other policies and procedures, and extend the school year to 20 additional days.