



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

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CDS Code: 10-10000-1000000

Splendid Valley Elementary  
999 Main Street  
Splendid Valley, CA 55555

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 formats. 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 school activities. Do not report the number of students at your school, the ethnic makeup of the students, or your 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

It's been an exciting year at Sample High School. We added a graphic design magnet program that brought us 62 new students. Our incoming freshman class grew by 30 students. Test scores from last spring resulted in our school being designated an underperforming school. As a result, our staff is emphasizing reading skills in grades nine and ten and algebra for ninth grade students. We're asking students to read more in school and at home, so we now have a 20-minute homeroom period devoted to reading.

We welcome parents and family members to volunteer in our library, at our career resource center, and on our graduation committee. Students would love to see members of the community helping out on our campus.

## 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.

- Include your school's proudest achievements.
- Outline issues that matter most to your staff.

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

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### EXAMPLE:

- Eight percent of our students were accepted into four-year colleges last year.
- We reduced the number of students scoring in the lowest quartile on the math section of the CAT/6 by five percent.
- Twelve percent more students took the SAT-I college entrance exam.

### 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

- Improve students' writing skills in grades nine and ten. Mark progress in writing by collecting three samples of student writing each year.
- Increase parental participation in schoolwide events such as Back-to-School Night.
- Identify struggling readers earlier and support them with additional tutoring or afterschool classes.

#### 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, such as 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 home report cards or hold parent conferences.
- Be careful to avoid jargon in this section. For example, the term “portfolio assessment” will be lost on most parents. Instead you might write, “We ask students to choose samples of their writing to place in a folder every month. This helps teachers, students, and parents see the progress a child is making.”

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

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**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 your 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):**

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### EXAMPLE:

Our staff monitors school grounds ten minutes before the start of school and immediately after dismissal. We have a closed campus, and all visitors must register with the office. We also hold monthly fire drills and have earthquake and disaster drills twice a year. We reviewed our school safety plan in March 2003 and modified it to account for power outages and terrorist-type alerts. The number of crime incidents against people and property has decreased from last year by two percent.

## 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

Students must complete homework in all core courses and in all college-preparatory elective courses. While most assignments are given during the week and due before the weekend, students are expected to complete projects such as book reports, research assignments, and science projects over a longer period of time.

## 7. Discipline

Parents will want to know:

- What steps you take to address discipline issues and what warrants suspensions or expulsions.
- Whether you use detention or in-school suspension to discipline students.
- How you reward good behavior.

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

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EXAMPLE :

We expect students to model mature and responsible behavior on our campus, in our classrooms, and at all school functions. Consequences for poor behavior include counseling, warnings, detention, in-school suspension, at-home suspension, and expulsion. We provide students with life-skills training such as conflict resolution, time management, and anger management.

## 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

The school year includes 180 days of instruction. Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:10 p.m. Our extended day program runs from 3:10 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. We offer students a breakfast program before school. Our principal also conducts a five-minute morning lesson with the entire student body before classes begin. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 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):**

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### 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 know:

- Who determines staff development needs and how training dollars are spent.
- How these programs relate 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):**

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### 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):**

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EXAMPLE:

During the 2004–2005 school year, a new Spanish teacher and two new math teachers joined our faculty. A second part-time librarian also joined our staff, as did a computer technology specialist who works with students in our computer lab two days a week. Five of our teachers are currently serving as master teachers to college students undergoing teacher training.

## 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):**

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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):**

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EXAMPLE:

We have four part-time academic counselors on staff to help students prepare for college or vocational school. A psychologist and school nurse are available based on student need. Two full-time resource specialists 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

GATE students can choose a single topic to focus on during the year in addition to their required coursework. They take Advanced Placement (AP) courses for college credit. They also engage in science-related field trips and lessons planned by our GATE coordinator.

## 15. Special Education—Required

- State the number of staff working in special education and whether they are part-time or full-time.
- List the activities and academic instruction offered within your special education curriculum.

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

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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.
- Include whether the staff is full-time or part-time.
- Describe the focus of English language instruction.

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

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### 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 sheltered 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.

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

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### EXAMPLE :

Our English/language arts curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, high school students should be able to compare and analyze literature using the terminology of literary criticism. Our students read and respond to significant works of literature that reflect or enhance their studies of history and social science. They also write biographies, autobiographies, narratives, short stories, analytical essays, research reports, and business letters.

## 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.

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

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EXAMPLE :

Our math curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. According to these standards, most students take algebra during middle school. However, many students study algebra in high school. By studying algebra, students develop an understanding of the symbolic language of mathematics. They also learn to use their algebraic skills and concepts in a wide variety of problem-solving situations.

## 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.

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

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EXAMPLE :

Our science curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for each grade level. In accordance with these standards, our science program features courses in physics, chemistry, biology, life sciences, and earth science. Our students learn to apply the principles of investigation and experimentation. Many science courses are elective but required for admission to colleges. We require all students at our school to study biology and life sciences, as well as the principles of physiology, cell biology, genetics, ecology, and evolution.

## 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.

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

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### EXAMPLE :

Our social studies curriculum is based on the California Content Standards for high school. According to the standards, high school students must gain a greater knowledge of United States history from the late eighteenth century through the present. They study the rise of democratic ideas throughout the world, the roots of current world issues, global industrialization, and the impact of new technology. As part of our program, students also study the movement toward equal rights for racial minorities and women, the role of the United States as a major world power, and the U.S. Constitution.

## 21. Buildings—Required

- Include information about the age, cleanliness, and condition of your buildings, school grounds, and restrooms. Include specific information such as the quality of security systems, plumbing, furnishings, lighting, paint, or carpeting.
- Describe your school's cleaning schedule and cleaning standards.
- Include details about the quality of classroom lighting, classroom space, desks, and playground areas.
- 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):**

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### EXAMPLE :

We installed eight portable classrooms to alleviate classroom crowding, but this eliminated our track and field space. As a result, we have staggered lunch breaks to relieve crowding on our grounds. Our school is scheduled for a new exterior paint job over the summer. We have also requested new plumbing in our student restrooms.

## 22. Library

- We realize you may not have access to information for every resource we've listed. Do your best to provide whatever information you have.
- State whether your school has a library or if it has been converted into classroom space.
- Mention how often students get to visit the library 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):**

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### EXAMPLE:

Our library includes Internet-connected computers so that students can do research online. We update our books and periodicals every two years. The library is open three days per week and is staffed by a part-time librarian. Our library is about one-third the size recommended for high schools. We plan to enlarge the library in 2006.

## 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 computer-equipped classrooms. We already have this data from your CBEDs report.

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

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### EXAMPLE:

We are fortunate to have two computer labs. One lab is used for the Graphic Design Magnet School; the other for elective courses such as Web page design and computer science. The labs are open after school. We have a variety of software, including Microsoft Word and Excel programs. Many of our vocational education students learn to use these programs.

## 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 opportunity for parents who want to get involved in your school.

The different for parent involvement on your campus, 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):**

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The contact person for parent involvement is:

Name:

Phone number:

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### 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):**

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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? \_\_\_\_

In the space below, describe how you include other teams (staff, the School Site Council) in your planning or management:

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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 includes parent members as well as teachers and administrators, and the PTA play key roles in shaping our students' educational experience.

## 26. Funding

Your SARC will feature districtwide expenditures data. We'd like you to tell us about the way you used categorical and supplemental funds in that year. This could include:

- Programs like afterschool tutoring.
- School improvement funds used to hire external evaluators.
- Professional development to improve teachers' skills in areas where your students are struggling.
- 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):**

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EXAMPLE :

Last year our hardworking PTA raised \$4,000 through scrip sales, a book fair, our annual carnival, and membership dues. These funds will be dedicated to purchasing new library books. We also received a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation to fund our music program.