U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Lisa Sue Stevenson
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Cash Valley Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10601 Cash Valley Road NW
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City LaVale   State MD   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21502-6044

County Allegany County

Telephone (301) 724-6632   Fax (301) 724-5297

Web site/URL https://www.acpsmd.org/ca   E-mail lisa.stevenson@acpsmd.org

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* Mr. Jeffrey Blank   E-mail jeffrey.s.blank@acpsmd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Allegany County Public Schools   Tel. (301) 759-2037

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 Mrs. Tammy Fraley
(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

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. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

3. 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.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.

6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.

7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district   <u>14 </u>Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   <u>4 </u>Middle/Junior high schools
                                 <u>4 </u>High schools
                                 <u>0 </u>K-12 schools

                                 <u>22 </u>TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/ (Find your school and check "Locale")

   [ ] Urban (city or town)
   [ ] Suburban
   [X] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	21	24	45
K	25	23	48
1	25	13	38
2	23	11	34
3	18	16	34
4	27	13	40
5	27	13	40
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	166	113	279

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0.4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
   the school (if unknown, estimate):   2 % Asian
                                      5.4 % Black or African American
                                      2.2 % Hispanic or Latino
                                        0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                       85 % White
                                        5 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 13%

   If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

   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 *to* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	269
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

   Mandarin

   English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %

                                                      1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 57 %

        Total number students who qualify: 160

8. Students receiving special education services: __27__ %

   __74__ 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.

__15__ Autism	__9__ Multiple Disabilities
__0__ Deafness	__0__ Orthopedic Impairment
__0__ Deaf-Blindness	__10__ Other Health Impaired
__14__ Developmental Delay	__7__ Specific Learning Disability
__0__ Emotional Disturbance	__16__ Speech or Language Impairment
__0__ Hearing Impairment	__0__ Traumatic Brain Injury
__3__ Intellectual Disability	__0__ Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: __1__

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 __15:1__

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	94%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
   Yes _   No X

   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.

The Cash Valley community is a cohesive family whose priority is effectively supporting the diverse health, safety, cultural, and learning needs of the whole child. This family-school structure allows students to experience a comprehensive education in a safe environment that will prepare them to contribute to a changing society.

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

Located in the mountains of western Maryland, Cash Valley Elementary School has been serving local families for over 40 years. Our one level, open space facility currently serves 279 students, with 58.4% qualifying for free and reduced meals. Special Education services are provided to 26.5% of the student population. Our school is unique in the sense that we serve as a regional placement for students requiring a Structured Learning Environment (SLE), with some students traveling approximately an hour by bus to receive instruction.

Although our school is not located in a neighborhood area, we strive to create a community atmosphere within the school by involving families with instructional and recreational activities. Our school community continues to work together to raise funds in order to enhance the outdoor space for students, families, and community members to enjoy. Some of the many features of this space include a walking track, a handicapped accessible fenced playground, a baseball field, a basketball court, sensory equipment, a covered pavilion, and a Chesapeake Bay watershed wetlands area. In addition, a concrete sidewalk surrounds the entire area, allowing for biking or walking, allowing handicapped accessibility to all entrances of the school.

Our school is proud of the low staff turnover rate with all classroom and resource teachers meeting the qualifications for being Maryland highly qualified educators. Maryland Advanced Professional certificates are held by the majority of the instructional staff. Our full-time staff members include a guidance counselor, a nurse, a speech and language pathologist, two special education inclusion teachers, and a library media specialist. Fifteen full-time instructional assistants provide additional classroom support to small groups as well as individual students. Music, Physical Education, and Art teachers are shared instructionally with other elementary schools. In order to meet the needs of our diverse student population, our school also benefits from the itinerant services of school psychologists, behavior specialists, autism specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, vision specialists, orientation and mobility specialists, English Language Learner instructors, reading and math specialists, mental health counselors, pupil personnel workers, and a school resource officer. Through federal Title I funding, we are afforded the services of one additional teacher who serves as the school's class size reduction teacher for ELA instruction and one instructional assistant who provides reading intervention services. Our Title I school support specialist and Family Engagement coordinator organizes opportunities for families to participate in their children's academic success. Additionally, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) has dedicated officers that meet to determine areas of need and support, planning various fundraisers and projects to unify the school community.

Many students in our Cash Valley family experience trauma-affected environments such as generational poverty, substance abuse, neglect, physical and emotional abuse, mental illness, incarceration, and unemployment. Substance abuse has claimed the lives of some students' close family members, with many of those children now being raised by other caregivers. These circumstances also lead to low student attendance, minimal family involvement, and transportation issues. To address these adverse family situations, the school collaborates with community agencies and the local education system to provide preventative health care services such as dental, hearing, and vision screenings. Basic needs are met through programs such as the Safe and Snug Project which provides winter coats for children in need, the weekend Backpack Program which donates food for the students' families over the weekends, and the Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMfA) free breakfast program. Our school also houses an on-site daycare center for families who require before and after school child care and partners with the local YMCA and Head Start to allow accessibility and travel between the facilities.

Cash Valley's statewide assessment scores show a continued trend toward closing the achievement gap between the Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) and Special Education subgroups and the aggregate at each grade level. As a result, the school was designated as a 2018 National Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Distinguished School and a 2019 Maryland Blue Ribbon School. We attribute this success to our vision, mission, and core values, in which all school initiatives and curricular decisions are based on individual students' needs. In order to provide a more inclusive setting for our diverse student population, our school is a member of the Maryland Coalition of Inclusive Educators (MCIE) and participated in training and action planning through the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT).

During this process, we realized the need for further exploration and analysis of our intervention program, differentiated instruction, inclusive practices, and professional development through Formative Assessment for Maryland Educators (FAME) and Formative Assessment for Leadership Teams (FALT). In our quest to meet the ever changing needs of our Cash Valley family, we proudly continue to explore new avenues for growth and success.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Cash Valley Elementary school views curriculum and instruction as a collaboration between all stakeholders: students, faculty, and families. Through SWIFT, a multi-tiered system of support was developed to identify instructional priorities and practices in order to sustain schoolwide implementation of our school improvement initiatives. The staff utilizes a scrolling process to ensure vertical alignment and efficient pacing that incorporates all aspects of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MDCCRS). To meet the diverse needs of our student population, instruction is planned and delivered through the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) and the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). In GRR and UDL, instruction is delivered through a process that includes focused instruction, guided instruction, collaborative learning, and independent learning. In addition, students are provided with multiple means of representation, action, expression, and engagement. This approach is fostered by our schoolwide emphasis on the use of technological supports and differentiated web-based instruction. All students have one-to-one devices in kindergarten through fifth grade. Data analysis of state, district, and school-level assessments are fundamental to planning and providing differentiated instruction to all learners. Grade-level teams meet weekly with inclusion teachers, content specialists, and administrators to monitor student progress, plan spiral reviews, and create targeted small groups to ensure equity. Progress reports and suggested strategies for student success are shared with families through conferences, activities in the classroom, assignment notebooks, and online communication. We view the social and emotional health of the school family as an integral part of the learning process. Therefore, mindfulness and metacognition strategies have become a priority and are embedded into our daily instruction as students learn to "drive their brains." Everyone is encouraged to internalize and take ownership of their learning by setting goals and persevering to meet those goals. The principles of FAME are essential as we guide students toward achieving learning targets based on carefully created success criteria. This initiative is being sustained through involvement in FALT. The Cash Valley family is dedicated to investing in these principles to create lifelong learners.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum at Cash Valley school consists of a comprehensive approach towards balanced literacy. Students receive focused Tier I instruction during a 120-minute reading block that includes reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. McGraw-Hill's Treasures reading series serves as the core reading program. However, through careful unpacking of the state standards, it became evident that additional resources were needed to fully meet the expectations of the standards. Instructional staff worked in grade-level teams to determine additional resources needed to alleviate the gaps that existed between the core reading program and the standards. Through the scrolling process, vertical teams met to pace and plan implementation of a more rigorous schoolwide program that includes whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. In order to meet the needs of all learners and to plan for differentiation, weekly co-planning sessions between grade-level and special education teachers are included in the master schedule. Meetings are guided by the SWIFT protocol for collaboration. Primary students are screened three times a year using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Intermediate grade students are assessed using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and targeted students are also screened through DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency and cloze reading assessments. Following these benchmark administrations, data meetings are held with grade-level teachers, district reading specialists, and administrators to track the progress of every student toward their learning goals and to assign targeted students to Tier II intervention programs.

During daily ELA instruction, primary students focus on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension with the emphasis on foundational skills. Instruction for intermediate grade students includes all five essential components and is heavily focused on vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Throughout all grades, it is recognized that students must be

proficient with both digital and print resources. Therefore, teachers have integrated multiple online resources such as Freckle, PebbleGo, ReadWorks, Read Theory, NewsELA, Discovery Education, SIRS Discoverer, Scholastic, and StoryWorks into instruction at all grade levels. Many of these online resources allow teachers to differentiate based upon instructional levels. Individual student accounts in both Discovery Education and the Google Suite enable intermediate students to manage their online resources, utilize information, and create collaborative products in multiple formats.

Writing is an integral part of daily lessons in all subject areas. Instruction is focused on the 6+1 Traits of Writing program which includes content topics on ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions, as well as the added component of presentation. Students are engaged in writing for different purposes such as responding to prompts, text dependent questions, modeling and reasoning in math, integrating evidence from multiple sources, and expression of creative ideas. Students write on demand and also work through the steps of the writing process. Success criteria is created collaboratively with students, and teachers appropriately model to give and receive feedback. As students take ownership of their writing and incorporate teacher and peer feedback for reflection, the GRR framework is actively evident. These initiatives have proven successful as students perform independently resulting in higher achievement on state ELA assessments.

1c. Mathematics

Eureka Math is the core math curriculum at Cash Valley Elementary school. During the initial year of implementation, grade-level teams collaborated with teachers from another county school to participate in module studies that were led by specially trained Eureka staff. Students receive multi-tiered instruction during a 70-minute math block that includes concept development, spiral review, fluency, multi-step problem solving, and differentiated small group instruction. Through the scrolling process, careful unpacking of the state standards provided information regarding resources and strategies that were needed to fully meet the expectations. This process allowed for intentional planning and pacing of content and spiral review. Regularly scheduled meetings involving grade-level teachers, special education teachers, and county math specialists provide opportunities to analyze data, reflect on instruction and pacing, and plan for whole, individual, and small group differentiation.

In order to meet the needs of all learners, additional resources are incorporated to enhance daily instruction and to reinforce previously taught concepts. Therefore, teachers have integrated multiple online resources such as Freckle, Zearn, and ScootPad into instruction at all grade levels. In addition, Imagine Math is a county-driven initiative that is being implemented and monitored daily at designated periods. All of these programs allow teachers to create individualized pathways to meet the needs of students requiring higher levels of support as well as those in need of enrichment.

During concept development, teachers help students establish a concrete understanding of math concepts and skills through modeling, discussion, and experiences that allow them to use a variety of math strategies and manipulatives. Each year parents participate in classroom activities that help them more thoroughly understand the strategies their children are being taught. Students are encouraged to participate in discussions using math vocabulary, collaborating with the teacher and peers to develop learning goals and success criteria. Although spiral review is a daily component of the Eureka program, additional spiral review activities are planned based on continuous formative assessment practices. At Cash Valley Elementary we promote math fluency as the ability to efficiently recall and apply skills and computation. To support the belief that fluency is more than memorization, we incorporate educational games, computer programs, and other classroom activities that develop these essential skills. Teachers also continue to strengthen their own understanding of these fluency skills by participating in professional learning activities such as Math Solutions and Boxcars and One-Eyed Jacks. A real world approach is connected with solving multi-step word problems through the application of the eight mathematical practice standards. Students are encouraged to select and use efficient problem-solving strategies and support their reasoning. Small group instruction is essential for mastery of the MDCCRS. Purposeful planning of small group activities allows teachers to address misconceptions and challenges within concepts. Multiple means of monitoring student progress, such as quarterly county-wide benchmarks, mid-module and end-of-module Eureka assessments, and ongoing formative and summative assessments are used to guide differentiation and structure groups.

Data derived from these assessments is analyzed during quarterly meetings between grade-level teachers, special education teachers, administration, and math specialists. Through a team approach and differentiated instruction, Cash Valley students have continued to achieve at a high level on state mathematics assessments.

1d. Science

Science instruction at Cash Valley school is based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and is taught using a hands-on, multimedia approach. Students use the 5E Model to explore real world problems and acquire the skills and knowledge needed to develop a scientifically-based view of the world. The four major science domains are physical, life, earth, and space, integrated with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Crosscutting concepts enable the students to engage in authentic learning at multiple grade levels with increasing depth and rigor. The recent purchase and subsequent training on the Full Option Science System (FOSS) has enabled teachers to conduct meaningful hands-on investigations in the classroom. Through multiple means of representation, students extend, refine, and revise their knowledge. Classroom extension opportunities include STEM activities, unit projects, research investigations, and hands-on experiments. In order to enhance learning and provide multiple means of presentation, online resources are integrated into instruction. These resources include Discovery Education, Mystery Science, BrainPop Jr., and Freckle Science. In addition, students use online resources such as PebbleGo, SIRS Discoverer, and appropriate search engines such as KidRex to assist in conducting their research.

Family engagement is encouraged through events such as STEM Day, Ag in the Classroom Mobile Science Lab, and Super Science Week. Community partnerships provide the opportunity for students to interact with representatives from local higher education facilities to complete hands-on learning activities and receive career-based information. Field trips to state parks, including Rocky Gap and Deep Creek Lake, as well as the week-long fifth grade overnight Outdoor School experience, provide further scientific explorations in an outdoor setting. These practices have led to increased student success on the fifth grade state science assessment.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Social Studies instruction at Cash Valley is based on the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standard that incorporates civics, geography, economics, and history. The integration of ELA is an essential part of the social studies curriculum. Students are assessed on their ability to ask and answer questions, find and evaluate resources, draw conclusions, and present their findings. Within the social studies discipline, students develop the ability to write arguments and support those arguments using text-based evidence from multiple sources. Print and non-print materials such as Scholastic News, StoryWorks, PebbleGo, Discovery Education, NewsELA, Readworks, and SIRS Discoverer are employed to facilitate inquiry-based activities.

Community and business partnerships enable the students to be immersed in real life experiences. Students visit an authentic canal boat and learn about life during that historic period through reenactments. Local historians engage students by sharing primary source documents and artifacts relating to specific time periods. Veterans lead a ceremony dedicating a new American flag to the school and presenting a history on flags that represent the armed forces. Guest speakers visit the classrooms during Career Day to showcase employment opportunities from the various career clusters. The guidance counselor also presents lessons based on the world of work and educational requirements needed for various career fields. A Wax Museum performance by fifth grade students is a culminating activity sharing research on European explorers, developing a first person point of view essay, and creating original character costumes. First responders visit the school to present information regarding fire safety. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program is delivered by a county resource officer as part of the fifth grade health curriculum. Students also have the opportunity to build relationships with a police officer and his K-9 partner allowing for a better understanding of community protective services. The goal of these partnerships is to promote good decision-making skills for safe and healthy living.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

Cash Valley hosts three-year old and four-year old pre-K programs. These half-day inclusive classes connect to the schoolwide initiatives and students participate in all school activities. These programs support early learners' readiness for kindergarten. The early childhood team analyzes Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) data to make curricular decisions based on findings. Young children's development is honored through active learning and building diverse foundational skills. They share the vision, mindset, and goals of the upper grades, with a focus on social and emotional development. Second Step, an early childhood curriculum, is used to support self-regulation and emotional management. Students participate in self-selected centers that provide opportunities to use imaginative play and relate to others socially. This affords students the chance to apply the social skills learned. Additionally, students participate in a 15-20-minute academic block. The three-year old class follows Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy, Birth to Age 8 for guidance and uses the Treasures program with integrated math skills and counting. MDCCRS is followed by the four-year old program. In these classes, Treasures and Eureka are the main resources for ELA and math and are in alignment with the overall instructional focus of the school. The staff is included in vertical planning meetings to ensure consistency in language and routines. Lessons for the three- and four-year olds include learning goals and success criteria that is developmentally appropriate. Students receive specialized instruction such as speech, physical therapy, and occupational therapy within the classroom setting to create a more authentic experience. Many students involved in the pre-K three- and four-year old classes attend the Kids' Korner Child Care which is housed at Cash Valley or are enrolled in a local Head Start program. Our early childhood programs are seen as an opportunity to welcome families to the Cash Valley community, beginning a successful learning pathway.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The library media program provides instruction, resources, and services to enable students to be effective users of ideas and information. All students in pre-K through fifth grade are instructed weekly in library media skills by a certified library media specialist. The library media curriculum is based on the Maryland State School Library Media Standards and is cross-walked with the district's ELA curriculum to achieve a seamless integration of concepts and skills. In addition, the media center provides access to an organized, diverse collection of resources, in all formats, that support the curricula. To ensure a quality collection, the library media specialist utilizes the county-wide selection policy and adheres to the guidelines for collection development. Another component of the comprehensive educational experience at Cash Valley is ensuring that children are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in our fast-paced, ever changing digital world. We believe that teaching digital citizenship to our students enables them to think, behave, and participate responsibly in present society. Therefore, all students receive bi-weekly technology and digital citizenship lessons that are taught by the library media specialist. These lessons incorporate authentic learning and enable the students to safely interact and collaborate with others online. The Common Sense Education curriculum serves as the basis for the digital citizenship lessons. Coding, keyboarding, robotics, and other computer science topics are also explored during these technology periods.

The goal of the physical education program is to promote life-long physical and safety practices, with healthy habits for students of all ages, while also improving mental health. We recognize the need for healthy mind and body lifestyles and its ability to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Physical activities are integrated throughout the school day in order to promote focus and cognitive function. Movement breaks aid in promoting cooperative learning, improving self-esteem, and helping students to manage their emotions. Instruction is delivered based on the Maryland Physical Education Framework and the Maryland Content Standards for Physical Education PreK-12. As all students participate in weekly lessons, they will become physically literate individuals and will select positive choices that lead to a future of safe, healthy lifestyles.

The counseling program follows the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. This model is based on three direction student services: school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. The school counselor teaches bi-weekly lessons in all classrooms based

on the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success: K-12 College and Career Readiness Standards for Every Student. These standards include learning strategies, self-management, and social skills. The counselor also assesses students' interests and then explores careers that align with the results. Additionally, the counselor's role is to advise students in a responsive manner by using staff and student surveys to determine group and individual counseling services.

Students' essential art skills are supported by following the guidelines of the Visual Arts Curriculum Standards as presented by the Maryland Art Educators Association, in conjunction with the National Core Art Standards. Art instruction is provided to all students on a weekly basis. Students are taught to cultivate the physical and mental skills used to produce any type of art, and the methods that define how and why art is created. They are taught to respond to different types of artwork through the ages by learning to critique, perceive, and analyze their own work, as well as the work of past and contemporary artists. Students also gain an understanding by connecting their art to the creations made by other students and artists. Integrating art to their own environment and lifestyle is a vital instrument in students' personal growth. Students are provided opportunities to display their artistic creations through showcases, contests, and book publications.

The music program affords all students the opportunity to be engaged through weekly music education classes with a certified music instructor. The curriculum is based on the music standards from the National Association for Music Education. Students in fourth and fifth grade have the option to participate in the band and orchestra program that meets weekly and are led by certified teachers. Students generate, select, develop, evaluate, and refine musical ideas. These experiences lead to musical and instrumental performances for various purposes and in different contexts.

3. **Academic Supports**:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Cash Valley utilizes a variety of instructional approaches to identify and support students who are performing below grade level. Classroom teachers, special education personnel, reading intervention staff, and county reading and math specialists collaborate to analyze data from tools such as DIBELS, Quick Phonics Screener (QPS), SRI, Imagine Math benchmarks, and KRA. In addition, formative assessments and classroom observations are included in the student identification process. Once students have been identified as needing additional academic support, the specific type of intervention is determined based on individual student needs. These interventions are provided in both the classroom and small group instructional settings. Research-based programs such as Read Naturally, Fundations, Explode the Code, Edmark, Reading Kingdom, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, and Multi-Sensory Reading Strategies are employed. In addition, students work in small, flexible groups as they receive scaffolding support in the core reading and math programs. Online programs allow teachers the opportunity to design specialized pathways to accommodate the needs of learners who are performing below grade level.

If student progress continues to be a concern for the teacher, a referral process is in place to request additional support and assessment through the Instructional Consultative Team (ICT). Our trained ICT personnel meet twice a month to review teacher referrals and assign case managers. Once the case has been assigned, the referring teacher and case manager work together to create a snapshot of current student performance, determine strategies, set goals, and monitor student progress. Updates of each case are provided at the school ICT meetings. These updates allow the team members to determine whether the instructional strategies being used are effective or if additional strategies need to be modified within the student plan. This collaborative process typically occurs before students are referred for Special Education services.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students who are performing above grade level are also afforded a variety of experiences to enhance their learning. Enrichment opportunities are provided for those students performing above grade level. This instruction takes place concurrently with the daily scheduled intervention block at each grade level; therefore, all students are receiving specialized instruction to meet their needs. In addition, students work in

small, flexible groups as they are provided with opportunities for acceleration in the core reading and math programs. Students follow online accelerated learning paths, interact with above grade-level complex texts, and engage in hands-on STEM activities.

Identified and selected students are participants in the Acceleration and Enrichment Program (AEP). Parents, teachers, and other educators in the building can submit nominations for candidacy in the program based upon observations and formative assessments. Acquired data, as well as teacher provided information, is recorded on a Talent Pool Nomination form for each nominated student. The AEP committee meets at the beginning of the school year to review all data and information prior to student selection. At any time throughout the year, nominations may be submitted for review. The library media specialist coordinates this program for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. Activities and lessons are in alignment with the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Standards and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Criteria for Excellence: Gifted and Talented Education Program Guidelines. The students meet weekly in grade-level groups, incorporating higher level thinking skills through research-based and community service projects resulting in schoolwide presentations.

3c. Special education

Students and faculty are all members of an inclusive school family. Special education and general education teachers collaborate to prepare for the implementation of individualized instruction. A goal matrix is used to identify daily instructional periods where students' individual goals can be met through Specially Designed Instruction (SDI). Based on the matrix guide, teachers determine if individual goals are best supported in the general education classroom or a more direct instructional setting. Participation matrices are developed to describe how a student will participate throughout the school day based on the supports, supplementary aids, and accommodations identified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students with the most significant learning differences participate in SLE. This program offers a low student-to-teacher ratio with explicit instruction based on essential skills and knowledge. It also provides opportunities to participate through inclusive activities as determined appropriate by the IEP team. These opportunities include classroom instruction, resource classes, social times (lunch and recess), and schoolwide assemblies. General education and special education teachers participate in weekly collaborative planning to determine lesson modifications and supplemental materials that need to be implemented. Related services are available for students requiring physical therapy, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility training, vision services, and speech therapy in order to reach their full potential in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The Special Education department utilizes a total communication approach to support the functional communication of all students. A variety of high and low technology supports are integrated into instruction and social activities. These supports increase expressive language skills through the use of core language boards, voice output communication systems, sign language, and picture exchanges. The goal is to promote student independence and foster relationships among students and adults throughout the school environment.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Students are enthusiastically greeted by the staff upon arrival every morning. Each week begins with a reminder to students that Funday Monday is the day to restart and refocus by displaying "cougar" character. The week ends on High Five Friday as students celebrate their hard work ethics and exit the building with high fives from the principal. Teachers start the day by reviewing the daily expectations and sharing positive comments to set the focus. Bulletin boards throughout the building display samples of student work, along with positive mindset phrases and visuals. Classrooms with perfect attendance proudly display their Perfect Attendance banners at the entrance to their teaching area. Each classroom selects a motto that represents their class expectations. Banners are then created displaying the mottos and are used as decorations during school assemblies.

The Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program is used throughout all grade levels. Students are verbally recognized for displaying the schoolwide expectations using the process of stating their name, stating their action, and stating the schoolwide expectation met. Individual and classroom awards are earned through points acquired using ClassDojo, an online management tool that allows students ownership in creating a positive learning environment. At the conclusion of each grading period, students are acknowledged for their academics, effort, character, and attendance during a celebration ceremony. Achievements are recognized with a prize jar, charms, and cougar coins for the Treasure Tower. Participation in award assemblies is based upon successful demonstration of the schoolwide expectations, which are "Be Respectful", "Be Responsible", and "Be an Expert Learner." To meet these expectations, all students work together to resolve conflicting situations and to repair relationships. Restorative practices are implemented for peaceful problem-solving when challenging issues occur.

All students are provided equitable opportunities to succeed, treated fairly, and supported by the educational professionals charged with their care and learning. As a regional center for students requiring classroom placement in SLE, the school family focuses on providing positive inclusive experiences. Students work together in small groups and as partners in order to collaborate and offer peer feedback during instructional activities. They are encouraged to assist in the development of learning goals and success criteria and to monitor their progress toward attainment of these goals. Through the use of UDL, students are encouraged to select their preferred method of presenting what they have learned. We also recognize that there are times throughout the school day when students may need to regulate their emotions, de-escalate and calm their bodies, or refocus their attention to be successful in the classroom. In order to restore this personal balance, students are provided opportunities to visit the sensory room and mindfulness area.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Multiple opportunities are offered for families to participate in school-based events. Meet the Families Night occurs at the beginning of the school year. All families are invited to meet the school staff and visit classrooms. Information is provided regarding the Title I Federal Program, PTO, and grade-level expectations. In the fall, grandparents are asked to attend Grandparent's Day activities. Classrooms engage the students and grandparents in activities such as interviews, timelines, and family trees. School action teams coordinate a specific family engagement activity and community partnership based on content areas. Connections are made with families by presenting the SIP overview and resources that are accessible to increase student achievement. Through family engagement activities, parents are guardians become participants in content lessons to understand learning standards and goal expectations connected to the SIP focus areas.

During ELA and Math Problem Solving Days, families engage in content specific activities and learn strategies to help their students at home. Step Into STEM is a hands-on afternoon event when families are introduced to robotics, Lego League activities, and classroom-based STEM investigations. In partnership with the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) and Potomac State College (PSC), a Super Science Week is planned each year. Students visit the mobile science lab, learn from science career guest

speakers, and participate in lessons taught by local college biology students. The Title I Family Engagement Coordinator conducts weekly workshops for volunteers to create and assemble materials for use in the classrooms and organizes the Guest Reader program. We strive to effectively include families of English Language Learners (ELL) and invite them to these events, providing language supports as needed.

Community partnerships have enabled students to receive dental sealants, winter coats, food backpacks, public library cards, vision screening, mental health counseling, and school supplies. The school family gives back to the community by donating to the local food bank, animal shelter, Toys for Happiness campaign, and by collecting funds for cancer awareness and Special Olympics. The Masonic Potomac Lodge partnership continues to support attendance initiatives through bicycle raffles, emphasizing the need to be present for learning.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Structures are in place that allow all staff members to participate on teams and address professional development needs while promoting participation as active school leaders. The Leadership Team serves as an umbrella under which all other teams function. This team meets monthly and is composed of the chairpersons from each of the schoolwide action teams, as well as representation from families and community members. The team is responsible for writing the SIP and monitoring the goals outlined in the plan. All team members have a voice when determining schoolwide initiatives that promote the vision and mission of our school.

In an effort to build sustainability of effective instructional strategies and practices for current teachers, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been established. The PLCs work together to develop and improve targeted instructional practices. In recent years, PLC teams have focused on formative assessment using MSDE's FAME and FALT modules which include book studies, instructional coaching, classroom observations, collaborative reflection, strategic action planning, and site visits from MSDE personnel. Continued implementation of FAME and FALT practices has resulted in more effective delivery of instruction in order to better meet individual student needs.

Cash Valley is a Professional Development School (PDS), and through partnerships with Frostburg State University (FSU) and Allegany College of Maryland (ACM), our teachers serve as mentors for student interns who are preparing to enter the field of education. This reciprocal relationship allows teacher candidates to visit the school to gain real-world experience in authentic classroom settings. Our teachers visit the campuses to conduct candidate interviews, evaluate interns' portfolios, and assist in designing curriculum for new teacher candidates.

We recognize the need to promote a healthy mindset and develop self-regulation skills for both students and staff. In order to become more responsive rather than reactive when interacting with each other, these topics are emphasized and practiced daily. We strive to meet all challenges with a growth mindset approach. Staff members are engaged in ongoing professional development to continue exploration of mindfulness, self-regulation, and metacognition, based on the book Teaching Students to Drive Their Brains. To strengthen the school's culture, approaches to this initiative include mindful breathing, Mindfulness for Teachers book study, massage chair availability, virtual reality goggles, and luncheons promoting healthy eating. We recognize the need to maintain a healthy mind and body lifestyle in order to be most effective for students and the school community.

4. School Leadership:

The school community is referred to as a family and is addressed as such through all communication. The school theme "Every Connection Counts" acknowledges that each positive contact between students, families, and staff enhances the partnership between school and home, developing an integrated unit that has common expectations for success.

The SIP is a reference guide that is a schoolwide document revisited by the faculty and staff to remain focused on the school's vision and mission. The school structure is established to build interpersonal

connections that allow horizontal and vertical communication to flow in order to reflect and revise approaches to meet the needs in the school environment. This process allows for individual student performance to be collected, analyzed, and actions to be taken while involving various perspectives in the decision-making process.

The Leadership Team is responsible for the overall implementation of the SIP components and data analysis, making necessary changes to continue the progression of learning. Members serve as chairs of the action and support teams, collecting data and sharing results for monitoring purposes. This leveled approach allows for all staff to share input and remain aware of attainment of goals or changes that may be necessary. The Culture and Climate Team monitors discipline and the implementation of the PBIS program. Schoolwide expectations are reviewed and evaluated to facilitate a safe and orderly environment. The focus is on restorative practices promoting time on task. This approach to discipline establishes the social culture, behavior levels, and consistent methods toward the schoolwide expectations of being safe, responsible, and an expert learner. To increase academic achievement, discipline data (referrals, logs, sensory room, mindfulness room, etc.) is monitored and analyzed by the Tier 2 Team, with the priority on positive interventions and supportive strategies. Through the Five Whys and Root Cause Analysis approach, the Math/Science, ELA/Social Studies, and Technology/STEM Action Teams analyze data of specific content assessments to identify learning opportunities and areas for celebration.

Administrators serve as members on each team, supporting safety, instruction, and relationships in alignment with security expectations, state standards and assessments, and a culture where everyone is valued and respected. Administrators participate in open discussions during action, support, and grade-level team meetings to review assessments, identify barriers, and reflect with staff on SIP goals. SIP initiatives are observed during classroom observations and walkthroughs for documented evidence of instructional implementation meeting schoolwide focus goals.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Differentiation of instruction is our school's overarching strategy for academic success. Intervention and enrichment, small flexible grouping within classrooms, and the use of web-based programs are areas differentiation is used to benefit all students. In order to accomplish this, we begin by conducting a formal data dive of the Maryland state assessment results using the Five Whys technique. Through this process, we are able to identify the root causes of problematic areas and create action plans for implementing improvement strategies. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) practice profiles are used to monitor implementation of a tiered support system for reading, math, and behavior.

If you enter any classroom at Cash Valley school, you will see these differentiation practices in action. Some students are collaborating with peers, while others are independently learning through individualized computer pathways using one-to-one device availability. In addition, a teacher or instructional assistant is monitoring a small group on a particular skill for reteaching, practicing, or enriching purposes. Conferencing with individual students becomes accessible while student partners are engaging in peer-to-peer interactions. Through explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies, students are checking their goal sheets to track progress toward individual learning targets or involved in an active brain break. While some students are utilizing manipulatives to concretely demonstrate skills, others may be abstractly referencing a project. Coreboards are visually displayed to use as a resource to support communication and provide the opportunity for students to be thoroughly engaged.

Incorporation of small group teaching has strengthened educators' abilities to meet students' needs. Our work with MCIE and SWIFT maintains the focus on equity-based inclusive practices, strengthens UDL implementation, and increases collaborative planning among general and special educators. Professional learning through FAME and FALT provides the teachers with tools that enable all students the opportunity to access grade-level content and to differentiate the process, product, and learning environment as needed.

Schoolwide improvement and individualized professional development continue to be a successful process when common values and ideals have been established with all members of the school community. Positive changes happen in a school environment that is open to honest discussions, reflective thinking, and a growth mindset. Differentiation approaches at Cash Valley have unified our school and created an environment where students receive quality feedback, blended learning, and strong relationships between students and teachers foster a love of lifelong learning.