



Principal's Answer Sheet for 2004–2005 School Accountability Report Card

CDS Code: 57-72678-6066245

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Dear principal,

Your district has retained our company, School Wise Press, to edit and publish your School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs). Our goal is to help you communicate information about your school to the public while meeting state and federal SARC requirements.

The California Department of Education offers principals and school staff the chance to provide narrative about many aspects of their schools. We intend to make it as easy as possible for you to contribute these written comments. This Answer Sheet will walk you through the various sections of the SARC. Each section fulfills a reporting requirement established by the California State Education Code or the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Therefore, it is important that you complete all sections of the questionnaire to the best of your ability.

Once your questionnaire is complete, editors at School Wise Press will edit your writing for parent-friendliness, grammar, and style. A representative from your district will review and approve our edits or request changes to the documents. **Please review your writing carefully before submitting it to us**—in most cases you will not have the opportunity to change or amend your answers before your final report is delivered.

Please complete your Answer Sheet using MS Word and return it to your district liaison on time. Missing your liaison's deadline will delay the delivery of your final reports.

School Wise Press provides final SARCs in optional printed and online format. Please speak with the SARC coordinator at your district if you have questions about the SARC products your district has ordered.

We look forward to helping you create accountability reports that accurately represent all aspects of your school.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Hanscome".

Barbara Hanscome
Managing Editor
School Wise Press

When filling out your Answer Sheet, please remember to:

- Refer to the previous (2004–2005) school year. California SARC law requires you to report on events, programs, and issues pertinent to the previous school year, not the current school year. Most of the data in your SARC will also represent the previous school year.
- Avoid educational jargon and acronyms; instead include information that is easy for everyone in your school community to understand. If you use program names, explain what the program is and what it does.
- Be specific. Rather than including general comments about your school, add more detailed descriptions of school events and accomplishments.
- Record your answers on the Answer Sheet provided. We’ve prepared this electronic document specifically for your school. If your school worked with SWP last year, your Answer Sheet will contain the writing you or your predecessor provided for last year’s SARC. You can simply revise this copy as you see fit.
- Note and follow the word limits provided in each section. Due to strict space limitations in our final document, we must delete text that exceeds the word limit.
- Review the examples and prompts in the enclosed Answer Sheet before writing the text for each section.

4. Safety

- Describe how your school setting helps students feel safe on the grounds and in the halls.
- Mention whether the grounds are monitored before, during, and after school.
- Describe the steps you have taken to prepare for emergencies?
- Report when you last revises your school safety plan?
- For middle schools and high schools, state whether the campus is open or closed.

Modify your 2003 SARC text below this line (limit: 70 words):

The counseling staff, school safety advocate, support group leaders, community liasons, and Freshman Focus programs all help students get needed assistance. We offer an anti-bullying program to help students stop using hostile and hateful language]

EXAMPLE:

Our PTO has provided safe and modern playground equipment. District maintenance staff and our custodial staff inspect equipment regularly. Staff members supervise the playgrounds at recess. Students follow our playground safety guidelines. Our emergency committee oversees monthly safety drills and meets in January to update our school safety plan. Our clean, safe campus reflects our pride in our community and ourselves.

5. Homework

- Describe how much homework teachers assign daily, weekly, or per subject.
- Explain your school’s policy on homework. For example, do you assign a mix of written work and reading? Are parents expected to be involved in homework, and if so, how much?

Modify your 2003 SARC text below this line (limit: 60 words):

EXAMPLE:

Our teachers assign homework four days a week. Most teachers send home a packet on Monday for students to complete during the week and return on Friday. Many teachers require parents to review and sign the packet each week. Teachers also assign monthly projects and expect students to read or be read to for at least 30 minutes per night. We offer homework assistance through our extended day program.

Prompts identify the specific topics you should address in each section.

Write and/or edit your text in this section.

These examples will assist you in completing answers.

1. Principal's Comments—Please Update

This section gives you the opportunity to outline the educational philosophy of your school and staff; report changes to school facilities, policies, or curriculum; and call on parents to get involved in activities. Do not report the number of students at your school, the ethnic makeup of the student body, or the API score—this data is reported elsewhere in the report.

Parents will want to know:

Your school's curricular emphasis.

Your school's proudest achievements (you'll have a chance to expand upon these in the next section).

Significant changes in staffing, buildings and grounds, grade ranges offered, or attendance area boundaries.

What sets your school apart from others in the district?

The impact recent cutbacks have had on your staff or programs.

Write text below this line (limit: 130 words):

EXAMPLE:

At Sample Middle School, we provide sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students with a strong district-adopted curriculum in all subject areas. We are now in a period of adjustment, having decreased our number of students from 725 to 555 in the last few years.

We have won the Governor's Performance Award for the last two years for increasing our Academic Performance Index (API). We are concentrating on improving student reading scores during the 2003-2004 school year. Our staff welcomes parent input and communicates with parents regularly via the phone, student assignment journals, homework hotlines, and school newsletters. During 2003-2004, we plan to introduce the Words of Wisdom program and an antibullying program.

2. Major Achievements—Please Update

In this section of the SARC, you have the opportunity to illuminate your school's accomplishments. Parents are looking for tangible gains, so please be specific. Use the bullet point format you see in our examples below. You might want to use material written for your Single School Plan for Student Achievement.

Parents will want to know:

Your school's proudest achievements, awards, goals that were accomplished.

Issues that matter most to your staff.

Achievements that directly affect students and learning.

Please note:

Include only achievements that occurred during the reporting year (2004-2005).

If you trained staff in specific programs or adopted new curriculum, describe the benefits that you hope to gain from the program or curriculum. Describe what the program or curriculum is, don't just name the program.

Write text below this line (limit: 90 words):

EXAMPLE :

- We worked hard to involve families of English learners in their children's education by offering parent-child reading workshops.
- The number of our students performing below the 25th percentile has dropped ten percent since 2000.
- Schoolwide student behavior continues to be positive due to our antibullying programs and parent and community participation. We saw a significant decrease in the number of fights and arguments between students.

3. Focus for Improvement—Please Update

When writing this section, you might want to use material written for your Single School Plan for Student Achievement.

Required information:

How you are measuring students' progress toward meeting state standards.

Parents will want to know:

The improvements you will focus on in the year to come and the issues that matter most to your staff.

How you measure achievement and how you will target areas that need improving.

Specific things your teachers are doing to improve student achievement.

The subject areas where you are focusing your efforts.

The specific ways you are helping students improve their abilities in science and math.

Write text below this line (limit: 90 words):

EXAMPLE :

- Improve student scores in the lowest area of performance, reading, by implementing a new reading program (Accelerated Reader) schoolwide.
- Implement an afterschool tutoring program early next year to help students struggling academically.
- Help our sixth and seventh grade students prepare to succeed in eighth grade algebra.

4. Other Measures of Student Achievement

This section immediately follows testing data. With the emphasis on standardized testing, parents may not be aware that schools have other methods of determining progress or achievement. This is the place to highlight those methods. This would also be the place for schools with strong programs for immigrant students to highlight the services they provide.

Parents will want to know:

The alternative assessments you use, like the fourth and seventh grade writing test, the CELDT for students not yet fluent in English, and the CAPA for learning-disabled students.

Your method for reporting student progress to parents and how often you send report cards or hold parent conferences.

Write text below this line (limit: 70 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our teachers evaluate students' skills using oral questioning, written tests, and project-based evaluations. They assess English learners the same way, although they may provide extra assistance to these students if needed. We are on a trimester system, with three report card periods each school year. We encourage parents to attend a parent-teacher conference after the first reporting period, which ends in early November.

5. Safety—Required

Required information

When you last revised your school safety plan

A brief description of the information in the plan.

When you last shared the plan with students and faculty

Parents will want to know:

The specific policies you've implemented to ensure student safety on school grounds and in the halls.

When the grounds are monitored and who monitors the grounds.

The steps you have taken to prepare for emergencies.

Write text below this line (limit: 70 words):

EXAMPLE :

We hold regular fire and earthquake drills; monitor school throughout the day; and have equipped all facilities with phones and intercoms. The number of crimes against property (theft and graffiti on buildings) increased 3% over the past year. To respond to this issue, we increased the number of staff monitoring our grounds. We've had no incidents of crime against students or staff for two years. We revised our safety plan in 2003.

6. Homework

Parents will want to know:

The amount of homework teachers assign daily, weekly, or per subject.

Your school's policy on homework. For example, do you assign a mix of written work and reading? Are parents expected to be involved in homework, and if so, how much?

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Write text below this line (limit: 60 words):

EXAMPLE :

Homework is a chance for students to learn responsibility and practice the concepts they've learned in class. Seventh and eighth grade teachers assign homework Monday through Thursday. Teachers also give students at least one written assignment each week and require them to read for 30 to 90 minutes per day.

7. Discipline

Parents will want to know:

Describe what steps you take to address discipline issues and what warrants suspensions or expulsions.

Report whether you use detention or in-school suspension to discipline students.

Mention how you reward good behavior.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

We teach all students anger management and reward them for positive behavior with certificates awarded during assemblies. However, our discipline policies are strict. We have zero tolerance for fighting, threats, and profanity. We have a higher suspension rate than most schools in our district. A student who is suspended must remain out of school for up to five days and participate in a mandatory parent conference. During the conference, a parent, student, administrator, and teacher sign a contract about future behavior.

8. School Schedule

Parents will want to know:

The length of the school year and the start and end of the school day.

Whether there are extracurricular programs and when they occur during the school day or year.

If your school is a multitrack school, and what that means.

Write text below this line (limit: 60 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our school year lasts from late August to mid-June. Our campus is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, and classes are from 8 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. Our extended day program lasts from 3:15 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and includes a snack for students. On Wednesdays, we dismiss students at 1:40 p.m. so teachers can meet and plan together from 1:40 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

9. Evaluating/Improving Teachers—Required

Required information:

Report the number of staff development days at your school.

Parents will want to know:

How you evaluate tenured and new teachers.

How you define the qualities of a successful teacher.

Whether teachers are involved in a peer review process or if they serve as mentors to other teachers at the school.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

EXAMPLE :

Teachers set group and individual goals each year. Evaluations are based on these goals, student performance on state tests, and observation of teaching techniques. We evaluate all teachers every year via in-class visits and peer reviews. Teachers identified as needing extra help are assigned a mentor teacher and provided opportunities to take additional training courses.

10. Staff Development—Required

Required information:

The number of staff development days your school offers.

How teachers spend their staff training time.

Parents will also want to:

Who determines the staff development needs and how training dollars are spent?

How are these programs related to student achievement?

Specific examples of the activities or training programs your staff attended during the reporting year.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

EXAMPLE :

We offer training seminars throughout the year to our staff and faculty. This year, we hired outside facilitators to help us align our curriculum and practices with the California Content Standards. Each month teachers meet in grade-level groups to review student work, plan instruction, and review teaching strategies. In addition, we provide staff with three staff development days so they can attend workshops or conferences.

11. Teacher Assignment

Describe significant changes in teacher assignment and additional duties your staff may have.

Write text below this line (limit: 60 words):

EXAMPLE:

We assign teachers based on their certification, interests, and skills. Ninety-five percent of our teachers are teaching within their areas of expertise. More experienced teachers mentor new teachers or teachers who may be teaching out of their field. This year, we hired two new math teachers who will teach Algebra to our eighth graders.

12. Substitute Teachers—Required

Required information:

Whether your school has experienced difficulty securing qualified substitutes.

Whether learning time is lost due to lack of substitutes with proper training.

Parents will want to know:

Whether you recruit full-time teachers from your substitute pool.

Who is responsible for hiring substitutes when they are needed? The principal or the district?

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE:

We are fortunate to have a group of retired teachers from our school who serve as substitutes. When we cannot find a substitute for a class, the principal or assistant principal steps in to teach. In some cases another teacher will teach the class during a preparation period.

13. Specialized Programs/Staff—Required

This section highlights additional resources you employ for students and unusual program innovations. If your school has counselors, nurses, psychologists, resource specialists, librarians, and speech/language/hearing specialists, you may mention them here. Be sure to include programs related to music, art, sports, cooking, and so on, if they are available at your school.

Required information:

Describe any special programs available to students and the services these programs include. **Do not include** information about your English learner, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), or special education programs, as you will provide this information in the sections that follow.

The number of hours per week these professionals work at your school and whether they are full-time or part-time employees.

Please note:

When describing part-time staff, please describe the number of hours these individuals work at your school per week or per month. Avoid writing “We have a five-hour instructional aide in the media center.” Instead, write “An instructional aid works in our media center five hours each week.”

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

We have two counselors and a full-time librarian on staff. A psychologist and a speech/language/hearing specialist are available based on student need. We also have a health technician who is on site six hours per week. Two part-time resource specialists are available to assist special education students.

14. GATE—Required

Use this section to describe the activities and academic programs you offer to GATE students.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our district GATE program provides more challenging learning experiences for students in astronomy, biology, economics, or creative writing. New students may be identified as gifted in the areas of academics, creative ability, leadership, or visual and performing arts if recommended by a teacher, parent, or the principal.

15. Special Education—Required

State the number of staff working in special education and whether they are part-time or full-time. Be specific about the types of disabilities you accommodate and the specialized staffing and resources devoted to each type. List the activities and academic instruction offered within your special education curriculum.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

EXAMPLE :

Students enrolled in our special education program meet daily with a special education teacher who provides instruction based on the student's Individualized Education Program. We also have a team of teachers and counselors who meet with the families of our special education students to offer them guidance in helping their children succeed at our school.

16. English Learners—Required

State the number of staff members devoted to English language education and their qualifications. Include whether the staff are full-time or part-time. Describe the English language instruction.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

EXAMPLE :

We have two bilingual (Spanish/English) instructional assistants and one full-time teacher devoted to our English learners. We focus our instruction on reading and verbal skills. English learners spend half of their day in special classes with other students learning English, and the other half in regular classes where they are taught in small groups. All of our teachers have credentials certifying them to teach English learners.

17. Curriculum: Reading and Writing—Required

The text below is based on the current California Content Standards in reading and writing at each grade level. You may write your own text for this section or copy the text below and paste it into your Answer Sheet.

Avoid jargon whenever possible. Briefly explain the theories and techniques behind each curricular approach or program.

To view the California standards for all subjects, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our reading and writing curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, sixth grade students read short stories, legends, historical fiction, poetry, essays, and plays. By seventh grade students research and write longer papers and essays that persuade others with logic and reason. In eighth grade students read serious novels and write book reports that draw conclusions. We require all of our students to complete daily reading assignments.

18. Curriculum: Math—Required

You may write your own text or copy the text below and paste it into your answer sheet. The text below is based on the current California Content Standards for math at each grade level.

Please avoid jargon. Briefly explain the theory or techniques involved in each curricular approach or program you mention.

To view the California standards for all subjects, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our math curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, students in the sixth grade must expand their knowledge of mathematical concepts, including how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and positive and negative integers. Our students learn the principles of statistics, probability and ratios, as well as how to analyze data and solve equations. In seventh grade students learn the Pythagorean theorem, calculate surface area and volume, and increase their understanding of fractional numbers, ratios, and proportion. Eighth grade students now study algebra, which for decades was taught in the ninth grade.

19. Curriculum: Science—Required

The text below is based on the current California Content Standards for science at each grade level. You may write your own text or copy the text below and paste it into your answer sheet.

Please avoid jargon. Briefly explain the theory or techniques involved in each curricular approach or program you mention.

To view the California standards for all subjects, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our science curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, students must study the earth and gravitation, cell biology, genetics, evolution, and the properties of heat. They also study motion, forces, and matter. Our teachers also prepare students for further scientific instruction by teaching them specific methods of investigation and experimentation.

20. Curriculum: Social Studies—Required

The text below is based on the current California Content Standards for each subject and grade level. You may write your own text or copy the text below and paste it into your answer sheet.

Please avoid jargon. Briefly explain the theory or techniques involved in each curricular approach or program you mention.

To view the California standards for all subjects, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our social studies curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, students in the sixth through eighth grades learn how historical events relate to each other in time. Our students also learn about research, evidence, point of view, and historical interpretation. Along these lines, they study ancient civilizations and growth and conflict in California history.

21. Buildings—Required

Include information about the age, cleanliness, and condition of your buildings, school grounds, and rest rooms. Include specific information such as the quality of security systems, plumbing, furnishings, lighting, paint, or carpeting.

Mention anticipated changes in the year ahead, such as construction work, improvements to classrooms, or the temporary relocation of students to a portable.

Include important conditions like crowding or the degree of dependence on portables. If your buildings have problems, disclose that information. This could include bathroom stalls that lack doors with locks, leaky roofs, or playground tarmac that needs resurfacing.

Describe any deferred maintenance or improvements.

Do not include the capacity of your buildings. Your district has already provided us with this information.

Your facilities manager will provide additional comments on the condition of your buildings, as required by the Williams legislation.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

We are located on an older campus, and our buildings are in need of some repairs. We have done much work over the past year to improve our buildings. The main classroom building recently received a new roof. All of our buildings have been painted and the lighting has been upgraded. Our electrical system is also scheduled for improvement during the upcoming school year.

22. Library

State whether your school has a library or if it has been converted into classroom space.

Mention how often students get to visit and check out books.

If you have a librarian, include whether the position is full-time or part-time.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

Our library contains a new Internet research center with eight computers. We have a full-time librarian and a part-time library aide. Students visit the library to check out books and do research during English class every other week.

23. Computers

Use this section to explain how teachers and students use computers.

Mention how often students visit the computer lab.

Include what software is available.

Describe how you've integrated computers into your curriculum.

Please do not report the number of computers or computer-equipped classrooms. We already have this data from your CBEDs report.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

Most classrooms are connected to the Internet. Brownell has one Mac lab where we teach two levels of computer classes and a Web design class. Students and teachers may also conduct research in the media center. Lab software includes programs for word processing, database, spreadsheets, graphic design, and the development of keyboarding skills.

EXAMPLE :

We have two computer labs that students visit for guided instruction on various software programs or class assignments. We have a variety of software including Microsoft Word and Excel programs. Every classroom is equipped with at least one Internet-enabled computer and a printer. Many of our teachers post assignments on classroom websites and incorporate Internet research into their coursework.

24. Parent Involvement—Required

Use this section to highlight the contributions of parents involved in your School Site Council, PTO, or PTA.

Required information:

Contact information for parents who want to get involved in your school.

Describe the different opportunities for parent involvement, such as in the classrooms, in leadership and governance, on field trips, etc.

Parents will also want to know:

Your expectations of your parent community. For example, you may ask parents to volunteer for a number of hours each month.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

The contact person for parent involvement is:

Name:

Phone number:

EXAMPLE:

Our school's annual plan and some budget approvals are made by our School Site Council, which always includes parent members. In addition, we have an English Language Advisory Committee to help students learning English feel welcome at our school. Our parents organization has 60 members, who have helped us build and grow a garden, paint school buildings, and raise funds for our music program. New members are always needed. Spanish and Vietnamese translators are also needed at many school meetings. To find out how you can volunteer at our school, please contact our PTA president, Elizabeth Riley, at (520) 654-9921.

25. Leadership—Required

Please answer each of the three questions below.

Write text below this line (limit: 100 words):

1. How many years of experience do you have as a principal? ____
2. For how many years have you have been a principal at this school? ____
3. How many years of experience do you have as a teacher? ____

Describe how you include other teams (staff, the School Site Council) in your planning or management.

EXAMPLE :

Teachers and administrators take part in decision-making at this school. Teachers determine instructional methods as a team; the entire staff develops staff training programs. Our School Site Council, which involves parent members as well as teachers and administrators, and the PTA play key roles in shaping our students' educational experience.

26. Funding—Required

Your district will be providing us with your district's expenditures, and may be including additional data on your school's actual expenditures in the 2004-2005 school year. We'd like you to tell us about the way you used categorical and supplemental funds in that year. This could include:

- Programs like after-school tutoring.
- School improvement funds used to hire external evaluators.
- Professional development to improve teachers' skills in areas where your students are lagging.
- Title III funds used to help English learners master English.
- If you raised funds independently (from business partners, grants, or PTA fundraisers), describe how you used those funds.

Write text below this line (limit: 80 words):

EXAMPLE :

- GATE funds support special textbooks and field trips for an astronomy course offered after school.
- School improvement funds helped us start a Homework Club.
- The Kaleidoscope Program brings a credentialed reading teacher to us who provides small group instruction to students who are not yet at grade on level in reading.
- The Parent Faculty Club funded a part-time technology assistant and a computer specialist who enable students in grades six through eight to use the computer lab during lunch, at recess, and before and after school.