

# School Profile

## Vicenza Elementary School

Vicenza, Italy



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## SCHOOL PROFILE DEVELOPMENT

The administration, Martha Parsons and David Eldredge, and the School Improvement Plan (SIP) Chairpersons, Marcia Scheppele and Bess Wills met with the Mediterranean District School Improvement Liaison, R. C., on August 22, 2006 to discuss the new process and develop plans for the first semester. On August 30 the District SIP Liaison and SIP Chairs provided an overview of the new DoDEA five-year school improvement plan to the faculty. Data needed for the school profile had been divided into nine separate data groups, Local Insights, Communications Arts, Existing School Data, Local Data, TerraNova A, TerraNova B, and TerraNova C, Survey, and Environmental Scan Task Groups. Staff members selected areas of interest within the individual groups and formed their teams. Our motto became “All for One and One for All.”

The Task Groups met individually, collected information or data pertinent to their tasks, then reviewed and analyzed their findings. Each of the Task Groups gave periodic reports to the staff throughout the process. Each group noting significant findings as related to their charge wrote a final report and presented the findings to the whole staff. Reports are available in the electronic file. Throughout the presentations, areas of concern began to emerge.

One representative from each Task Group participated in the Think Tank process to select our SIP goals. Think Tank members included M. B., David Eldredge, L. H., M. K., J. L., E. M., D. M., C. M., Martha Parsons, K. R., M. S., M. T., and B. W.

As charts were reviewed from the presentation on October 30 by the Think Tank members two areas of concern were obvious to the group. They were written communications across the curriculum and mathematical reasoning.

## MISSION STATEMENT

### **DoDEA Vision**

Communities investing in success for ALL students

### **DoDEA Mission**

To provide an exemplary education that inspires and prepares all DoDEA students for success in a dynamic, global environment.

### **Mediterranean District Mission**

To support schools for the success of *every* student

### **Vicenza Mission Statement**

It is the mission of Vicenza Elementary School to provide a curriculum in which each student has opportunities to develop skills applicable to real life situations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by:

- Learning strategies for thinking, reasoning and problem solving skills
- Accessing, processing, and communicating information through the utilization of modern technology
- Managing change successfully
- Developing a positive attitude about improving his/her skills and social responsibilities
- Demonstrating positive human relationships

Practicing learning as a lifelong process

## **Vicenza Core Commitments / Beliefs**

**We believe that our school can be a place in which every student is actively and successfully engaged in challenging and meaningful thinking and learning activities. By providing positive adult role models in a nurturing environment, our students will become responsible and caring citizens of the global society.**

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## UNIQUE LOCAL INSIGHTS

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Information was gathered from the following resources:

- School Information System
- School Secretaries
- School Liaison Officer
- Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR)
- Child and Youth Services (CYS)
- Child Development Center (CDC)
- DoDEA Customer Service Survey 2004-2005
- Local Teacher Survey 2006

### **Presentation / Analysis of Data**

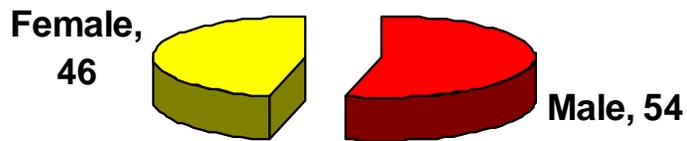
Camp Ederle, situated between Verona and Venice in Northern Italy, is the home of Southern European Task Force (SETAF). The Camp Ederle / Vicenza military community consists of approximately 3,000 active duty personnel, 550 retirees, 740 civilian employees, and 4,500 family members.

SETAF is an airborne rapid reaction force and Joint task headquarters ready to respond anywhere in the US European Command's area of responsibility. SETAF has been forward deployed since the 1950's and remains an integral part of the US Army's Power Projection ability. Military members and support are often deployed, participating in combined exercises in Morocco, Tunisia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Ukraine, Hungary and Germany, Afghanistan and Iraq. It is a major subordinate command of the US Army force south of the Alps in Europe. With soldiers assigned or in tenant support units, SETAF is the largest US Army force south of the Alps in Europe, with responsibilities throughout the Southern Region and the Mediterranean area.

Vicenza Elementary School is a Pre-school through Sixth grade elementary school. The current population is approximately 550 students. Some of the kindergarten and first grade students entering Vicenza Elementary have attended Italian pre-school (Asilo.) Of the current student population, 54% are males and 46% are females. Sixty-nine percent of the students are Caucasian. The student population is evenly dispersed among the grade levels.

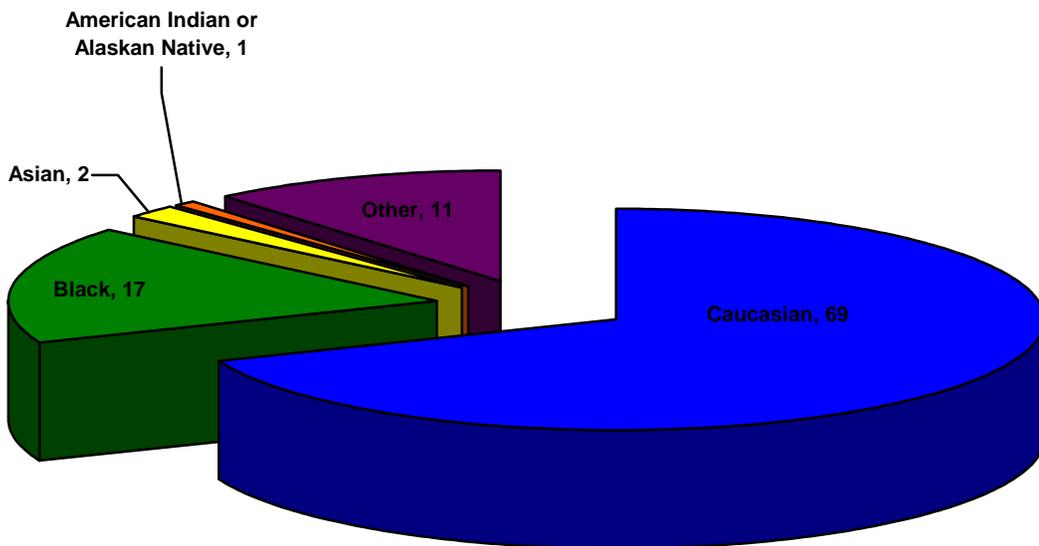
Currently there are fifty-nine faculty members. Sixty-seven percent have a master degree or higher. Ninety-five percent of the staff is female with five percent males. Eighty-seven percent of the staff is Caucasian.

### Vicenza Elementary School 2006 Student Gender Graph



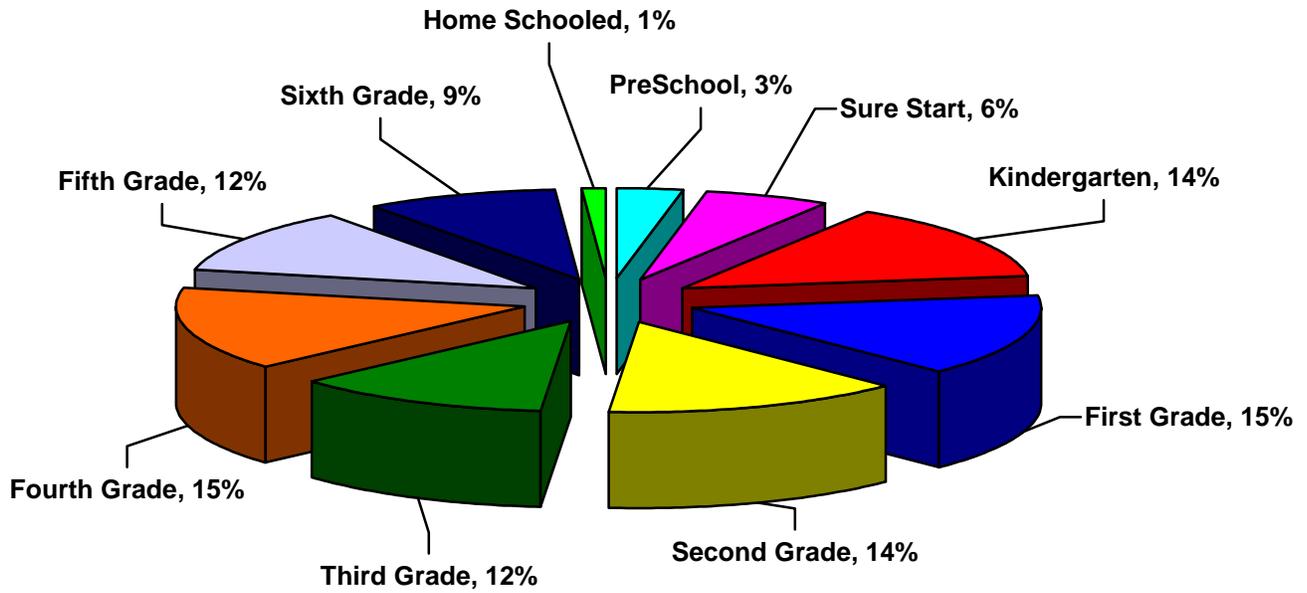
This graph shows that 54% of the students are males and 46% are females.

### Vicenza Elementary School 2006 Graph by Race



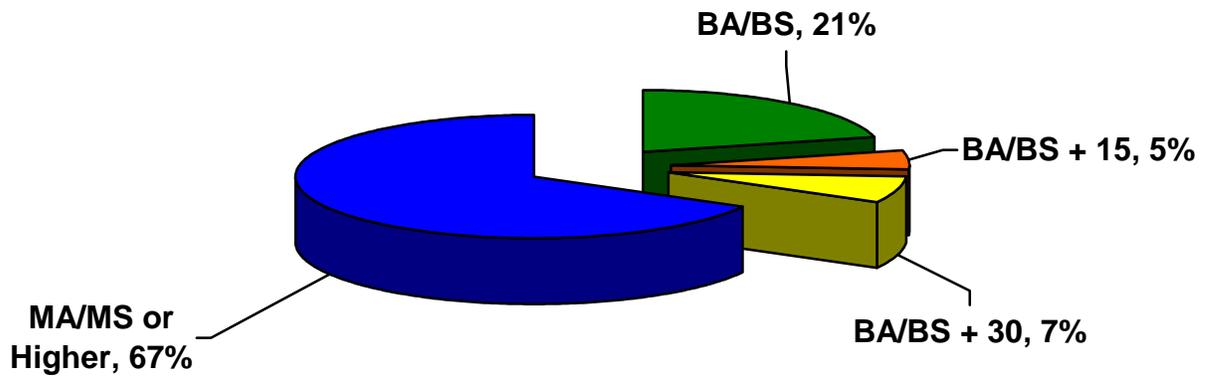
This graph shows that 69% of the students are Caucasian, 17 % are black, 2% are Asian, 1% is American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 11% are others.

### Vicenza Elementary School 2006 Grade Level Percentages



Data indicates that population is evenly dispersed among grade levels.

### Vicenza Elementary School 2006 Teacher Education Levels



Data shows that 67% of Vicenza teachers have a Master's Degree or Higher.

Programs that support student achievement in conjunction with the classroom teacher:

- Reading Recovery
- Read 180
- Special Education
- Compensatory Education Reading
- Language Arts Reading Support
- English Language Learner Support
- Character Education
- Gifted Education
- Reading Counts
- Type to Learn
- Scholastic Reading Inventory
- Math Traveler
- Full Day Kindergarten
- Sure Start

Supports Outside of School

- Education Development Intervention Services
- Health Clinic
- Behavioral Health Services
- Military Community
- Parent to Parent
- New Parent Support Group
- Child Development Center – School Aged Services, Youth Services, Camp Adventure
- Family Life Consultants
- Early Intervention Services for Children Birth – 36 months of age
- Family Advocacy Program

**Implications for Student Performance Goals**

Vicenza Elementary School has experienced a high turnover of student population. More than 70% of our population is new to the school this year. A large portion of our student population is bilingual and/or English language learners.

**Identification of Sub-Groups:** None

**Other Actions Needed**

Being part of a military community, families are constantly feeling the affects deployment. The separation of family members affects school climate. Teachers are continually challenged to meet the emotional needs of separated families.

## **INFORMATION FROM FORMER STUDENTS**

The DoDEA 2004-2005 Customer Satisfaction Survey for Vicenza Elementary School was used to gather the following information. Forty-nine percent of the upper elementary students responded to the survey.

Student survey results showed that major areas of concern at Vicenza Elementary School were:

- 31% fighting/violence/gang
- 23% lack of respect from students for teachers

**Implications for Student Performance Goals:** None

**Identification of Sub-Groups:** None

**Other Actions Taken:** None

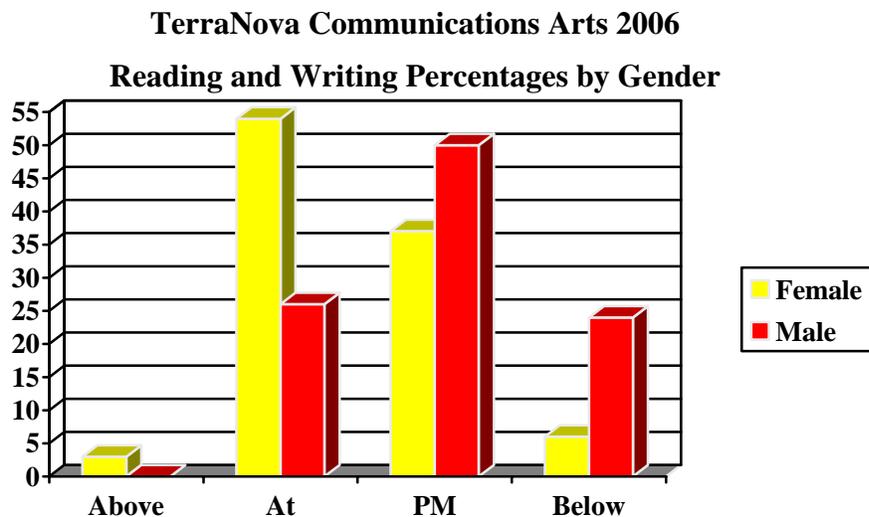
## EXISTING SCHOOL DATA: STUDENTS

### Data Collection Instruments

- TerraNova Multiple Assessments, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition- a system-wide, norm-referenced assessment given annually to all students in grades 3-6
- TerraNova Communication Arts, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, - a system-wide, criterion-referenced assessment given annually to all students in grade 4
- Vicenza Elementary Task Force Teacher Survey- Local teacher survey given in the fall of 2006 to Vicenza teachers
- DoDEA Customer Satisfaction survey – offered to all parents, students and staff, spring 2006
- Vicenza Teacher Opinion Perception Questionnaire given in fall of 2006

### Presentation/Analysis of Data

Vicenza Elementary student scores on the TerraNova Performance Assessment Communication Arts (TNPACA) decreased in both Reading and Writing over time. Results indicated that Writing is an area of concern. Vicenza students scored below the National average. The results from the total fourth grade population showed that only 36% of students met or exceeded the writing standards in 2006.



Graph shows the differences in reading and writing between males and females.

Vicenza Elementary School TerraNova Communications Arts  
2006

Total Reading and Writing

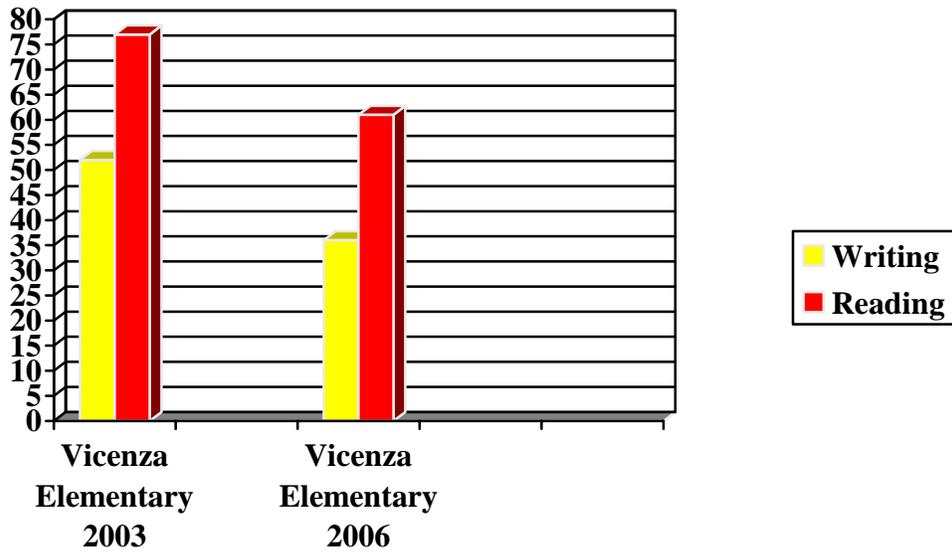


Chart shows a 16 % decrease in the percentage of students scoring at or Above the Standard over the 3-year period.

Vicenza Elementary School Performance Assessments  
Communication Arts

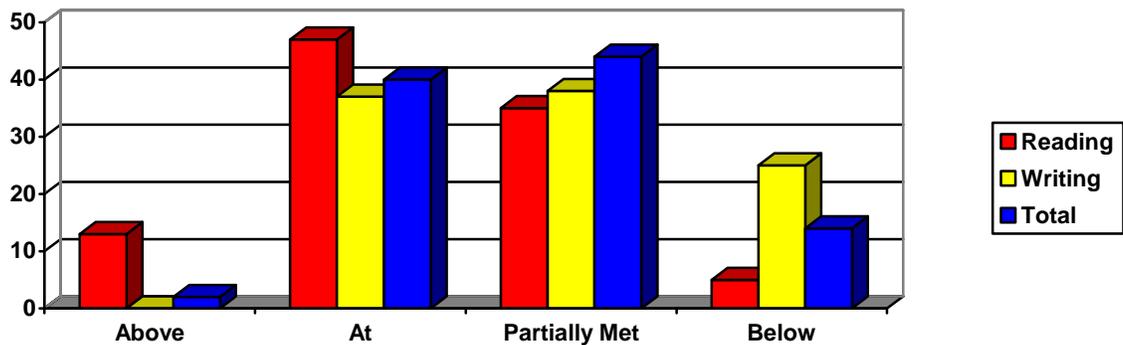


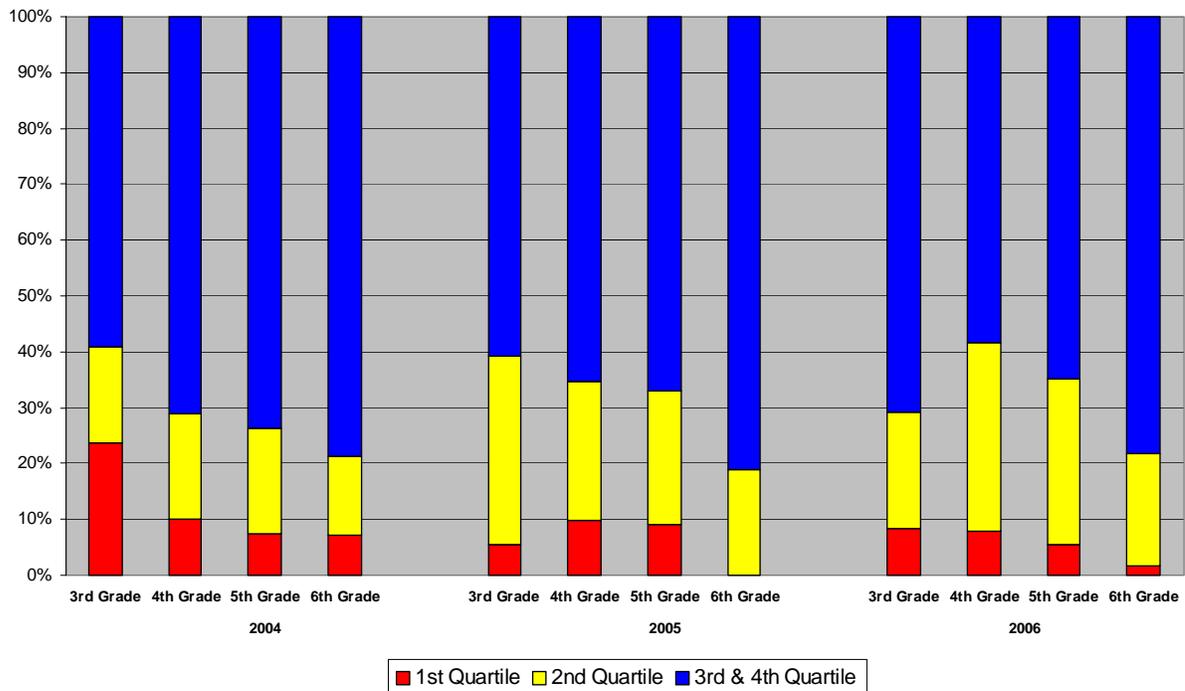
Chart shows that 40% of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students are below the standard in reading and 63 % are below the standard in writing.

### Vicenza Communications Arts Totals

| Reading (Stand)                       | Mean Points Earned | Local % Correct | National % Correct |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Establish Understanding               | 4.6 of 6           | 77              | 71                 |
| Explore Meaning                       | 4.5 of 6           | 75              | 73                 |
| Extend meaning and Examine Strategies | 3.6 of 6           | 61              | 64                 |
| Evaluate Critically                   | 3.2 of 6           | 53              | 49                 |
| Total Reading                         | 15.9 of 24         | 66              | 64                 |
| <b>Writing Strands</b>                |                    |                 |                    |
| Write Effectively                     | 9.1 of 18          | 51              | 51                 |
| Write Fluently                        | 5.5 of 9           | 62              | 68                 |
| Total Writing                         | 14.7 of 27         | 54              | 57                 |
| <b>Total Communications Arts</b>      | <b>30.5 of 51</b>  | <b>60</b>       | <b>60</b>          |

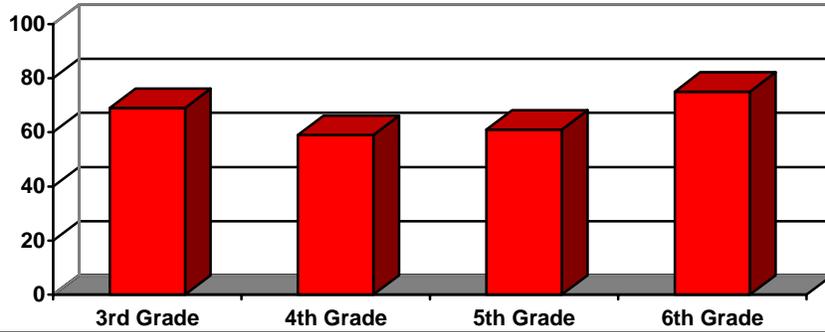
The Vicenza Elementary scores on the TerraNova Performance Assessments Communication Arts are commensurate with the national average. However, female students in grade four consistently outscored their male counterparts in all reading and writing strands in 2006. Additionally, less than 50% of students meet or exceed the standards in writing. The Vicenza Communications Arts Totals show that students answered 53% of the items correctly on the Evaluate Critically subtest. Students scored at or below that national average on all sections of the writing strands.

### 2004 - 2006 Terra Nova School Wide Quartiles Language



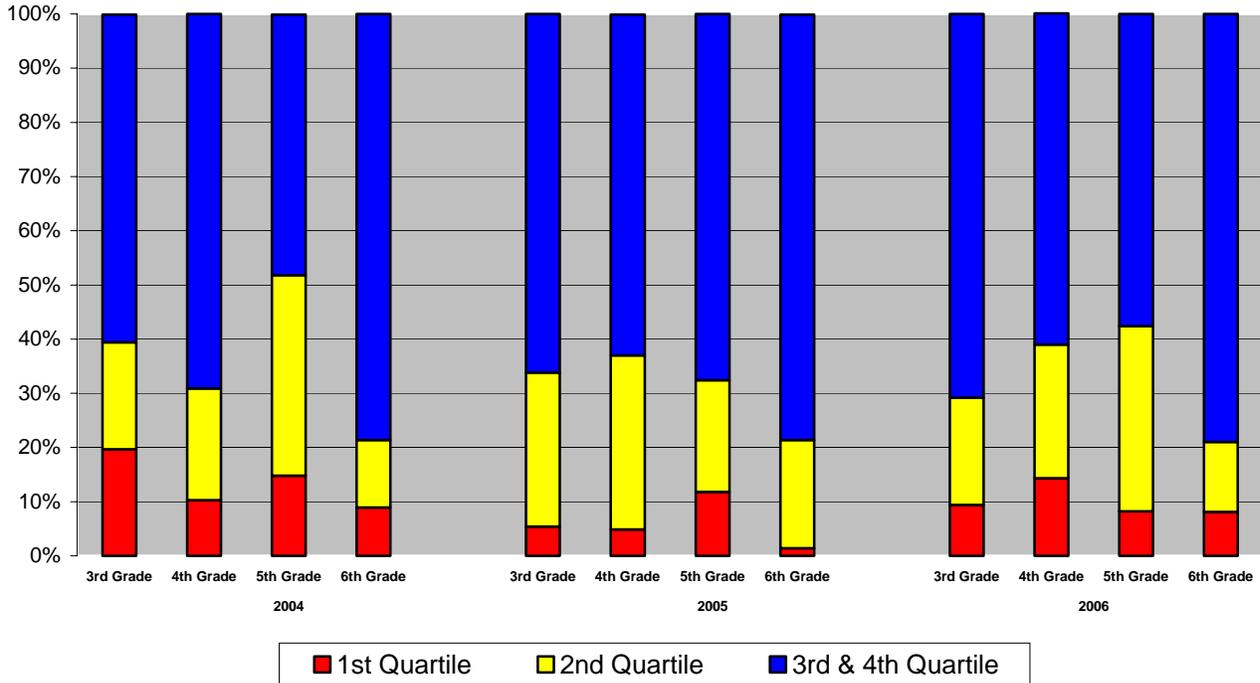
This graph shows that students in grades 3, 4, and 5 did not meet the DoDEA standard.

### Vicenza Elementary School 2006 TerraNova Median Math Scores by Grade Level



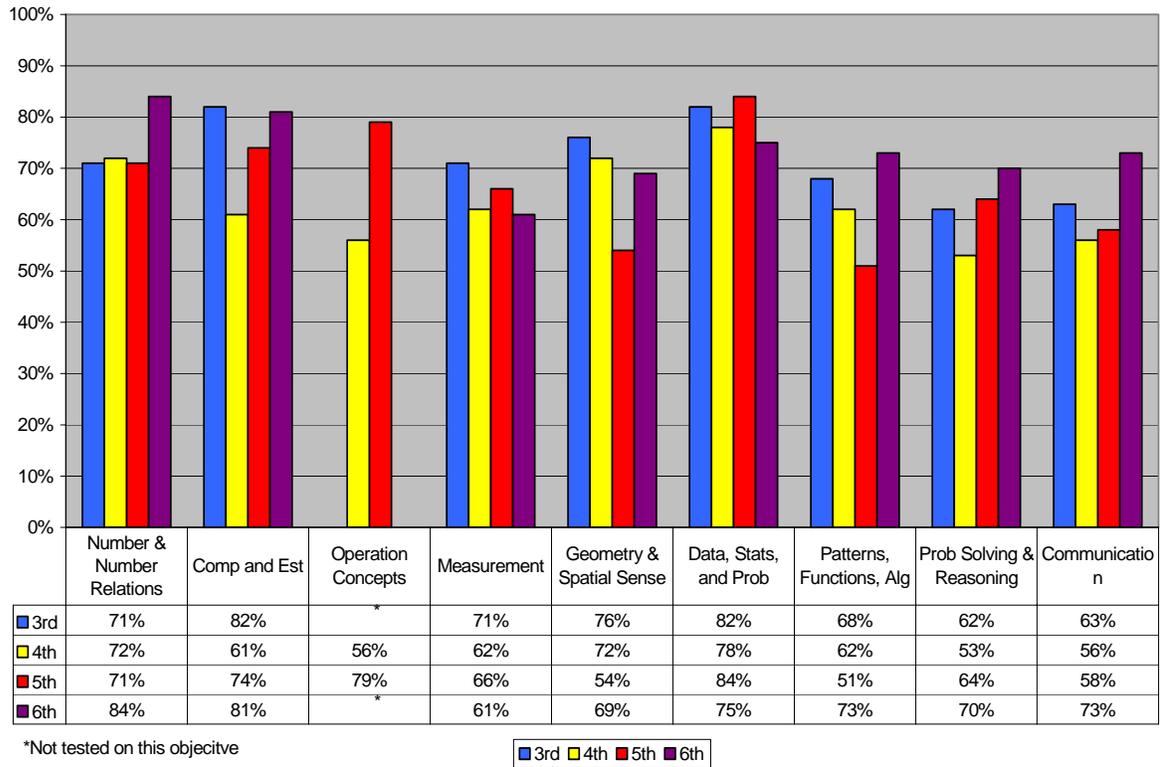
This graph shows that the median scores for grades 4 and 5 are below the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile

### 2004 - 2006 Terra Nova School Wide Quartiles Math



TerraNova Math scores show that fewer than 75% of the students scored in the third and fourth quartiles in grades 3, 4, and 5 in 2004-2006.

### Vicenza ES Math Objectives Summary



TerraNova math scores were below the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile in six skill areas

### Implications for Student Performance Goals

Areas identified by this data for student performance goals include:

- Writing communications
- Mathematical reasoning
- Gender differences in reading and writing

**Identification of Sub-Groups:** None

**Other Actions Taken:** None

## EXISTING SCHOOL DATA: COMMUNITY

### Data Collection Instruments

- Environmental Scan
- DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey

### Presentation / Analysis of Data

Environmental Scan data indicated that to prepare students for jobs in the future education should focus on:

- Increased use of technology in the classroom
- Focus on science/health education
- More opportunities for cooperative learning
- Stronger Character Education
- Increased community involvement
- Focus on foreign language and culture education

### DoDEA initiatives

- Math Matters
- DoDEA Reads

### Community/Parent support

- School Advisory Council (SAC)
- Parent representation on School Improvement Leadership Team (SILT), Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)
- Parent volunteers- Math Night and Reading Night, Book Fair, Book Swap, Celebrity Reader

### Customer Satisfaction Survey

- Most teachers and students gave Vicenza Elementary School a grade of A or B
- Most teachers and students felt that the primary purpose of the DoDEA schools was to provide a balanced education in which basics are only one factor
- Most teachers felt that all students have the ability to reach a high level of learning

**Implications for Student Performance Goals**

- Technology
- Communications
- Affective Development

**Identification of Sub-Groups:** None

**Other Actions Needed**

Staff allocations to support areas of concerns may need to be addressed.

Investigate staff development opportunities to support areas of need.

## EXISTING SCHOOL DATA: INSTRUCTIONAL

### Data Collection Instruments

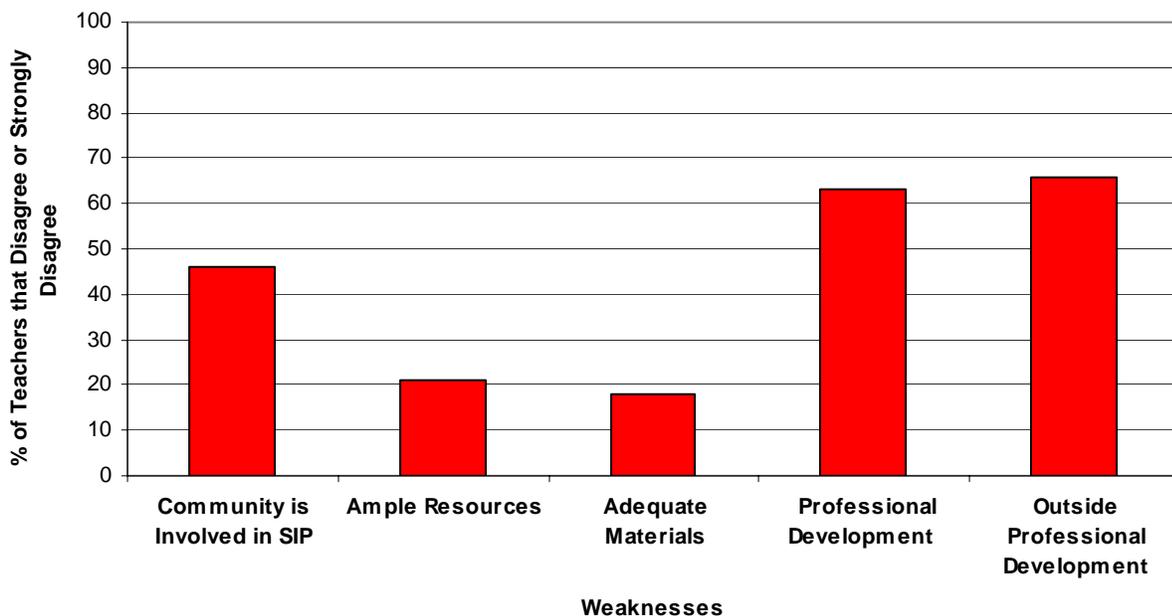
- Vicenza Task Force Teacher Survey
- Report of the Visit of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement Next Steps Report

### Presentation / Analysis of Data

#### Vicenza Task Force Teacher Survey Weaknesses

- Less than half of teachers felt that the community is involved in the School Improvement Process
- Most teachers felt that the school's resources to support instruction and highest student achievement are grossly lacking
- Most teachers felt that classroom instructional materials are insufficient
- Many teachers felt that opportunities for meaningful professional development related to subject areas are not sufficiently provided
- More than half of teachers felt that funded professional development opportunities provide by outside experts are not sufficiently provided

Vicenza Elementary Task Force Teacher Survey 2006



This graph shows weaknesses perceived by teachers. Professional development is indicated as the greatest need.

## NCA Next Steps for School Improvement

### Findings

- Military and community members are supportive of school improvement and student achievement
- The SIP chair and committees are active in pursuit of the goal through implementation of the interventions, and staff is committed to improving reading student achievement. In year four, the goal was modified to include a focused strategy at each grade level.
- As instructional leaders, administration established common planning time and encourages collaboration of teachers to share strategies.
- New staff was welcomed and provided with orientation to the current plan.

### Next Steps

- Establish systematic processes for orientation and renewal of the SIP. Investigate a rotation or sharing of leadership roles.
- Provide staff development in practical data analysis that supports selection of related instructional interventions. Increase use of scientifically based researched teaching techniques and programs.
- Increase consistency within grade levels for expectations, grading practices, weekly objectives, and homework.
- Capitalize on current positive community response to the success of improved reading. Celebrate the results and utilize this momentum to perpetuate school-wide participation in the next cycle.

### Staff development opportunities

- New Science adoption Implementation
- New Math adoption Implementation
- Scholastic Achievement Manager Training
- Type to Learn
- Math/ Science Foldable
- Wiggle Works/ Smart Place
- Kidspiration/Inspiration

- Math Traveler
- Four Block
- Differentiated Instruction
- Scholastic Red courses
- Smart Board
- Guided reading
- Student Informational Systems (SIS)

### **Vicenza 2006 Teacher Perception/Opinion Survey**

40% or more of the teachers in the following categories identified areas of weakness:

#### **READING**

- 56% of teachers perceive **analyzing text** as an area weakness
- 61% of teachers perceive **evaluating and extending meaning** as an area of weakness
- 50% of teachers perceive **higher level comprehension of informational text** as an area of weakness
- 60% of teachers perceive **critical thinking** as a weakness
- 53% of teachers perceive **application of reading to the real world** as an area of weakness

#### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

- 48% of teachers perceive **synthesis across text** as an area of weakness
- 45% of teachers perceive **sentence structure** as an area of weakness
- 58% of teachers perceive **writing strategies** as an area of weakness
- 70% of teachers perceive **proof-reading** as an area of weakness
- 59% of teachers perceive **informational writing** is an area of weakness
- 64% of teachers perceive **expository writing** is an area of weakness
- 54% of teachers perceive **application to real world writing** is an area of weakness

#### **MATHEMATICS**

- 58% of teachers perceive **problem solving and reasoning** as an area of weakness

- 56% of teachers perceive **written and oral math communications** as an area of weakness
- 54% of teachers perceive **critical thinking** as an area of weakness
- 49% of teachers perceive **relating math concepts to the real world** as an area of weakness

### THINKING SKILLS

- 41% of teachers perceive **recall** as an area of weakness
- 40% of teachers perceive **comparing** as an area of weakness
- 44% of teachers perceive **identifying attributes and components** as an area of weakness
- 50% of teachers perceive **determining accuracy and adequacy** as an area of weakness
- 47% of teachers perceive **identifying central elements** as an area of weakness
- 47% of teachers perceive **inferring** as an area of weakness
- 41% of teachers perceive **restructuring** as an area of weakness
- 46% of teachers perceive **integration** as an area of weakness
- 46% of teachers perceive **establishing criteria** as an area of weakness
- 43% of teachers perceive **verifying** as an area of weakness

### Implications for Student Performance Goals

- Involve parents and other community members in the School Improvement Process
- Pursue creative ways to reallocate and align materials to meet curricular needs
- Investigate staff development opportunities from many sources

**Identification of Sub-Groups:** None

**Other Actions Taken:** None

## INTERPRETATION AND TRIANGULATION OF DATA

**Student Performance Goal 1:** *All students will improve writing communication across the curriculum.*

- Data Point 1 – TerraNova Multiple Assessments, page....
- Data Point 2 – TerraNova Communication Arts, page...
- Data Point 3 - Local Assessments, Teacher Perception/Opinion Survey, page...

**List Student Performance Goal 2:** *All students will improve mathematical reasoning across all grade levels.*

- Data Point 1 – TerraNova Multiple Assessments, page...
- Data Point 2 – TerraNova Communication Arts, page...
- Data point 3 – Local Assessments, Teacher Perception/Opinion Survey, page...

### ESSENCE OF THE GOAL:

Goal 1: All students will improve writing communication across the curriculum.

Essence: Vicenza Elementary School defines writing communication across the curriculum as the ability to organize and compose information as developmentally appropriate.

Goal 2: All students will improve mathematical reasoning across all grade levels

Essence: Vicenza Elementary School defines mathematical reasoning as the ability to demonstrate critical thinking by using mathematical concepts to solve problems in daily life.

## **RATIONALE FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE GOALS**

Each Task Group was responsible for a particular area of the School Profile. Some groups were more involved with projecting trends for the future and other groups were more involved with analyzing data and noting areas of concern. Each Task Group's final report highlighted areas of possible focus for school improvement. Information was recorded on charts and Power Point presentations to be considered by the Think Tank members at a later date.

Think Tank members met and reviewed information from the nine Task Groups. Reoccurring themes of cross-curricular writing and mathematical reasoning were apparent throughout the process of identifying areas to be strengthened.

### **Rationale for Goal 1:**

According to the TerraNova Multiple Assessments, Language sub-tests Vicenza Elementary students in grades three, four, and five did not meet the DoDEA standards. Numbers of students in grades four through six in the top two quartiles have declined over time.

The TerraNova Communications Arts Assessment showed that the Vicenza Elementary School student scores had a significant decline in the areas of Reading and Writing from 2003 to 2006. When comparing the Reading and Writing scores, the Writing scores were significantly lower.

According to the 2006 Vicenza Teacher Perception/Opinion Survey, 40% or more of the teachers indicated seven areas of weakness in Language Arts related to writing. Teachers perceive synthesis across text, sentence structure, writing strategies, proof-reading, informational writing, expository writing, and application to real world writing as areas of concern.

### **Rationale for Goal 2:**

The 2006 TerraNova Multiple Assessments, Math sub-test indicates that the percentage of students scoring in the first (bottom) quartile has increased compared to the 2005 measure. Vicenza Elementary students scored below the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile in six math sub-tests with Patterns, Functions, and Algebra, Problem-solving and Reasoning and communications being the lowest.

According to the TerraNova Communication Arts Assessment shows that Vicenza Elementary students have decreased in Written Communication skills and over 60% of the students did not meet the DoDEA standard. This impacts their ability to effectively demonstrate their reasoning and problem solving skills in mathematics.

As indicated on the Vicenza Teacher Perception/Opinion Survey teachers perceive Vicenza students to be deficient in Problem-solving and Reasoning, Written and Oral Math Communications, Critical Thinking and Relating Math Concepts to the Real World.