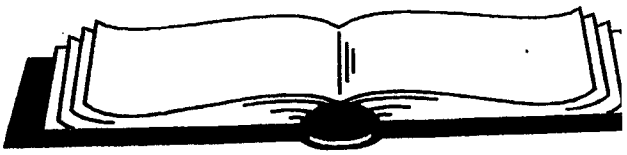
(office use only)

NEW JERSEY

2000-2001
Guidelines and
Application



BEST PRACTICES

Deadline for Application to County Office: NOVEMBER 27, 2000

The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category Early Childhood Education Program (Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name Doorway to Unlimited Thinking and Learning
Number of Schools with Practice 1 (If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)

County	Atlantic
District (Proper Name)	School District
District Address	Egg Harbor Township School District
	street/p. o. box: 202 Naples Ave. POBox 31
	city: West Atlantic City, NJ zip code: 08232
District Telephone	609-646-7911 Fax 609-383-8749 Email
Chief School Administrator	Dr. Leonard Kelpsh, Superintendent
Nominated School #1 (Proper Name)	
School Address	C.J. Davenport School (grades K-3)
	street/p. o. box: 2501 Spruce Ave.
	city: Egg Harbor Township NJ zip code: 08234
School Telephone	609-645-3550 Fax 609-645-1116 Email
School Principal	Mr. Louis Della Barca
Program Developer(s)	Dr. Beth Ann Richey
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY

Approved: (Yes) No **County Superintendent's Signature** [signature]

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Code # _____
(for office use only)

NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION

Application Requirements: Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

1. **RESPONSES to the information and the statements below must be ANONYMOUS and ACCURATE.** No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements
2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4.** Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
3. Application must be **keyboarded on 8 ½" x 11" white paper, portrait** format. **Twelve-point or larger computer font** or **fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font** must be used. (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)
4. **KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be **no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response.** Format your response for accuracy and clarity.
5. **The information on page 4 and the responses** to statements must be copied **on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable)** must be copied **on one side of the page.** Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
6. **The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.**
7. **The original and seven copies of the application** must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by **November 27, 2000,** with the **Itemized List of District Applications** form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:

Type of School	Grade Levels	
X Elementary School	K-3rd grade	Practice Name Doorway to Unlimited Thinking and Learning
___ Middle School	___	Number of Schools with Practice 1
___ Junior High School	___	Number of Districts with Practice —
___ High School	___	Location __ Urban/City __ Suburban With Urban Charcteristics
___ Other: ___	___	X Suburban __ Small City/Town __ Rural

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.

___ Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	___ Educational Technology	___ Safe Learning Environment
___ Assessment/Evaluation	___ Gifted and Talented Programs	___ School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness
___ Bilingual Education and Diversity	___ Health and Physical Education	___ Science
___ Citizenship/Character Education	___ Language Arts Literacy	___ Social Studies
X Early Childhood Education Programs	___ Mathematics	___ Special Education
___ Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	___ Professional Development	___ World Languages
	___ Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,** addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at http://www.state.nj.us/education.

DOORWAY TO UNLIMITED THINKING AND LEARNING

1. **Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.**

This Multi-Age, primary school levels, program is steeped in the philosophy of learning based on a developmentally appropriate curriculum with continuous progress for each student. In this multi-age setting, one will find that the traditional grade-level age designations, with rigid grade leveled ability groups, have been dropped and that a multi-age span of two or three years exists among the students. Instead of a grade-based curriculum with grade-leveled text programs, the multi-age curriculum and program meets the total needs and levels of the students. The structure of the curriculum/instruction centers on integrated thematic instructional units across all skill and content curriculum areas. Brain-based learning, learning centers, multiple intelligences, cooperative learning, lifelong skills and guidelines and flex grouping techniques are the center of our multi-age program. Flex grouping allows students to begin on their own level of development and have continuous progress, not some preconceived age - grade-level developed material where the students might be on, below or above that particular "preplanned" program. Learning is continuous and the students move from the easier, to more challenging and complex subject matter This permits the students to excel, at their beginning level and promotes a continuous environment for high student achievement, beginning on his/her level and progressing continuous upward progress.

In touring the Multi-Age classrooms, one will find two Multi-Age teams located in four classrooms, two for each team with two teachers and one teacher assistant for each team. During the day, the children will be involved with both teachers and the teacher assistant.
Walking into any of the Multi-Age classroom, one might see a teacher working with a small group of students who have a common identified need in a learning segment for the moment. Later, some of those children might join a second teacher and with children not with them before. The grouping identifies the needs of those students brought together. In another part of the room, one might find students working independently at centers where they are being challenged to use higher thinking skills and still another group working cooperatively on various projects and still another student assisting a classmate in need.

The objectives for this program include.

A. At the end of the first year of the Multi-Age program, 90% of the students in Multi-Age classes will score as well as or better than the traditional classes score on the math and reading on the District's standardized test, the TerraNova.

B. At the end of the first year of the Multi-Age program, 90% of the students in Multi-Age classes will show a significant gain in mastering phonics skills.

C. At the end of the first year of the Multi-Age program, 90% of the students in Multi-Age classes will score as well as or better than the traditional classes scored on the Harcourt Brace End-Of-Year Placement test in reading.

D. The results from the parents completing the Psycho-Social Evaluation, at the end of the year, will indicate a positive growth in social, emotional and discipline expectations.

2. **List the specific** *Core Curriculym Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,* **addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard (s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.**

"A school should not be a preparation for life. It should be life." Elbert Hubbard

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: some examples

3.1 All students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences.

3.3 All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

3.4 All students will read a variety of materials and texts with comprehension and critical analysis.

The students in the multi-age classes use a variety of reading materials just as they could have at home. Emphasis on comprehension and critical analysis are evident in projects such as researching an invention and determine how to "upgrade" it. Using computer resources, the students prepare a written account of their upgraded invention and present the upgrade in a commercial given to classmates and/or at their annual science expo.

MATHEMATICS: some examples

4.3 All students will connect to other learning by understanding the interrelationships of mathematical ideas and the roles that mathematics and mathematical modeling play in other disciplines and in life.

4.5 All students will regularly and routinely use calculators, computers, manipulatives, and other mathematical tools to enhance mathematical thinking, understanding, and power.

The learning environment in the multi-age classroom offers interdisciplinary problem-centered challenges for the students to inquire, discover and formulate responses and applications to other disciplines through the use of a variety of materials and manipulatives. For example students utilize materials and manipulatives to inquire and discover basic math skills and apply them in their project of setting up a store with objects to sell with prices and offer 10 to 20% discount to be taken off at the register when purchased. The objects sold were small objects made by using various measurement skills learned.

SCIENCE: an example

5.2 All students will develop problem-solving, decision-making and inquiry skills, reflected by formulating usable questions and hypotheses, planning experiments, conducting systematic observations, interpreting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and communicating results.

The multi-age classes have a science laboratory-like setting in one of the four classrooms, which all students utilize. Dressed in actual lab coats, the students engage in hands-on problem-solving activities involving science related topics of the human body, earth, life and physical sciences as outlined in the Core Curriculum Content Standards. They experience hypothesizing, investigating and experimenting and formulate responses and discussions to fellow classmates.

SOCIAL STUDIES: an example

6.9 All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying the environment and society.

Students in the multi-age classes study their own environment as well as that environment and geography and society through a variety of materials and communicating with a pen pal acquired in a different geographical location than their own. The information gained is shared with classmates and group projects displayed for everyone to see.

WORLD LANGUAGES: an example

7.2 All students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationship between language and culture for at least one world language in addition to English.

Students in the multi-age classes are introduced to one another's cultures and differences in languages as well as an in-depth study of one world language in addition to English.

CROSS-CONTENT WORKPLACE READINESS STANDARDS: an example

Standard #2 All students will use information, technology, and other tools.

Students in the multi-age program use computers and dream writers effectively in recording and presenting information acquired.

Standard #3 All students will use critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.

Teachers of the multi-age classes use strategies that challenge students to grow in using upper level thinking skills, from naming to upper levels of analyses and syntheses.

Standard #4 All students will demonstrate self-management skills.
Students in the multi-age classes are given may opportunities to begin accepting the responsibility for their own learning such as developing, assigning responsibilities to classmates and oneself, completing and presenting a small group project that utilizes skills and content learned with application to other disciplines.

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these standards.

"Continuous progress mandates that students should neither spend time on what they have already adequately achieved, nor proceed to more difficult tasks if they have not yet learned materials or acquired skills essential to that new level of knowledge." Madeline Hunter

The students in the multi-age classes have various educational needs. Many show advanced learning in one subject area, such as math skills but delayed learning in the area of reading or vice versa. In this setting, each student is challenged to reach his/her highest level of academic success by beginning on their own level and progress at their own pace going as far and as fast as they can successfully promoting their own high level of achievement. Some students are achieving at higher levels than they would be permitted in their traditional graded classrooms while other students need further review on levels lower than in their traditional classrooms. Some of these students might need an additional year to gain knowledge needed, whereas in their traditional classroom, it would mean failing grades and possible retention. The multi-age program blurs the grade level and preplanned graded programs and permits the students to progress according to their own level rather than a predetermined curriculum assigned to a grade.

"Ongoing assessment and evaluation of each child's learning replaces practices such as tracking, retention, and promotion." Jim Grant and Bob Johnson

Objective A assessment used to measure objective A (see question #1, objective A for objective wording)
Assessment: **TERRANOVA Standardized assessment assessed both reading and math areas.**
Objective Results: At least 90% of the multi-age students scored as well as students in the traditional 1st and 2nd grades in the areas of math and reading on the Terra Nova standardized assessment. Scores and comparison are available. All students in the district are assessed with this standardized test each spring.

Objective B assessment used to measure objective B (see question #1, objective B for objective wording)
Assessment: BOTEL PHONICS MASTERY TEST
Objective Results: See Chart : Botel Phonics Mastery Test More than 90% of the multi-age students showed significant growth from the 50th and below percentile to the 90th or higher percentile.

This assessment was administered in the beginning and end of the school year. The pre assessment results were used for specific skill needs for flex group instruction, while the post assessment results were used to measure growth (pre and post) for each student. In reviewing the chart, one can see that all students show significant growth in mastering phonics skills from the beginning to the end of the school year.

CHART #1 level-1 students pre and post assessment
BOTEL PHONICS MASTERY TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	PRE TEST TOTAL (POSSIBLE 100%)	POST TEST TOTAL POSSIBLE 100%
#1	42	94
#2	25	97
#3	26	68
#4	26	92
#5	52	96
#6	55	99
#7	27	97
#8	47	82
#9	45	86
#10	45	99
#11	15	96
#12	26	99
#13	15	83
#14	29	94
#15	24	93
#16	27	73
#17	29	96
#18	46	96
#19	26	99
#20	51	94
#21	54	99
TOTALS	732	1932
TOTALS AVERAGED	PRE 34.8 OR 39%	POST 92%

All level-1 students show a significant growth in mastering phonics skills from the beginning to the end of this school year.

CHART #2 level-2 students pre and post assessment
BOTEL PHONICS MASTERY TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	PRE TEST TOTAL POSSIBLE 100%	POST TEST TOTAL POSSIBLE 100%
#1	85	99
#2	62	96
#3	70	87
#4	73	94
#5	61	97
#6	51	92
#7	74	96
#8	83	97
#9	72	100
#10	66	94
#11	70	100
#12	75	99
#13	68	99
#14	70	99
#15	89	94
#16	52	96
#17	34	96
#18	50	96
#19	49	94
#20	52	94
#21	58	100
#22	56	99
#23	51	96
#24	59	97
#25	40	93
#26	54	94
#27	50	99
#28	52	99
#29	47	90
#30	54	97
#31	52	97
TOTALS	1879	2980
TOTALS AVERAGED	PRE 60.6 or 61%	POST 96%

Objective C assessment used to measure objective C (see question # 1, objective C for objective wording)

Assessment: HARCOURT BRACE END-OF-YEAR PLACEMENT TEST

Objective results: See Charts: Harcourt Brace Placement Test At least 90% of the multiage students scored as well as or better than the traditional classes on the Harcourt Brace End-Of-The Year Placement Test.

Charts 1A and 2A show vocabulary, comprehension and total scores for traditional classes. Charts 1B and 2C show vocabulary, comprehension and total scores for multi-age classes. The data verifies the research indicating that 90% of the students in multi-age classes do as well as or better than the traditional 1st and 2nd grade students in the areas of vocabulary and comprehension skills.

CHART 1A - Tradional First Grade
HARCOURT BRACE PLACEMENT TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	VOCABULARY POSSIBLE 30	COMPREHENSION POSSIBLE 21	TOTAL POSSIBLE 51
#1	30	21	51
#2	27	21	48
#3	30	18	48
#4	29	17	46
#5	28	17	45
#6	28	16	44
#7	25	16	41
#8	24	13	37
#9	19	12	31
#10	18	13	31
#11	17	10	27
#12	15	10	25
#13	11	10	21
#14	14	05	19
#15	11	08	19
#16	07	04	11
#17	27	13	40
#18	20	11	31
#19	11	09	20
#20	15	09	24
#21	17	08	25
TOTALS	432	261	684
TOTALS AVERAGED	20.1 out of 30 20 out of 30	12.4 out of 21 12 out of 21	32.5 out of 51 33 out of 51

CHART 2A - Tradtional Second Grade
HARCOURT BRACE PLACEMENT TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	VOACBULARY POSSIBLE 30	COMPREHENSION POSSIBLE 21	TOTAL POSSIBLE 51
#1	30	21	51
#2	29	21	50
#3	30	20	50
#4	30	20	50
#5	29	21	50
#6	30	9	49
#7	29	20	49
#8	29	20	49
#9	27	21	48
#10	30	18	48
#11	27	21	48
#12	29	18	47
#13	29	17	46
#14	28	16	44
#15	26	17	43
#16	23	19	42
#17	26	14	40
#18	21	10	31
TOTALS	502	333	835
TOTALS AVERAGED	27.8 OR 28 OUT OF 30	18.5 OR 19 OUT OF 21	46.3 OR 46 OUT OF 51

CHART 1B - Level-1 Multiage
HARCOURT BRACE PLACEMENT TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	VOCABUARY POSSIBLE 30	COMPREHENSION POSSIBLE 21	TOTAL POSSIBLE 51
#1	30	21	51
#2	30	21	51
#3	30	20	50
#4	30	20	50
#5	28	21	49
#6	30	19	49
#7	30	19	49
#8	29	20	49
#9	28	21	49
#10	25	17	42
#11	24	16	40
#12	30	17	47
#13	28	17	45
#14	28	15	43
#15	27	16	43
#16	27	15	42
#17	23	12	35
#18	10	13	23
#19	11	10	21
#20	09	05	14
#21	06	06	12
TOTALS	513	341	854
TOTALS AVERAGED	24.4 OR 24 OUT of 30	16.2 OR 16 OUT OF 21	40.6 OR 41 OUT OF 51

CHART 2C Multiage Level-2 (Group two))
HARCOURT BRACE PLACEMENT TEST

STUDENT NUMBER	VOCABULARY POSSBLE 30	COMPREHENSION POSSIBLE 20	TOTAL POSSIBLE 51
#1	30	20	50
#2	30	20	50
#3	30	20	50
#4	29	21	50
#5	29	21	50
#6	29	21	50
#7	30	20	50
#8	30	19	49
#9	29	19	48
#10	29	19	48
#11	28	20	48
#12	29	18	47
#13	30	16	46
#14	29	14	43
TOTALS	411	268	679
TOTALS AVERAGED	29.3 OR 29 OUT OF 30	19.1 OR 19 OUT OF 21	48.5 OR 49 OUT OF 51

CHARTS: 1A and 1B Summary

Group of Students	Vocabulary (possible 30)	Comprehension (possible 21)	Total (possible 51)
Traditional First	20	12	33
Multiage Level 1	24	16	41

CHARTS: 2A, 2B and 2C Summary

Groups of Students	Vocabulary (Possible 30)	Comprehension (Possible 21)	Total (possible 51)
Traditional Second Grade	28	19	46
Multiage Level - 2 (group 1)	28	19	47
Multiage Level -2 (group 2)	29	19	49
Multiage Level -2 Average	28	19	48

Objective D assessment used to measure objective D (see question #1, objective D for objective wording)

Assessment: PSYCHO-SOCIAL EVALUATION: Parent question survey – short responses evaluated

Objective Results: Evaluation of responses indicates an overall improvement of social, emotional and self skills in discipline needs. Response summaries are available for review. The questionnaire addressed recognized improvement and our Life Long Guidelines and Skills for self discipline. Some 95% of parents responding stated specific areas of improved social-emotional development with their children. A review of the many responses indicate that the children in the multi-age program are less shy, more independent, better self esteem, more confident and self directive, gain more friends, show more respect and use the life long guidelines at home as well as school. The overall responses of the Psycho-Social assessment verifies the research indicating that students in the multi-age classes do as well as or better than those students in traditional classrooms in the area of psycho-social growth.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

"Begin by crafting a broad shared vision of your program goals and establish a realistic implementation timeline."
Jim Grant, Bob Johnson and Irv Richardson

A. Share the multi-age philosophy/vision with the Board: power point/discussion/questions and answers/web sites
B. Notify staff of presentation on multi-age and present: power point/discussion/questions and answers/web sites/
C. Notify parents of presentation on multi-age and present: power point/ visit multi-age classrooms/discussion
D. Student applications are sent home/first come first serve basis for openings being low/average/high/
E. Interested staff completes applications/schedule interviews with present multi-age teachers/principal/other
F. Staff selected as needed and teacher training begins: assign web sites/texts to review/multi-age school visitation
G. training sessions for two weeks involving: philosophy selected/position statement/curriculum areas with integration strategies for across the curriculum using integrated thematic instruction with brain-based learning/multiple intelligence's/ flex skill grouping/learning centers/materials needed and cooperative learning.
H. Planning for implementing a thematic learning center and time given for writing thematic units integrating content across the curriculum/provide an on-going support team during the first four years of the program.