

U.S. Department of Education
2019 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. Charles Treft

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

Official School Name Mount Harmony Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 900 West Mount Harmony Road

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

Owings MD 20736-8919
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Calvert County

Telephone (443) 550-9620

Fax (410) 286-4017

Web site/URL
http://mhesweb.calvertnet.k12.md.us
s/ _____

E-mail TreftC@calvertnet.k12.md.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Daniel Curry

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail curryd@calvertnet.k12.md.us

District Name Calvert County Public School District Tel. (443) 550-8000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Dawn Balinski

(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. 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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

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

22 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
 - Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
- Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	51	53	104
1	53	40	93
2	70	41	111
3	51	53	104
4	49	56	105
5	50	43	93
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	324	286	610

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 73 % White
 - 7 % Two or more races
- 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 5%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	30
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	605
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4%
27 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Dutch, Portuguese, Amharic, Tagalog, Urdu, Cambodian, American Sign Language, Vietnamese, Korean, Polish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10%
 Total number students who qualify: 61

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
40 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>4</u> Autism | <u>4</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>3</u> Developmental Delay | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>13</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: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 23:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	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 2018.

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. 1985

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

We will create a culture of learning built on the belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.

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

Mt. Harmony Elementary school (MHES) located in Owings, Maryland, Calvert County was officially dedicated on April 29, 1962. The school began as a junior high for seventh and eighth grade African American students. In the beginning, the school was surrounded by fields of tobacco with most families earning their living by farming. Over the years, as the community grew, the agricultural jobs were replaced with higher paying white-collar government workers. At the same time, the school began teaching Kindergarten through fifth grade students. In 1976 two additional kindergarten classrooms were added to the school. Today, many of the school's parents are military and government workers or contractors who commute each day to Washington D. C. or Northern Virginia. The school began with humble beginnings, but from the beginning, the culture of the school was based on high expectations for all students. In 1976 61% of Mt. Harmony's third, fourth and fifth graders scored advanced on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) and during the 1985-1986 school year, MHES was awarded the distinguished National Blue Ribbon honor. The award helped to establish a culture of excellence at the school that has remained throughout the years.

The culture of excellence at Mt. Harmony Elementary school starts with the staff. The staff's core values are based on being passionate, encouraging, creative, and trustworthy. The staff believes that what they do each day makes a difference in the lives of their students, they are encouraging because they realize just saying "good morning" or "great job" can change a student's outlook toward their day, use creative methods to allow students to use their strengths and to show their learning in different ways, and know that relationships are the key to building trust with students, parents, and the community. The current staff includes the Calvert County Public Schools Teacher of the Year and the 2018 Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative elementary math teacher of the year.

The staff believes in the school mission that "all students can learn." The staff strives to provide students a variety of learning experiences in addition to the core academics that include: character building grade level assemblies, career day, the Maryland Agricultural Lab trailer, project based collaboration between different grade levels, reading buddies, extra reading for students in grades 1 – 3, weekly STEAM activities for grades K – 5, and social emotional learning using the Second Step program. Mt. Harmony is a Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) school. Quarterly assemblies are held to recognize students who faithfully attend school and excel academically. Students are encouraged to love learning by attending after-school clubs that include: chess for grades 1 - 5, national parks, American Revolution, American Sign Language, Lego book club, crochet, art, Spanish, Girls Who Code, 5th graders on the move, WeDo2.0, EV3, drama, and Green Team. Approximately 150 students or 25% of the student population attend after school clubs. The school's dedication flyer documented that "student guides" provided tours on the day of the dedication ceremony. Nearly sixty years later, students are still encouraged to become leaders in the school, and in fact, there are eighty students in the Student Council, fifty safety patrols and 24 classroom ambassadors.

Mt. Harmony strives to include parents in the daily operations of the school through a weekly school message that includes a calendar and notices of upcoming school events. Parent and student feedback are sought through yearly climate surveys. There were one hundred eighty-five parents who completed the 2017 – 2018 parent climate survey, this was the highest number of any school in Calvert County. The results of the survey from students and parents were overwhelmingly positive. Many school events are held throughout the school year such as back to school nights, moms' and dads' days, breakfast with the principal, learning celebrations, literacy nights, lighting of a kindness tree, and open houses. Due to the huge parent and community turnout for events, most are scheduled over multiple days.

The school's dedication flyer from 1962 documented that the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) served refreshments at the ceremony. Over the years, the school's PTA has always been an active component of the school. The school's PTA plans numerous family nights throughout the school year. Some of the events include Monster Mash, Sweetheart dance, family movie night, paint night, donuts with dads, and muffins with moms. The PTA actively fundraises for the school's STEAM initiative and provides volunteers for school events during and after school hours. The PTA sponsors and creates the school's yearbook.

The school has partnerships with many of the local businesses in the community. A local landscape company maintains the flower beds in front of the school along with Green Team members. The first grade takes an annual field trip to local businesses, the Functional Skills class goes into the community each month for field trips, the administrative team routinely visits the one-hundred fifty plus students who attend the local day cares, the Kindergarten team provides kindergarten readiness talks with parents in the community, and recently the school partnered with the community fire department to hang lights for the lighting of the school's Kindness Tree.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The English Language Arts curriculum at Mt. Harmony Elementary School (MHES) is designed to develop capability and cultivate interests that allow all students to be equipped with literacy skills that will empower them to become lifelong learners. The staff utilize the Maryland Common Core Readiness (MCCR) standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language as the foundation for its elementary Integrated Literacy Instructional Framework. Kindergarten – 5th grade students are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understanding mastered in preceding grades. The Integrated Literacy Framework used at MHES contains teaching and learning expectations in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. Each component is a complex, integrated network requiring equal attention to fully develop all students' capacities to become literate individuals. The Integrated Literacy Framework considers the incorporation of systematic, explicit instruction, assessment for and of learning, responsible use of technology and evidence-based best practices. The Integrated Literacy classrooms at MHES are child centered, developmentally appropriate, promote thinking-based learning, and ensures access for all. The staff models what it means to be a lifelong learner, makes informed data-driven decisions, and strives to build positive relationships that create an engaging reading and writing classroom culture. At MHES, the English Language Art curriculum is organized around three components to support literacy development: reading workshop, writing workshop, and word study.

MHES uses formative assessments to drive instruction. Teachers analyze and identify learning gaps students may have by using a variety of methods that include assessment prompts, oral reading, oral, written and tech-based response, computer ability assessments, and observations. Integral data pieces utilized include diagnostic assessments, 3x3 strategy reflective reading conferences, Early STAR and STAR Reading. These formative assessments provide additional data for targeted remedial and enrichment instruction. Furthermore, these assessments allow teachers to provide students with purposeful feedback to track learning, which empowers students to set goals and take ownership of their learning. Teachers at MHES use the county benchmark quarterly reading assessments to gauge and compare both site-based and district-wide achievement. Grade level Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and the Collaborative Leadership Team (CLT) use the assessment data to plan instruction and learning strategies that will meet the needs of all students.

1b. Mathematics:

Mt. Harmony Elementary School's (MHES) mathematics curriculum and goals are based on the Maryland College and Career Ready (MCCR) Standards. Instruction is planned with teachers utilizing a variety of strategies to include differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). All lessons begin with a lesson essential question based on a standard, followed by learning goals, activities, and assessment prompts that serve as formative assessments. MHES staff use STAR Math, the Numeracy Screening Tool and Computer Ability tests as formative assessments. Teachers utilize the results of the formative assessments to identify gaps and to plan reteaching and extension activities. Students utilize the feedback to adjust their personal learning goals. The staff utilizes the county benchmarks for summative assessments, but based on UDL principles, believe students should be provided opportunities to show their learning through multiple means to include projects, writing, presentations, and real-world problem solving. Grade level Professional Learning Communities (PLC) use the data to reflect on their teaching and to provide direction and purpose for next steps.

The school staff want students to learn to value mathematics, become confident in their ability to do mathematics, become mathematical problem solvers, learn to communicate mathematically, and learn to reason mathematically. It is the staff's goal to build the students' conceptual understanding along with their procedural knowledge. Students at MHES are taught to interpret and construct knowledge, rather than just absorb it.

Math numeracy is an integral part of math taught in all grade levels. Students participate in teacher facilitated small groups that connect mathematics numeracy with manipulatives, 21st century games and activities, technology, and supporting literature. Scaffolded instruction, such as talk cards and cloze activities, help students build their knowledge by providing frameworks to participate in accountable math talk that is both student-friendly and rigorous in terms of academic language. In the upper grades, students participate in authentic problem-solving by collaborating and reflecting on multiple approaches to real-world problems. Additionally, students engage in daily math workshops that review connections between algorithms and content. Students use these reviews to connect standards and solve problems that are interdisciplinary and multi-step in nature. Students use advanced graphic organizers and incorporate written language and oral communication skills into their mathematical thinking.

1c. Science:

The Mt. Harmony Elementary School (MHES) science curriculum is based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The curriculum is designed to provide all students interactive science instruction that promotes analysis and interpretation of data, critical thinking, problem solving, and connections across science disciplines. Curricular goals include: learning to think and behaving scientifically by engaging in the Science and Engineering Practices, developing a deeper understanding of scientific core ideas as they progress in school, and understanding the crosscutting concepts that link all disciplines of science to become scientifically literate.

Students start with a phenomena and come up with questions they must answer in order to explain that phenomena. Through the creation and analysis of models, experiments and the analysis of data, as well as, further information acquired through videos, simulations, and readings, students craft their understanding of the phenomena and express their thinking in writing using evidence to support.

The staff incorporates science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) in interdisciplinary ways. Inquiry based STEAM learning is provided to students in grades K – 5 during weekly Lego robotics instruction, in-class STEAM bins, and hands-on, real world, problem solving projects. The connections between the arts and college and career readiness in areas such as engineering, graphic design, robotics, and construction allow MHES students the opportunity to be creative and forward thinkers.

Students complete county Science benchmarks each quarter to assess their knowledge of the science standards. Each year, fifth grade students participate in the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) to assess their knowledge of the Next Generation Science Standards. The county benchmarks, MISA, and formative assessments created by teachers are used to provide feedback to teachers and students. Teachers use the data from assessments to plan reteaching and extension activities. Students use their personal assessment data to create and adjust learning goals. In addition to the before mentioned assessments, students are given an opportunity to show their learning using videos, writing, presentations, and projects.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

The goal of Mt. Harmony Elementary School's (MHES) social studies program is to promote civic competence by preparing students to actively and knowledgeably participate in a democratic society. Teachers provide instruction based on the scope and sequence established by the county which draws from the C3 Framework for Social Studies Standard's Inquiry Arc. Instruction is planned with teachers utilizing a variety of differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies. All lessons begin with a lesson essential question based on a standard, followed by learning goals, activities, and assessment prompts that serve as formative assessments. The formative assessments provide feedback to the student and teacher. The teacher utilizes the results of the formative assessments to plan reteaching and extension activities and students utilize to adjust their personal learning goals. The school utilizes the county benchmarks for summative assessments, but based on UDL principles, believes students should be provided opportunities to show their learning through multiple means to include projects, writing, and presentations.

Students engage in virtual field trips, use multimedia to connect with varying cultures, celebrate diversity by creating informational texts and projects, and use hands-on learning to create museums within the school. Project-based learning is ongoing throughout the school year and includes activities such as the fourth grade Bottle Buddies, murals created by primary students of culturally diverse individuals, the celebration of different cultures on bulletin boards, and the exposure to and reading of culturally diverse fiction and nonfiction texts by students.

The social studies units are driven by compelling and supporting questions which provide students the opportunity to evaluate historic and current events and explore the relevancy of such events in today's society. Students analyze historic and current events from the multiple perspectives of those involved in order to gain a deeper, more well-rounded understanding of the world in which we live. Students are encouraged to view multiple perspectives of historic events in order to synthesize information and apply their knowledge to real-world problems. Advanced instructional strategies such as role playing, jigsaw activities, Socratic seminars, SIOP strategies, and explicit vocabulary instruction are used to provide students with opportunities to garner the background knowledge needed to build their schemata and reflect on connections across the content areas.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Arts – Students in grades K - 5 participate in Art 1 time each week for forty-five-minutes. The visual arts program includes the traditional fine arts of drawing, painting, and sculpture. Instruction also includes the textile crafts of weaving, pottery, and printmaking. Students learn the basic elements of art (line, color, and shape) in kindergarten and apply their knowledge using a multitude of media to express themselves. They observe and discuss the elements of art used in master artworks. Each consecutive year builds upon and expands their knowledge of the arts through vocabulary, artists, periods, media, and techniques.

Physical Education – Students in grades K – 5 participate in PE 2 times each week for forty-five-minutes. The program is reflective of the Maryland State Physical Education Content Standards and National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for Physical Education. The physical education program foundation is built on psychomotor skill development along with fitness and nutrition activities. Instruction is differentiated to support student interaction, communication, and collaboration with a partner or in groups. These activities help students gain an understanding and acceptance of individual differences and abilities. Students are taught to create goals, challenge themselves, and focus on their personal growth while working to acquire mastery of physical skills and knowledge. Several highlights of the program include transforming the gym into a large Monopoly board, an Amazon Jungle and a special ops obstacle course. The annual field day is a favorite of both students and parents.

Library – Students in grades K – 5 participate in library 1 time each week for forty-five minutes. The Mt. Harmony library is the largest learning hub in the entire school. The teacher librarian is a contributing member of every team and has established a culture of literacy that encompasses the arts, reading, STEAM, Makerspaces, and technology. Collaboration with classroom teachers integrates digital skills across grades and disciplines. Through inquiry the library lessons inspire students to conduct research through critical questioning. Students learn to access, evaluate and safely use print and digital resources to create new information. Students checked out 21,897 books this past year. Culturally diverse literature is paired with required curriculum to embrace diversity and assist in preparing students to engage in a global society.

General Music - Students in kindergarten through fifth grade receive general music instruction once a week for forty-five minutes. Students begin exploring the foundations of music with loud/soft, high/low, and

slow/fast sounds, as well as demonstrating a steady beat using a variety of instruments and movement. As they progress through the grades, they become familiar with reading and notating basic rhythms such as quarter notes, quarter rests, and eighth notes. This eventually leads to reading and performing more challenging rhythms including triplets and sixteenth notes. Students in third grade are taught the fundamentals of playing the recorder while students in fourth and fifth continue building on those skills.

Choral Music - Students in grades 3-5 may participate in Chorus. Students meet thirty minutes each week, during the school day. Chorus students present a winter and spring concert each school year, perform at the school's Volunteer Luncheon, and community events outside the school. Fifth grade students have an option to participate in the All-County Elementary Chorus. During the current school year, student participation in chorus is about 50% of 3rd grade and 25% of 4th and 5th grades.

Instrumental Music - Students in fourth and fifth grade may participate in instrumental music, including small group, and ensemble lessons all offered during the normal school day. Additionally, advanced strings and band groups meet once each week before school. All students perform in two annual concerts held at a local high school auditorium, local community events, and in-school performances during the school day. Fifth grade students can try out for the All-County Honors Band, All-County Honors Orchestra, and the Elementary Solo and Ensemble Festival. During the current school year, participation in band/strings has been 46% for 5th grade and 35% for 4th grade.

Second Step – Teachers provide students weekly social-emotional learning utilizing the Second Step program. Instruction is provided during class meetings, school counselor presentations, and quarterly assemblies. The program has a specific scope and sequence for each grade level that includes stories, videos, songs, and lessons to provide students strategies related to controlling emotions and how to appropriately problem solve conflicts with their peers.

STEAM – Weekly STEAM activities are provided to students in grades K – 4 by the Art and Music teachers. The WeDo2.0 and EV3 curriculum is utilized for students in grades 2 -4 and age appropriate activities are provided for students in Kindergarten and first grades.

3. Special Populations:

The success of all students at MHES begins with the collaborative planning by each grade level. Instruction is tailored to meet each individual student's needs by utilizing differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies. Daily lessons include a lesson essential question based on a content standard, learning goals, learning activities that focus on what a student should know and be able to do, a writing content standard, assessment prompts, and formative assessments. Assessment prompts are utilized to ensure students master learning goals prior to moving on to the next skill. The formative assessments are utilized to provide teachers and students feedback on their progress in mastering content standards. Teachers utilize instructional time, as well as, a daily targeted flex time to reteach or extend instruction for students.

The MHES staff actively refer students to the Student Services Team (SST) if they have collectively tried everything to meet a student's needs with little success. The SST comprised of the building administration, school counselor, school psychologist, pupil personnel worker, and grade level teacher meet to discuss next steps. If there is clear, convincing data, and observation that a student is struggling, an intervention is tried. Once a child is placed in an intervention, the interventionist meets with the classroom teacher frequently to discuss the skills being learned by the student to ensure there is application of the skills within the classroom. The interventions are closely monitored through the quarterly progress reports prepared by the interventionist and shared with the parents and students.

To address achievement gaps between the different subgroups, the Collaborative Leadership Team meets monthly to review data, create school-wide closing the gap goals, to implement strategies, and to allocate resources. To address gaps with special education students, the team has created a strategic plan for cotaught teachers to plan collaboratively with their grade level teammates, the special education inclusion teacher, and the school's Learning Focused trainer. The appropriateness of every special education students' services,

accommodations, supports, and modifications are closely reviewed at Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings. For students who struggle due to a physical impairment, the 504 team provides accommodations and supports to remove barriers from their learning. Students who are identified as “highly able” in grades 4 and 5 receive instruction on the Advanced Learning Program (ALP) curriculum modules. A teacher has the discretion to include any student they believe will benefit from one of the ALP modules. Additional instruction that includes book studies and research is provided to “highly able” and other students in the library. Students in grade 3 receive enrichment activities that extend their learning. Students in kindergarten – second grade participate in the county’s Talent Development Program activities.

The MHES staff provides services for 27 active English Language Learners (ELL) from five different home schools. The different languages represented by our active and exited ELL students include Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Dutch, Portuguese, Amharic, Tagalog, Urdu, Cambodian, American Sign Language, Vietnamese, Korean and Polish. The grade level content standards are presented in a way that is comprehensible to ELLs, often by applying SIOP strategies. The ESOL teachers work closely with the general education and special education teachers to design lessons that differentiate language instruction. The ESOL teachers facilitate professional development and provide supplementary materials to support the teachers who instruct ELLs.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The Mt. Harmony Elementary School (MHES) positive environment starts before the school day begins. Every student is greeted at their bus, the morning Kiss N Go, or as they enter the front door by a staff member. The staff believes in the school mission that "all students can learn." They hold themselves accountable and expect students, parents, and the community to hold themselves accountable as well. The staff developed the following school forecast that is shared with all students, "Expect to see smiling, encouraging, and motivating staff members as you step off your buses and enter MHES. In your classrooms, expect to be challenged and motivated by teachers who deliver world-class lessons. Expect to learn with classmates who are engaged, problem solving, thinking at a higher level, learning from each other, and thinking globally. Expect a sunny successful day!" Students are provided book marks that include points of emphasis related to being kind, being safe, and getting smart. Students are taught to handle conflicts with others by "attacking the problem, not the person." They learn if a person calls them a name, they can call the other student a name which is attacking the person or attack the problem by telling the other person they didn't appreciate being called a name. The school embraces the Positive Behavior Incentives and Support (PBIS) program. Staff hold quarterly grade level assemblies to recognize students who best exemplify the school's learning pledge of "Being respectful by being kind, Responsible by being safe, and getting smart by giving their best, owning their learning, always being ready to learn, and striving for excellence." The Second Step program is taught by all teachers. The program provides students with different social and emotional strategies and skills based on individual grade levels. Every classroom teacher holds morning meetings to address student concerns or questions.

A staff member is recognized by the admin team at monthly staff meetings for "stirring the pot with love." The grade level colleagues of the staff member selected each say positive things about their teammate. In addition to being recognized, the "stirring the pot with love" staff member receives a ladle, can of chicken noodle soup, and a gift card. Classroom teachers are recognized through all staff emails, pictures, and at the school's monthly staff meeting. Staff Buckaroos are written throughout the month as notes of appreciation to fellow colleagues. Two staff members are randomly chosen each month by the administrative team and given extra planning for taking the time to write a Staff Buckaroo. Staff luncheons provided by the administrative team and the PTA are held throughout the school year to celebrate the staff. The school participates in the Calvert County Teacher of the Year, Educational Support Person of the Year, and the County Employee of the Month programs to recognize school staff.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The staff at MHES engage parents as soon as they enter the school's lobby. In the lobby, parents see a bulletin board with photographs showing students involved in learning activities and the school's motto, "striving for excellence." A school-wide photograph that includes every student and staff member is posted in the main hallway. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, chaperone field trips, and to volunteer in the school. On most days there are at least 5 volunteers in the school.

Parents are sent a weekly school message each Sunday at 5 p.m. via the school message notification system. The school message includes a weekly calendar, list of upcoming school events, volunteer opportunities, and a summary explaining upcoming student assessments. The calendar includes pictures of students learning throughout the school, parents, community members, and volunteers. Communication with the parents is a priority for the school's staff. Teachers respond within 24 hours to any parent emails and answer phone calls as soon as possible. Many of the school's teachers use Class DoJo to communicate throughout the day with their students' parents. A yearly electronic climate survey is provided to parents to seek feedback about the school. The feedback is utilized by the staff to make improvements to the school's climate.

Staff members actively participate in the monthly Parent Teacher Association meetings to provide input on school activities, initiatives, and to collaboratively plan for school-wide events. The staff strives to partner

with community members and businesses including daycares, the fire department, Parks and Recreation, and private schools in the area. The county's Parks and Recreation Department provides before and after care for students attending the school's summer Camp Invention. The enrollment for the camp is open to all elementary school students in the county.

Individual grade levels provide opportunities to include parents and the community throughout the school year. Some of these events include: fourth-grade students inviting veterans to attend a Veteran's Day program that includes patriotic songs and student speeches, kindergarten hosting a writer's tea party, second grade hosting a weekly STAR student event, and fifth grade hosting a trade fair.

Other school-wide events to engage parents include: the principal hosting a quarterly Breakfast with the Principal sponsored by the student council to update parents on things going on and upcoming in the school, Moms' and Dads' days where parents are given an opportunity to visit their child's classroom, introduce their child, and to say something positive about their child in front of his/her peers, an open invitation for parent's to eat lunch with their child on special occasions i.e. birthdays, a grandparents day that includes a class visit and an opportunity to get a portrait with the grandchild/ren, library book fairs that includes an early morning and after school buying events for parents, and literacy nights that include local community members serving as guest readers.

3. Professional Development:

The school's professional development (PD) is aligned with the district's strategic plan to close achievement gaps for all students along with the school's mission and vision statements. PD is data driven, differentiated based on staff needs, designed to address students' academic and social emotional needs, led by the administrative team and teachers, and provides content supervisors time to explain and disseminate curriculum scope and sequences, content standards, and instructional best practices. The administrative team utilizes PD presented at the monthly administrator and supervisor meetings in grade-level professional learning communities (PLCS) and quarterly vertical PLCs.

The school staff is encouraged to reach out to the admin team or content supervisors to request PD for their grade levels. The staff frequently attend PD provided by the Calvert County Public Schools content supervisors outside of school hours i.e. Diving deeper into the math and English language arts standards. This PD is directly related to the Maryland Common Core Readiness Standards (MCCR). By attending the PD, teachers develop a greater understanding of content, standards, and effective strategies which promote greater student achievement. It is an expectation for teachers who attend PD to bring back strategies they learn and implement or share with colleagues.

The school staff, along with the district, is currently participating in the Learning Focused PD initiative as a strategy to close achievement gaps across the district. The PD provides staff with research and evidence based best practices, elements of effective lesson planning, ways to effectively differentiate instruction, and strategies to promote higher-level thinking for students. The staff is using the strategies during daily instruction to close achievement gaps for all students and to plan for individual student needs. As part of the Learning Focused PD, the school staff complete monthly online modules and then attend support meetings facilitated by a school staff member.

The kindergarten, first grade, and second grade teachers are participating in an equity, access, and progress PD to learn new ways to strategically use data in their planning to close achievement gaps with the school's special education students.

Staff are given opportunities to provide a variety of PD on school-based PD days and staff meetings. Some of the PD provided by staff includes Schoology - the county's learning platform that houses curriculum and resources, gradebook, Learning Focused, Performance Matters – how to find and analyze data, Specially Designed Instruction, and equity.

PD opportunities are shared with the staff by the administrative team. Every staff member is provided an opportunity to attend a PD of their choice that they believe will build their capacity. Aspiring

administrators in the school are encouraged to attend the county's Aspiring New Administrator trainings, as well as, the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals' annual conference. The school staff believes, as stated in Stephen Covey's book *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, we must "Sharpen the Saw".

4. School Leadership:

The administrative team at MHES believes whole heartedly in the school's mission and vision that all students can learn and that it is their responsibility to collaborate with the school's staff to create an environment that results in high levels of student achievement. The administrative team is data driven, but also understands the need to address each student's social-emotional needs. The administrative team believes in collaborative leadership and encourages staff members to continuously build their capacity and to lead within and outside of the school. The admin team's philosophy can be summed up in the following Rita Pierson quote, "Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be."

The Collaborative Leadership Team (CLT) chaired by the school principal includes the assistant principal, dean and staff members from each grade level and focuses on closing achievement gaps, climate and culture, and equity. The collaborative approach is to ensure every grade level is focused on not only their grade level's achievement, but also the entire school. Decisions made by the CLT are shared in Professional Learning Committee meetings (PLC) and at monthly staff meetings. The CLT creates both long range and benchmark goals for the school improvement plan. To ensure the buy-in of the entire school staff, each grade level is expected to write and monitor a yearly benchmark goal for math and English language arts.

Decisions made by the administrative team focus on accomplishing the school's mission and vision. Some examples of decisions made by the administrative team to improve student achievement include: creating social-emotional learning groups for students that need to be better engaged in the classroom, providing after-school clubs that extend students' learning, providing extra collaborative planning for teachers who have students that are struggling, providing extra collaboration for co-taught special and general education teachers with content supervisors, purchasing screening resources for math and reading to accurately assess a students' progress and to identify learning gaps, and providing students in grades 1 – 3 with ten minutes of extra reading 3 times each week.

The school has several staff members who serve as leaders in the school by serving as team leads on their grade level teams, by providing training and presenting professional development at PLCs, school based professional development (PD), and county PD, serving on the school's CLT, planning and leading different family engagement educational nights throughout the school, serving as points of contact to organize vertical learning activities with another grade level, sponsoring after school clubs, mentoring aspiring teachers from local universities, and providing additional learning opportunities for students i.e. STEAM and Advanced Learning Program (ALP).

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that has been most instrumental to the school's success is the staff's collaboration to ensure we fulfill our school's mission and vision statements to create an environment that engages all students in learning that will result in high academic achievement, that closes achievement gaps, and ensures all rising sixth graders leave MHES ready for middle school. At the start of Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, monthly staff meetings, and at school based professional development, the mission and vision statements are reviewed by the staff to create a shared collaborative sense of urgency. The staff wholeheartedly believes they share a collective responsibility for each of the six-hundred-ten students and not just for the students in their classrooms.

The staff collaborates in a variety of ways to include grade level and vertical PLC meetings, weekly team planning, school based professional development (PD), and bi-monthly planning between general and special education teachers. Every collaborative effort is focused on the concept that the collective strength of the group can achieve much more than the ability of one person.

During vertical PLCs, the staff collaborate to share ideas, resources, teaching strategies, data, assessments, and grade level content standards. The staff also reviews student work and utilizes their vertical expertise of the content standards to help each grade level backward map to ensure students master the critical skills. The staff recognizes that student success depends on the staff's collective awareness of how curriculum spirals and transfers between disciplines.

The grade level team planning ensures that every teacher is held accountable for teaching the content standards, following the established scope and sequence, utilizing research and evidence-based strategies, planning instruction that meets the needs of all students, and creating formative assessments to assess learning goals. By working together through a firm understanding of the importance of instructional foundations, teachers create innovative strategies that close achievement gaps and extend student learning.

Bi-monthly planning between general and special education co-taught teachers is focused on meeting the needs of every student in the classroom. As part of the planning process, Specially Designed Instruction is planned to meet the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans.

On a more global effort, the Collaborative Leadership Team (CLT) comprised of stakeholders from each grade level, special education, and resource teams review school-wide data, identify achievement gaps, and create goals along with strategies to ensure all students learn at "high levels of achievement." The collaborative leadership approach holds each member accountable for going back to their teams and disseminating the same message.