

U.S. Department of Education
2023 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 Mr. Bryan Boykin
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Williamsburg Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3600 North Harrison Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Arlington State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 22207-1844

County Arlington County

Telephone (703) 228-5450 Fax _____

Web site/URL <https://williamsburg.apsva.us/> E-mail bryan.boykin@apsva.us

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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Francisco Duran E-mail francisco.duran@apsva.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Arlington County Public Schools Tel. (703) 228-8000

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Reid Goldstein
(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.

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

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, leave blank.*

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 2023 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 22 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 32 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

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
☐ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Students
PreK	0
K	0
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	0
6	269
7	275
8	283
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	827

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5.2 % Asian
 - 2.1 % Black or African American
 - 8.5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 71.3 % White
 - 12.7 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 3%

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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	827
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Spanish, Mongolian, Arabic, German, French, Japanese, Amharic, Korean, Russian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
25 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2 %

Total number students who qualify: 19

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 14 %
Total number of students served 119

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>18</u> Autism	<u>4</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>34</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>51</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 9 %
Total number of students served: 72

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 5

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	58
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

12. 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 14:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	96%	98%	98%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

15. 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.

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

Equity Access and High Levels of Learning for All.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

[https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/CLPTAB762B9E/\\$file/A-3%20Nondiscrimination.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/CLPTAB762B9E/$file/A-3%20Nondiscrimination.pdf)

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

As students walk into Williamsburg Middle School (WMS), administrators and staff greet them at the front door while an energy of school pride encompasses our lobby. Whether it is the display case devoted to “Wolf Pack Pride”, bulletin boards highlighting “Wolves with Character”, or the occasional lobby takeover by our Pep Band, students begin their day surrounded by positivity and encouragement. WMS is one of six middle schools within the Arlington Public School (APS) division. Arlington sits directly across the Potomac River from Washington, DC, in the Northern Virginia region. Just miles from historic national landmarks, including the Pentagon and Arlington National Cemetery, WMS was dedicated in 1955 and is named after one of the most historic cities in the United States, Williamsburg, Virginia. Arlington’s population is among the most highly educated in the country. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2017 American Community Survey, 93.9% of all household residents aged 25 and older were High School graduates, and 74.1% were college graduates. A unique quality of raising children in Arlington is the walkability and accessibility to parks. Being so close to DC and still feeling close to nature is a huge plus for WMS students and families. WMS strives to develop lifelong learners who are civic minded and culturally sensitive, in an environment that is safe and supportive. The school’s community of learners values equity, access, and high levels of learning for all. The accepted norms of WMS revolve around emboldening kindness and respect; promoting self-esteem; and encouraging empathy, honesty, and accountability.

Williamsburg’s strategies to encourage and challenge students to develop their full potential can be described as a wheel, with the student at the center hub. Each spoke—academic, emotional, physical, social, and cultural—helps students navigate smoothly throughout their Middle School experience. This shared vision of the Middle School model guarantees stakeholders are committed to providing support, curriculum, and instruction that is student centered. Through teaming, WMS is able to provide common planning time for teachers to collaborate through Collaborative Learning Teams (CLTs), and with content coaches, school counselors, and other support staff. By providing this time, WMS staff members can discuss the whole student—academically, socially, and emotionally. This enables staff to both intervene and enrich student needs in an intentional and holistic system of support.

WMS takes pride in and attributes much of the school’s academic success to its daily intervention and enrichment period, Wolf Time (WT). WT, named after the school mascot, begins in mid-October each school year after annual baseline student performance data has been collected. WT focuses on improving student achievement and strengthening skills in reading, writing, and math. Multiple data points are used to decide which students require the intervention and need the additional support to close any learning gaps they may have. Teacher input is also highly considered in making these decisions. WT runs for 35 minutes a day, four days per week.

Intervention for WT is provided by Math, English language arts (ELA), and special education teachers. Teachers use a variety of resources and strategies to support students during this time. These approaches include individualized and adaptive online learning platforms, systematic multisensory instructional practices, and individual student conferences tailored to meet students’ deficits. Data is collected, and student progress is monitored. WT is paused for two to three days twice a year to allow intervention teachers time to gather data and ensure that it is updated for each student. WT groups are flexible and fluid. Every four to six weeks, teachers and coaches use data, observation, and student classroom performance to determine if students need to continue receiving services. At these junctures, between “rotations,” decisions are made during CLT meetings for ELA and math to determine if students, who did not qualify previously, need to be placed in an intervention.

When students participate in intervention during WT, their peers are placed in enrichment offerings provided by their grade-level teachers. Enrichment offerings are meant to be a stress-free time that provides opportunities for staff to find ways to address the whole child, and it typically includes an academic component (reading, writing, math, technology, analysis of data/information, etc.). To support the school’s focus on student wellness and social-emotional functioning, teachers are encouraged to write proposals that provide cooperative learning opportunities for students, other offerings focus on mindfulness and self-care. Prior to the beginning of WT, students take a survey that describes each offering for their grade level, and

they rank the offerings they are most interested in taking. A few examples of WT enrichment include stock market investment, planning a road trip, designing a food truck, and learning about endangered species and environmental efforts to protect them. There are six to seven rotations each school year. Students are placed into WT sessions for each rotation by an administrator, and every effort is made to provide students with offerings based on preference. Student representatives provide feedback to administrators four times a year regarding WT. This feedback is critical in making sure that WT is meeting the needs of all WMS students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

At WMS, the ELA Department provides engaging, high-quality, inclusive instruction while meeting the interests, strengths, and needs of every student. Teachers implement the standards-based curriculum framework as the foundation to explore genres, develop a passion for reading and writing, build metacognition skills, apply critical thinking strategies, and foster effective communication. The curricular approach aligns to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Standards of Learning (SOL) with a focus on power standards to provide differentiated, culturally responsive, and evidence-based instruction. Each unit consists of essential questions, enduring understandings, diverse texts, SOL-based focus skills, and key vocabulary. Vertical alignment between grade levels and other content areas creates a cohesive, interdisciplinary learning environment.

Grade 6 students are enrolled in separate Reading and English classes, allowing for more support in reading, writing, and communication skills. The Reading Specialists employ research-based Science of Reading pedagogy to boost word recognition and language comprehension. This allows for a smooth transition from Elementary School to the Middle School model of reading to learn. Grade 6 English teachers focus more on explicit writing and grammar instruction within performance tasks while addressing all English standards. Grades 7 and 8 students have one English class comprising all the standards.

WMS ELA teachers work collaboratively in CLTs to develop and use a variety of tiered instructional approaches to meet and exceed the expectations of the Virginia SOL. Employing the Gradual Release of Responsibility model, teachers present material with a whole-group mini lesson, then move onto a reading/writing workshop with small-group and individual practice. Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) components, including content and language objectives, provide classes with a clear purpose and learning target goals. This student-centered learning allows for choice and voice options to demonstrate knowledge, collaboration, and student discourse. Utilizing differentiated instructional practices such as thinking routines, choice boards, stations, mastery paths, and online learning platforms empower students to experience success.

Assessments are purposeful and intentional. Starting with pre-assessments and screeners to gauge prior knowledge and skills, teachers determine levels of entry, make grouping decisions, and differentiate. State assessments such as the Virginia Growth Assessment and other screeners are given multiple times a year to show growth. Students receive timely, constructive feedback on classroom formative checks, concurrently providing teachers with student data to inform instruction. This is achieved by exit tickets, station work, book clubs, student conferences, notebook checks, thinking routines, etc. In addition, student experiences are supported by adaptive, online learning platforms tailored to students' individual strengths and weaknesses. Data from online resources also provide student skill levels and shape individualized instruction and extensions.

Summative assessments aim to allow students to demonstrate appropriate mastery of skills and concepts through a variety of products. This includes socratic seminars, informational essays, debates, persuasive writing, public service announcements (PSAs), speeches, infographics, myths, literary analysis essays, and more. Students are encouraged to build metacognition through reflection during the learning process after applying strategies and evaluating their strengths and needs. All these components prepare students to be effective communicators through reading, writing, research, and critical thinking.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

WMS offers Math 6, Math 7, Pre-Algebra, Math 8, Algebra I, Intensified Algebra I, and Intensified Geometry to its students. Grade 6 students take Math 6 or Pre-Algebra; grade 7 students take Math 7, Pre-Algebra, or Intensified Algebra I; grade 8 students take Pre-Algebra, Algebra I or Intensified Algebra I, or

Intensified Geometry. Except for Algebra I and Geometry, math classes focus on Algebra readiness through the following strands: 1) Number and Number Sense; 2) Computation and Estimation; 3) Measurement and Geometry; and 4) Patterns, Functions, and Algebra. Algebra I and Geometry classes have specific strands that build upon the Pre-Algebra strands.

Teachers use the VDOE SOL Curriculum Framework as their guide. Power standards, which are standards that have been deemed important for future success in math, are emphasized. Teachers meet twice a week in collaborative learning teams to map out units, plan, share resources, create common assessments, discuss student progress, etc. Student-centered lessons give students a choice in their learning and allow for differentiation based on individual student learning needs. Teachers use Canvas, the school's learning management system, to link resources and materials for each lesson. Here, students can complete and submit assignments, find content missed due to absences, review subject matter, etc.

The Math Workshop model guides planning. Math classes begin with a Number Sense routine, followed by a mini lesson, guided practice, and student choice. At the beginning of each class, teachers review the content and language objectives, as well as the agenda, each of which is specific to the lesson. Math Workshop encourages students to use investigative or discovery-style learning while working collaboratively with classmates. Teachers support students in small groups and encourage higher-level learners to take risks by working on extension activities.

Teachers create common summative assessments for each unit and discuss student performance in CLT meetings. Teachers use these assessments, as well as formative assessments throughout each unit, to gauge student progress and inform instruction. In addition, assessment results provide teachers with the data needed to identify students who need additional support or who may require extension opportunities. Data from these assessments gives teachers a focus for designing their spiral review activities for future instruction. Students have opportunities to strengthen their conceptual understanding by participating in review lessons and completing test corrections. WMS feels it is most important for students to learn the content regardless of when in the school year they demonstrate mastery.

Multiple data points and information are used to measure student achievement. At the beginning of the year, the Math Inventory and Virginia Growth Assessment provide information as to where students are performing. These scores are compared to the midyear scores for the same assessment to monitor progress and provide teachers feedback regarding instruction. The data from these assessments help to determine if students will be in a formal intervention block. Discussions take place during CLT meetings regarding students whose scores do not meet benchmark, and a plan of action is created to intervene and support those students while monitoring their progress.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Science is a comprehensive study of Earth and Space (6th Grade), Life (7th Grade), and Physical (8th Grade) Sciences. Students develop a comprehensive understanding of science by spiraling and connecting points across the diverse curriculums. The department identifies cross-cutting connection points and embeds these points into the diverse areas of science, allowing students a cohesive science experience through their middle school years. This vertical alignment supports students developing lasting science knowledge.

The science department collaborates to ensure vertical alignment, valuing a learning-by-doing approach to science. Sixth grade establishes foundational experimental design language and practices, built on in 7th grade through guided a science project, continued in 8th grade by independently designing a science project. This development is by supporting inquiry labs each year. Students do investigations, live or digital, supporting development of concepts. This vertical alignment builds a strong science program where students leave able to do science by questioning and designing independent investigations.

Students engage in the curriculum through collaboration with teachers to develop activities that personalize the learning experience. Students develop questions and determine materials to witness phenomena occurring in front of them. This builds students' excitement and understanding of science. The activities are developed with Universal Design for Learning as the core to provide access to all students, creating

opportunities for English Language and Self-contained students to be integrated in the general education classroom with scaffolds built for all students to be successful in a general education class. Science develops students' voice and choice with guided choices in 6th grade, 7th grade provides greater independence through personalized learning, culminating with 8th grade students being active participants in designing their learning opportunities. Students learn to set academic goals and develop action plans to meet goals, and reflect on content and skills learned to develop the next goal. Through this process, student learning is measured by a combination of formative assessments and summative projects.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Students at WMS participate in a robust and engaging Social Studies curriculum, as outlined by the Virginia Department of Education. Grade six focuses on United States History, inclusive of the earliest inhabitants of North America to present day. Sixth graders take part in a variety of activities throughout the year in order to engage with the historical content. Grade seven engages in civic learning and economic concepts. Engaging civics lessons focus on the documents and fundamental principles which shaped our U.S. Constitution, aspects of good citizenship, the structure and function of the three branches of government, and student application of content knowledge. Eighth grade students are enrolled in a high school level course that focuses on World Geography, and they are able to earn a high school credit. While following the Virginia SOL's, the focus is placed on the cultures of different regions around the world.

The department works together to scaffold instruction throughout the grades and thread a shared vocabulary and approach to engage with content. These instructional approaches include, but are not limited to, hands-on simulations, guest speakers, primary source analysis, document based questions (DBQs), a variety of student choice projects, rich content, critical thinking, and more.

The department uses a combination of direction instruction, exploratory learning, and integrative learning between content areas. Students are assessed at all three grade levels using pre-assessments, tests, quizzes, projects, essays, and state required Performance Based Assessments (PBAs). These PBAs are evaluated based on a common rubric provided by the VDOE and feedback from these assessments drive and enhance student learning. Students are required to research different questions using primary sources and a variety of resources in order to show measurable skills through writing a formal essay. Planning is extensive and collaboration is key to providing all students with equitable learning opportunities.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

The CTE Programs at WMS provide students with opportunities to learn Business and Information Technology (IT), Family and Consumer Science (FACS), and Technology Education (TE). Each CTE area is associated with its National Club—Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA); Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA); and the Technology Student Association (TSA)—and offers Career and Technical Student Organizations in all subjects. The CTE Programs offer a wide range of classes and include High School credit for students in two classes, as well as offering an Industry Certification Exam for Computer Programming students. The school's programs strive to have the most up-to-date equipment and supplies to provide students with real-world experience, including computer platforms and programs, culinary equipment, and 3D printing and laser engraving equipment.

The CTE Programs partner with local organizations to bring in the community to enrich student learning for the 21st century. Business Education partners with the Junior Achievement of Greater Washington to bring real-world connections and lessons about career readiness; the FACS Department invites the Arlington Extension Service to discuss nutrition and consumer finance; and the TE Department has partnered with an architect in the observation of an Elementary School being built on the school's campus. WMS' teachers represent various backgrounds—those with master's degrees, military veterans, those who have National Board Certification, and career switchers—offering students a robust curriculum following the State Department of Education competencies, which include many workplace readiness skills for all the students.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

WMS offers a strong variety of Fine Arts elective classes that cultivate an inclusive environment. Grades 6–8 students are challenged on a daily basis through three different levels of Chorus, Band, and Orchestra. The school also offers three levels of Visual and Theater Arts. After-school enrichment programs are provided such as a fall play, spring musical, jazz band, and art and chorus classes. All Music students attend a District Assessment and receive superior or excellent adjudicated ratings. Music students participate in school concerts, assemblies, and sporting and community events and attend a spring trip competition. Many Music students participate in District Choir, Band, and Orchestra and also represent WMS at the state level at All-VA. The Visual Arts Program provides students with opportunities to showcase their work throughout the school building and in several art shows within the greater Arlington community. Student artists have achieved multiple National Silver Key Awards from the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. The Fine Arts Program cultivates the entire child through the development of creativity, communication, and confidence building. The Fine Arts Program fosters social and emotional learning, brings the student body together, and engages the entire school community.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

The WMS Health and Physical Education (HPE) Department teaches grades 6–8 students for 225 minutes a week. Students receive eight weeks of comprehensive health instruction, as well as 28 weeks of PE. The HPE Department also includes a self-contained Adaptive PE Program.

The HPE Department uses the latest fitness training techniques, technology, and individualized accommodations to assist students in achieving their personal health and fitness goals. Utilizing State Standards, Fitnessgram, Canvas, and the WELNET website, students and teachers reassess fitness goals and strategies four times a year, which has led to some of the highest Cardiovascular, Strength, Endurance, and Flexibility scores in the state. In addition, students are introduced to a variety of activities (team sports, individual sports, Pilates, dance, high-intensity interval training [HIIT] training, weights, etc.) that teach and encourage fit lifestyles and can be utilized throughout their lifetime.

In the Health classroom, students learn about nutrition, social and mental health, social, media and technology awareness, drug awareness, community and environmental health, diseases and disorders, and anatomy and physiology. The HPE Department utilizes personalized learning, group work, class discussion, grade-level counselors, a nurse, a school psychologist, and a drug abuse counselor to help students acquire the SOL appropriate for their grade level.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

WMS offers levels I and II of six world languages for High School credit, in addition to Exploratory Latin introducing grade 6 students to Latin. WMS currently offers Spanish, French, American Sign Language (ASL), Latin, and Chinese, and Spanish for Fluent Speakers. Although WMS is a Middle School, the world language courses mirror High School courses in both pacing and curriculum. Upon successful completion of the courses, students receive High School credit toward their diploma. Based on the new VDOESOL for World Language, WMS focuses on proficiency in the target language, with students achieving the Novice-High to Intermediate-Low level by the end of level II in the spoken language. Many students enter High School at level III and continue to pursue an advanced or International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma.

WMS offers Spanish for Fluent Speakers. This course is a Spanish Language Arts course designed for students who have oral fluency in Spanish but have not mastered basic reading and writing skills. Students develop communication skills in reading, writing, and speaking and begin the study of Spanish grammar.

Students develop a deeper understanding of perspectives and practices of Hispanic culture.

ASL is an additional language for students to develop basic skills in signing. The class is taught by a native signer and provides exposure to the world of communication with the deaf. Some students leave the WMS program and have the opportunity to enter High School programs leading toward certifications in ASL interpretation.

2d. Technology/library/media

Developing students who are thoughtful, critical, creative, and ethical users of technology and information is embedded into all curricular areas in grades 6–8. The Instructional Technology Coordinator, a full-time teacher, coaches staff in methods and tools to integrate technology into students' learning in meaningful ways. All classrooms are outfitted with interactive SMART Boards for whole-group instruction and activities. All WMS students have personalized learning devices, iPads, and keyboards, which they use daily to access online textbooks, databases, internet resources, and collaborative work environments. Digital media research skills are integrated into all content areas through library instruction. The full-time librarian collaborates with teachers across content areas to embed lessons in media literacy into instructional units that advance academics and personal information seeking. Core content teachers bring students for research and media literacy lessons about once a unit. The library houses a large, diverse collection of print books, magazines, and audiobook players, as well as e-resources, to meet the academic and personal interests of the students. English and Reading classes visit the library once a month for “book talks” and a book exchange in addition to research and information literacy lessons. The library is easily accessible to students all day. Many students visit during lunch to read, study, exchange books, and participate in book club and other activities.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

In addition to its traditional ELA curriculum, Williamsburg Middle School offers an innovative, multi-level course-of-study in Journalism (a range of elective classes open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students). Starting with the basics of Intro to Journalism, then progressing through New Media Journalism, and ultimately Broadcast Journalism, students learn to: identify newsworthy topics; analyze complex information; think critically about real-world issues; evaluate multiple perspectives; produce written, broadcast, and online content; and communicate their stories to an authentic audience across an array of multi-media platforms using the latest in 21st century technology.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Following the Arlington Tiered System Support (ATSS) framework, similar to Response to Intervention (RTI), WMS teachers are in constant observation and discussion of student data. CLTs, composed of teachers and coaches, meet twice a week to plan instruction, analyze student performance, and make intervention decisions. Core classroom teachers address all abilities, as students are assessed through diagnostics, screeners, benchmarks, and curriculum assessments. This frequent progress monitoring (Tier 1) provides insight into students' academic strengths and needs.

Intervention protocols are implemented for students performing below grade level in English and math. Additionally, the Reading Specialist and Math Coach meet to discuss solutions and student concerns. These flexible interventions (Tier 2) during WT are constantly being monitored and adjusted based on evidence and student success.

For English and math, students are grouped according to specific needs. In ELA, further screeners on decoding, encoding, fluency, writing, and comprehension are administered to select and identify students and groupings. ELA teachers utilize evidence-based, structured literacy approaches within these focused small groups. These learning pathways include multisensory methods, adaptive online learning platforms, standard-based practice, and individualized conferring to meet specific abilities.

In math, WT addresses two different types of student concerns. First, students scoring below grade level on the diagnostic screener are identified. Utilizing quantile scores, students are assigned personalized strands within the individualized software provider. They engage in the math program as it adjusts in real time to their progress. These students benefit from practice with foundational skills and current support from the teacher. The second type of student, struggling with the current content, is provided small-group and one-on-one mini lessons to build confidence and skills.

Tier 3 interventions include reading strategies, math strategies, or an additional self-contained class to provide struggling students with more intensive, yearlong support.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Differentiation to ensure all students, including above grade-level learners, grow at WMS is a school-wide goal. Teachers receive training in differentiating the content, process, product, and environment and collaborate with planning communities and the Resource Teacher for the Gifted (RTG) to design activities that promote higher-level thinking and deepen understanding of content. Students who demonstrate mastery of grade-level content in math take accelerated courses, while students in other content areas are provided with opportunities to extend and enrich their learning.

Lessons for all courses are designed to challenge students and address readiness, interest, and learning profiles. Teachers utilize resources that provide opportunities for critical thinking such as problem-based learning, William & Mary Literature units, DBQ units, and Project Zero Thinking Routines. In addition to purposeful low-floor, high-ceiling activities, teachers use Canvas mastery paths to individualize tasks. Mastery of concepts on pre-assessments directs learners to opportunities to dive deeper into content. These opportunities can include tiered activities, independent research projects, and critical and creative strategies such as Role, Audience, Format, Topic (RAFT) assignments. Learners who quickly master concepts are also provided with opportunities for extension and enrichment.

Students who are identified as gifted in a specific domain are clustered within the classroom setting. Students can be referred for gifted identification through a universal screener, parents, school staff, community members, or students. While identified students can be required to participate in higher-level activities, all above grade-level learners, regardless of identification, can participate in these opportunities.

WMS also offers enrichment beyond the classroom setting. Competitions such as the Science Fair, World Geography Bee, MathCounts, and the AMC 8 are available for students to stretch and develop their talents. WMS is committed to providing above grade-level learners with the rigor they require to develop the higher level thinking skills and perseverance necessary to be prepared for college and careers beyond high school.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Implementing scientifically based, explicit instruction based on ongoing professional development is key to instruction for the diverse Special Education population at WMS. The Special Education Team is highly involved in CLT planning and department teams; the team engages in purposeful discussion of best practices and differentiation and collaboratively creates lessons for use in co-taught and self-contained SOL-aligned courses. For instance, in math classes students receive target instruction in computation strategies and math discourse with "Number Talks" routines, while in Reading, the focus is on implementing Science of Reading practices such as phonics, syllabication, and morphology. In English, students utilize mentor texts, teacher modeling of writing, graphic organizers, and additional scaffolds to achieve success with responding to writing prompts. Finally, students have access to extend their learning through personalization of content available through Lexia and Dreambox, which allow teachers to target learning gaps, monitor growth, and adjust instruction. The collaborative planning, professional development, and access to coaching from Reading and Math Specialists are key to designing effective instruction for all learners.

For students with more significant needs, WMS has implemented countywide programs and the Instructional Studies course. Countywide programs include Functional Life Skills (FLS) and Interlude, a

therapeutic program to support students with emotional disabilities. Students in FLS are integrated with grade-level TAs and host a variety of school-wide celebrations such as candy grams and Best Buddies hot chocolate days, providing them with authentic opportunities to apply life skills and socialize with their nondisabled peers. Community involvement extends beyond WMS with the Special Olympics and field trips to the post office, library, grocery store, and bowling. Students in Interlude have a continuum of supports available ranging from full integration and supported self-contained to a drop-in safe space. These programs are also supported by highly trained Instructional Assistants. Students with significant executive functioning weaknesses can select Instructional Studies as a class for grades 6–8, where they receive specific support for classroom content while developing planning, organizational, and self-awareness skills.

3d. English Language Learners:

English learners (ELs) take a daily two-period language arts block with teachers who are dually certified in English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and ELA.

ELs also participate in general education electives and PE. ELs are recommended for mathematics courses based on readiness. ELs who need additional support in mathematics are recommended for Math Strategies taught by a teacher who is certified in Math and ESOL.

ELs take science and social studies in the general education setting. These classes are taught by teachers certified in those fields and supported by a certified EL teacher in a co-taught classroom or a general education setting. The EL teacher provides scaffolded instruction aligned to the EL's level of English language proficiency in science and social studies.

All general education teachers who have ELs in their content classes have received extensive training in sheltered instruction and best practices for teaching ELs. In science classes, teachers present content in a variety of formats (visual, graphic, audiovisual, labs, pictorial, etc.) so that ELs have the opportunity to learn new science concepts and connect to prior background knowledge. Classroom instruction is delivered in different settings such as whole class, individual, and small groups so that students experience learning individually—and collaboratively—and teachers can address the diverse needs of students who are learning English as well.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Engagement of WMS students starts with the commitment to build a strong culture and community. This begins when students walk through the door and are welcomed by the school's Kindness Tree. The tree might look different each month, as it is decorated to support the diversity of the school's students and community. Throughout the building, it is evident how student expectations that are aligned to WMS' positive behavior support system are shown in each area. Students have a clear visual understanding of what it looks like to follow the three Rs: respecting yourself, respecting others, and respecting our shared environment. To reinforce student understanding of the three Rs, WMS staff award "Wolf Paws" to students who exemplify the respectful behavior taught and visualized throughout the school. This affirmation of respect provides further opportunities for student reflection on choices they make in all areas of their academic experience at WMS. Each grading period, students who receive "Wolf Paws" are entered into a school-wide prize drawing.

To help ensure that students are supported in all areas, the comprehensive School Counseling Program and Student Support Services Department work collaboratively with all staff to meet the needs of students. The School Counseling Department works closely in the planning of social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons delivered weekly through a Teacher Advisory (TA) period. Lessons are developed collaboratively to support typical developmental needs of students utilizing Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies, as well as responsive lessons based on stakeholder feedback.

Student career exploration is supported through multitiered formats. Students engage in career exploratory surveys, reflection, and academic planning tools using the Naviance program with teachers during WT. As part of the academic planning process, CTE teachers share how their courses can support exploration of their career interests. Grade-level counselors complete individual academic planning sessions with all students to ensure their understanding of graduation requirements and how their course choices may affect their future academic goals.

Academics and career readiness are not the only areas that WMS sees its students shine. Through the School Counseling Program, grade-level teams submit students who exemplify different character traits each month. Students who are submitted are acknowledged as "Wolves With Character" each month and are provided recognition via a certificate and prize. Student voice is essential to the climate and culture of WMS. At the conclusion of each quarter, Administration and School Counselors meet with small groups of students to elicit feedback on their learning experiences, feelings on safety and security, and how they are connected to the WMS community. Each quarter, a new group of students is selected to ensure a wide range of perspectives are provided.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

One of the hallmarks of success at WMS is the commitment to ensuring that the transition to Middle School is a seamless process for all families. The school's approach to this is designed to ensure that the needs of students are met while simultaneously providing their parents with the tools necessary to support them. This process consists of focusing on the key areas of academic planning, campus acclimation, student support, and extracurricular activities. The school's Counseling and Administrative Teams partner with the local feeder Elementary Schools and their Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) to coordinate events, continue existing partnerships, and disseminate information through currently established lines of communication.

The academic planning process begins with hosting parent and student information sessions that introduce the Academic Program of Studies to highlight the course offerings available to students. Students in grades 5-8 participate in small-group sessions with their future school counselor in which they have an opportunity to ask questions and make course selections. This ensures families have the information necessary to make informed decisions for the next school year.

Familiarity with the physical layout of the school is vital to the comfort of the school's families when they arrive at school. Each spring, WMS hosts all rising grade 6 students for campus tours led by student ambassadors from their associated Elementary Schools that include class visits. This gives the current students an opportunity to provide an act of service to the school community and build relationships with new students. Parents also get the opportunity to participate in guided campus tours during the summer to see the instructional spaces and learn about school safety and security. Students also get another opportunity to familiarize themselves before the start of school during fall orientation after they have received their schedules for the year.

To ensure there is a focus on the development of the whole child, WMS offers a wide range of extracurricular activities. During spring and summer orientation, the School Activities Coordinator outlines the criteria for participation in interscholastic sports and clubs. The School Activities Coordinator also works with the PTA to plan student dances, festivals, pep rallies, field day, and book fairs. These co-sponsored events contribute to a positive school climate and provide parents opportunities to volunteer their services.

Helping Hands is a community service club designed to foster leadership skills and provide opportunities for students to contribute to the greater Arlington community. Club members learn about the needs of their community and strategize how WMS students can help by raising a sense of awareness amongst their fellow classmates. The club partners with local nonprofits such as the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) and Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA).

3. Creating Professional Culture:

WMS is committed to the recruitment, retention, and development of highly qualified staff. We provide the resources necessary to support a sustainable Professional Learning Community (PLC) with CLTs at every level of the school. During the recruitment process, we highlight our philosophy of supporting staff so they can, in turn, do the same for their students. At WMS, onboarding new staff is a process, not an event. This begins by ensuring that basic staff needs are met such as early classroom/office access, providing school supplies, and sharing points of contact for operational essentials. Staff/student expectations are communicated to ensure consistent application and compliance. WMS also focuses on building relationships to begin acclimating new staff to the school community, culture, and norms through the assignment of a mentor. The school's instructional philosophy, planning expectations, curriculum documents, and common assessment tools are shared so that teachers are prepared to focus on academic goals. Instructional support is provided through content-specific CLTs, and coaching is provided by Content Lead Teachers or other subject-matter central office experts in conjunction with the school administration.

Professional learning for all staff is an integral part of the school's success and mirrors WMS' approach to instruction for all students. It is the school's belief that adult learners should be met where they are, given a choice in how they access and engage with the material, provided time for application, and allowed to participate in guided reflection after doing so. Like the school's standard expectations for classroom instruction, WMS implements a differentiated professional development model to ensure the individual needs of staff members are met by providing content that is relevant, job embedded, and applicable.

Just like in the classroom, there are times when the content presented does not meet the needs of some staff due to varying levels of need or ability. For those staff members, who have typically been early adopters of the latest practices in teaching and learning, introductory content was not a good use of their time, so the school created the Independent Learning Plan (ILP). These plans allow staff members to propose topics for professional learning if they are aligned with current school/district goals, have an impact on student learning, raise student achievement, and identify what new learning and/or product would be created as a result of this work. This approach to professional learning has been embraced by the staff and demonstrates WMS' commitment to their professional growth and its direct correlation to student achievement.

4. School Leadership:

WMS' leadership philosophy and departmental structure highlight the school's value of shared leadership and its importance to the success of the school. The Administrative Team at WMS consists of a Principal, two Assistant Principals, a Director of Counseling (DOC), and a School Activities Coordinator. The Principal leads the instructional program, ensures compliance with the district policy/procedure, develops the annual school action plan, and allocates resources to meet school goals in alignment with the school division's strategic plan. The Assistant Principals provide oversight to the various academic content areas, Special Education compliance, school safety, student discipline, and transportation and coordinate emergency drills. The DOC provides oversight to the Student Services Department, which consists of School Counselors, a School Psychologist, a Substance Abuse Counselor, and a School Social Worker. In addition to these responsibilities, the DOC leads the development and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program to support the academic, social/emotional, and career development of all WMS students. The School Activities Coordinator, provides oversight to all extracurricular activities to include but not limited to clubs and interscholastic sports.

The next tier of leadership is the Instructional Leadership Team, which consists of the Instructional Lead Teacher; Math Coach; Reading Specialist; Science Lead; History Lead; Electives Lead; Health/PE Lead; English Learner Lead; World Language Lead; Special Education Lead; Instructional Technology Coordinator; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Coordinator; Library Media Specialist; and Gifted Resource Teacher. This team provides leadership to various departments by organizing monthly meetings to distribute information and share the latest content-specific instructional practices. In addition, the team works collaboratively to create professional learning opportunities for the staff and ensures the collective execution of the annual school action plan.

The final tier of school leadership consists of Grade-Level Team Leaders (TL). As a school that deploys an interdisciplinary team model, there is one teacher who serves as the leader for each team. The TL facilitate weekly team meetings to discuss student needs, strengths, and coordinate parent communication when needed. TL also play a vital role in school operations by providing feedback on school-based initiatives, sharing staff concerns, and serving as the first level of escalation if a team member needs support.

This philosophy is a significant shift from the previous leadership structure that was authoritarian in nature and focused on compliance for success rather than collaboration. By deploying a shared approach to school leadership shows that WMS values staff input and understands the importance of transparency in school operations and collaborative decision-making. The Administrative Team at WMS learned that by creating these varying levels of teacher leadership opportunities, it promotes ownership of the school climate and instructional program and promotes a high level of staff engagement in the success of the school.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

WMS staff foster an environment that is equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive. With guidance and support from the APS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Department, staff have learned to apply an equitable and inclusive lens in all content areas to meet diverse student needs. Each year, a survey is administered to the student body to gather feedback on their feelings regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at school. This information is used to assess the strengths and opportunities for growth in the school's current practices and inform future initiatives.

Representation matters, and the WMS staff creates an atmosphere that welcomes and celebrates all students. Learning materials in the classroom reflect diverse voices; classroom displays are inclusive; and media and bulletin boards around the building spotlight various cultures. The library collection is diverse, and books representative of all students are always on display. The school's technology-rich environment enables many inclusive practices: speech to text, audio support, and language support, among others. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development through the school year to engage all WMS students.

A part-time, school-based coordinator for diversity, equity, and inclusion is the school's liaison with the district office and coordinates district-wide and school-wide programs related to equity, inclusion, social justice, and diversity. This coordinator also leads the WMS Equity Team, a committee of stakeholders, staff, and students. The Equity Team collaborates throughout the school year to create activities and events that

recognize and celebrate the many cultures seen throughout the WMS school community. The Equity Team also creates and sponsors opportunities for students and staff to learn about the various aspects of different cultures. This is accomplished through assemblies, food tastings, interactive bulletin boards, special segments on the morning news broadcast, and guest speakers. Authentic voices are sought and students are empowered to share their cultural experiences and knowledge with their peers.

Students also benefit from inclusive, non-academic activities, and WMS has a robust after-school program. Students are encouraged to create a club or affinity group based on their interests, which staff members sponsor and supervise. Clubs include the Special Olympics, Sister Circle, Best Buddies, Helping Hands of WMS, Card Club, Gender Sexuality Alliance, and more.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that has been instrumental to the success of WMS has been its commitment to the implementation of the essential attributes of effective Middle Schools outlined in *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* by the Association for Middle Level Education. This book states that successful schools provide an education for young adolescents that is responsive, challenging, empowering, equitable, and engaging. In order to demonstrate these attributes, WMS collectively examined the 18 characteristics associated with the attributes, sorted into three categories: Culture & Community; Leadership and Organization; and Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

A strong culture and community have been essential to creating an environment at WMS where the staff, students, and community at large contribute to its success. WMS engages its families as partners in their child's education by being transparent about the strengths and opportunities for growth in the school's instructional program, and shares how the school can provide or request support when it is needed. The Counseling Department provides comprehensive services to support the academic, social, and emotional growth of the students through individual/group sessions or targeted lessons in class. One of the Counseling Department's priorities is to ensure that every student can identify a "trusted adult" who can serve as an advocate or confidant at school. Every staff member at WMS understands that the needs of our students are the top priority when they enter the building.

The leadership and organizational structures in place at WMS have been created through a shared vision of what the school wanted to be in order to meet the needs of students and staff. Through a shared leadership structure, the responsibility for its success is also distributed. This has been accomplished through collaboration, professional learning, and courageous leadership to ensure that the heart of every decision made at WMS is student centered and equitable.

The instructional staff at WMS prioritizes the delivery of a curriculum that is challenging and engaging and provides students an opportunity to explore regardless of academic ability. WMS teachers maximize student voice in the classroom by providing multiple avenues for students to access the curriculum and demonstrate their understanding. The learning environment supports instruction that is active, relevant to student interest, and assessed in a variety of ways that provide choice in how students demonstrate learning. Above all else, educators at WMS understand the importance of being knowledgeable in their specific content so they can deliver instruction at developmentally appropriate levels of depth and complexity to ensure students are challenged.