

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Melissa White

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

Official School Name Stonehouse Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3651 Rochambeau Drive

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

City Williamsburg State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 23188-6623

County James City County

Telephone (757) 566-4300 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL https://wjccschools.org/ses/ E-mail Melissa.White@wjccschools.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\*Ms. Olwen Herron E-mail olwen.herron@wjccschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Williamsburg-James City Public School District Tel. (757) 603-6400

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. 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

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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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 3 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools

15 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	60	59	119
1	50	62	112
2	57	55	112
3	54	62	116
4	66	68	134
5	74	65	139
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
<b>Total Students</b>	361	371	732

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2 % Asian
  - 16 % Black or African American
  - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 65 % White
  - 9 % 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: 9%

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	37
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	28
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	65
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	719
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.090
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %  
17 Total number ELL

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

Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %  
Total number students who qualify: 179

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %  
107 Total number of students served

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

<u>13</u> Autism	<u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>27</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>29</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>26</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>4</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>7</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	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.	24
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
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., 22:1 231:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	97%	96%	96%
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.

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

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

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

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

The mission of Stonehouse Elementary is to achieve a supportive learning community in which each individual is respected, valued, and empowered to strive for excellence through academic achievement,

citizenship, and wellness. We support the mission, vision, and strategic plan of Williamsburg James City County. We base our teaching on best practices. We help all students achieve by addressing individual needs and learning styles. We engage families through positive communication and by providing parent education opportunities. We collaborate with the community for our mutual benefit.

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Stonehouse Elementary School opened its doors to students and staff in 2000 in response to increased construction and growing population in the north-western part of the county. We are located 40 miles from the capital city of Richmond, 13 miles from Colonial Williamsburg, 22 miles from Jamestown, and 24 miles from Yorktown, providing our students and staff a plethora of historical resources and extended learning opportunities beyond the classroom. As our area continues to grow, changes have been made to Stonehouse. For instance, Stonehouse was home to the Bright-Beginnings program, a school-based preschool for children ages 2-5 identified as at risk and/or children with identified disabilities or delays. As the Stonehouse population topped 900 and included multiple learning cottages, the pre-school program was moved to another location within the division in 2010. We now serve approximately 736 students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Stonehouse is an inclusive school that endeavors to support all students and their range of needs. In fact, two-thirds of the division's Hearing-Impaired students attend SES. We also have two self-contained cross-categorical classrooms comprised of students in kindergarten through 5th grade. In addition to meeting the needs of these students, we also recognize the unique needs of our transient families. According to a US census, Hampton Roads has the highest concentration of military personnel in the country. As a school within the Hampton Roads region, we are cognizant of our military families' daily sacrifices and need for support within the school setting.

depicts Stonehouse's focus on developing the whole child, including experiences with the fine arts and athletics. In the foreground is a balance, a visual reminder that in all things we are to treat our students equitably while recognizing our students' individual needs, talents, and gifts. Encouraging children to pursue their dreams and honoring each child's uniqueness are the values upon which Stonehouse was established and those we continue to uphold today.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Stonehouse Elementary School supports Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools' (WJCC) philosophy of a Balanced Literacy Approach. Instructional strategies are designed to address the range of students' interests and needs as they grow as readers and writers. Our approach is literature-based and follows the reading and writing workshop model. The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) are at the core of our curriculum and guide our best practices. Teachers meet weekly with their grade level teams and every other week with the Reading Specialist to review data and make instructional decisions. The Literacy Team meets quarterly to look at student performance and identify students who are in need of Tier 2 Intervention. Ongoing collaboration between the Special Education Team, Classroom Teachers, and other Interventionists occur daily to address individual student needs. Additional enrichment programs for students are available to include our Visions Program for our Gifted and Talented students, as well as participation in a book club for 4th and 5th grade students. The school division routinely partners with the Williamsburg Area Reading Council (WARC), the College of William and Mary, and School-University Research Network (SURN) to provide professional development opportunities for teachers including, Writer's Workshop, word study instruction, Student Teacher internships, Assessment Literacy, and emerging practices for small group reading instruction. Our teachers have participated in multiple Teachers as Readers opportunities to include 6 +1 Traits of Writing, The Daily 5, The Café Book, and The Next Step Forward in Guided Reading.

Stonehouse Elementary School follows the WJCC Mathematics Curriculum. The Virginia Standards of Learning guide our instructional planning, lessons, and practices. Recently revised standards have increased the level of rigor and expectations. Our vertically aligned curriculum focuses on number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability, statistics, patterns, functions, and algebra. Stonehouse students learn through an interactive, kinesthetic approach to mathematics. It is the foundation on which students experience success and determination with authentic, application based problems. Students are encouraged to explore patterns and make connections using manipulatives, as well as engage in "Math Talk" as they solidify their understanding of foundational number concepts. Teachers meet weekly with their grade level teams and every other week with the Math Specialist to review data, which guides instructional decisions. Our Math Specialist uses a collaborative approach to provide support to students and teachers, as well as to provide intervention for those who require more intensive instruction. Additional enrichment programs include our Visions Program for Gifted and Talented students in grades K-4. Qualifying fifth graders participate in a 6th grade math course.

The Stonehouse science program is based primarily on the Virginia Standards of Learning, emphasizing Scientific Investigation, Reasoning, and Logic; Life Processes; Living Systems; Matter; Interrelationships in Earth/Space; Earth Patterns, Cycles and Change; Earth Resources; and Force, Motion, and Energy. Science instruction is student-oriented, providing hands-on, authentic learning opportunities that are not textbook dependent. Science content is integrated across the curriculum and fosters development of critical thinking skills. Scientific concepts and skills are taught using nonlinguistic representations, interactive notebooks, technology, and participation in scientific investigations. A collaborative partnership with Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility supports STEM knowledge and activities, extending student learning beyond the classroom.

Social Studies frameworks are an integrated program of History and the Social Sciences. The four major strands include history, geography, civics, and economics, and are designed to promote civic competence. Emphasis is placed on applying knowledge and skills from these four areas through hands-on learning in the classroom, guest speakers and outreach programs, as well as participation in field experiences within the Historic Triangle and surrounding areas. WJCC partners with neighboring resources such as Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the Richmond Historical Society to ensure alignment between curriculum standards and extended learning opportunities.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The rapidly changing global economy calls for a different type of future workforce; it calls for dynamic and creative thinkers. We offer a variety of classes through our “centers” rotation at all grade levels, affording students an opportunity to discover their niche. Students attend Media, Art, Technology, Physical Education, and Performing Arts classes on a rotation basis once weekly for 45 minutes.

To support creative thinking skills outside the general education classroom, we emphasize the arts in education, offering performing arts classes such as Orchestra, Band, and General Music. Band and Orchestra are available to fifth graders and are a prerequisite for sixth grade intermediate classes. Students may take one performing arts class for the year in addition to their other centers. Those participating in Band or Orchestra obtain an instrument of choice and rehearse once per week in a homogeneous setting in preparation for various concerts throughout the year.

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade participate in Music class. They explore musical concepts of pitch, beat, rhythm, and form through singing, playing instruments, movement, playing games, and performing. During lessons, student activities include both independent and group work. Additionally, we enjoy grade level performances yearly. Families, central office staff, and school board members are invited to attend these special events.

At varying levels of depth based on grade level, our art program is intended to support the following goals for students: Demonstrate understanding of and apply the elements of art; Learn the proper use of and techniques associated with various art media; Solve visual art problems with originality and imagination; Develop understanding of the relationship of the visual arts to history, culture, and other subjects by tying in art projects to specific areas of study at various grade levels; Reflect upon and develop an understanding of and respect for their own work and the work of others.

Students in kindergarten through second grade participate in Health/Physical Education class once every 5 days for 45 minutes, while third through fifth grade participate twice every 5 days for 45 minutes. Here, students learn about goal setting, the Five Components of Fitness, intensity levels, bone health, food for energy and health, muscle motion, pedometers, and general hygiene. Skill-related activities are taught in each class with emphasis on increasing personal health and fitness levels, rather than competing with others.

Beginning in kindergarten, all students take Technology. Although grade level expectations become more complex, topics include types and parts of computers and devices, mouse control skills, school division technology policies, internet safety, digital citizenship and cyber bullying, internet navigation, paint/draw skills and editing digital images, media player, file management, keyboarding, word-processing, spreadsheets and graphs, multimedia presentations, online research (source reliability and citation), testing strategies, and computer programming/coding. Students work individually and in groups depending on the topic or assignment. Students also have access to technology including laptops, iPads, and iPods in their classrooms, making it a part of daily instruction.

In Media, there is typically a whole-group lesson and activity followed by book check-out. Lessons are developed after collaborating with teachers and consulting the SOLs and the AASL’s Standards of Learning for the 21st Century Learner. The main objective of the Media Center is to create a fun, positive environment to encourage life-long readers. This is achieved by enthusiastically sharing quality literature as well as carefully selecting diverse, high-interest books which support student learning for the collection. In the primary grades, literature appreciation is the focus. For students in grades 3-5, the goal is to create effective consumers of information.

An essential component of our centers program is to provide exploration, interaction, and enrichment of the core curriculum. To that end, centers teachers routinely collaborate with classroom teachers and tailor instruction to align with current grade level content. For example, in art, students create products that are used as props and settings for grade level performances. Our music teacher produces these grade level programs to enrich classroom learning. Our technology teacher instructs students within his class in applications, programs, and games that are used in the general education classroom. This type of

collaboration is a hallmark characteristic of the student experience at Stonehouse.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Our instructional philosophies are based on the consistent use of high-yield strategies designed to maximize student engagement. To ensure student engagement, teachers plan differentiated learning activities for students based on individual learner profiles, including classroom performance, learning styles, multiple intelligences, language abilities, prior knowledge/background experiences, and assessment data. Students create individual learning goals and work with teachers and families to develop an action plan for attainment. Additionally, SES has implemented Student-Driven Conferences to promote student accountability for their learning.

During reading instruction, teachers use Reading and Writing Workshop Models and implement small group instruction and individual student conferencing to meet the needs of diverse learners. Flexible grouping is based upon multiple data points such as performance on the Developmental Reading Assessment 2, Developmental Spelling Assessment, Measures of Academic Progress, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, and Test of Phonological Awareness. Daily 5 instructional practices are evident in classrooms, supporting independent literacy stations and incorporating technology-based programs such as Raz-Kids, Bookflix, and PebbleGo. Kindergarten and first grade students are taught using the practices of the Wilson Foundations Program. Kindergarteners, first graders, and RTI students in grades 2-5 receive “just right” reading materials nightly to foster home school relationships. We implement a literature based reading instruction program with a book room that includes an inventory of over 20,000 books.

Teachers use flexible grouping in math instruction based on students’ needs and targeted skills. Data is collected through Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) to inform instructional decisions and to create small groups for reinforcement, enrichment, and remediation. Curriculum Based Assessments (CBA) on PowerSchool are given after instruction to determine mastery of skills and to decide if further instruction is needed. Teachers use math centers to include manipulatives, games, and activities that increase students’ math vocabulary, support number sense, reinforce facts, and increase problem solving skills. Model drawings, “Math Talk”, and cooperative groups are used to move students from concrete to abstract understandings of math concepts. Consistent use of technology enhances mathematics instruction. Online resources such as Reflex Math, XtraMath, and other various apps foster the home school connection.

As part of Response to Intervention (RTI) practices, students are provided support based on a multi-tiered approach. Intervention for Tier 2 students is provided by a Reading Recovery Teacher, Student Support Teacher, Reading Specialist, Math Specialist, and a part time tutor. Students who need occasional support work with volunteers from The College of William & Mary, retired teachers, and the local community. Students needing intervention are identified during data meetings with grade level teachers, interventionists, and administration. Teachers routinely obtain, upload, and review student information using a fluid Data Wall, which allows for monitoring of student progress. Students identified for formal intervention are typically 6 months below grade level, have not responded to classroom interventions, and/or have not passed benchmark scores for state and local assessment to include PALS, DRA2, MAPS, CBA, and any additional classroom assessments. Teachers work collaboratively to develop individualized Student Assistance Plans so that interventions and modifications are documented and monitored regularly.

Interventions for Tier 3 are provided by our Reading Recovery Teacher and Learning Specialists using both collaborative and resource models. We offer Wilson Reading for students who demonstrate a deficit in decoding. Learning Specialists use Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). The high SOL pass rates of our students receiving special education services can be attributed to the authentic co-teaching model valued at Stonehouse.

Additional assessments used to inform instruction include the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Otis Lennon School Ability Test, Test of Mathematical Ability for Gifted Students, Cognitive Abilities Test, Performance-Based Assessments in science and social studies, Math Tasks, Access for ELLs, district writing prompts, performance on pre- and post- tests, and classroom product assessments. As our subgroup

gaps have greatly decreased, we have renewed commitment to providing enrichment opportunities for all learners. Subsequently, the Stonehouse School Improvement Plan for SY2016-2017 is to increase the percentage of students who attain a pass advanced score on the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Stonehouse Elementary School is a community of learners and leaders committed to fostering the development of the whole child. As a school community, we build positive relationships with students by empowering them to become life-long learners. As Sea STARS, our core values include Safety, Tolerance, Attitude, Respect, and Striving for excellence. These ideals are embedded in our school and guide interactions among students and staff. We celebrate these core qualities through individual and class recognition. Our belief that all students can be leaders is exemplified in our monthly student leadership program whereby students are recognized for exhibiting one or more of the 8 Habits of Student Leaders.

As a community, we recognize that academic success is largely dependent upon emotional well-being. To that end, school counselors push into each classroom monthly and provide lessons on emotion regulation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. Counselors also conduct small group counseling, serving more than 20 groups per year.

Our fifth grade students are particularly motivated to produce the Sea Star Morning Show, our morning announcement broadcast. The Student Council Association (SCA), which begins in 3rd grade, determines School Spirit Days, runs the school store, and coordinates community service activities. All grade levels participate in Reading Buddies, where primary students are paired with older readers for mentor reading opportunities. Annual events such as the Holiday Sing-Along, bring the student body together to celebrate diversity and our collective cultures. To honor our military families, we participate in Stockings for Soldiers, sending supplies to deployed service members, and our fourth grade Veterans' Day Program has become such a highly anticipated annual event that community members not related to our students look forward to it each school year.

Staff morale is equally critical to the success of our school. Administrator and staff recognition are published weekly via the Driving Engagement and Golden Sea Star awards. You've Been Mugged/Booed, Secret Pals, and Tickets of Gratitude exemplify the Sea Star Spirit and create a culture of appreciation and respect. The Hospitality Committee extends kindness and concern for staff well-being and our PTA routinely spoils staff with tokens of appreciation and plans events such as our school carnival, where families and staff members build relationships while participating in fun activities throughout the school. Finally, the open-door policy practiced by school administration lends itself to open communication and collaboration.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

For sixteen years, Stonehouse Elementary School has garnered tremendous support of families, community leaders, and local businesses. At the heart of these relationships is the Stonehouse PTA, which facilitates a variety of programs and other supports that enable student success and improvement. Our PTA's dedication is evidenced by their financial support and volunteer hours. Fundraising efforts and awarded teacher grants support learning in the classroom and school-wide cultural arts performances. Watch DOGS (Dads of Great Students) support classroom learning, manage our recycling program, and model the importance of engaged fathers.

Our annual Read Across America celebration is attended by forty-two members of the community including senior school division leaders, politicians, emergency responders, military personnel, professors and students from The College of William and Mary, published authors, and the Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction. Partners in Literacy provides families of kindergarteners and first graders information about effective reading strategies and free materials for home use. Read-aloud videos are also available for families on our website. Parent volunteers, retired teachers, and students from The College of William and Mary tutor students on a weekly basis. Our third grade team educates parents about state testing with a Family SOL Night to inform and reduce anxiety over high-stakes testing.

Science, Math, and Wellness Night is an interactive evening for families in which local scientists, local businesses, and high school volunteers provide engaging science experiments and student investigations are shared. The School Health Initiative Program (SHIP) educator collaborates with classroom teachers to promote kinesthetic learning opportunities. Additionally, SHIP offers opportunities for students to explore health and wellness activities after school and in the greater community.

Our Feed the Minds and Sea Star Power Pack programs provide identified students with a backpack of nutritious food and a book to add to their home library each Friday. Our partnerships with Hickory Neck Church and the Girl Scouts of America allow us to sustain the program.

Open and transparent communication is the foundation of student and school success. Administration sends a scheduled weekly call and blast email to all families with the coming week's activities, volunteer recognition, and additional opportunities for parental involvement. PTA disseminates bi-monthly newsletters with curriculum updates from each grade level, teachers use various methods of communication to relay information routinely, parent conferences are scheduled regularly, and quarterly leadership award ceremonies celebrate student successes. School counselors hold three parent workshops annually on subjects of interest such as child anxiety and stress.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Professional development at SES includes division-wide activities, site-based opportunities, and individually selected experiences for professional growth. Professional development offered by the division has focused primarily on Assessment Literacy, Student Indicators of Engagement, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). Dr. Gareis and Dr. Grant with The College of William and Mary worked with Stonehouse faculty to create common assessments using the Virginia Standards of Learning and Bloom's Taxonomy to create a Table of Specifications, ensuring alignment between the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Assessments are reviewed and revised as needed according to changes in the standards.

Ongoing professional development is provided to support teachers in MTSS implementation. As Stonehouse embraces positive behavior and support systems associated with MTSS, we have developed a school-wide matrix for behavioral expectations that extend beyond the classroom and include the cafeteria, hallways, restrooms, and buses. MTSS will continue to be a focus of professional development across the WJCC School Division.

In addition to these division-led activities, Stonehouse faculty participated in a book study of John Hattie's Visible Learning for Teachers to develop a common understanding of high yield instructional practices. Administrators utilized the Student Indicators of Engagement forms for all documented walk-throughs. Data was gathered from these observations and disseminated to staff to provide feedback and celebrate successes, while identifying three indicators of focus (goal setting, reflection, and feedback). Teachers also participated in their own peer observations and provided reflection sheets to administrators.

New SES teachers participate in a mentor program in which they are paired with a veteran teacher to support their transition to our school. Monthly meetings are held to address new teacher questions and concerns, as well as any operating or procedural responsibilities. Our low attrition rate may be attributed to the support that new teachers are provided. Additionally, all teachers participated in a division-wide professional development mini-conference in which they selected break-out sessions that supported their personal goals. Kindergarten teachers also attended a state-level conference designed specifically for primary teachers which resulted in restructured math and literacy blocks.

SES faculty demonstrate commitment to their individual professional growth as well. This is evidenced by the number of teachers who participate in Teachers as Readers, the Williamsburg Area Reading Council (WARC), and continuing education opportunities at the collegiate level. Finally, three teachers are currently seeking National Board Certification.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

At Stonehouse Elementary School, administration strives for two-way, transparent communication at all times and maintains an open door policy. Because Stonehouse has experienced turn-over in administration since the retirement of the founding principal, the current administration believes in the critical importance of building relationships and garnering input from all stakeholders within the school. Creating a shared culture that is focused on both student and staff advancement and satisfaction is a priority. Additionally, administration values the traditions that make Stonehouse the unique learning community it is, while simultaneously soliciting input from all involved to keep us moving forward with shared purpose. To that end, a Leadership Team meets monthly and serves as a liaison to the entire school staff. Team leaders, curriculum leaders, specialists, the school nurse, counselors, the ESL teacher, and school administration meet in order to assess the school's progress toward its goals and help determine next steps. This team also works to develop and provide input for the School Improvement Plan, as well as the school budget. In an effort to extend leadership opportunities to all staff and prevent stagnation, grade level leaders change every two years, thereby changing the dynamic of the Leadership Team. Monthly faculty meetings are held to provide professional development related to the School Improvement Plan and offer a venue to discuss any items needing attention from the collective faculty.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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At Stonehouse Elementary School, we take pride in our academic success. We begin with the end in mind and emphasize the importance of literacy development in the early years. To that end, we dedicate full-time instructional paraprofessionals in each kindergarten classroom, extending their responsibilities to include daily individual or small group reading instruction with first graders. Interventionists and Learning Specialists provide support to identified Tier 2 students in all grade levels and collaborate with classroom teachers to support individual student needs. Unique academic supports in place to promote student achievement in the upper grades include our Rock the Test program, lunch bunch groups, SOL Survivor, and free tutoring opportunities. Rock the Test has been Stonehouse’s extended learning opportunity for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 for the last eleven years. This program provides students additional support in preparing for the reading and mathematics SOL tests. Similarly, SOL Survivor is a rotation-based review designed specifically for fourth graders incorporating games, competitions, awards, and confidence-building opportunities.

Collaboration and open communication between staff and administration provide the foundation for student academic success. To that end, weekly Advisory Team and School Counselor meetings are held in order to discuss school-wide, grade-level, and individual student concerns. Further, teachers and Learning Specialists participate in half-day planning sessions once per quarter to develop long-range plans, in addition to bi-weekly collaboration periods with math and reading specialists. Commitment to collaboration has resulted in increased student achievement as measured by student performance on the SOL assessment, increased student engagement in the classroom, and higher levels of reported teacher efficacy and satisfaction. As we continue to grow as a learning community, we remain mindful of our responsibility to reflect upon our successes and our opportunities for growth. As educators, we strive to model what it means to be life-long learners. Not only do our students set goals within the classrooms, our teachers and administration set professional goals yearly, create an action plan for achievement, and continue to monitor progress made toward reaching those goals the following year. At Stonehouse, we recognize success is individualized and not purely determined by a score on a standardized test; instead, success is evidenced by the growth in academic achievement, citizenship, and wellness.