

U.S. Department of Education
2017 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 Mrs. Tracy Dorotha Hilliard

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

Official School Name Centerville Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3601 Carriage Hill Drive

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

City Frederick State MD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21704-0000

County Frederick County

Telephone (240) 566-0100 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://education.fcps.org/ces/ E-mail tracy.hilliard@fcps.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*Dr. Theresa Alban E-mail Theresa.Alban@fcps.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Frederick County Public Schools Tel. (301) 644-5000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Brad Young
(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. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 37 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 13 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 10 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 60 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	68	78	146
1	81	79	160
2	96	84	180
3	76	78	154
4	75	85	160
5	121	98	219
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	517	502	1019

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 21 % Asian
 - 7 % Black or African American
 - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 51 % White
 - 6 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 5%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	29
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	24
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	53
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	1042
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.051
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
57 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Chinese, Czech, Ewe, Farsi, French, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Kurdish, Lithuanian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Nepali, Oriya, Pampang, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Twi, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese, American Sign Language,

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %
Total number students who qualify: 43
8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
53 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.

- 12 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 2 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 6 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 5 Other Health Impaired
- 8 Specific Learning Disability
- 7 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 2 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	41
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	27
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	16
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 24:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	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 2016.

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
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.
A collaborative environment is important to the academic success of our scholars in an educational environment with high expectations to be a productive citizen.

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

Centerville Elementary School (CES) is a large suburban elementary school in Frederick County Maryland. Centerville is nestled within the Villages or Urbana housing development. Centerville opened its doors to excellence in the Urbana community in August 2005. Centerville has experienced steady scholar enrollment growth that has required the need to acquire additional learning space. Currently Centerville has five individual portable classrooms and a 12 classroom mega pod to house our scholars in fourth and fifth grade. Centerville has a current enrollment of 1019 scholars in grades Kindergarten through fifth. Our school has the largest Kindergarten through 5th grade enrollment of all Frederick County elementary schools. Our scholar population consists of 51% White, 21% Asian, 12% Hispanic or Latino, 7% Black or African American, 6% two or more races, 2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian or Alaska native. Centerville values and respects the gifts that our diversity brings to our community. The celebration of our diversity is celebrated every day but highlighted each year in April during our Multicultural Night. Our 39 different languages spoken enriches all that we do at CES to build a strong community of scholar learners. Centerville serves as a training ground for future teachers by being designated as a Professional Development School in partnership with a local College.

Our vision is the cornerstone of our work to meet the needs of our scholars at Centerville. Centerville's vision is "to nurture the development of the whole scholar in partnership with parents and the greater community. CES challenges and equips scholars with skills to succeed academically and flourish as lifelong learners. We welcome all scholars in a supportive environment. Our staff is committed to continuing professional development to ensure quality instruction that engages our scholars and prepares them to be responsible, contributing citizens." Our mission statement at Centerville Elementary is "where our stars shine bright." Yes it is very simple but we believe that every scholar at Centerville will shine bright, be introduced to rigor at and above their instructional level, respect diversity, and become a responsible citizen that has a positive impact in the community.

Two years ago, we began to incorporate Angela Duckworth's philosophy of "grit" with our scholars and included Carol Dweck's, "the power of YET." Our leadership team began with a book study using Mary Cay Ricci's book, *Mindsets in the Classroom*. This began our work on building teacher capacity to incorporate the strategies in the classroom to improve scholar achievement. Our teachers began with the "productive struggle" technique to promote perseverance among our scholars. The scholars work in small groups to solve a complex problem slightly above their ability level. The scholars experience FAIL (First Attempt in Learning) to increase their learning and develop perseverance. This has allowed teachers to understand how their scholars are processing concepts and provide the instruction to close the achievement gap. We have included our parents in the education of grit and the power of YET. We introduced parents to the concepts during back to school night to begin our discussion on why their scholar may come home using the word FAIL and the power of YET. In addition, video clips are sent to the parents in the family newsletters to continue the school knowledge growth of CES parents.

Centerville's traditions and programs have cultivated a collaborative community. The Star Spangled Celebration is the signature event for the school community. This carnival like event promotes the collaborative spirit of the school community coming together to have fun outside of the school day with staff. Kindergarten Parents and parents new to Centerville are invited to the Boo- Hoo breakfast so the PTA and administration can answer any questions and connect new Centerville parents and veteran parents to build a support system. Grandparents are invited in for breakfast and to preview the book fair to purchase holiday gifts for our scholars.

We have math and literacy nights that are used to inform parents of instructional strategies used in those subject areas. The annual STEM Fair provides parents and scholars the opportunity to participate in science experiments while working with scientists from our community and have the opportunity to explore careers in STEM. Fifth grade scholars write the script for morning announcements, report and produce the daily morning news. Star Pride assemblies occur quarterly to recognize scholars and staff for demonstrating the pillars of character. Every scholar produces a piece of artwork that is displayed during the annual Night of the Arts. Scholars participate in the Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops fundraiser each year. Chorus scholars

provide entertainment for volunteer breakfasts sponsored by the PTA. The PTA provides funds from fundraising to purchase technology to promote the 21st century skills our scholars need to compete academically.

Our annual Helping Hoops campaign was started to collect food items and hygiene products to donate to the Urbana Food Bank. Last year we gathered well over 5000 items. To cap off the event the staff plays a basketball game against another elementary school to gather more items. Scholars participate in the Garden Club to maintain our garden that produces vegetables that are donated to a local shelter. In addition, our scholars and staff facilitated and/or participated in Toys for Pets, “Soup”er Bowl soup collection, pajamas, socks, sheets and towels, were all collected for people in need.

The Centerville community expects excellence from our staff and scholars. Collectively, the Centerville community meets the needs of our scholars so all of our stars shine bright.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Centerville scholars are learning skills and concepts that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Instruction is rigorous and expectations are high at CES. Scholar success is fostered through verbal discourse, questioning, technological expression and delivery, and common formative assessments.

Language Arts

Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) does not use a prescribed packaged program to instruct English Language Arts. In each grade level, teachers engage scholars in reading rich literature and in-depth expository texts. Through discussion, collaboration, and composition of written responses, scholars analyze complex texts to make connections and build understanding. Current events, culture, technology, history and science are integrated into language arts instruction daily across all grade levels. The English Language Arts focus for FCPS has been on implementing guided reading based on the work of Irene Fountas and Su Gay Pinnell. In addition, to Fountas and Pinnell teachers use Frederick County's Comprehension Seed Instruction(CSI) mini lessons to support the adopted Common Core Reading Standards. To individually meet the scholar's academic need the teachers select complex text to use and support the CSI mini lesson. Primary grades build scholars' foundational skills in phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Intermediate grades continue this growth by deepening scholars' comprehension and expanding their vocabulary. Differentiated formative assessment occurs daily as teachers reflect on scholars' progress toward mastering Common Core standards. Teachers then utilize a variety of strategies to meet each reader and writer at their level, including whole group instruction, flexible guided reading groupings, and literature and inquiry circles, as well as research based interventions. During the Writing Workshop, teachers use and build upon the Lucy Calkins Units of Study as scholars build oral and written language skills. By writing narrative, expository and opinion-based texts, scholars learn and apply their knowledge of texts and practice spelling, word study, grammar and usage skills.

Math

Frederick County adopted the Common Core standards for mathematics. We do not have a prescribed packaged program to teach mathematics. Teachers use county units to provide the instructional focus for math instruction for our scholars. The quarterly county assessment data we collect from scholar performance provides the instructional focus for each lesson. The county has made available a resource titled Go Math that teachers can use to supplement their instruction. Scholars at CES take a hands on and problem solving approach to meet county and state goals that are aligned with Common Core standards and mathematical practices. Scholars are engaged daily in rich activities that not only allow them to explore new concepts, but continually apply these skills in new ways to deepen their knowledge. Every day teachers use interactive math notebooks and math manipulatives such as base ten blocks, Cuisenaire rods, and virtual manipulatives to make abstract concepts more concrete for scholars. Scholars are challenged to use their skills by solving real world contextual problems. Instructional routines such as number talks, engagement in productive struggle, and open ended tasks allow scholars to engage in verbal discourse about their math strategies and thinking. Scholars have access to technology tools such as Chromebooks, iPads, and interactive whiteboards that allow them to explore and apply math skills in a fun, meaningful and rigorous way. Teachers use a guided math group format to offer differentiated instruction to scholars in flexible groups which allows scholar engagement in daily independent practice, engage in spiral review, and explore with hands-on learning. Scholars showing mastery are enriched with more complex problems and novel ways to apply the skill and scholars that have yet to meet the standard are given opportunities for reteaching and targeted intervention.

Science

Excitement about science is accomplished through hands on scientific investigation and critical thinking in the areas of Earth/space science, life science, and physical sciences. Centerville Elementary School grades K-4 currently follow the Maryland Voluntary State Science Curriculum, and grade five has already transitioned to Next Generation Science Standards. Scholars raise chicks and butterflies to study their life cycles and create terrarium habitats during life science units. Scholars studying Earth and Space science

build anemometers to measure the wind, track and analyze patterns in daily and seasonal events, and develop models to explain concepts such as rotation and revolution. Identifying mystery substances using basic chemical testing, building rubber band powered vehicles, and making non-newtonian solids are part of the physical science curriculum. Science is made meaningful to their daily lives through our learning garden, STEM night, and Maker-Space club.

Social Studies

Social Studies instruction at CES builds scholars' understanding of their families, neighborhoods, community, country and world as they develop questions, conduct research and analyze primary and secondary sources. Teachers use interactive websites, classroom simulations, field trips and integrated texts to guide scholars through evaluating sources to find evidence to support their conclusions. In Kindergarten and grades one through three, scholars learn their role in their community. In grades four and five, scholars expand this knowledge by learning Maryland and American history. The goal of our Social Studies instruction is to help scholars become responsible and informed citizens. Principles of government, economics and financial literacy are embedded in Social Studies instruction throughout each grade level. During the Library-Media block scholars, learn digital citizenship and online responsibilities. The importance of civic responsibility is taught and reinforced through service learning projects.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Centerville Elementary School offers scholars the opportunity to learn, explore and build their character in a variety of spaces outside of the traditional classroom through art, music, physical education and library media lessons.

The arts department at CES gives scholars the chance to explore the world of art through fine arts, music and band. All classes visit art and music classes twice a week. Fourth and fifth graders may also participate in band with instrument specific instruction weekly.

The highlight of the year is a Night of the Arts event where every scholar in the building displays a piece of artwork, turning the school into a museum with over 1,000 unique pieces for families to enjoy. During the evening, there is also a performance by the CES scholar's chorus. This is one of several performances the scholars put on each year with between 150 and 200 scholars singing.

Fifth graders shine during their annual Recycled Art Show where teams of scholars work together to develop and create runway outfits using recycled materials for the models.

We have 219 scholars in the band and orchestra. Fourth graders do caroling around the school just before the holidays. The 5th grade scholars participate in band and strings feeder schools concerts in January, with a combined 4th and 5th grade spring concert in May.

During weekly music classes scholars learn critical listening skills and practice analyzing music. They also build confidence through solo performances and learn cooperation and creativity when putting on group performances. The music teachers incorporate technology and most recently utilized Google services to provide scholars access to musical selections at home for practice.

Physical Education at Centerville strives to encourage scholars to live healthy active lifestyles seeing each class twice a week for fun, fitness, and team building. All scholars participate in our fall school fundraiser, Race for Education, which raised \$40,000 to be used for technology in the school. Scholars have also raised over \$21,000 for the American Heart Association through the Jump Rope for Hearts event making CES the highest earning school in Frederick County.

Fourth and fifth grade scholars can participate in the after school track and field club facilitated by staff. Weekly practices introduce scholars to different track and field events and concludes with the annual Hugh B. Nolan Track Meet with scholars from all FCPS schools attending.

Scholars at Centerville are able to achieve high standards in their 21st Century Media Center. Through the

use of technology, including Chromebooks, iPads, and an interactive whiteboard, scholars learn to be thoughtful consumers of media, take part in digital citizenship lessons at all ages and develop lifelong research skills. Scholars also enjoy an innovation lab with access to a variety of makerspace tools as well as coding and computer science lessons.

In addition to weekly lessons, the media center also houses the school's morning announcement broadcast system. Teams of 5th graders work together to run the morning announcements acting as anchors, camera operators, directors and soundboard operators

Centerville also works with community members and businesses to teach and engage scholars through gardening. By pairing with organizations including Katie's Krops, the Urbana Food Bank and local Future Farmers of America students developed, cultivated, and maintained a vegetable garden with crops being donated to the local food bank and nursing homes. These civic responsibility activities and community partnerships inspire our scholars to work to better the world around them.

In addition, to instruction during the school day scholars, kindergarten through fifth have a variety of before and after school extended learning opportunities to choose from. Scholars are encouraged to participate in coding and makerspace clubs, technology team, garden club, stem club, chorus, art club, safety patrol, foreign language classes and more.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Centerville Elementary School, we strive to meet the needs of each scholar. This process begins with our grouping meetings held in the spring. Grade level teachers work collaboratively with administrators and instructional specialists to identify each learner's strengths and needs. Scholars are grouped in clusters so that there are peers with similar strengths and needs have the best learning environment in a heterogeneous class. This process allows for classroom teachers to collaborate with intervention teachers and for scholars needing enrichment or reteaching to have opportunities within their classroom. We strive to keep the scholars in the classroom so the interventionist and the classroom teachers co-teach as the intervention allows.

Teachers in Grades K-2 meet with the primary talent development specialist to enrich all scholars and provide higher level thinking opportunities for our younger scholars. In intermediate grades, teachers use technology to provide enrichment projects and opportunities for scholars. All grade levels scholars use technology such as the Google Classroom to access learning materials and submit work to the teacher. In addition, interactive notebooks are a key feature in many grade levels to allow scholars to use the constructivist approach to learning new concepts. The scholars use the notebooks to record their learning of new material and the approach they will use to demonstrate the new learning. This notebook also serves as a communication tool between home and school. The notebook provides the parent with a snapshot of the learning occurring in the classroom.

At Centerville, we begin our school year with a "Getting to Know You" assessment of our kindergarten scholars to determine what skills they have acquired and where to place them in their heterogeneous classrooms. Any scholar that is not ready will be placed in an intervention group to assist with building those basic skills as measured by the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

With over 40 classroom teachers, we value a collaborative environment where staff collaborate on best teaching practices and use the strengths of one another to improve their teaching capacity. Teachers collaborate to create and score teacher made assessments before each unit of study to assess the scholar's current knowledge of the new concepts. The teachers use the assessment information to determine how to differentiate the instruction and promote flexible grouping of our scholars. This allows our scholars to take ownership of their learning in diverse academic environments to set achievement goals.

Formative and summative assessments are used at Centerville in order to plan learning experiences and to determine achievement by our scholars. Grade level teams meet regularly to review scholar data from teacher created and county benchmark assessments. Teachers meet with specialists and administrators

during the data talks to set a growth goal for their class and brainstorm instructional strategies to help them meet that goal. Each teacher selects scholars to target in order to achieve the goal, with an emphasis on scholar groups with a 10% or greater achievement gap. This data talk process is repeated quarterly to review and check progress toward the goals set for the scholars. Parents are made aware of their scholar's achievement through conferencing and county reporting tools.

Common planning time has been a key in providing an effective Professional Learning Community (PLC) at CES. We work on a three-week model to provide coaching and feedback to increase teacher instructional capacity. A grade level works three straight weeks with either the math or literacy specialist, with one week off for team topic. During the three weeks: week 1 is used to teach a concept and give the teachers a task to complete; week 2, teachers complete the task with schools, informal check-ins by the specialist occur; and week 3 the teachers debrief and share highs and lows. Throughout this work, staff have the opportunity to use interviews, observations, show me, hinge questions, and exit tickets to flexibly group scholars and modify instruction.

Centerville is a place to celebrate the authentic and personalized learning that takes place every day. The instructional methods, interventions, and assessments used engage, challenge, and support every scholar.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our Star Scholars shine bright at Centerville Elementary! Our school is scholar-centered and focused on a growth mindset where scholars are taught to use the power of YET!! Teachers at CES create safe learning environments in which scholars are encouraged to stretch their learning and persevere through any challenges.

Scholars are encouraged to display the Pillars of Character, and are recognized four times a year during a school assembly. Scholars are motivated to demonstrate these important characteristics by earning “StarBux” to spend at our school and classroom stores. Scholars put their pillars of character into action by helping others in need during our many drives in the school, such as the Helping Hoops Can Food Drive. Our scholars are so emboldened by this that they even write up their own proposals for drives in areas they see a need and present to the principal for approval.

All of our scholars are special and we work hard to make sure all social, emotional, and academic needs are met. Our counselor uses lunchtime to teach and practice social skills with her “Lunch Bunch.” Upper grade classes are Peer Buddies to our primary grade scholars. Our scholars love to spend time with their buddies in activities such as reading together outside on beautiful days, creating anemometers together for a STEM project, or just seeing each other in the halls! Our school has monthly spirit days where we get to dress up and have fun together while we learn! All of this is accomplished during our school hours, but we have many teachers who offer their time to run after school clubs such as Coding Club, Girls on the Run, and STEM clubs.

Staff members are also supported every day at Centerville! We see each other as a large extended family and know we can count on each other if a need arises. Our hard work is also recognized in our principal's weekly Star Staff Scoop newsletter where she gives thanks to teachers' individual hard work. Administrators are in classrooms daily to provide informal feedback. Our veteran and new teachers are supported alike by our specialists. Our new teachers meet with our Super Star veteran teachers monthly during the school year. Our principal offers extra sub money above and beyond the county's program budget so that new and veteran teachers are able to observe other teachers who exemplify the best of our teaching profession.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

With 39 spoken languages at Centerville Elementary, we strive to include all families and to support our community. Find out First notifications, announcements and newsletters are sent out frequently to keep families updated on school and community events. Our scholars also use daily agendas to track assignments and upcoming events. Over 75% of classroom teachers utilize Bloomz to communicate assignments, activities and events which helps parents and teacher interact easily.

Continuous communication allows Centerville to gather our families for events such as Grandparents Breakfast, Star Spangled Celebration, and family nights that include STEM night, Night of the Arts, Literacy Nights, Math Nights, Multicultural Nights and a Night for Hour of Code. These events have allowed Centerville the opportunities to gain more information about our families and learn how we can better support the diversity of our scholars.

The PTA is an amazing support to Centerville with over 5000 hours of volunteer service each year. PTA organizes our largest fundraiser, Race for Education. The PTA president serves as a member of the school leadership team. She is able to work with school leaders to better understand curriculum and the school improvement goals for the scholars. The administration attends the monthly PTA meeting to promote collaboration between the school and the school community. The PTA helps Centerville give back to the community by arranging restaurant nights to raise money that is donated to Blessings in a Back Pack.

Our staff and scholars take great pride in giving back to the community. Books for incarcerated families are donated as well as collecting supplies for the Heartly House of Frederick. Each year we collect items for the local food bank with a “Souper” Bowl drive and our Annual Helping Hoops Drive. Last year our school was the top fundraising school in Frederick County for Jump Rope For Heart (JRFH) and this year we were thrilled to raise another \$21,274 for JRFH. This comes after the community supported our PTA in raising \$40,000 during our Race for Education fundraiser. Scholars have taken initiatives to complete sock collection of 1,588 pairs of socks for people in need and supplies for dogs/cats in shelters. With the devastation and loss of schools and homes in Louisiana, the CES staff gathered school supplies and clothing to send to families in Louisiana to help rebuild and support the schools to reopen.

3. Professional Development:

At Centerville, professional development plays an integral role in the academic success of all scholars. We value a collaborative, safe and secure learning environment where our top priority is providing every scholar with a highly qualified teacher. Our growth mindset allows us to never stop evolving, instead, always pushing ourselves to provide the best research-based instruction we can to our scholars. The English Language Arts focus for Frederick County has been on implementing guided reading based on the work of Irene Fountas and Su Gay Pinnell. In math, there has been a large focus on understanding the Common Core math standards and implementing instructional routines, such as number talks, problem solving, and reasoning.

Grade-level teams meet weekly to dive deeper into language arts topics, math topics, and team topics. To help transfer theory into practice, our professional development sessions are organized in three week cycles for each topic. The first session is dedicated to learning the content, the second applying the content by discussing instructional strategies, methods and tools, and the third to reflect on how the new practice or strategy went and where to further direct work. This “Learn, Apply, Reflect” model has allowed our teachers time to gain a deep understanding of best practices and most importantly, reflect constantly on strengths and needs of their scholars and make instructional implications.

Twice a year, staff members meet one on one with our specialists and administration to review scholar data, discuss the instructional implications of that data, and ask pertinent questions specific to their group of scholars. At these meetings, teachers set goals in both language arts and math to improve scholars' reading and math assessment scores for the next quarter.

Technology breakout sessions are offered at faculty meetings and led by teachers who have implemented the technology. Teachers select sessions that will best meet their needs. Technology sessions have included using google classroom, setting up a parent communication tool called Bloomz, and using online research databases.

Every summer many Centerville teachers participate in a voluntary book study. Books have included Jennifer Serravallo's *The Reading Strategies Book*, and Gravity Goldberg's, *Mindsets and Moves*. In addition, our math specialist taught a Computational Strategy class after school to build teacher capacity in number sense and mental math.

John Cotton Dana, a public librarian once stated, “Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” Here at Centerville we embody that message!

4. School Leadership:

The Centerville Leadership Team is made up of 6 classroom teachers, a music teacher, a math specialist, a literacy specialist, two ELL teachers, a special education teacher, the PTA president, and the three administrators. The leadership team is responsible for being the facilitators of the school vision, “data keepers”, monitors of the Continuous Improvement Plan, and generators of topics for professional development based on data. The team is an integral part of the scholar success at the school. The leadership team works collaboratively to identify academic targets, and monitor scholar progress to implement instructional strategies to increase scholar achievement. Team leaders meet weekly with their

team to report on scholar progress, share instructional practices and discuss grade level and individual quarterly growth targets. This team works on the premise of “whatever we do must benefit all scholars.” The team will challenge each other and ask is that decision in the best interests of our scholars? If the answer is, “no” the team will brainstorm additional strategies to implement.

At Centerville Elementary, we believe that every scholar is unique and needs a champion to be successful to achieve in academics and to be a contributing citizen in our society. The teacher as the classroom leader has to build positive relationships with the scholars. We have incorporated some of the late Rita Pearson’s beliefs that if a scholar knows that you care, they will perform in a positive way. The relationships build dividends as the scholars persevere and grow academically and take responsibility for their learning in the classroom. This environment allows our teachers to live the Centerville vision and provide the leadership in the classroom.

Collaboration is the key at Centerville, whether it is in the classroom, with teammates, or the administration. The sharing of leadership has increased our teacher leadership and the impact on instructional decisions to meet the needs of our scholars and build staff instructional capacity. Teachers are leaders in the classroom and are expected to assist with grouping scholars for the next grade level. Our teacher leaders collaborate with our scholars to build scholar leaders. Our scholars have assumed anchor positions to assist with producing the morning news. The intermediate scholars serve as Safety Patrols, Book and STEM buddies, Flag Raisers, School Store workers and kindergarten helpers during arrival and dismissal.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The collaborative culture at Centerville has been the most influential practice at our school. A strong collaborative environment starts with everyone building an understanding of the school's vision and its impact on scholar achievement.

Shared leadership is a large part of our collaborative environment at Centerville. Decisions are not made by one person as staff is empowered to share in the decision-making process to implement instructional changes, budget, scholar grouping, staffing, and scheduling. For instance, as we begin to discuss scheduling for the following school year, staff is charged with sharing the pros and cons of their current schedule before creating a new schedule. Team leaders come together to discuss non-negotiable items and build a schedule that will yield the best instructional program for our scholars. The schedules are then voted on by staff. Once consensus is reached it is supported and implemented.

Collaborative goal setting for our scholars is important to close the achievement gap. Data is shared at all professional development sessions and leadership meetings. Our intervention staff works closely with the classroom teacher to meet the needs of our scholars not meeting grade level standards. Teams of teachers work together to develop a plan of action including instructional strategies and determine how it will be implemented to achieve targeted outcomes. The autonomy given to the teachers to meet the needs of our scholars have given birth to creative scheduling and teaching models that were not considered in past school years.

The collaborative culture at Centerville has assisted with building school capacity puzzle to meet scholar needs. Staff is involved in the interview process as their voice can offer opinions on the responses and if the person will support the school vision. Collaboration with all facets of our community is important as the PTA is a collaborative partner with the school. The PTA believes in our vision to provide the best learning environment for our scholars by providing technology and materials that are used in the classroom to increase scholar capacity. Our support staff is the backbone of our collaborative environment puzzle without their contributions our puzzle would be incomplete.

When we won the Maryland Blue Ribbon award, we adopted a slogan of “we all had a hand in this.” It is true as not one person earned the award. We as a collaborative school community won the award. We are so honored to have been acknowledged for our efforts to provide the best learning environment for our scholars.