

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 Mr. James Weisner

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

Official School Name Manor Woods Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 11575 Frederick Road

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

City Ellicott City State MD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21042-2016

County Howard County

Telephone (410) 313-7165 Fax (410) 313-7170

Web site/URL http://mwes.hcpss.org E-mail carol_debord@hcpss.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. Michael Martirano E-mail michael_martirano@hcpss.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Howard County Public Schools Tel. (410) 313-6600

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Cynthia Vaillancourt
(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):
- 41 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 20 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 12 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 74 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	57	63	120
1	48	56	104
2	67	57	124
3	78	67	145
4	77	61	138
5	66	62	128
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	393	366	759

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 47 % Asian
 - 6 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 40 % White
 - 4 % 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: 8%

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	43
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	57
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	704
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.081
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 8 %
62 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin, Chinese-Min Nan, Farsi, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Persian, Punjabi, Russian, Sindhi, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, Uyghur, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7 %
Total number students who qualify: 51
8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
54 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 18
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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	32
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	21
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 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	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
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.

We foster a learning environment that upholds standards of excellence in teaching and learning, where students, community members, and staff are valued and exercise mutual respect in a diverse and changing world.

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

Manor Woods Elementary School's beautifully wooded campus is located in Ellicott City, Maryland and is one of Howard County's largest elementary schools with approximately 780 students in kindergarten through grade five. Built in 1994, Manor Woods became the county's 32nd elementary school. Ellicott City has experienced significant growth over the past 15 years. Because demographics have changed remarkably over the years, the school's mission to foster a learning environment that upholds standards of excellence in teaching and learning, where students, community members, and staff are valued and exercise mutual respect in a diverse and changing world is particularly relevant. While this changing community provides rich cultural experiences and resources, it requires continuous reevaluation of effective strategies to reach and engage families.

Manor Woods is a school community where academic excellence is achieved and character education is exemplified as a foundation for success. This vision is a key component in helping students develop their full potential socially, emotionally, academically, physically, culturally, and environmentally. Three positive behaviors on which student success is built are to be ready, respectful, and responsible. By utilizing this simple language school-wide, all teachers highlight and model the impact of these behaviors in their respective environments. These behaviors are reinforced through our PBIS program. Consequently, behavioral interruptions to the learning environment are minimal.

In its 22-year history, Manor Woods has established several not-to-be-missed traditions. Each year families and teachers come together for a Back to School Picnic where relationships are started, refreshed, and enriched. Students, staff, and families look forward to the annual Halloween parade, holiday sing-a-long, Flag Day celebration, Evening of Excellence, Field Day, music concerts, and end of year picnics. Each year, teachers work to bring the curriculum to life for students and families in the form of plays, folktales, or simulated congressional hearings.

The value of physical, social, and emotional health is regularly encouraged and students are challenged to take risks and embrace a growth mindset in all areas. The guidance counselor meets monthly with classes and more frequently with students who exhibit a need for additional support with friends, organization, or stress management. The physical education department also promotes healthy living by sponsoring Family Fit Night. Teachers continue to encourage these ideas by implementing movement breaks, brain breaks, and positive reinforcement of social interactions through our PBIS duck slips.

It is important at Manor Woods that all students see themselves represented in the school culture. Since we are an increasingly diverse community, we strategically plan our efforts for inclusion. The strong partnership with the PTA allows a variety of experiences in which many cultures are intentionally represented. The addition of cultural arts programs, focusing on music, arts, and academics as part of these experiences allows students to recognize their membership in many cultures, not simply ethnic ones. This creates a school culture that embraces and values differences and commonalities.

Manor Woods staff meet the needs of all students through a variety of interventions, enrichment opportunities, and collaboration. Classroom teachers spend time getting to know student needs to effectively meet them in the classroom. Data discussions, student goal setting, and student conferences are regularly conducted to ensure appropriate growth of all students. Our reading specialist and ESOL teachers collaborate closely with classroom teachers to design specific supports for students, while paraeducators also work with small groups. GT resource teachers conduct talent spotting lessons at each grade level and pull enrichment groups in first-fifth grades. Students participating in the highest level of math enrichment also participate in a worldwide competition through the Math Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools contest and consistently score among the top 10% of teams. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in two annual language arts opportunities supported by the school. Second through fifth graders participate in the Young Author's Writing Contest through State of Maryland International Reading Council (SoMIRAC). Students enter an original short story or poem and entries are judged at the school, county, and state levels. Students also participate in the Bowie Baysox Read and Hit a Home Run program, promoting reading both at home and at school. All of these efforts provide opportunities for students, staff, and

families to encourage, celebrate, and promote academic growth throughout the school.

Manor Woods earned Maryland Green School certification in 2010 and maintains this status while expanding students' environmental awareness and activism. All students participate in recycling, both through the county single stream program, the Crayola Colorcycle program, and the Trex plastic recycling program. Fifth graders raise trout from eggs to fingerlings and release them in a local stream under the guidance of the Trout in the Classroom program. They also participate in the restoration of oyster reefs by constructing an artificial reef that is then placed in the Chesapeake Bay as a habitat.

Manor Woods is a thriving environment for all of its community members. The school's community success is in large part due to the strong home/school relationships that are established and grown over the years. Teachers regularly challenge themselves with new learning, workshops, initiatives, technology, best practices, and National Board certifications. Students consistently give their best, set goals, are risk takers, and work hard, while parents and community members support both teachers and students through their engagement, positive feedback, resources, involvement, and communication.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Manor Woods Elementary follows the Howard County Public School System Curriculum for all core curriculum areas. The HCPSS Curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards to ensure that our students are college and career ready.

Our language arts program is designed to provide every student in grades K-5 with opportunities to become successful communicators, to read comprehensively, write effectively, speak meaningfully, and listen critically. Writing instruction includes narrative, opinion, and informational writing at all grade levels. Teachers introduce a new genre by reading sample texts and charting characteristics that students notice from that genre. Following the gradual release of responsibility model, teachers model how to write the genre, the class works together to write some samples of the genre, then students are assigned a writing task that they are ready to do independently. In the primary grades, students use Daily Five to stay actively engaged in purposeful reading and writing activities independently while teachers instruct small groups. Teachers meet with small groups for guided reading using books that are on the instructional level of their students. Informal running records and comprehension checks as well as benchmark assessments are used to ensure that students are challenged without frustrating them. Guided writing is integrated into reading lesson plans to give students the opportunity for immediate feedback and support while writing about what they read. Prefixes, suffixes, and bases are the focus of vocabulary instruction in the intermediate grades. Word families are the focus of vocabulary instruction in the primary grades. Students are expected to apply their vocabulary knowledge in all content areas.

Our mathematics program encourages students to practice applying mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and it requires students to think and reason mathematically. Teachers begin each math class with number routines that focus on critical concepts and number sense. After learning a new routine, students practice it for several days, thus making it "routine" for them. When introducing new concepts, teachers provide manipulatives so students can have hands-on experiences with numbers and operations, geometry, measurement, and algebraic thinking. Teachers model a variety of strategies, encouraging students to solve problems in different ways. Though we emphasize problem solving, basic facts are still important at each grade level. Teachers provide experiences to build fluency with facts at each grade level. Teachers create anchor charts and refer to them as students practice the strategies. Students write in math journals to record their learning, practice using a variety of strategies, and using math vocabulary. Closure at the end of each math class ensures that students understand the concepts that were introduced and practiced that day. Closure activities include group discussion, reviewing the class anchor chart, or writing in math journals.

The social studies curriculum expands in focus as students get older. In the primary grades, we lay the foundations for students to see themselves in their communities and the world. They learn about responsible citizenship, how community helpers support the community, and share traditions from their cultures. In the intermediate grades, students focus on the local history of Ellicott City and Howard County, the settlement of our state of Maryland, and our nation's foundations. Simulated Congressional Hearings are the culminating event for fifth grade students after learning about United States history. Students work collaboratively in small groups to research a topic that is central to our country's basic principles, write a group speech arguing the advantages and disadvantages of the principle, present the speech in front of guest judges from the community, and respond to follow-up questions about their speech.

The Next Generation Science Standards guide our curriculum. By capturing students' perceptions of the world around them, our program provides opportunities to expand, change, enhance, and modify the ways in which they view the world. Students are fully engaged in planning investigations, manipulating materials and making observations, seeking answers to questions, and explaining ideas based on evidence. Throughout an activity, students reflect regularly on what they have done, the problems they have met, and how they have come up with solutions. Cross-curricular connections are made naturally within our own classrooms as well as through our related arts classes. Students collaborate on shared Google Docs to form

and support opinions related to focus questions. Students have experiences in art and technology classes that support their science content knowledge. These connections help students see that science extends further than the classroom walls. The Engineering Design Process (EDP) is integrated into all grade levels with knowledge building upon the prior grades' concepts. Students learn the five steps of EDP in kindergarten as they build shade structures to reduce the warming effects of the sun. By the time they reach fifth grade, students design and build water filters to reduce the spread of pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. Local real-life connections are made directly from their classroom investigations.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Manor Woods, our art program is designed based on the school system's fine arts department curriculum. All students in kindergarten through fifth grade have 60 minutes of art instruction per week. We enrich our program through participation in 8-10 county and state art exhibitions every year. Our school hosts an Artist-in-Residence every three years, where students are exposed to the work of a practicing artist and create permanent installations for our school. This past year, the Manor Woods art department received a grant from the Walters Art Museum in partnership with the Robinson Nature Center in Columbia, MD. This grant allowed first grade students to participate in a theme exhibition at the Museum. Additionally, we have partnered with the art department at our feeder high school to create collaborative student artwork. Both of our art teachers continue to develop professionally through education, personal practice, and teaching art in extra-curricular settings. Both teachers are recipients of Maryland Art Education Association Educator of the Year awards.

All students at Manor Woods receive weekly instruction in the media center. Our learners engage in lessons that foster a lifelong love of reading, as well as lessons that build skills in research, source evaluation, and creating presentations. From first graders collaborating on writing a non-fiction book on animals, second graders writing poetry and participating in a poetry slam, to fifth graders investigating the human impact on our waterways at a local and global level, our students are participating in activities that support both the curriculum in content areas as well as the ALA standards for 21st century learners. Frequent collaborations with other teachers allow our students to benefit from a cross-curricular approach to content learning.

At Manor Woods, all students attend vocal/general music class for 60 minutes per week. Following a rigorous county curriculum based on the National Standards for Music, students develop the skills necessary to create, perform, and respond to music. Students participate in a variety of learning experiences which include: singing, playing instruments, movement, reading music, writing music, listening to exemplars, use of music terminology, evaluating music using criteria, and performing. The goal of the music program is to develop lifelong musicians and consumers of music. All grade levels are given an opportunity to perform for an audience outside of the classroom. Students in the primary grades perform our school song at assemblies and community events, participate in the all-school singalong in December, and perform patriotic songs during our Flag Day celebration. Students in the intermediate grades may participate in performance ensembles. Each ensemble prepares for at least two performances a year. Third graders may participate in orchestra. At our school, 73% of our third grade students participate in orchestra. Students in fourth and fifth grades may participate in chorus as well as band or orchestra. Ensemble time is considered additional enrichment to music class, and 83% of all fourth grade students and 88% of all fifth grade students participate. We are proud that many of our ensemble students are chosen to participate in All County GT ensembles which strengthens their personal growth as musicians and community members.

In physical education, students engage in a variety of movement experiences to promote lifetime physical learning, encourage wellness, and develop life skills such as communication, teamwork, and fair play. Students participate for 90 minutes a week in skills, games, rhythms, gymnastics, and dance experiences that relate to math, science, movement, fitness, and health concepts. During the school year, all students participate in the Turkey Trot and Field Day, while second through fifth grade students may participate after school in Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart events. The P.E. department also hosts a Family Fit Night to enrich the well-being of our larger school community.

Every student at Manor Woods participates in a weekly, 60 minute technology class using computers and iPads, in addition to what is infused throughout all subject areas within classrooms. Students are exposed to

numerous applications such as Wixie, Microsoft Word, iMovie, Google Docs and Canvas, a supplemental online classroom tool, to enhance grade level curriculum and current trends in technology. Additionally, programmable robots are used to engage students and teach programming skills during class and after school programs. Students are taught essential lifelong skills such as keyboarding, collaboration, and computer science, preparing them to thrive in our technology-driven world, as well as ensure mastery of standards for the 21st century.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Our effective program is due to our staff's dedication to improving instruction to help students reach their full potential. Primary/intermediate math and language arts meetings occur yearly to create cohesive school expectations and address student needs. Recent meeting topics have included higher level questioning to build number sense, bar modeling to decipher problems, on-demand versus formal writing assignments, math vocabulary to enhance math talk, close reading to improve interpretive comprehension, and academic vocabulary for informational text fluency. This year's focus has been on writing instruction across grade levels. One outcome was the posting of non-negotiable classroom expectations, which contain previous and current grade level writing and grammar expectations. All staff are responsible for holding students accountable for maintaining skills across grades.

Another staff strength is creating engaging, rigorous, and thought-provoking lessons by collaboratively planning with all stakeholders: related arts teachers, special educators, academic support staff, and paraeducators. Classroom teachers work with special educators to analyze data and determine the most effective academic program for students. Some students have shown accelerated growth after using a structured phonics approach as a result of this collaboration. Also, paraeducators actively support classroom instruction with small groups and individual interventions (e.g., reading and math fluency, letter recognition, basic facts) to maximize success for approaching and on grade level students.

Individuals and teams actively research instructional methodologies to improve our school's pedagogy. Currently, number talks and guided reading are being studied. Last year, Daily 5 was implemented, resulting in increased fluency in our readers. Lessons include differentiation to scaffold activities so learning is accessible, rigorous tasks to encourage persistence and deeper understanding, and independent student choice activities to address unique learning styles. Individual education plans, 504 plans, action plans, and behavior intervention plans are referenced to determine next steps for individual students. English language learners are supported through small group instruction, individual assistance, use of technology, and peer mentors.

In addition to academic growth, our school works toward positively building up the whole child. We do this by promoting a growth mindset, praising effort, and through "The Power of Yet" - where it's okay not to understand a new concept yet. Our popular music programs provide enrichment opportunities, along with instructional seminars that are open to all students. Curriculum extension units enrich our high achieving students. Guidance lessons provide social and emotional understanding. After school activities encourage friendships and build our school community. Students are provided opportunities to become active in the community, such as participating in the Heavenly Hats program, Change Matters collection for our county's crisis shelter, and service projects to support our military and the Ronald McDonald house.

Student proficiency and growth are measured through observations, formative and summative assessments, and performance-based tasks. Teachers at all grade levels collaborate to disaggregate data provided through school-system and state-wide assessments. As a result of our data analysis, we maintain flexible grouping for students so that all students are afforded access to rigorous coursework throughout the year. Our school improvement team analyzed student performance data from the previous school year to determine that female students were underrepresented in higher level math courses in the intermediate grades. Our teachers made a conscious effort through student groupings and instructional practices to provide more opportunities for girls to excel in mathematics. Our use of number talks as a routine at the beginning of each math class have also had a positive effect on our female students' confidence, participation, and math vocabulary usage.

Technology classroom integration and collaborative projects with technology teachers are prominent

throughout our school. Primary classrooms use iPads, computers, and provide access to software programs for reading practice both in school and at home. Special education students are provided assistive technology to address note taking, predictive spelling, speech to text capabilities, and assistance reading grade level text. Intermediate student teams have online access to research documents with science articles, creating a collaborative working document. Our county's Canvas platform provides students and teachers the ability to interact with one another and their teachers on assignments.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Creating a climate and culture that not only supports students, but where staff is valued and supported is a cornerstone for our school's success. We have many initiatives in place and are on the lookout for new supports that engage and motivate both students and staff.

We provided all staff members with the opportunity to identify and leverage their individual strengths using Gallup Strengths Finder. Through reading, professional development, and conversations with colleagues, staff have been able to not only identify how their own strengths can help them grow personally and professionally, but increase their understanding of their colleagues to support high-functioning teams.

The Positive Behavioral Incentives and Supports (PBIS) program promotes students' academic, social, and emotional development through our "3 Rs": being respectful, being responsible, and being ready to learn. Positive behaviors are reinforced through grade-level lessons, the use of duck slips to reward positive behavior, and public recognition of students. We recognize positive behavior during quarterly culminating school-wide celebrations, such as Movie and PJ day, Beach day, and Board game day.

This year, developing a growth mindset is a focus at our school. The word "yet" can be seen throughout the building, to remind students to persevere when attempting a new skill. However, growth mindset isn't just emphasized for students. Staff use notes and candy to celebrate and motivate each other. Staff also work as teams to prepare a meal or treats for the entire staff, and periodic after-hours staff gatherings are held throughout the year, which help foster a sense of family among the staff.

A recent collaboration with our school's Girl Scout troop resulted in the creation of a brightly colored Buddy Bench near our playground, encouraging students to be a friend to those that are in need of one. Throughout the school year, staff are visible in the front of the school at arrival and dismissal and throughout the building during the day greeting students. There are several special events during the school year, many in partnership with the PTA, that support the school as an engaging and motivating place to be. These include Junior Achievement Day, Family Fit Night, Fun Day, the Holiday Sing-a-Long, Variety Show, Evening of Excellence, and International Night.

Our PTA works with our administration to support staff throughout the year, including recognizing individual staff members through the use of positive notes, hosting staff appreciation lunches, dinners, and dessert buffets, and inviting food trucks to serve lunch to staff members.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The minute you walk into Manor Woods, you feel welcome, whether you notice the multi-language greeting on the office door, the student work displayed throughout the hallways, or the "be kinder than necessary" reminder on the desk of the principal. We proudly serve an ethnically diverse student population with backgrounds in 22 native languages.

We utilize electronic resources to inform families. Through our school and PTA websites, PTA Facebook page, school Twitter feed, and email blasts, we provide timely information to our community. Daily communication reports are utilized for some of our students so there is frequent communication to best support them. Families participate in face-to-face parent/teacher conferences with interpreters provided for our parents who are not English speakers.

Positive relationships with our families begin with our annual Open House prior to the first student day. A Back-to-School picnic occurs early in the year and Fun Day celebrates the end of the year with the community. An active PTA partners with the school staff, and parent volunteers assist in classes and organize school wide activities such as the Artist in Residence program, cultural arts programs, the PTA Reflections program, and the annual Variety Show. Parents are members of our School Improvement

Team. Our PTA also provides after school enrichment programs to assist our students in college and career readiness. This year, a STEM Fair was held with over 100 students participating in this evening event. Through our Family Fit Night, families were connected with resources in the community, emphasizing the importance of physical fitness and staying healthy. The PTA was instrumental in bringing community leaders to the school to share information regarding the Board of Education elections, the budget process, and overcrowding and redistricting issues. Community members are also guest judges in our fifth grade Simulated Congressional Hearings. The school has partnerships with community business including McDonalds and Mathnasium. Additionally, the school regularly has student teachers from local colleges and universities and also offers the opportunity for high school students to volunteer and support teachers.

One of our most well-attended events is our International Night, where families and staff show pride for their countries of origin by dressing in traditional clothing, preparing regional favorite foods, and showcasing artistic performances. Many countries have been represented and this event helps our students become more acculturated.

Manor Woods students give back to our larger community in several ways. Students regularly drop off items in a shopping cart housed in the front lobby for donation to our local food bank. Aluminum drink tabs are collected and donated to Ronald McDonald House. Students have also recently participated in the Change Matters campaign for Grassroots, our county's only homeless shelter, Heavenly Hats and the American Heart Association's Hoops for Heart and Jump Rope for Heart and collected more than 1500 books for the Maryland Book Bank.

3. Professional Development:

This year, Manor Woods staff have focused our professional development on the topic of mindset. Our staff approaches professional development with a growth mindset; looking for opportunities to develop intelligence in our staff and students. Our staff uses Howard County Public School System performance benchmarks, data analysis, conversations with math and reading support teachers, and the goals in our School Improvement Plan to guide choices in professional development. At Manor Woods, we support all teachers with a Teacher Development Liaison who is available to aid staff members with evaluation year questions as well as training on domains that are assessed through the Danielson Model. Teachers, administrators, and other school staff at Manor Woods go beyond what is expected in order to be a part of professional development that will be of benefit to our diverse student body and can provide strategies and skills relevant for staff throughout the school.

One need identified by our School Improvement Team was for students to engage in productive struggle during rich math tasks, in order to improve their overall performance in math. Many teachers chose to attend professional development sessions on Number Talks in order to learn how to effectively provoke discourse and productive struggle. After attending this training, teachers shared the information learned in biweekly, school-based sessions with the math support teacher. These collaborative work sessions provided scaffolding for teachers with various experiences in order to make the application sustainable. Since the implementation of Number Talks, we have seen improved performance in math as well as increased Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores for students in all grade levels.

Another challenge identified by the School Improvement Team was ensuring the consistent implementation of a well-balanced literacy block in all grade levels, in order to positively impact language arts performance. In order to address this challenge at Manor Woods, staff at all grade levels attending training on guided reading to illuminate the process of learning to read and reading to learn. In addition to this, staff members have attended training on analyzing running records in order to pinpoint goals for students based on their individual needs. Teachers also engage in biweekly grade level meetings with the reading support teacher in order to better understand the new information and critique and reflect on the reading process in their classrooms. These trainings have positively impacted student achievement at Manor Woods, based on classroom performance, Fountas & Pinnell data, and MAP scores.

Teachers and administration at Manor Woods have focused on developing students' strengths and challenging fixed mindsets with growth mindsets. In order to foster a professional learning community

where this is possible, administration provided the entire staff with Carol Dweck's text *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. We have had several school-based professional development opportunities to engage in professional discourse on mindset in multiple contexts. Many staff members chose to continue developing their knowledge of this topic by attending book clubs and courses focused around both Carol Dweck's text as well as on work by Mary Cay Ricci on mindset in the classroom. The building-wide focus on mindset, from administration to support staff, has had a positive effect on student outlook and performance as measured by our student engagement survey.

4. School Leadership:

At Manor Woods, teamwork is an essential element to school leadership. The Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC), comprised of the principal, assistant principal, grade level team leaders, representatives from special education, related arts, academic support, and student services, meets biweekly and focuses on academic goals, testing information, professional development, and upcoming school events. These meetings are open to all staff, who frequently share suggestions and ideas on how to best meet the needs of students and staff.

The School Improvement Team (SIT) meets quarterly and is open to all staff. SIT members work collaboratively to carry out our school mission. Our school improvement plan serves as a tool for monitoring school progress, appropriately adjusting instruction, and delineating responsibility for implementation.

Our Instructional Intervention Team (IIT) includes representatives from each grade level as well as our academic support team. They meet monthly to discuss interventions to meet the diverse needs of our students. Grade level representatives serve as case managers and facilitate team meetings about how we can better support individual needs. For individuals in need of additional support, a case manager with the leadership skills and knowledge based on the student's need is assigned to work individually with the classroom teacher.

Manor Woods is a professional community that works to provide the best learning environment. Committees include language arts, math, STEM, Green School, social, and PBIS. These committees ensure a consistent approach and united learning environment, allowing everyone to participate and to enjoy leadership roles.

Our teacher development liaison provides ongoing professional learning and support for staff aligned with best practices for instruction and evaluation. Monthly collaborative meetings build capacity through sharing sessions designed to support teachers in their evaluation year. Additionally, the liaison meets monthly with all non-tenured teachers to help them grow their pedagogical practices.

Manor Woods teachers participate in leadership activities at the county level, including writing curriculum across content areas and grade levels and presenting at county-wide professional development events. These activities allow our staff to remain current in pedagogy and support and lead within and outside of our school.

Building the leadership capacity of students is also a priority for us. Students demonstrate leadership through activities including student leaders, morning announcements, mentoring opportunities, and in a variety of community outreach programs.

Leadership takes many forms at Manor Woods, which helps us to achieve our mission of upholding standards of excellence in teaching and learning.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Student success at Manor Woods is ensured through collaboration of grade-level team members, administration, and support staff during regular data discussions in both language arts and mathematics. Data is gathered from PARCC, MAP, Fountas & Pinnell benchmarks, CogAT testing, classroom performance on formative and summative assessments, and teacher observations. These discussions allow participants to share information about all students.

As part of the data discussion process, appropriate placement of high-performing students in confirmed and students are identified for possible participation in Curriculum Extension Units. These units allow highly-able students to extend their knowledge of science and social studies content outside of the general academic setting. Gifted and talented mathematics is offered to high-performing students in grades 4 and 5 who test into the program through their CogAT scores or teacher recommendation based on classroom performance and data. Other high-performing students participate in an above-grade level math and/or reading class. These instructional groups are closely monitored to ensure continued appropriate academic placement. The progress of on-grade level students is monitored through the data discussions to verify appropriate instructional placement and identify opportunities for extensions or interventions as warranted. Students who are currently working below grade level and who need additional support are closely monitored through these discussions to determine if the students are meeting or exceeding their expected rate of progress. If students are in need of academic support, additional assessments are administered and the data is reviewed to help determine the next instructional steps to allow for success. Students who are identified as below grade level in reading are given direct small group instruction from the classroom teacher and additional support is provided by the reading specialist. English language learners are provided direct instruction by our ESOL teachers with support from grade level paraeducators. Students identified as below grade level or who need additional support in math are co-taught by the classroom teacher and special educator. If any student is not making expected growth, teachers may refer them to IIT. This team will work with the classroom teacher to create a plan to identify targeted goals and steps to achieve them. Data discussions play a key role in knowing the learner to facilitate their progress and ensure success.

Implementing the data discussions on a school-wide level allows for collaboration between many educators, administrators, and support staff. This practice has been the most influential action for ensuring student success.