

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. L. Joseph Jira

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Hereford High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 17301 York Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Parkton State MD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21120-9757

County Baltimore County

Telephone (410) 887-1905 Fax (410) 887-1944

Web site/URL http://herefordhs.bcps.org/ E-mail LJira@bcps.org

Twitter Handle

https://twitter.com/HerefordHSBulls Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. S. Dallas Dance E-mail ddance@bcps.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Baltimore County Public Schools Tel. (410) 887-4191

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Charles McDaniels

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 112 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 29 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 27 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 168 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	133	160	293
10	170	132	302
11	143	169	312
12 or higher	144	131	275
<b>Total Students</b>	590	592	1182

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 89 % White
  - 2 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 3%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	39
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	1188
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.033
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7 %  
Total number students who qualify: 88

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
73 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>11</u> Autism               | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>35</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>4</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers	69
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals	11
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	96%	95%
High school graduation rate	97%	97%	98%	98%	96%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	316
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	71%
Enrolled in a community college	21%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	2%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	3%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Hereford's Mission is to provide a safe, rigorous, student-centered environment that continually challenges students, faculty, and staff to improve and develop the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for students to graduate as 21st century global learners.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Located in the rolling hills of northern Baltimore County, Hereford High School is a comprehensive public high school that opened in 1909 and currently enrolls 1,182 students in grades 9-12. As the northernmost school in the system, our zone covers approximately one-third of the acreage (or about 2223 square miles) of all of Baltimore County north to the Pennsylvania line, south to Cockeysville, MD, east to the Harford County line, and west to Carroll County. The school campus sits on 104 pristine acres, comprised of a renovated main academic building, newly constructed state of the art science wing, a turf stadium with lights, one historic and one modernized barn, and a 1.5 acre pasture for our Agriscience animals.

Hereford High School is fully accredited by The Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and by the Maryland State Department of Education. Hereford is also a member of PCACAC (Potomac & Chesapeake Association for College Admission Counseling) and the College Board. Since the 1993-94 school year, Hereford students have followed a daily organized schedule consisting of four 85 minute periods plus a 60 minute enrichment/lunch hour.

Hereford High School has deep roots in the community it serves. The land for our school was sold to the Board of Education of Baltimore County by Herman and Isabella Burton in 1950. We are the only high school in our school district that has just one feeder middle school. This unique situation, referred to as the Hereford Zone by local school districts, allows us to capitalize on the positive benefits of such exclusivity, including vertical team meetings among both teachers and administrators from the high school and middle school, strong ongoing communication between families and schools, and close beneficial relationships with long-standing families in the community.

Hereford has a reputation of academic excellence. Approximately 91% of the graduating class attends college. Hereford High School has been repeatedly awarded the Baltimore County High School Achievement Award. Hereford has consistently been ranked by Newsweek Magazine, US News and World Report, and The Washington Post as one of the top high schools in the nation. For example in 2015, US News and World Report ranked Hereford High School as 8th in the State for its “high academic performance” and for its “high degree of student college readiness.”

On the campus of Hereford HS, one will find numerous programs to help students develop to their full potential, both academically and socially. The Advancement Via Individual Determination program (AVID) identifies students in the “academic middle” and supports them as they enroll in Advanced Placement classes and seek admission to competitive, four-year colleges and universities. Within this program, students also receive mentoring from upperclassmen in the AVID program and college tutors, and regular visits with their guidance counselor. For other students who may need additional academic assistance, Hereford offers a robust tutoring program in conjunction with the honor societies associated with the school. Before school, during the Enrichment Hour, and after school, students have the opportunity to work with peer tutors who specialize in content areas in which students often struggle.

The school community at Hereford also recognizes the need of students to develop strong and healthy social relationships. Each student is assigned a guidance counselor to work with throughout high school. Thus students receive personalized guidance services, including counseling and transcript review, which allows the counselor and student to develop a strong relationship and trust to address academic, social, and emotional needs. Another way in which Hereford addresses the emotional and social development of students is through Freshmen Connections, a program that invites selected students with low middle school test scores and/or academic grades to participate in activities on the high school campus before officially enrolling at Hereford High School. During their summer sessions students in the Freshmen Connections program engage in team building activities and are taught organizational strategies, helping them to establish a sense of belonging to a safe and supportive community.

More than 90% of students at Hereford participate in at least one extra-curricular activity. We aim to have every student participate in at least one club, organization, or sports team. Many clubs, such as The Robotics Club, The Envirothon, Math League, It's Academic, Mock Trial, and Forensics teams, continue to win local,

regional, and state awards. Hereford's athletic program is regarded as one of the best in Maryland and athletic teams currently hold numerous county, regional, and state championships. Our staff and students show great respect for our campus and environment, thus earning the prestigious Green School status awarded by the Governor of the State of Maryland.

Perhaps the greatest attribute of Hereford HS is the strong support of the parents and members of the community who continually work with the school's administration. Comprised of a principal (who was once a teacher and assistant principal of Hereford HS) and three assistant principals (including one who also coached at Hereford), the administrative team is consistently guided by concerns voiced by members of the community as well as focusing on needs and concerns demonstrated within the school building and voiced by students, faculty, and staff. With the strong involvement of so many stakeholders, pride and the desire to be recognized as an elite school has never been greater.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

#### 1. Reading/English Language Arts

The English Department implements the BCPS curricula that align with the CCR Reading and Writing Standards. Performance Based Assessments provide teachers with data, allowing them to adjust instruction accordingly.

As part of the school-wide #HZONE reading initiative, English students implement multiple close reading strategies, evaluate author's content and craft, and then apply that knowledge to creating cohesive compositions. These daily efforts support the PARCC Literacy Exam and the Reading and Writing Sections of the SAT. In addition, any junior interested may take the SAT preparation course taught in conjunction with the Math Department.

At the AP level, trained instructors advance these skills using college-level texts and guiding students through a year-long research project. In any given year, approximately 70% of the junior classes rises to the challenge of enrolling in the AP Language and Composition course. The AP Literature and Composition course attracts mainly seniors.

English electives include Creative Writing, Journalism, Yearbook, Theater, Speech and Film. In these courses, students improve media literacy and develop forms of expression applicable across disciplines.

### 2. Mathematics

The Mathematics Department also follows the BCPS curricula, ensuring consistent exposure to the Standards of Mathematical Practices. Flexible scheduling allows students to enroll in math classes concurrently, resulting in greater success across all levels. AP-bound students start their journey in middle school where vertical teaming establishes solid foundations and expectations.

Students who need additional support take Math Assistance to master fundamentals. Aligned with Algebra, this course introduces and implements PARCC and SAT content. When staffing and scheduling, priority is given to ensuring smaller sections of these courses.

AP math students consistently succeed on the Calculus AB and BC and Statistics exams in part because teachers remediate during Enrichment Hour and students willingly participate in the successful peer-tutoring program.

### 3. Science

The Science Department uses the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to ensure students learn disciplinary concepts. Students are taught real world skills, science and engineering practices, and cross cutting concepts in all science classes. For students who excel in science, AP Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Environmental Science are offered to provide additional rigor and opportunity for college credit. The few students who have not passed the High School Assessment (HSA) in Biology as ninth graders commit to a yearlong remediation program that targets key concepts tested on the exam. Since the Biology HSA has been a graduation requirement, Hereford's pass rate has exceeded 99%.

Overseen and supported by the Science Department, the Agriscience Department, the only one in Baltimore County Public Schools, maintains a modernized barn, a greenhouse, and one and a half acres of pasture for animals. Students gain a solid academic foundation and acquire career skills related to carpentry, plumbing, electricity, welding, animal husbandry, horticulture, and landscape/turf management. In these classes, students develop work ethics and life skills that they readily apply to the workforce or build upon in two-year and four-year post-secondary programs.

#### 4. Social Studies/History

In the Social Studies Department, students acquire the foundational skills of written and oral argument, historical causation, interpretation, synthesis, and theory analysis by closely reading primary and secondary sources. In learner-centered groups, students engage with multi-media documents, assuming roles as historians, political scientists, economists, and psychologists. Emphasis is placed on high-level concept analysis.

To support students performing below and above grade level, the department practices curricular scaffolding and learning extension opportunities. Teachers offer unit review sessions, assessment correction opportunities, and individual tutoring. For students performing above and beyond in the social sciences, AP course offerings include US Government and Politics, World History, US History, Economics, Psychology, European History and Human Geography. The courses are all designed similarly and in accord with College Board expectations, and teachers within the department share resources to ensure that all students achieve and excel. Rigorous activities designed to stimulate and extend prior knowledge allow students to synthesize ideas across disciplines and ensure that students consistently examine and evaluate the social and cultural norms of our society.

#### College and Career Readiness

Hereford recognizes the importance of students creating individual four-year plans in order to be prepared for college and careers. Beginning in 9th grade, counselors conduct classroom visits and train students to use the highly successful Naviance program in which they can complete tasks to map out academic, career, and social goals, as well as take inventories to help them determine their career interests. Students can view results and discover how the results fit into their areas of strength, which helps them determine post-secondary choices. This information is organized onto students' accounts which facilitates their college application process in their senior year.

#### 5. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Visual Art program at Hereford High teaches creative thinking and problem solving and guides students to develop an individual artistic voice. The program begins with an introductory class accessible to students with all levels of art knowledge, and continues with elective courses in photography, digital arts, and painting and drawing. The digital arts curriculum includes animation, filmmaking, illustration and graphic design using professional grade software, and the photography program includes digital photography as well as a traditional darkroom. We also offer both integrated and self-contained arts opportunities to our students with special needs. We are currently expanding our offering of sculpture opportunities through an after school ceramics club. Hereford art students have been recognized consistently with awards at Baltimore County exhibitions at local museums, colleges, community art centers, and student film festivals and nationally through the scholastics art and writing awards. Student artwork is displayed throughout the year in several galleries within the school, as well as at community businesses and the local public library. A Hereford student was chosen for the inaugural BCPS superintendents purchase award in the spring of 2014. Most recently, three Hereford High students took the top prizes in every category (Best Drawing, Best Painting, Best Photograph) at the Towson Arts Collective High School Art Competition on Friday March 4, 2016.

The Music Department offers eight performing ensembles including Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Choir, Advanced Guitar and Percussion Ensemble. General music classes include guitar and piano, while AP Music Theory meets the needs of serious music students and Music for FALS gives special learners hands-on music experience. Rich in musical diversity, the Music Department earns superior ratings for performances at annual music assessments. Performing collegiate-level repertoire, the ensembles often represent BCPS at local events.

In conjunction with the performing arts, Hereford's Dance program is widely recognized throughout the county and state and features four classes of varying levels of experience. The Dance program works closely with the popular Theater Department. Throughout the year, both dramatic and musical theater

productions are usually sold-out and bring members of the student body and the community together to witness highly talented performing arts students on stage.

The Physical Education Department teaches grade 9 students in an atmosphere that fosters participation in individual, small group, and large group activities. Individualized for all levels of ability, courses promote safety and lifetime fitness through student-centered learning. Upper class students may enroll in elective courses such as Weight Training, Team Sports and Dance. Health classes offered to students in grades 9-12 stress the importance of optimal health. Students learn about decision-making, dealing with stress, sex education, diseases and disorders, drugs, nutrition, and wellness.

The World Languages curricula align with the National Proficiency Standards set by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages. Offering three modern languages (Spanish, French, Chinese), levels 1 through 5/6-AP, courses prepare students with language skills needed to compete in an increasingly global society. The Integrated Performance Assessments support students' real world use of the language they have learned by exposing them to authentic listening and reading materials and placing students in real-life writing and speaking situations. Students who take AP language courses routinely place in 300-level language courses at the university level.

Hereford Engineering /Technology Education offers a vision of inspiring, engaging, and preparing our next generation to be inventors and innovators who will lead U.S. achievement in STEM based fields. It emphasizes the application of mathematical and scientific concepts to create technological models that solve engineering-based challenges. Hereford's IDEA labs provide rapid prototyping experience in computer aided design, modeling, digital fabrication (3D printing, Laser Engraver, and CNC machine) and video production. Advanced Technology courses include Engineering Design and Advanced Design Applications. The broadcasting class produces a daily news show and promotes student achievement and community connections by live streaming school concerts and sporting events. The National Technical Honor Society encourages student participation in engineering-based competitions related to electric cars, robotics, model rocketry, bridge building, architecture challenges, and engineering, and achieves success in state, national, and international competitions, including the VEX Robotics World Championship Create Award in 2015.

The School to Career Department facilitates in-school and offsite work experiences for students. In class, students learn personal, professional, and technical skills by writing resumes and practicing interview skills. Students develop personalized learning plans and are measured formatively through observations during site visits. On the job, students pursue their interests in a wide range of experiences, many enthusiastically working beyond the required hours. The department also orchestrates the annual Senior Interview Day, providing an opportunity for all seniors to practice professional writing and interviewing with experts from the community. This school-wide initiative is supported by the English Department, which guides students through the related writing process.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a college readiness program which supports students in the academic middle who want to explore a rigorous curriculum and enroll in a four year college or university upon graduation. AVID elective courses feature teachers employing AVID methodologies so that students can improve their writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading skills as they move toward Advanced Placement courses. In 2014-2015, the AVID 12 class had 100% acceptance rate into four-year colleges/universities and accumulated over \$1.1 million in scholarship and grant money.

## 6. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Hereford High School meets the diverse and individual needs of students by offering a continuum of special education services. These services include differentiated instructional supports in all levels of general education, including Standard, Honors, Gifted and Talented, and Advanced Placement instruction. Highly qualified special education teachers are assigned as co-teachers to classrooms with students who have Individualized Education Plans (IEP) while para-educators provide academic and social-emotional supports for students in all areas. Additional adult support is provided for individuals who have greater educational and social needs. A behavioral Interventionist and the school social worker are available to provide emotional support that enables students to remain in class during valuable instructional time. This helps

students with disabilities take advantage of more inclusive opportunities, which leads to greater success participating in rigorous academics.

For diploma-bound students with more severe learning disabilities, classes outside of general education are warranted. Highly-qualified special educators instruct smaller groups of students in English, math, social studies and science; these classes modify the pacing and assignments used in the general education curriculum. Many students with IEPs take advantage of the Study Skills class. This class, also outside of general education, is taught by special education teachers and provides opportunities for students to work on IEP goals and organization, obtain additional assistance for assignments across all content areas, and receive reading instruction using research-based decoding and comprehension strategies.

The enrichment hour gives the behavior interventionist time to address emotional concerns. Students also participate in a variety of social groups at this time with a focus on social thinking necessary for success in the classroom and beyond. This is particularly beneficial for our growing body of students with autism.

Students with extensive academic needs participate in the FALS (Functional Academic Learning Support) Program. Students in this program learn basic life skills while being exposed to core curricular content. Extensive support services are provided for academic and social needs. These students participate in the general education setting for art and music, and attend a special physical education class. Students gain real world work experience by participating in supervised community work experiences at Old Navy and PetCo. Community-based instruction trips also provide numerous opportunities for students in this program to practice functional life skills in an authentic environment.

Hereford also provides outlets of rigor for those students who are identified as Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement students. Within this population, potential National Merit Scholars are identified and enrichment or coaching classes are offered to them in order to help these students achieve optimal scores on the PSAT and SAT. Keeping high level students challenged is evident by the amount of Advanced Placement courses that are offered. With 25 AP classes to choose from, students are able to target their academic strengths and enroll in classes that will prepare them for or allow them to explore their courses of study in college. Additionally, Baltimore County Public Schools has a relationship with the Community College of Baltimore County which allows college-ready students to take and earn transferable college credits on the campus of Hereford HS.

#### 7. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Maryland measures high school academic process each year by administering the Maryland High School Assessments (HSA), the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and additional college readiness tests such as Advanced Placement (AP) exams and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

Hereford High believes the best preparation for scoring well on the SAT and for achieving success in college begins with enrollment in at least one Advanced Placement course in high school. As a result, the AP program is the "academic engine" of the school.

According to the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability at the Maryland State Department of Education, in 2013 the average AP student at Hereford High School took 1.9 (2) AP exams and had an average passing rate of 3.5. Because Hereford believes that participating in an AP course is the best preparation for college and careers and for the SAT, the school works hard to increase its minority, FARMs, and IEP populations in AP courses.

Over the past few years, a school wide concerted effort has been made to increase AP enrollment within our FARM, IEP, and Minority Populations. An increase in AP enrollment from 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years in each of these areas has been documented. Data includes 2.5% increased to 2.9% for FARM students, .9% to 1.0% for IEP students, and 4.4% to 5% for minority students. Over the past 4 years student participation in AP classes and AP exams has increased while the passing rate has remained above 75%.

This past year, students took exams in more than 25 AP courses. Hereford consistently has almost 100 students enrolled in AB and BC Calculus. In 2013-2014, 101 Hereford students took an AP Calculus exam and 100 students passed with scores of 4 or 5. The remaining student passed with a 3. Mathematics is an important indicator of college and career readiness. A decrease in the number of Hereford students taking remedial math courses in college has also been noted during this period.

The SAT participation rate has also seen an increase due to the BCPS SAT Day. In 2013, BCPS established "SAT Day" aimed at promoting college readiness. In 2013 the Hereford SAT participation rate was 78%; in 2014, 94% and in 2015, 96%. In addition to increasing SAT participation rate, Hereford High School students continue to perform at high levels on the SAT exams. Hereford continues to earn average scores higher than both the state and national averages. Just this past year, the Class of 2015 average verbal scores were 36 points and 32 points higher than the state and national averages, respectively. Average math scores were 57 and 39 points higher, and average writing scores were 47 and 41 points higher than the state and national averages.

With the establishment of a school wide SAT day also came the establishment of student score report day. At Hereford, time is allotted to promote understanding of PSAT and SAT score reports for all students. Small group sessions are held to help students connect their score report data to college and career readiness. Parents receive score report information via Connect Ed phone calls, school newsletters, and the school website. School counselors also assist students in understanding and making connections between PSAT score report data and course planning.

The majority of Hereford High School students are not first generation college students. High SAT scores, grades from high school, and success at the post-high school level are parental expectations for almost all of our students. Understanding score report data and knowing how to use data to move forward academically help our students to reach success in both high school courses and post-high school opportunities.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

School staff, students, and key stakeholders are active participants in establishing a positive school culture and climate at Hereford HS. The administration has outlined four key goals to support an effective school climate. These include ensuring student safety, improving teaching and learning, increasing school activities participation, and building positive interpersonal relationships. At the forefront of school climate is the protection of each student's physical, emotional, and social well-being. The teachers, counselors, and administrative team work together to establish norms and behavioral expectations, as well as rules and procedures, to promote positive behavior. The school's Behavioral Interventionist and Social Worker work closely with students and design programs to monitor individual student behaviors. To support a culture for teaching and learning, the administrative team places an emphasis on job-embedded professional development to meet the specific needs of teachers. At the beginning of the year, teachers work with their department chair and assistant principal to identify professional development goals. In addition, workshops and seminars are offered for teachers to enhance their teaching methodologies for the improvement of classroom instruction.

Hereford HS also has multiple opportunities for students to become active members of the school community. Through the leadership of dedicated school personnel, numerous clubs are offered for students to participate and express their interests, skills, and diverse ideas with others. Hereford also has a unique Enrichment Hour daily from 10:30- 11:30 for students to gain academic support, attend club meetings, and build positive relationships with classmates and teachers. Hereford HS has a strong culture for extra-curricular participation and success as evident by winning the most athletic championships in the state of Maryland.

Continually, Hereford HS welcomes the opportunity to work with key stakeholders to support a positive school culture and climate. Organizations such as P.O.P.S. (Parents of Performing Students) work to build and support the performing and fine arts programs through fundraising and award yearly scholarships to exemplary students. Two longstanding community organizations contributing to the unique roots of agriculture of the school are the Junior Agriculture Club and Third Gunpowder Farmers' Club. For over 60 years, these clubs have supported Agriscience programs by facilitating internships and providing ongoing guidance to students demonstrating interests in agriculture.

As a result of its positive school culture and climate, Hereford HS has high teacher retention, high attendance and graduation rates, and a low suspension rate. Hereford High School continues to survey students, teachers, and stakeholders to gather input before making decisions regarding factors impacting students' academic success and social well-being.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Hereford HS provides numerous opportunities for community engagement in preparing students for their transition into high school and post-secondary opportunities. College and Career Readiness workshops offered by staff and community partners include College Night, Financial Aid Night, FAFSA Night, Junior Night, and Naviance training to help prepare parents for the college application process.

Hereford HS maintains community partnerships to ensure equity and education for all students and stakeholders. In 2005, My Neighbor's Foundation was created by a local community member and is supported by many families and businesses. My Neighbor's Foundation supports children in the Hereford Zone who are experiencing financial challenges so they can participate with their peers in school activities and events. Students receive financial assistance for field trips, yearbooks, prom tickets, and other areas of need. Additionally, clubs and organizations based at Hereford HS collaborate with the foundation to help raise funds. Faculty and staff are integral members of the My Neighbor's Foundation as well, making monetary donations and providing their time and services at fundraising events throughout the community.

Parents need to be supported and educated on the social well-being of their children. Recognizing this need, community members and school staff representing all members of the school's feeder system developed The Hereford Zone Safety Committee to promote social awareness and educational topics as identified by parents and community that are relevant to our school population. Hereford HS hosts community presentations including internet safety, cyber bullying, drug education, and teen relationships.

Alongside community involvement, our strong alumni support is the cornerstone of our community bond. The Hereford experience remains with our graduates, and in turn, graduates continue to give back to the school through various foundations. Hereford HS has a Community Foundation Scholarship which annually awards approximately \$109,000.00 provided by 75 donors to the graduating senior class.

The principal promotes transparency and student success through open communication. Coffee with the principal, Connect Ed calls, and monthly newsletters allow parents, students, and stakeholders to stay connected with the school's vision and mission. Additionally, Hereford HS is an exemplary high performing school making significant progress in closing the achievement gap as a result of contributions from dedicated teachers and instructional leaders. Hereford HS believes in the proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child," as the whole community plays a role in the growth and development in preparing children as life-long learners.

### 3. Professional Development:

For the past few years, much of the professional development consisted of district-wide inservice days prior to the start of the school year. This professional development focused on changes in curricula, standardized testing, and district-wide initiatives. With the addition of a STAT (Students and Teachers Accessing Tomorrow) teacher, professional development became more localized. STAT teachers serve as school-based instructional leaders who support the administrative team as they implement the school's progress plan. The STAT teacher provides a continuum of professional development experiences aligned with that plan.

The 2015-2016 Hereford HS Professional Development Plan supports the school's mission to provide students with educational experiences that are rigorous, relevant, responsive, and accessible in a safe, supportive, and culturally responsive learning environment, infused with technological skills so they are prepared to compete in the complex global economy upon graduation. In order to achieve this, teachers must remain current on pedagogy and skill set. Hereford is focusing on four areas of professional development: Close Reading Strategies in all content areas, Standards Based Grading, Educational Technology, and Learner-Centered Instruction.

Before the 2015-2016 school year began, the administrative team analyzed SAT and PSAT scores and identified a need for improvement in teaching close reading skills to improve students' abilities to critically analyze complex texts. A five-phase strategic plan was developed for implementing a POW (Passage of the Week) or school-wide SAT preparation strategy. During professional development, teachers were introduced to the close reading strategy and POW criteria. Sessions were offered on finding reading resources, refining questioning, revising POWs, and providing feedback to content departments on SAT alignment.

BCPS is currently revising a county-wide grading policy and moving towards a more standards-based grading approach. Each month, the STAT teacher and Grading Committee meet to review the county-wide grading professional development package. Standards based grading conversations and professional development sessions are facilitated through faculty meetings, department meetings, and small group combined content meetings.

Using informal observation data, formal observation data, and teacher surveys, professional development needs are analyzed and professional development experiences are offered to meet those needs. In addition to in-house professional development, many teachers attend professional development programs outside of the school house. All teachers of AP courses have received training through one-day workshops or a week-long summer institute held at Goucher College. These AP professional development opportunities are

offered by BCPS and sponsored by the College Board. Teachers from all disciplines have attended county-wide content-specific workshops and conferences.

#### 4. School Leadership:

The Instructional Leadership Team at Hereford High School supports the belief that quality instruction leads to student achievement. The goal that all students will be college and career ready regardless of their socioeconomic background is deeply rooted in the leadership's actions and initiatives for the school community. Effective school leadership is achieved at Hereford High School through teamwork and leaders embrace the diversity of all teachers, students, and school personnel.

The Leadership Team is multifaceted with the principal, assistant principals, department chairpersons, counselors, and teachers all taking active roles in preparing students to be 21st century thinkers and learners. The principal and assistant principals work together to improve teaching and learning through ongoing professional development, eliminating achievement gaps, reviewing results from standardized tests for data based decision making, and scheduling courses based on the students' college and career interests.

The principal has strategically selected department chairpersons to be content experts and to steer the quality of instruction within their departments. The department chairpersons at Hereford HS are effective liaisons among students, parents, and administrators. The department chairpersons hold monthly meetings for professional development geared toward improving the effectiveness of teaching and raising the bar on student achievement. Through the strategic leadership of Hereford High School's department chairpersons, the enrollment of Advanced Placement courses continues to increase, as does dual enrollment in high school and community college classes in order to prepare students for college and career success.

School counselors and teachers are integral parts of the Leadership Team's ability to meet the unique needs of all learners. Over the past few years, several teacher based leadership committees have been created and aligned to the School Progress Plan. The SAT and AP committees are longstanding committees at Hereford High School geared toward improving students' college placement through standardized testing. The teachers and counselors in these committees work tirelessly to provide leadership in instruction and preparation for the SAT and AP exams. New to Hereford High School are the Grading Committee and Freshman Connection Committee, both designed to improve academic success for all students.

In summary, the school principal has recognized the importance of effective team building that makes school leadership inclusive. The assistant principals, department chairs, committee leaders and school personnel share the principal's mission of preparing students for college and career readiness. The principal routinely seeks the expertise of the school leaders when making decisions that impact teaching and learning at Hereford High School.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Hereford High is unique in many ways. An extraordinarily large percentage of students participate in extra-curricular activities. The result is that our students are very busy, particularly after school. The Enrichment Hour has been a part of Hereford High School's school day for almost two decades. This program takes place in the middle of the day, allowing students to participate in clubs, receive extra help, and participate in meetings that they might not be able to attend after school.

The Enrichment Hour is unique to Hereford and works well due to the dedication and involvement of administration, staff, and students. The hour is divided into an enrichment half and a lunch half. Students choose from a variety of staff-sponsored offerings: extra help/tutoring, clubs, student council, SAT review, or other test review. In many instances the offerings are both halves and students may eat their lunches in the teacher's classroom to facilitate their participation.

Students have a diverse set of choices to attend on a daily basis. If they do not choose to sign up for an activity, they have assigned seats in the auditorium where they are expected to be reading or quietly studying. A signup process allows teachers to track when students are utilizing their assigned seat numbers. The computer program that handles this process was written by a student.

On occasion, assemblies may be held during Enrichment Hour. This time can also be used to distribute school-wide pertinent information such as scheduling, graduation requirements, and procedures for district wide standardized testing.

Because they have such a wide range of activities, students can be participants in clubs and receive extra help even if they participate in other after school activities. By their sophomore year, 90% of students are enrolled in at least one club or organization on campus, largely due to the implementation of Enrichment Hour.

Students have opportunities to grow both academically and personally through enrichment activities. Enrichment Hour allows teachers to keep students on track academically, give one-to-one attention where needed, and offer a variety of clubs of interest to our school community. Enrichment Hour provides our students an opportunity to interact with other students in our building whom they would not normally come in contact with during the school day. These experiences build a positive atmosphere among the entire student body, teachers, and other staff members at Hereford HS. Enrichment Hour is a major contributor to the positive and healthy climate our students experience at Hereford High School.