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News Record of Maplewood and South Orange
463 Valley Street
Maplewood, NJ 07040

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Dear Editor,

In his recent article "Clinton Principal Moves On," Philip Sean Curran made a statement about Clinton School having its "share of challenges," going on to cite a statistic from the 2005-06 School Report Card that states that 15 percent of our students live in homes where English is not the primary language. He also goes on to say that this is the highest figure of any school in the district.

As the school district's English as a Second Language (ESL) school, it is true that we have a higher percentage of students living in homes where English is not the primary language than other schools in the district. However, at Clinton School you will never hear this referred to as a challenge. We embrace our status as an international school, where our children have the opportunity to learn about cultural diversity, tolerance, and world cultures and languages first hand. At Clinton School, we view our international character as a tremendous asset, and as something that enhances our school and our children's learning experience. One just needs to visit our annual International Dinner, held each spring, or look at our fourth grade immigration projects every year, or watch how an entire first grade class comes together to welcome and teach a new student from Sudan, to witness how much the Clinton School community values, celebrates, and lives our cultural diversity.

Looking at a School Report Card to make general statements about a school community is a dangerous exercise. The Clinton School community is much more than a statistic or an aggregate test score. We are a vibrant, rich, and cohesive group, and we value diversity, community, and tolerance, not just in our ideas but in our daily lives.

Sincerely,

Leah Gomberg, Clinton School PTA President
Cecelia Cancellaro, Clinton School PTA Vice-President