

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2018 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 Mr. Ryan D. Forkert

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

Official School Name Luxmanor Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6201 Tilden Lane

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

Rockville MD 20852-3738  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Montgomery County

Telephone (240) 740-0820

Fax (240) 740-4390

Web site/URL

<http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/luxmanores/>

E-mail ryan\_d\_forkert@mcpsmd.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. Jack Smith Ph.D.

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail jack\_smith@mcpsmd.org

District Name Montgomery County Public Schools Tel. (240) 740-3030

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. Michael Durso

(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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 135 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 40 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 26 High schools
  - 2 K-12 schools
- 203 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
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	18	4	22
<b>K</b>	41	45	86
<b>1</b>	50	45	95
<b>2</b>	37	43	80
<b>3</b>	40	40	80
<b>4</b>	37	38	75
<b>5</b>	43	46	89
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	266	261	527

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 23 % Asian
  - 15 % Black or African American
  - 19 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 38 % White
  - 5 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 18%

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

Luxmanor is home to many international families who reside within the school boundaries for a short period of time. These families typically work for government agencies either associated with their home country or with the U.S. government. Additionally, families who work for the federal government for short periods of time reside within the school boundaries.

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	51
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	34
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	85
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	467
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.18
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	18

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 28 %  
145 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Ewe, French, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Konkani, Korean, Mandingo, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, Yoruba

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 17 %  
Total number students who qualify: 91

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %  
76 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>6</u> Autism                   | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>38</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability  | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11
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, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
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 26:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
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 2017.

<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

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 Luxmanor community will provide a high-quality, world class education that ensures success for every child through dedicated teaching and learning.

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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Luxmanor Elementary School is located in Rockville, Maryland. The local school community consists of single family homes, condominiums, townhomes and apartments, situated in a suburban setting outside of Washington D.C. The close proximity to the nation's capital attracts families from around the world, which contributes to students from 23 different countries and 26% of students receiving English as a Second Language services and a diverse student body. As recently as 12 years ago, we were considered a small school with only 320 students. New construction in the area has yielded a rapid increase in enrollment. Opened in 1966, the school received additions in 1988 and 2008. The school is scheduled for a revitalization/expansion project, which is scheduled to begin in July 2018. During this time, the school will relocate to a holding school for 18 months while work is completed on the project.

The Luxmanor community has a rich history that has impacted the nation. Located on the Isaac Riley Farm, Reverend Josiah Henson worked as a slave from 1795 to 1830. His 1849 autobiography, "The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave," inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The Josiah Henson Park is located three blocks from the school within the school community.

The community plays a vital role in the success of the school and parents support the school in various ways. The PTA sponsors multiple traditions and events throughout the school year that enhance the learning experiences of all students in the school. Parents kick off the school year with the annual Back to School picnic, which provides families the opportunity to meet each other, as well as interact with the staff. During the school year, the PTA sponsors three book fairs to provide students with additional opportunities to read books and engage with literacy. The Science Fair allows our students to showcase their science projects with judges from the National Institutes of Health and International Night gathers families to highlight and celebrate the various cultures in our school from around the world. The Geography Bowl promotes students learning about different regions around the world in a friendly, competitive environment. The Variety Show, at the end of the school year, allows students to showcase their talents ranging from singing to telling jokes to playing instruments. Family Fun Night is a time for families to come to school and enjoy an evening of games.

School events throughout the school year support students' academic and emotional well-being of each child. The school counselor conducts counseling lessons every other week focused on decision making, character education, social skills, conflict resolution, self-esteem, social media, internet and personal safety and career awareness. Small group counseling is focused on enhancing social skills and dealing with special topics such as grief/loss or family separation. Lunch bunches conducted by the principal and counselor provide additional opportunities for students to discuss their lives and make deeper connections to the school. Town Hall meetings during the school year celebrate student successes in the classrooms. Every student sets yearly goals in reading and math, brainstorming ideas on how they can meet their goals and track their own progress in meeting those goals. The Young Scholars program, in fifth grade, is focused on building student to student relationships, nurturing self-esteem and confidence in students, promoting collaboration and enriching the educational experience and cultural awareness of students. Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) day provides students with interactive lessons throughout the day that integrate science, technology, engineering, art and math to engage students. Read Across America week celebrates literacy each day through a variety of activities that all students participate in such as guest reader day, dress up as your favorite character day and Drop Everything and Read day, as well as a year-long program that promotes and rewards reading outside of the school day that is sponsored by a nationwide company. Cultural awareness is part of the School Improvement Plan to honor and celebrate the differences between us and recognize that all cultures are valued and important at the school. Instructional materials used are multi-cultural so all students see themselves in the books they read at school and in the projects they research.

Luxmanor is proud to be home to two special education programs that provide services to students from multiple other schools. The School Community Based (SCB) program provides services to students who have severe cognitive disabilities in grades kindergarten – fifth grade. We are also home to the Preschool Education Program (PEP) which provides services to three and four-year-old students who qualify to receive

special education services. Our two SCB classes and two PEP classes are integrated into our daily schedules and are beloved by our community.

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

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

Luxmanor's instructional planning is guided by the Common Core State Standards and the MCPS Curriculum 2.0, integrating Universal Design for Learning strategies and critical thinking skills. The curriculum is designed to challenge students and prepare them for college and future careers.

Luxmanor uses a research based balanced literacy approach that provides all students with a wide range of reading and writing experiences in both whole group and small group instruction. During whole group instruction, teachers model comprehension strategies, demonstrate fluent oral reading of text, develop content rich vocabulary and engage students in discussions. Small group guided reading instruction is focused on the needs of students and is used to master indicators in reading literature, reading information, foundational skills, and language vocabulary. Teachers use instructional leveled texts during small group guided reading to teach students how to strategically comprehend complex texts, as well as develop critical thinking skills. Students also engage in research-based critical thinking programs, such as Junior Great Books and The William and Mary Language Arts Program.

In mathematics, beginning in Kindergarten, teachers work to develop the students' knowledge and skills in the area of counting and cardinality, addition and subtraction within 10, and word problems. In first and second grade, the students continue to build their understanding of addition and subtraction as they are adding and subtracting within 100 and then 1,000, by the end of second grade. Their ability to persevere and make sense of word problems continues to grow as well. In the intermediate grades, students are multiplying, dividing, working with fractions, solving word problems using the four operations, looking for patterns, creating mathematical models, and reasoning both abstractly and quantitatively. As students prepare to leave after fifth grade, their math toolbox is full with all they need to tackle middle school math and most importantly, math in real-world situations. Classroom teachers and specialists create a rigorous learning environment that promote both collaboration and independence. All students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the areas of understanding, computation, application, reasoning, and engagement (UCARE).

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are implemented in the fourth and fifth grades. This science content prepares students to become college and career ready. These standards integrate science and engineering in order to enhance the scientific inquiry process within the classroom setting. In Kindergarten through third grade, students continue to study the MCPS Curriculum 2.0 science units. These units provide students with the strong science foundations that are needed to bridge the gap between the NGSS and the current Curriculum 2.0. Students study life sciences, engineering design and process, earth and space sciences and physical sciences.

Students participate in STEAM Day each spring, where they have the opportunity to experience a hands on approach to the inquiry process. Students are involved in experiments focusing on earth science, space and technology, and physical science. These opportunities integrate a rigorous experience that deals with the content and application of how science is practiced in our daily lives.

Social Studies is taught with an on-going approach that reaches into every aspect of the school community. Students in grades K-5 experience a wide variety of learning experiences designed to increase their awareness of their community, state and the nations of the world. The school year begins with civics lessons that lay the foundations of a respectful and caring learning environment throughout the school. As part of MCPS Curriculum 2.0, students have learning opportunities not only in civics but also in appreciation of cultures around the world, history, economics and geography. Students develop an understanding of their world and how they can make positive contributions as they go through life. Lessons are planned with the school's diverse population in mind. Teachers use interactive flip charts, trade books and a wide variety of media resources to enrich instruction to address the many different learning styles in our classrooms.

The Student Government Association (SGA) is a vibrant group of students who plan and help students and staff to practice what they learn in the social studies curricula. With their help, the Luxmanor population carries out meaningful real-time community outreach activities such as The Thanksgiving Food Drive, The Winter Coat Drive, The Winter Clothing Drive for Fisher House and The Pennies for Patients program.

Luxmanor has two Preschool Education Program (PEP) classes. This program provides special education services to children ages 3-5 identified with moderate learning delays. Children in this program have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on individual student needs. The IEP goals serve as a guide to assist students learning skills other children their age have already learned such as colors, basic shapes, and identifying letters and numbers. Developmental skills that include communication, exploration, movement, play and socialization are all focused on in conjunction with IEP goals. Classroom teachers, speech/language therapists, occupational therapists, and/or physical therapists collaborate together to address the individual goals and needs of students.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

All students at Luxmanor participate in art, music and physical education one time per week. In addition, all students in grades Kindergarten through second grade attend media once per week and students in grades three through five attend media on a flexible schedule designed to provide them optimum time to conduct inquiry projects.

The art program at Luxmanor serves all students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. Each year, every grade level receives instruction and experiences in the following areas of art: drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics and printmaking. Masks and puppets, bookmaking, architecture and textiles are explored as well. The elements of art and the principles of design are a focus for each lesson. As students progress through their elementary years, the elements and principles are presented with an increasing level of complexity. For example, understanding the use of color in a work of art begins in Kindergarten. Students identify the primary colors and mix them to form secondary colors. As the students reach fifth grade, they will have learned about warm and cool colors, complementary colors, tints and shades, monochromatic color schemes and analogous colors. This same pattern of learning occurs for all of the elements, principals and areas of art. The art program includes opportunities to learn about individual artists, particular periods in art and a look at how art plays a role in our daily lives, in the history of mankind and how it makes connections to our learning in other subject areas.

Physical education is focused on exercise physiology, biomechanics, social-psychological principles, motor learning principles, physical activity and skillfulness, all of which are imbedded in students learning new skills, practicing respect and exhibiting good sportsmanship. In the fall, students begin with basketball and soccer units, learning the skills of how to dribble and shoot in both sports. Students then transition to fitness where they learn new exercises, how to work and stretch different muscle groups, and learn about heart rate, taking your pulse and goal setting. During the winter, students begin gymnastics, learning how to do different rolls, balances and weight transfers. In February, students participate in the annual Jump Rope for Heart, where students raised over \$4,000 during the 2016-2017 school year. In the spring, students learn the skills to play baseball, tennis, badminton and pickle ball. The overall goal for students is to develop a mindset that values physical activity and its benefits in sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

In music, students learn and practice musical skills in the areas of singing, performing on classroom instruments, analyzing and responding to music (through movement, writing, and music vocabulary), reading standard musical notation, improvisation, and composition. Instrumental music is aligned with the National and State Music Education Standards. Students choose their instrument of choice and develop their skills both individually and as members of a larger community. Students have the opportunity to showcase their skills through annual winter and spring concerts, as well as regional concerts.

Each spring, Luxmanor conducts a Specialists' Showcase event where the art, music and physical education teachers highlight the skills students have been practicing during the school year. One piece of art work for each child is displayed throughout the school year to highlight the work each grade level has focused on. Third grade students share their proficiency in playing their recorders, highlighting their ability to read and

interpret music. Fourth grade students exhibit their jump roping skills as they highlight their timing, balance, creative movement and individual abilities.

Students come to the media center to learn and apply information literacy skills. The primary focus is on inquiry projects from the curriculum for each grade level. To complete these projects, students work through the research process—from asking questions, to identifying keywords, to evaluating both print and digital resources, to taking notes, to citing sources. Students then continue to work with their classroom teachers to take the information they discovered during research to produce informational, persuasive, or opinion writing pieces. Back in the library, students will also work with various applications to create a final product using technology. The students have created animated presentations, book trailer videos, timelines, and graphic-novel styled e-books. Additionally, students learn about responsible digital citizenship, covering topics such as cyberbullying, password protection, spam and privacy.

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

Student performance is assessed throughout the school year to provide teachers with relevant data to analyze and plan for instruction to meet the needs of their students. Assessment data ranges from anecdotal notes taken during instruction, to quiz/test data, to grades, to norm referenced assessments such as the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) assessments in reading and mathematics. All of these data points provide teachers with the information they need to target their instruction to meet the needs of their students. Both individually and as a team, teachers analyze their students' performance and develop instructional plans for providing additional instruction in both areas of need and areas for enrichment.

This year's School Improvement Plan is focused on improving teachers' effectiveness to analyze student work in order to determine the next steps for instruction. Teachers use a systematic approach to break down a specific indicator to see where students are showing proficiency and where they need clarification to guide further instruction. This allows teachers to see which areas students are ready to extend on and which areas students need to revisit. This is done both independently and in teams to ensure everyone is on the same page and to share ideas. After analyzing, teachers are able to use flexible small groups for reteaching and enriching targeted areas. In these small groups, teachers use a variety of resources and manipulatives to present information in multiple ways.

Students who require additional support in reading participate in a reading intervention program including Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention, SOAR to Success, Early Interventions in Reading, Read Naturally and Ready Common Core Reading. In mathematics, students participate in Ready Common Core Math and FASTT Math. For enrichment, in reading, students participate in Junior Great Books and the William and Mary Language Arts Program and in mathematics, students in grades four and five participate in a compacted math class that accelerates their learning through the sixth grade curriculum. ESOL teachers and special education teachers plug into classrooms to support their students during instruction in reading and mathematics.

Teachers continue to focus on closing the achievement gap. Multiple student data points are analyzed to determine specific areas for growth and then action plans are developed for students. Inclusion in intervention programs or enrichment opportunities are determined for each child and their progress is tracked to determine the effectiveness of those programs for each child.

In grades 2 through 5, teachers utilize chromebooks on a daily basis. Chromebooks allow for differentiation through the use of assistive technology. Students can use features such as "speech to text" and "read to" in all content areas. This enables students' independence while making the curriculum accessible for all. Chromebooks allow ESOL teachers to modify assignments posted to Google Classroom in order for ESOL students to have more success with classroom assignments and concepts. Through the use of Google Classroom in grades three through five, teachers are provided with a digital platform to instruct their students in the same electronic medium they live in outside of the school day, which further engages students in their learning at school.

Weekly planning meetings focus on both whole group and small group instruction. These plans include the

necessary vocabulary to be developed with all students, manipulatives to be used, leveled texts and differentiation based on student levels. Planning for ESOL students is included, which incorporates the use of sentence frames, visuals, word banks and note taking strategies. Individual teachers incorporate instructional practices from the Individual Education Plans (IEP) their students have who receive special education services.

Last year, the School Improvement Plan was a focus on improving teacher's capacity in planning for, and incorporating critical thinking across content areas. Teachers began to plan purposefully using Bloom's Taxonomy for questioning in order to stretch students thinking in all subject areas. Teachers continue to use these strategies to push students to think critically in all content areas. This type of questioning is also scaffolded with a variety of questioning stems to make these type of questions accessible to all students, even those who are second language learners. Teachers may start with questions at the identifying level, then move into the explaining level and end with students applying what they learned to create a representation of what they have learned.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Luxmanor strives to create an environment that fosters a lifelong love of learning. Students enjoy coming to school because the staff has created a safe and nurturing environment. Luxmanor has created a calm, respectful place to learn through the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness teaches students to focus their attention on being effective and skillful in everyday life. In any given classroom you might see breathing activities, mindful writing and hand exercises, guided visualizations and meditation. The practice of mindfulness connects students with a deeper sense of purpose and joy. Students are also recognized at monthly Town Hall meetings for their individual and collective achievements. Students are acknowledged for meeting personal goals, improved academic performance, and being a positive school citizen. Luxmanor encourages students to recognize each other for random acts of kindness. Students complete a compliment card for another student in the classroom and place it in the classroom bucket. During class meetings, compliments are regularly shared with the group. Recognizing each other encourages the students to spread their love and good feelings to others.

For individual recognition, the students earn stars as a reward when “caught” making good choices by any adult in the building. The stars are placed in a Star Jar for a weekly drawing by the principal. The drawing is held every Friday afternoon and the Star Jar winner is recognized over the loud speaker for all to celebrate. The students are rewarded with a certificate and a pencil. For group recognition, classes are awarded Owls for collectively making positive choices. Once a class earns 25 Owls, a celebration is rewarded.

The administrators at Luxmanor create a positive environment where staff members are respected and valued. The staff’s opinions are taken into account when making decisions that affect the Luxmanor community. Effective staff practices are written out on “Staff Superstars” and publicly displayed. Additionally, the principal recognizes one staff member each week for their hard work and dedication. The staff member is acknowledged in the weekly staff bulletin and receives the coveted “staff member of the week” parking spot. The principal regularly surprises the staff with monthly goodies that he rolls to each classroom on a cart.

The Luxmanor staff has shown great school spirit by participating in both Montgomery County’s staff kickball and softball leagues. The staff also celebrates numerous wedding showers, baby showers and holiday celebrations together. These activities bridge relationships of staff members from all grade levels and content areas outside of school hours.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Luxmanor benefits from an engaged community that supports the achievement of students. Luxmanor serves as a professional development school for Towson University. Student interns studying to be teachers rotate through the primary grades over the course of three semesters, culminating in their student teaching. Seniors from the local high school also complete internships at Luxmanor, learning about all aspects of being a teacher and impacting the lives of students. Tutors from the Oasis Institute volunteer with hand selected students, working on both academic and social skills.

Local businesses partner with the fourth grade team to provide students a behind the scenes look at how they operate their business and discuss the economics of running a business. Students then create their own business plans to sell to their teachers in a “Shark Tank” scenario.

In partnership with a school parent, the Right Track Wellness Program was created which focuses on students living healthy lifestyles. This partnership led to a total of \$15,000.00 being won in grant money from a local restaurant that supplemented the purchase of new equipment for recess, nutrition books for each classroom, an assembly on nutrition, a school-wide ice skating event and “Eat the Color of the Rainbow Week.”

Teachers conduct Back to School Nights (BTSN) in the fall where they review the curriculum with parents. ESOL teachers also host an ESOL BTSN where interpreters are available to translate the information being shared to families whose first language is not English. Formal parent/teacher conferences are held after the first quarter informing parents of their child's performance, as well as informal conferences throughout the school year. Families receive weekly emails from their child's teacher informing them of what their child will be studying in the upcoming week. The principal sends home a monthly newsletter, The Owl's Hoot, informing parents of school and district-wide news and events, as well as emails and letters throughout the month informing parents of events at school and pertinent information. During New Parent Night, new families receive information from the administrators that pertains to the operations of the school and an overview of the curriculum. Parent presentations have been held that focused on student achievement, social emotional learning, mindfulness and how to help your child learn to read.

Families also volunteer in the classroom, working with individual or small groups of students, attending field trips, assisting at lunch and recess, copying materials for teachers and shelving books in the book room and media center.

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

Luxmanor's professional development is focused on providing teachers with the right tools and knowledge to enable them to effectively analyze student data and plan meaningful instruction to ensure success for all students. This is completed in a variety of ways.

The school system provides trainings over the summer and throughout the school year. Teachers have opportunities to engage in online webinars, face-to-face trainings and collaborative learning sessions. Trainings focus on a wide variety of topics from math and reading instruction to using data to plan for instruction.

At the school level, staff are provided equity training throughout the school year. We have used the work of Glenn Singleton to guide us in our journey of examining our own racial and cultural identity, examining the racial identity of students and staff, and learning how to establish learning environments that are conscious of race and culture. Through this professional development, teachers are better able to implement equitable classroom practices that facilitate engagement from more students. Staff have also received training on ESOL strategies, incorporating critical thinking into lessons, reading and math instruction differentiation, interpreting student achievement data, mindfulness and planning.

At the individual level, the staff development teacher and reading specialist provide differentiated professional development, working closely with each grade level to provide learning and support that is tailored to the specific needs of the students and teachers. You can find them modeling lessons in classrooms, sitting with teams or individual teachers to analyze student data and determine next steps for instruction, setting up peer visits, discussing options for differentiation to meet the needs of all students and providing trainings during staff meetings.

Administrators participate in curriculum update meetings throughout the school year that provide training in the curriculum, how to interpret and use data, changes in academic programs and research based programs to support and enrich student instruction. Administrators also benefit from coaching relationships with supervisors who provide one-on-one focused professional development based on individual needs.

At Luxmanor, the professional development work is founded on the belief that building teacher capacity leads to higher student achievement. By partaking in ongoing learning, we are constantly reflecting on and tweaking our approach to teaching. As a staff, we realize the importance of bettering our craft and to get the very best from our students we have to be at our best.

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

The principal is a strong advocate of shared leadership and includes the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) in all decisions that impact students and staff. The ILT is composed of all team leaders, the assistant principal, the staff development teacher, reading specialist, administrative secretary, special education teacher, ESOL teacher and counselor. The principal frames the vision for the school and the ILT collaborates together to implement a shared vision of student success for all students. The ILT meets monthly to analyze student performance data, approve and evaluate school-wide initiatives, develop and monitor the school improvement plan and make instructional and operational decisions for the school. Decisions made by the ILT focus on what is best for the students at Luxmanor.

The principal conducts data meetings with each grade level to analyze student achievement and determine the next steps in improving student performance. Teachers are provided data to analyze, along with a set of questions to consider as they look at the performance of their students. Teachers then create their own plans for improving student achievement, with a focus on closing the achievement gap, which is supported by the principal through additional materials, planning time and professional development.

The principal meets weekly with the Core Team composed of the reading specialist, staff development teacher, assistant principal and lead special education teacher. This team plans staff meetings based on the School Improvement Plan, analyzes school-wide data, analyzes school-wide intervention programs and develops data presentations for the staff. Specialists at this meeting share with the principal the work they have conducted with staff to improve teaching and learning. Improving student performance is the guiding criteria for all discussions.

Weekly meetings are conducted with the building services manager to discuss building needs. Routine maintenance of the building is reviewed, as well as any additional topics that may need to be discussed such as upcoming events at school. The building manager receives feedback on the cleanliness of the building and is actively involved in determining how his team can continue to improve the physical learning environment of the school, both indoors and outdoors.

Continuous communication with the PTA President continues to build upon the strong relationship between the school and the community. Working together, the principal and PTA President address community concerns and questions and provide parents with informative information sessions at PTA meetings.

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

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The Luxmanor staff have a strong history of collaborative problem solving and planning that enables our students to meet rigorous academic expectations. Every day, staff members can be found analyzing data and planning for instruction to meet students' needs. Teachers use anecdotal data, quizzes, tests, exit cards and MAP data to drive their instruction. Together, they discuss the performance of their students and then collectively plan instruction that targets their students' needs and pushes them to the next level.

ESOL and special education teachers also collaboratively plan weekly with the classroom teachers to scaffold the learning taking place in the classroom so their children can access the grade level content and enrichment opportunities like their peers. The specialists share strategies to use with students, such as word banks, sentence starters and chunking the work into smaller parts, as well as incorporating the plans from the classroom into their own work with students, focusing on vocabulary development and repeated modeling for students to assist them in understanding topics being studied in the classroom.

Teachers discuss their students' response to the lessons they have implemented and alter their plans for the next day to better meet their needs. This may result in reteaching a concept with their students, providing more enrichment or providing additional time for students to complete an assignment.

When students are struggling, all of the teachers on a grade level, along with the administrators, paraeducators, ESOL teachers, special education teachers, reading specialist and staff development teacher, discuss the performance they are seeing and then plan strategies to use with the students to improve their achievement. This may result in a child being placed in a reading or math intervention or enrichment group, but can also result in regrouping students and trying new materials and research based strategies with students. These decisions are made collaboratively by a group of professionals familiar with both the students' performance and the instructional options available.

The office staff ensures that everyone who enters the building is welcomed and immediately assisted. They work with teachers and specialists to ensure new student information is promptly shared and student needs are taken care of prior to their starting school.

Taking a team approach to create options for students has been a strength of the entire staff. Everyone takes ownership of all of the students and expects all students to meet the high expectations we hold for each child.