St. Mary's County Public Schools

Bridge to Excellence Master Plan
2007 Annual Update

Part I

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Note: For more information, please visit our website at http://www.smcps.k12.md.us.

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November 2007

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Background: Authorization and Purpose

Authorization
Section 5-401, Comprehensive Master Plans, of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland

Purpose
The Bridge to Excellence Act requires that each local school system reassess and revise its Master Plan as necessary and submit an Annual Update to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for review. Each local school system should submit the Annual Update to the county board on a regular timeline.[1] MSDE can request revisions to ensure that updated plans are having the effect of improving student achievement and increasing progress toward meeting State performance targets.

[1] The Maryland State Department of Education has asked for clarification from the Office of the Attorney General about the requirement that school systems provide a copy of the annual update to local County Council, County Executive, or County Commissioners at least 60 days before submitting it to the Department.

The 2007 Master Plan Annual Update

In 2002, the State of Maryland strengthened its standards-based education reform model to achieve the twin goals of equity and adequacy in its public schools. Perhaps the most important element of this reform effort was the enactment of The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act (BTE), which resulted in a significant increase in State funding and gave school systems flexibility to determine the best allocation of those resources. In exchange, school systems are held accountable for the performance of their schools and their students.

As part of the standards-based education reform model, the State established content area and grade level standards for student achievement as well as performance standards to support student learning at high levels. These standards are designed so that all students are proficient in reading and mathematics, receive a high school diploma, are taught by highly qualified teachers, and attend safe schools.

Under the Bridge to Excellence Act, each school system was required to develop, adopt, and implement a five-year comprehensive Master Plan linking funding from federal, State, and local sources to strategies designed to improve student achievement and school performance. The plans, which are updated every year, demonstrate that local school systems are implementing workable reform strategies and seeing results. Yet, additional work remains to ensure that all children are achieving at high levels.

Preparing all Maryland students to meet the ever-increasing demands of life in the 21st century continues to define the single greatest challenge facing educators today. To meet this challenge, all efforts to raise achievement, enhance accountability, and improve teaching and learning must be aligned. The Master Plan Annual Update guidance demonstrates this alignment by incorporating the five No Child Left Behind goals into Maryland's nationally recognized accountability system.

In 2007, local school systems will be implementing the fifth year of a five-year Master Plan and will see the final year of unprecedented increases in State Aid to Education funding. Local school systems have spent five years designing and implementing practices, programs and strategies aimed at improving the learning opportunities for all children. In Fiscal Year 2008, full Thornton funding actually ***begins.*** And, now, local school systems face the challenges of planning for the future – a future where expectations are high and all children have access to high quality education. This kind of long-range strategic planning is essential to increase student achievement and eliminate performance gaps.

Bridge to Excellence Master Plan
2007 Annual Update

(Include this sheet as a cover to the submission indicated below)

Part I: The Content— Due: October 15, 2007

Local School System Submitting This Report: St. Mary's County Public Schools

Address: 23160 Moakley Street
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Local Point of Contact:

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WE HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of our knowledge, the information provided in the 2007 Annual Update to our Bridge to Excellence Master Plan is correct and complete. We further certify that this Annual Update has been developed in consultation with members of the local school system's current Master Plan Planning Team and that each member has reviewed and approved the accuracy of the information provided in the Annual Update.

Signature (Local Superintendent of Schools) **Date** September 4, 2007

Signature (Local Point of Contact) **Date** Sept. 4, 2007

Local Planning Team Members

Use this page to identify the members of the school system's Bridge to Excellence Master Planning Team. Where applicable, include their affiliation or title within the local school system.

Name	Affiliation/Title with Local School System
Mrs. Linda J. Dudderar	Chief Academic Officer, BTE Point of Contact
Mr. J. Bradley Clements	Chief Operating Officer
Mr. Daniel Carney	Chief Financial Officer
Mrs. Kathleen Lyon	Executive Director of Student Services
Mr. Jeff Maher	Director of Professional and Organizational Development
Dr. Edward Weiland	Director of Human Resources
Mr. Theo L. Cramer	Director of Academic Support
Dr. Charles E. Ridgell, III	Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mrs. Kelly Hall	Director of Elementary Instruction, Administration, and School Improvement
Mr. J. Scott Smith	Director of Secondary Instruction, Administration, and School Improvement
Mr. William Caplins	Director of Information Technology
Mrs. Regina Greely	Supervisor of Data Warehouse, Instructional Technology, and Library/Media
Mrs. Janis Taylor	Supervisor of School Improvement and Strategic Panning

PART I: The Content

Annual Review of Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

I.A
Executive Summary to the 2007 Annual Update

Overview

St. Mary's County Public Schools has taken some bold steps in our journey to move our school system from good to great. Our streamlined mission statement requires that we know the learner and the learning, expecting excellence in both. We commit to educating all students, accepting no excuses, and building our organization on rigor, relevance, respect, and positive relationships. We build all that we do throughout our school system on these commitments to our students, teachers, and community. The renewed energy and focus in our school system has created an epidemic of targeted improvement and strengthened relationships.

Focus

We are now focused on targeted, short term cycles of improvement via our Professional Learning Communities. Our practitioners are continuously examining, assessing, and fine-tuning their instructional practice each day based on assessment results. Our data warehouse provides immediate information regarding student achievement. Our new student information system, *eSchoolPlus*, allows another lens to sharpen the focus on individual student progress and to identify the barriers that hinder that progress. The momentum that we have achieved by shifting our focus to teams of teachers who have found more effective ways to reach our students is encouraging and invigorating. We have expended $35,000 for our collaborative teams to meet at the schools to assure that teachers are learning together and reflecting on and improving upon their practice. Our streamlined school improvement plans and process and the more relevant emphasis on team collaborative plans have shifted the locus of our strategic planning to the people who truly will make the difference.

We have reached our tipping point and the scale has tipped from good to great where actions and attitudes have changed considerably and the contagious effect has impacted our students. Collaboration is not just an initiative that we discuss; it is a reality and has had a revolutionary impact on the conversations and the norms. It is the change agent that has created this new momentum across our school district.

School System Successes

Abundant Good News

Elementary School

- At the elementary level, 84.8 percent of "all" students were proficient in reading; 86 percent of "all" proficient in mathematics.
- All elementary schools made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in both reading and mathematics.
- At the elementary level, the gap between African American students and their White counterparts closed 4.6 points in reading and 7.6 points in mathematics.
- At the elementary level, African American students posted a double digit gain of 10.5 percentage points in mathematics performance.
- Elementary students have improved their attendance by .8 percentage points since 2003, achieving a 95.4 percent attendance rate, the highest recorded.

Middle School

- At the middle school level, 78 percent of "all" students were proficient in reading; 67.3 percent of "all" students proficient in mathematics.
- At the middle school level, all subgroups improved the percent of students at proficient in reading from 2006 to 2007.
- At the middle school level, special education students were the only subgroup to achieve double digit gains in both content areas realizing a 14.5 percentage point gain in reading and a 10.6 percentage point gain in mathematics.
- At the middle school level, students met the 94 percent satisfactory standard for average daily attendance for the first time in five years. They have gained 1.2 percentage points over five years.

High School

- At the high school level, class of 2009, the percentage of students passing the HSA improved in all four content areas with 88.7 percent proficient in Government, 87.7 percent proficient in Algebra, 81.9 percent proficient in English and 91.6 percent proficient in Biology.
- While there was a slight decline in the SAT scores, participation rate was up and the performance of African American students was significantly higher with an 11 point gain in writing, a 39 point gain in reading, and a 38 point gain in mathematics. Their combined score of 1332 showed an 88 point gain overall from 2006.
- At the high school level, attendance has improved 1.7 percentage points since 2003.
- The graduation rate improved from 85.83 percent to 87.69 percent which is 4 percentage points above the state AMO for 2006-2007.
- Special education students improved their graduation rate from 83.33 percent to 90.91 percent.
- The dropout rate improved from 3.98 percent to 2.73 percent, falling below the state satisfactory standard of 3.00 percent. A dramatic decline in the dropout rate for special education students from 5.01 percent to 2.62 percent is noted.

School System Challenges

Elementary School

- LEP students lost ground in reading, falling 3.4 percentage points from 2006 to 2007.
- Hispanic students lost ground in reading, as well, falling 4.3 percentage points from 2006 to 2007.
- A 23.0 percentage point gap persists between African American students and their White counterparts in reading; a 19.7 percentage point gap persists in mathematics.
- The achievement gap for Special Education students and their non-disabled peers (31.4 percentage points) and FARM students with Non-FARM students (28.6 percentage points) persists at grade five in reading.

Middle School

- Middle School students are not making significant progress in reading (4.7 percentage points) or mathematics (3.0 percentage points). Although students in the aggregate have made gains, most student groups are making minimal progress. Whereas all student

groups made gains in reading, African American and LEP students lost ground in mathematics.

- At the middle school level, the gap between African American students and their white counterparts increased by 6.1 points in reading and 4.2 points in mathematics.
- ELL students in middle school are not making progress. In reading, they gained only .4 percentage points; they lost ground in mathematics, dropping 6.3 percentage points in that subject.

High School

- Although the gap is closing for special education students on the English HSA, a 49.3 percent gap with non-disabled peers continues to persist with only 33.7 percent of special education students passing this assessment.
- A significant gap (28 percentage points) persists between FARM and Non-FARM students.
- Attendance at the high school level for "all" students had a slight decrease from 91.7 percent to 91.5 percent. The attendance rate dropped for those subgroups that are experiencing the greatest academic difficulty: African American (.5 decline to 88.6 percent), FARMS (2.0 decline to 84.6 percent), Special education (1.6 decline to 87.4 percent) and LEP (1.6 decline to 93.1 percent). The satisfactory standard for attendance is 94 percent.
- Although our graduation rate improved for "all " students, we saw a slight decline in the rate for African American students (.8 percentage points) with a rate (82.8 percent) below the satisfactory standard of 83.23 percent. Although the attendance rate of economically disadvantaged students improved from 69.18 percent to 75.0 percent, that rate is significantly below the satisfactory standard.

School System Priorities and Distribution of Fiscal Resources

Tough Decisions and Funding Priorities

Looking back at our fiscal climate during the last school year, we realized a $14,965,762 increase in our FY 07 operating budget over our FY 06 funding, an 11 percent increase. A significant portion of our budget increase was targeted to honoring our negotiated agreement and continuing to assure competitive salaries for our teachers (6th in the state for beginning teacher salaries). We added 89.55 new positions. Additionally, SMCPS received $12,795,485 in the Capital Budget to support 16 capital projects.

For the current year, we have realized a $19,378,875 increase in our FY 08 operating budget over our FY 07 funding, a 13 percent increase. A significant portion of our budget increase was targeted to honoring our negotiated agreement and continuing to assure competitive salaries for our teachers. We added 73.8 new positions, 80 percent of which were classroom teachers and support to teachers. Additionally, SMCPS received $22,765,000 in the Capital Budget to support 12 capital projects.

Our funding priorities from the current year budget to address our challenges in the 2007-2008 school year include the following initiatives:

- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academies - We have opened academies at the elementary, middle, and high school level. This rigorous and unique program of study will emphasize the core areas of mathematics and science with an infusion of technology and engineering. The program will include extensive laboratory experiences using the most contemporary technologies for scientific inquiring, mathematical calculation, and engineering design and problem solving techniques. There will be an emphasis on critical and creative thinking in an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Culminating projects will provide opportunity for application of learning. Mentorships and internships will be supported by our military contract community and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station engineers, scientists and test pilots.

- The Chesapeake Public Charter School - This elementary, K-5, charter school opened on August 22, 2007 and accommodates 162 students.

- Middle School Reform Initiatives - The recommendations of the Middle School Task Force were implemented. They include additional teachers of mathematics at grade 7 to support a double period of mathematics for all students. Funding is also provided to support an extended day program at our middle schools.

- The Safe Schools Initiative - The recommendations of the Safety and Security Task Force were implemented. They include the addition of a Safety and Security Coordinator and security vestibules being added to numerous school this summer bringing the number of schools with these vestibules to 18 out of 27 schools.

- Expansion of Freshman Sports - We have added boys' basketball and girls' cheerleading.

- Technology Enhancements - Provide enhancements to the technology at each school while meeting the goals of our life-cycle replacement program. Additionally, creating a model/demonstration school for technology at George Washington Carver Elementary.

- Maintain our Board of Education Class Size Goals

- High School Assessment Initiative - Provide additional support, via HSA Lead Teachers, to assist students in passing the HSAs

- Offer Mandarin Chinese as a high school course and provide an introduction to Mandarin Chinese to middles school students

- Provide an additional 5 Kindergarten classes to meet increased enrollment and provide one additional Prekindergarten program to meet the increasing need at that level

- Honor all negotiated agreements

Demographics
St. Mary's County Public Schools employs 2,256 staff members, approximately 1,200 of whom are teachers. In the 2006-2007 school year, we served 16,665 students in 25 school settings. We had 16 elementary, 4 middle, and 3 high schools, a career and technology center, and an alternative learning center.

Our student population was made up of 74.3 percent White, 19.8 percent African American, 2.61 percent Hispanic, 2.52 percent Asian, and .59 percent Native American students. Our county average for students who are economically disadvantaged is 22 percent. Special education students make up 12 percent of the school population.

In 2007, our average class size was 18.7 in Prekindergarten, 19.4 in Kindergarten; 20.6 in grades 1 and 2; 22.4 in grades 3-5; 16.9 at middle school; and 19 at high schools. Our graduation rate was 85.83 percent.

Communication, Collaboration and Commitment
We are committed to building positive and productive relationships within our organization and with our parents and community partners. We communicate often via our automated telephone system, enhanced web page, educational television channel (Channel 96), the new student information system, *eSchoolPlus*, with a Teacher Access Center (TAC) and a Home Access Center (HAC), and more parent and community forums, such as *What Counts.*

We continue to strive to provide every student with access to academic experiences that will extend their knowledge, prepare them each year for the next level of learning, and assure that they will be competitive as they move beyond high school to their next endeavor.

I.B
Budget Information

Current Year Variance Table - 2007 Master Plan Update
Local School System: St. Mary's County

*This table will also be transmitted electronically.

	FY 2007 Current Approved Budget	FY 2008 Original Approved Budget	Change	% Change
		($ in Thousands)		
Revenues:				
Local Appropriation	$ 67,811,488	$ 75,999,584	$8,188,096	12.07%
Other Local Revenue	$ 810,546	$ 900,956	$90,410	11.15%
State Revenue	$ 78,700,405	$ 88,873,061	$10,172,656	12.93%
Federal Revenue	$ 10,513,649	$ 10,782,978	$269,329	2.56%
Other Local Revenue	$ 157,774	$ 41,429	($116,345)	-73.74%
Prior Balance Available	$ 1,517,705	$ 2,517,705	$1,000,000	65.89%
Total Revenue	**$ 159,511,567**	**$ 179,115,713**	**$19,604,146**	12.29%

Change in Expenditures:		
LEA Master Plan Goal 1: Student Achievement		
NCLB Goal: 1 Middle School Math Block Scheduling	$	249,540.00
NCLB Goal: 1 Math and Science Initiatives	$	138,580.00
NCLB Goal: 1 STEM (Science,Technology, Engineering and Math)	$	719,158.00
NCLB Goal: 1 High School Assessments (HSA)	$	124,770.00
NCLB Goal: 1 Full-day Kindergarten	$	439,538.00
NCLB Goal: 1 Middle School Task Force	$	105,440.00
NCLB Goal: 1 After School Initiatives	$	37,836.00
NCLB Goal: 1 Mandarin Chinese High School Course	$	14,690.00
NCLB Goal: 1 Data Warehouse and eSchool Solutions	$	47,657.00
NCLB Goal: Subtotal – Goal 1	**$**	**1,877,209.00**
LEA Master Plan Goal 3: Recruitment/Retention of Teachers		
NCLB Goal: 3 Enhancement of recruitment/retention of highly qualified teachers	$	9,105.00
NCLB Goal: 3 Minority Teacher Recruitment Specialist	$	68,820.00
NCLB Goal: 3 Subtotal – Goal 3	**$**	**77,925.00**
LEA Master Plan Goal 4: Safe Schools		
NCLB Goal: 4 Safety and Security Coordinator	$	70,320.00
NCLB Goal: 4 Pupil Personal staff	$	74,292.00
NCLB Goal: 4 Increased in-school health and Home & Hospital	$	215,990.00
NCLB Goal: 4 Subtotal – Goal 4	**$**	**360,602.00**
Mandatory/Cost of Doing Business;		
(Not captured elsewhere)		
Increases in negotiated contractual agreements - salaries	$	5,269,327.00
Increases in negotiated contractual agreements - benefits	$	8,273,708.00
Transportation	$	387,376.00
Utilities	$	647,456.00
Nonpublic Special Education Placements	$	245,545.00
Growth: Teachers and MOI	$	149,770.00
Charter School	$	1,413,000.00
Subtotal – Mandatory/Cost of Doing Business	**$**	**16,917,182.00**
Other (must not exceed 10% of Change in Total Revenue)	$	238,247.00
Restricted Funds	$	132,981.00
Subtotal – Other	**$**	**371,228.00**
Total (must equal the Change in Total Revenue)	**$**	**19,604,146.00**

Prior Year Budget Variance Table

(Comparison of Prior Year Revenue and Expenditures)

St. Mary's County Public Schools

Revenue	FY 07 Planned Revenue 07/01/2006	FY 07 Actual Revenue 06/30/2007	Change
Local Appropriation	$ 67,811,488.00	$ 67,811,488.00	$ -
State Revenue	$ 78,700,405.00	$ 78,445,794.00	$ (254,611.00)
Federal Revenue	$ 10,513,649.00	$ 9,176,659.00	$ (1,336,990.00)
Other Revenue	$ 810,546.00	$ 1,524,456.00	$ 713,910.00
Other Local Revenue	$ 157,774.00	$ 155,274.00	$ (2,500.00)
Prior Balance Available	$ 1,517,705.00	$ 2,139,066.00	$ 621,361.00
Total	$ 159,511,567.00	$ 159,252,737.00	$ (258,830.00)

NCLB Goal	Expenditures by Local Goal	FY 07 Planned Expenditure	*FY 07 Actual Expenditure	Change
LEA Master Plan Goal 1: Student Achievement				
	Class Size Reduction and Growth	$ 909,802.00	$ 936,836.00	$ 27,034.00
	High School Assessments (HSA)	$ 119,010.00	$ 106,780.00	$ (12,230.00)
	Kindergarten Implementation	$ 238,020.00	$ 235,754.00	$ (2,266.00)
	Special Education	$ 79,800.00	$ 72,220.00	$ (7,580.00)
	Curriculum and Instructional Development and Support	$ 41,424.00	$ 37,724.00	$ (3,700.00)
	Data warehouse	$ 5,796.00	$ 6,300.00	$ 504.00
	SubTotal Goal 1:	$ 1,393,852.00	$ 1,395,614.00	$ 1,762.00
LEA Master Plan Goal 2: Student Achievement - non-English speakers				
	Academic standards for Limited English students	$ 37,400.00	$ 30,203.00	$ (7,197.00)
	SubTotal Goal 2:	$ 37,400.00	$ 30,203.00	$ (7,197.00)
LEA Master Plan Goal 3: Recruitment/Retention of Teachers				
	Highly qualified teacher recruitment and retention	$ 11,800.00	$ 11,800.00	$ -
	SubTotal Goal 3:	$ 11,800.00	$ 11,800.00	$ -
LEA Master Plan Goal 4: Safe Schools				
	Attendance/Suspension monitoring, revision and compliance	$ 21,425.00	$ 14,379.00	$ (7,046.00)
	PBIS - Positive Behavior Interventions and Support	$ 75,726.00	$ 38,780.00	$ (36,946.00)
	Increased in-school Health and Home & Hospital services	$ 118,850.00	$ 163,731.00	$ 44,881.00
	Best learning environment for students	$ 6,070.00	$ 6,070.00	$ -
	SubTotal Goal 4:	$ 222,071.00	$ 222,960.00	$ 889.00
Mandatory/Cost of Doing Business:				
	Increases in negotiated contractual aggreements - salaries	$ 4,683,734.00	$ 4,683,734.00	$ -
	Increases in negotiated contractual aggreements - benefits	$ 1,592,571.00	$ 1,359,377.00	$ (233,194.00)
	Transportation	$ 178,687.00	$ 178,687.00	$ -
	Utilities	$ 641,296.00	$ 622,202.00	$ (19,094.00)
	Non-public placement	$ 185,000.00	$ 216,606.00	$ 31,606.00
	SubTotal Mandatory/Cost of Doing Business:	$ 7,281,288.00	$ 7,060,606.00	$ (220,682.00)
Other (must not exceed 10% of Change in Total Revenue)				
	Other	$ 231,366.00	$ 197,766.00	$ (33,602.00)
	Less reduction in Restricted Programs	$ (679,779.00)	$ (679,779.00)	$ -
	SubTotal Other:	$ (448,413.00)	$ (482,013.00)	$ (33,602.00)
Total		$ 8,496,000.00	$ 8,238,170.00	$ (258,830.00)

Prior Year Variance Table – Analyzing Questions

Instructions:

Please respond to the following questions using the information provided in the Prior Year Variance Table.

Revenue Analysis

1. Did actual revenue meet expectations as anticipated in the Master Plan Update for 2007? If not, identify the changes and the impact any changes had on the FY2008 budget and the system's progress toward achieving master plan goals. Please include any subsequent appropriations in your comparison table and narrative analysis.

The Prior Year Budget Variance Table for St. Mary's County Public Schools shows a reduction in actual revenue, $258,830, in comparison to the original FY2007 general and restricted fund budgets. The state revenue shortfall is an aggregate effect of realizing a current year budget adjustment to transportation and special education which aligned these budgets to actual and the restricted fund revenue realized to the actual grant award and/or expenditures. The federal revenue shortfall is an aggregate effect of the restricted fund revenue realized to the actual grant award and/or expenditures.

The change in the 2007 original budget to actual revenues did not affect any of our initiatives stated in the 2006 Master Plan update since they were adjustments to restricted fund projections for FY2007. The total gain in revenue in the general fund was $590,000 which is the source of our primary Master Plan initiatives.

Increases in revenue:

- Interest Income - $551,000 due to rising interest rates
- Non-public placement - $63,000 offset by an increase in expenditures for non-public placement (state source)
- Quality Teacher Incentive - $22,000 offset by an increase in the number of teachers paid the incentive (state source)
- NTBS Certification - $18,000
- JROTC - $41,000 offset by an increase in the cost of instructors for the program (federal source)
- Fund Balance - $621,000

Decreases in revenue were:

- Impact Aid - $148,609 - census figures (federal source)

Analysis of Actual Expenditures

2. Please provide a comparison of the planned versus actual expenditures for each local goal provided in the Prior Year Variance Table. Identify changes in expenditures and provide a narrative discussion of the impact of the changes.

Master Plan Goal 1: Student Achievement

The change in the budget estimate for these initiatives was the result of higher actual salary costs of teachers for Class Size Reduction and Growth compared to the budgeted amount. The offset of actual salaries being lower on High School Assessments, kindergarten implementation, and special education initiatives reduced the aggregate total increase for the Student Achievement goal.

Master Plan Goal 2: Student Achievement - non-English speakers

The budgeted amount for the hourly paraeducators supporting Student Achievement for non-English speakers was higher than the actual amount incurred during this fiscal year.

Master Plan Goal 3: Recruitment/Retention of Teachers

The actual expenditures supporting recruitment and retention of teachers for St. Mary's County Public Schools met the budgeted goal.

Master Plan Goal 4: Safe Schools

The aggregate increase of $889.00 supporting Safe Schools was the result of savings due to actual salaries and expenditures for the Attendance and Suspension monitoring, revision, and compliance and PBIS - Positive Behavior Interventions and Support initiatives. The increase for the initiative, In-School Health and Home and Hospital services, was a result of the actual salaries of the new nursing staff being higher than anticipated along with the increase in travel costs.

Salary Increases and Fixed Charges / Mandatory Cost-of-Doing-Business

St. Mary's County Public Schools realized a savings of fixed charges and mandatory/cost-of-doing business. The savings was realized from the decrease in life insurance premiums and other insurance expenditures, in conjunction with stable health insurance premiums. The budget for employee health benefits was formulated with an anticipated increase in health insurance premiums.

I.B.iii: Budget Attachments: 1, 2, and 3

ATTACHMENT 1 - TOTAL REVENUE STATEMENT (Current Expense Fund)

*This table will also be transmitted electronically.

Local School System: St. Mary's County — **2007 Annual Update**

REVENUES		Original Approved FY 07 Budget	Final FY 07 Actual Revenue	Original Approved FY 08 Budget
Note: Do not include revenue for School Construction Fund, Debt Service Fund, or Food Service Fund.				
LOCAL APPROPRIATIONS	1.1.01.00	$ 67,811,488.00	$ 67,811,488.00	$ 75,999,584.00
OTHER REVENUE*	1.1.05.00	$ 810,546.00	$ 1,524,456.00	$ 900,956.00
STATE REVENUE				
Foundation	1.1.20.01	56,781,663.00	56,775,175.00	63,966,343.00
Economically Disadvantaged (Comp Ed & EEEP)	1.1.20.02	9,824,641.00	9,732,147.00	11,159,527.00
Special Education**	1.1.20.07	5,735,545.00	5,662,799.00	6,676,746.00
LEP	1.1.20.24	343,413.00	343,413.00	446,840.00
Guaranteed Tax Base	1.1.20.25	196,946.00	196,946.00	238,867.00
Transportation	1.1.20.39	5,010,124.00	5,007,064.00	5,471,378.00
Governor's Teacher Salary Challenge	1.1.20.56	-	-	
Other (specify)***		-	-	
Environmental Education		5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Quality Teacher Incentive		-	22,000.00	15,000.00
NTBS Certification		10,000.00	28,000.00	28,000.00
Miscellaneous Grants (see attachment)		783,073.00	575,251.00	550,852.00
TOTAL STATE REVENUE		$ 78,700,405.00	$ 78,359,795.00	$ 89,564,553.00
FEDERAL REVENUE				
Title I-A - Local System Grants		2,015,486.00	1,936,590.00	2,015,486.00
Title I-A - School Improvement		200,000.00	108,284.00	200,000.00
Title I-B1 - Reading First		-	-	-
Title I-C - Migrant Education		-	-	-
Title I-D - Neglected and Delinquent		-	-	-
Title I-F - Comprehensive School Reform		-	-	-
Title II-A - Teacher Quality		728,549.00	685,725.00	728,549.00
Title II-D - Education Technology		20,872.00	15,284.00	20,872.00
Title III-A - Language Acquisition		21,408.00	408.00	21,408.00
Title IV-A - Safe & Drug-Free Schools		58,659.00	52,469.00	58,659.00
Title IV-B - 21st Century Learning Centers		316,750.00	309,940.00	281,250.00
Title V-A - Innovative Education		15,938.00	5,470.00	15,938.00
Title VI-B2 - Rural & Low-Income Schools Prog.		-	-	-
Title VIII - Impact Aid		2,000,000.00	1,651,391.00	2,000,000.00
Homeless Children and Youth		23,000.00	24,200.00	23,000.00
IDEA - Special Education		3,000,837.00	3,031,456.00	3,186,915.00
Perkins Career and Technology Education		164,081.00	160,765.00	164,081.00
Other (specify)***				
Department of Defense		330,000.00	341,225.00	330,000.00
JROTC		120,000.00	161,329.50	120,000.00
Miscellaneous Grants (see attachment)		1,433,060.00	780,828.00	1,522,306.00
TOTAL FEDERAL REVENUE	1.1.30.00	$ 10,513,640.00	$ 9,161,262.50	$ 10,691,464.00
OTHER LOCAL REVENUE		$ 157,274.00	$ 153,274.00	$ 41,429.00
TOTAL REVENUE		$ 157,993,062.00	$ 157,905,215.00	$ 176,096,006.00
PRIOR BALANCE AVAILABLE	1.1.40.00	$ 1,517,705.00	$ 2,139,066.00	$ 2,517,705.00
TOTAL REVENUE, TRANSFERS AND FUND BALANCE		$ 159,511,367.00	$ 159,144,281.00	$ 179,115,713.00

*Tuition, payments and fees, earnings on investments, rentals, gifts and other non-state, non-federal revenue sources.

**Should include state revenues from formula funding as well as non-public placement funding.

***Add lines as needed for all other fund sources in the Current Expense Fund.

****Nonrevenue and transfers.

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ATTACHMENT MISCELLANEOUS STATE & FEDERAL GRANTS - TOTAL REVENUE STATEMENT

***This table will also be transmitted electronically.**

Local School System: St. Mary's County	2007 Annual Update		
STATE REVENUE			
REVENUES	**Original Approved FY 07 Budget**	**Final FY 07 Actual Revenue**	**Original Approved FY 08 Budget**
Miscellaneous Grants			
Adult Basic Education & Literacy Services	166,350.00	166,350.00	166,350.00
Fine Arts Initiative	26,499.00	31,430.00	32,921.00
Judith P. Hoyer Child Care & Education Center	323,333.00	262,501.00	323,333.00
Infants & Toddlers through SMCHD	50,000.00	44,281.00	50,000.00
Maryland Model for School Readiness	23,715.00	1,714.00	26,715.00
Middle Grades Tobacco Prevention Education	7,250.00	7,453.00	7,594.00
Aging Schools	114,926.00	-	-
STEM Implementation	-	-	151,434.00
State School Improvement	-	-	50,000.00
LMB- Care Management Entity	-	-	67,535.00
LMB After School	81,000.00	64,522.00	81,000.00
TOTAL STATE MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS	793,073.00	578,251.00	956,882.00

FEDERAL REVENUE			
Miscellaneous Grants			
Adult Basic Education & Literacy Services	128,132.00	128,132.00	128,132.00
Learn & Serve America	17,165.00	5,581.00	23,819.00
Infants & Toddlers through SMCHD	49,667.00	45,635.00	49,667.00
Special Education Discretionary	94,206.00	50,460.00	89,446.00
Special Education Disproportionality	25,000.00	4,493.00	25,000.00
Workforce Investment Act-In School Youth	79,705.00	12,639.00	40,000.00
Medical Assistance	871,271.00	389,211.00	865,818.00
Future Leaders of the World	-	-	187,215.00
Maryland K - 12	-	-	1,000.00
Maryland Technology Literacy Year 3	-	-	10,000.00
Project Nexus	-	-	64,000.00
Primary Talent Development	-	-	59,812.00
Sexual Harassment/Assault Prevention	-	-	12,500.00
Passthrough Carryover	167,734.00	144,677.00	25,800.00
TOTAL FEDERAL MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS	1,433,080.00	780,828.00	1,522,309.00

ATTACHMENT 2 - TOTAL EXPENDITURE STATEMENT (Current Expense Fund)
***This table will also be transmitted electronically.**

2007 Annual Update

Local School System: St. Mary's County

TOTAL SUMMARY BY CATEGORY

Category	Original Approved* FY 07 Budget	Final FY 07 Actual Expenditures	Original Approved FY 08 Budget	FTE Staffing FY 08 Budget
201 Administration	$ 3,568,876.00	$ 3,529,646.00	$ 3,869,837.00	39.00
202 Mid-level Administration				
Office of the Principal	$ 8,213,067.00	$ 8,164,698.00	$ 8,783,102.00	132.00
Administration & Supervision	$ 3,166,732.00	$ 3,221,982.00	$ 3,837,942.00	46.50
203 Instructional Salaries	$ 62,002,007.00	$ 61,018,748.00	$ 67,064,519.00	1,189.97
204 Textbooks & Instructional Supplies	$ 3,546,185.00	$ 3,283,186.00	$ 4,007,426.00	
205 Other Instructional Costs	$ 1,427,270.00	$ 1,183,852.00	$ 1,178,185.00	
206 Special Education	$ 17,446,340.00	$ 17,610,247.00	$ 18,441,105.00	328.80
207 Student Personnel Services	$ 1,075,779.00	$ 1,084,526.00	$ 1,591,111.00	15.60
208 Health Services	$ 1,516,741.00	$ 1,390,326.00	$ 1,576,269.00	33.00
209 Student Transportation	$ 11,159,613.00	$ 11,428,073.00	$ 12,144,552.00	23.50
210 Operation of Plant	$ 11,551,088.00	$ 11,565,856.00	$ 13,035,866.00	154.00
211 Maintenance of Plant	$ 3,127,628.00	$ 3,116,365.00	$ 3,586,355.00	44.20
212 Fixed Charges	$ 30,433,327.00	$ 25,244,420.00	$ 38,841,849.00	
213 Food Service				
214 Community Services	$ 162,334.00	$ 84,515.00	$ 87,786.00	2.00
215 Capital Outlay	$ 1,114,580.00	$ 985,585.00	$ 1,070,807.00	9.50
Undistributed Federal Funds		$ 6,012,452.00		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES/FTE	$159,511,587	$159,144,281	$179,115,713	2,017.07

**Include federal funds and federally funded positions in Budget (Original and Prior Year Budget AND Original Approved Current Year Budget) and FTE columns.

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ATTACHMENT 3 - TOTAL FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF STATEMENT

*This table will also be transmitted electronically.

2007 Annual Update

Local School System: St. Mary's County

POSITION TYPE	FY 07 Budget	FY 08 Budget
Superintendent, Deputy,Assc, Asst	1.00	1.00
Directors, Coord.,Superv.,Specialists	44.92	49.92
Principal	25.00	26.00
Vice Principal	37.00	38.00
Teachers	1,102.90	1,141.00
Therapists	29.70	31.60
Guidance Counselor	40.00	41.50
Librarian	28.00	28.50
Psychologist	8.75	9.75
PPW/SSW	7.00	7.90
Nurse	29.00	32.00
Other Professional Staff	12.40	7.00
Secretaries and Clerks	108.50	122.70
Bus Drivers	17.00	9.00
Paraprofessionals	245.00	259.00
Other Staff	207.70	213.20
TOTAL FTE STAFF	1,943.87	2,017.07

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1.D
Progress Toward Meeting Performance Standards

Are the programs, practices and strategies implemented by local school systems achieving their intended effect of improving student performance and eliminating achievement gaps?

Instructions:
This section requires school systems to report on successes and challenges related to performance standards, additional State requirements, and local goals, where applicable. In addition, school systems are asked to reflect on the programs, practices, and strategies to which they attribute success and those that will be implemented, changed, or enhanced in order to overcome challenges and ensure progress.

The alignment of resources with Master Plan priorities must be evident. The Guidance Document has been developed to provide a clear connection between local school system priorities and resource allocations. Resources can be allocated through a number of avenues: increases in revenues, reallocated or redirected funds, a shift in focus, and/or the continuation of initiatives and programs. Throughout each section, school systems will be asked to share how the school system plans to allocate resources to support continued progress and overcome challenges.

The analyzing questions within each section are designed to illustrate the unique circumstances, successes, and challenges that exist in each of the 24 school systems in Maryland.

I.D.i
Maryland School Assessment

No Child Left Behind Goal 1: By 2013-2014, all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.

No Child Left Behind Indicators 1.1 and 1.2: The percentage of students, in the aggregate and for each subgroup, who are at or above the proficient level in reading/language arts and mathematics on the Maryland School Assessment.

As required under No Child Left Behind, Maryland has established continuous and substantial growth targets for 100 percent of students to reach proficiency by 2013-2014.

To help school systems illustrate progress and challenges toward achieving the 100 percent target for proficiency and the associated strategies and resources to address concerns and overcome challenges, the following changes have been made to the organizational structure of the 2007 Update:

- Student achievement data are organized by content area and grade band.
- The student achievement section focuses on student performance based on percent proficient.

Within the reading and mathematics content areas, local school systems should address the performance of elementary and middle school students using Maryland School Assessment data. Local school systems should address the performance of high school students using the High School Assessment English 2 and High School Assessment Algebra data.

Instructions:

1. Review the school system's available proficiency data for each content area and grade band by subgroup at the school system level.

   - Proficiency data for 2005 and 2006 are available immediately on the Maryland Report Card website.
   - The 2007 proficiency data will be provided to local school systems no later than September.
   - In the event that the 2007 proficiency data for high schools is not available before the Update is completed, local school systems should address the performance of high school students using the 2005 and 2006 proficiency data.

2. Insert the tables provided by MSDE that include the details behind the system's performance from 2005 through 2007.

3. Review the proficiency data in the tables and identify where disparities in achievement[2] are evident.

[2] Section 5-401, Comprehensive Master Plans, of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

EMH Level	Subject	SubGroup	2005			2006			2007		
			Proficiency	Proficiency	Tested	Proficiency	Proficiency	Tested	Proficiency	Proficiency	Tested
Elementary	Reading	All Students	2743	78.6%	3489	2769	80.7%	3431	2875	84.8%	3392
		American Indian	22	81.5%	27	14	73.7%	19	14	82.4%	17
		Asian	82	95.3%	86	78	92.9%	84	84	94.4%	89
		African American	368	56.0%	657	364	57.7%	631	438	66.0%	664
		White	2209	83.6%	2641	2248	86.0%	2615	2273	89.7%	2534
		Hispanic	62	79.5%	78	65	79.3%	82	66	75.0%	88
		FARMS	569	59.4%	958	514	60.3%	853	574	68.7%	835
		Special Education	326	55.5%	587	338	59.5%	568	368	67.9%	542
		Limited English Proficiency	45	76.3%	59	39	79.6%	49	32	76.2%	42
	Math	All Students	2682	76.9%	3489	2822	82.1%	3436	2918	86.0%	3393
		American Indian	19	70.4%	27	13	68.4%	19	11	64.7%	17
		Asian	80	93.0%	86	79	92.9%	85	83	92.2%	90
		African American	339	51.6%	657	378	59.9%	631	464	70.4%	659
		White	2184	82.7%	2641	2283	87.2%	2619	2287	90.1%	2538
		Hispanic	60	76.9%	78	69	84.1%	82	73	82.0%	89
		FARMS	551	57.5%	958	537	62.8%	855	598	71.9%	832
		Special Education	291	49.6%	587	337	59.4%	567	361	67.0%	539
		Limited English Proficiency	48	81.4%	59	38	76.0%	50	37	80.4%	46
Middle	Reading	All Students	2567	71.7%	3579	2686	73.3%	3664	2810	78.0%	3603
		American Indian	6	42.9%	14	16	72.7%	22	22	78.6%	28
		Asian	70	82.4%	85	79	83.2%	95	93	86.1%	108
		African American	318	47.4%	671	384	51.9%	740	407	56.5%	720
		White	2116	77.3%	2739	2140	78.6%	2723	2221	83.3%	2665
		Hispanic	57	81.4%	70	67	79.8%	84	67	81.7%	82
		FARMS	420	47.6%	883	441	50.7%	869	481	56.8%	847
		Special Education	157	33.8%	465	154	34.1%	451	219	48.6%	451
		Limited English Proficiency	20	60.6%	33	14	46.7%	30	8	47.1%	17
	Math	All Students	1987	55.5%	3579	2355	64.3%	3663	2411	67.3%	3585
		American Indian	4	28.6%	14	12	54.5%	22	18	66.7%	27
		Asian	63	74.1%	85	82	85.4%	96	93	86.1%	108
		African American	210	31.3%	672	295	39.9%	739	280	39.4%	711
		White	1663	60.7%	2738	1910	70.2%	2722	1960	73.9%	2654
		Hispanic	47	67.1%	70	56	66.7%	84	60	70.6%	85
		FARMS	288	32.6%	883	350	40.3%	869	360	42.9%	839
		Special Education	92	19.8%	465	127	28.3%	449	173	38.9%	445
		Limited English Proficiency	17	51.5%	33	19	61.3%	31	11	55.0%	20

Reading

Grade 3

The aggregate data in grade three showed progress with students moving 2.9 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Hispanic students -6 percentage points.

Grade 4

The aggregate data in grade four showed progress with students moving 6.8 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: Asian students -2.6 percentage points and LEP students -4.4 percentage points.

Grade 5

The aggregate data in grade five showed progress with students moving 6 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: African American students -2.7 percentage points, Hispanic students -11.1 percentage points, Special Education students -3.8 percentage points, and FARMS students -4.4 percentage points.

Grade 6

The aggregate data in grade six showed progress with students moving 7 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Hispanic students -2.4 percentage points.

Grade 7

The aggregate data in grade seven showed achievement disparities with students moving -0.8 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. The disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: White students -0.5 percentage points, African American students -3.3 percentage points, and FARMS students -6.2 percentage points.

Grade 8

The aggregate data in grade eight showed progress with students moving 6.1 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: Asian students -9.1 percentage points and Hispanic students -1 percentage points.

English II

The aggregate data for English II showed progress with students moving 11.5 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Asian students -3 percentage points.

Mathematics

Grade 3

The aggregate data in grade three showed achievement disparities with student moving -2.5 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. The disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: White students -2.1 percentage points, African American

students -0.3 percentage points, Asian students -0.5 percentage points, Hispanic students -1.8 percentage points, and Special Education students -11.3 percentage points.

Grade 4

The aggregate data in grade four showed progress with students moving 4.7 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: Asian students -1.1 percentage points and LEP students -14.3 percentage points.

Grade 5

The aggregate data in grade five showed progress with students moving 6.4 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Hispanic students -10.3 percentage points.

Grade 6

The aggregate data in grade six showed progress with students moving 5.7 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Asian students -1.4 percentage points.

Grade 7

The aggregate data in grade seven showed achievement disparities with students moving -0.6 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. The disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: Hispanic students -3.6 percentage points, African American students -7.4 percentage points, and FARMS students -7.9 percentage points.

Grade 8

The aggregate data in grade eight showed progress with students moving 3.6 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with these student groups: African American students -0.9 percentage points, Asian students -5.3 percentage points and Special Education students -1.1 percentage points.

Algebra

The aggregate data for Algebra showed progress with students moving 12.8 percentage points from Basic to Proficient. However, the disaggregated data reflects declines in proficiency with Hispanic students -7.4 percentage points.

Maryland School Assessment (continued)

Reading

Instructions:
Using Table 1.1, provide a bulleted list that identifies the school system's areas of greatest success and areas of greatest concern with respect to subgroup performance in reading.

Table 1.1 Areas of Greatest Success and Greatest Concern in Reading

	Greatest Success	Greatest Concern
Elementary	• African American student performance increased 8.3 percentage points to 66% proficient in 2007**;** results have increased 10 percentage points over two years. • FARMS student performance increased 8.3 percentage points to 68.7% proficient in 2007; results have increased 9.3 percentage points over two years. • Special Education student performance increased 8.4 percentage points to 67.9% proficient in 2007**;** results have increased 12.4 percentage points over two years.	• The achievement gap for African American students narrowed (27.6 points in 2005, 28.3 points in 2006, and 23.7 points in 2007), but is still significant. • The achievement gap for Special Education students is not closing at grade 5; there is a 31.4 point gap between Special Education and Regular Education student performance. • The achievement gap for FARMS students is not closing at grade 5; there is a 28.6 point gap between FARMS and Non-FARMS student performance.
Middle	The impact of the revised instructional model in 6th grade last year has generated positive results in the performance of: • Special Education student performance increased 14.9 percentage points to 52.5% proficient. • African American student performance increased 13.1 percentage points to 62.3% proficient. • FARMS student performance increased 15.4 percentage points to 62.2% proficient.	• In 7th grade, the decrease in FARMS students' performance by 6.4 percentage points to 50% proficient is of great concern as is the decrease in African American student performance by 3.3 percentage points to 51.7% proficient. • The achievement gap for FARMS students is not closing at grade 7; there is a 33.4 point gap between FARMS and Non-FARMS student performance.
High	• African American student performance increased 14.5 percentage points to 59.1%	• Although Special Education student performance increased, the 33.7% passing rate for the

	passing the English II HSA. • Special Education performance increased 16.5 percentage points on the English II HSA. • Hispanic students achieved highest passing rates to date, 84.2% on the English II HSA.	English II HSA is a concern. • A significant achievement gap (28 percentage points) persists between FARMS and Non-FARMS students on the English II HSA.

Based on the Examination of the Areas of Greatest Success and Greatest Concern in Reading:

1. Identify and describe the practices, programs, or strategies[3] to which you attribute the success. Include the corresponding resource allocations in your discussion.

All Levels

- **Pacing Guides and Curriculum Maps** - Teachers were provided VSC-driven curriculum/core guides to ensure adequate time allotments and adequate pacing. Guidance was provided to instructional staff. Where core programs did not fully align with VSC, supplemental materials were selected. Passage maps/pacing guides ensured rigor, focus, and timeline accountability.
- **Increased the Quantity of Benchmarks** - Locally developed assessments have been expanded to quarterly administrations with the exception of 11th and 12th grade English. Additional benchmark assessments allow for consistent and data-driven monitoring of student progress on their IEP goals and objectives relevant to their grade-level curriculum.
- **Predictor Assessments** - Multiple assessments were administered including leading data (SMCPS Benchmark assessments, DIBELS, AIMSweb) and lagging data (MSA, HSA, Stanford 10/OLSAT). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) was administered to all students kindergarten to grade 5. *Performance Matters* (PM) data warehouse allows for continuous student monitoring through data analysis and the ability to match programs and interventions to meet the individual student needs of both general and special education students.
- **Collaborative Teams** - Many schools created common planning time, weekly team data analysis meetings, and an accountability process for team planning through Quarterly Team Action Plans (TAPs) and shared their model. Special education teachers were assigned to these teams and attended all content area professional development opportunities in collaboration with their general education peers. In addition, general education supervisors and school-based administrators have been provided co-teaching observation guidelines to assist them during informal and formal observations of co-teaching teams.
- **Professional Development** - General and special education teachers were provided professional development on research-based reading interventions (Wilson Reading, REWARDS, Read Naturally, Bridges to Literature, Earobics, Fundations).

Elementary

- **Core Reading Program** - All materials used for students in grades Prekindergarten-2 were on the MSDE approved/recommended list of research based programs and align with Maryland's Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC). The core reading program (Houghton Mifflin 2005)

[3] In this discussion, as applicable, local school systems should reference the key professional development initiatives that are described in the Professional Development section of this document.

addressed five essential areas of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

- **Targeted MSDE Approved Interventions** - Specific student needs were addressed with the implementation of research based interventions (Fundations, Wilson Reading System, Read Naturally, Six Minute Solution to Fluency, SOAR to Success, REWARDS, Earobics, and Road to the Code).
- **Increased Time and Academic Focus** - Elementary schools allotted 135 minutes of daily reading instructional time. Class sizes were reduced to provide additional engaged instruction during the instructional day, and eliminate student down time (goal/cap ratio 20-23 for K, 21-24 for 1-2, 25-29 for 3-5). Class sizes are significantly lower at the Title I schools.

Middle

- **Increased Time and Academic Focus** - Middle schools allotted 90 minutes of reading instruction at all grade levels (45 minutes of reading and writing instruction at the students' instructional levels). Class sizes were reduced to better facilitate differentiated instruction (goal/cap ratio 25-29 for middle school classes).

High

- **Instructional Practices** - English teachers incorporated additional active reading strategies in their whole group reading instruction. Newly hired English teachers received training early in the year regarding active reading strategies. All English teachers received training on the EMC Write-In Reader, which accompanies the literature books at each grade level. This resource provided detailed active reading strategies for several of the reading selections from the literature book. English teachers used these lessons in their individual classrooms.
- **Targeted Instructional Program** - Of the four English Core Learning Goals, two goals are dedicated to reading: one addresses comprehension and interpretation and the other, evaluation of text. As teachers followed the new English curriculum maps distributed last year they were able to more effectively target the instruction in these areas. Students did show improvement in reading on local assessments and teachers observed improved quality of BCR responses as the year progressed.
- **Effective Strategies** - During the professional development held in February 2007, English teachers focused on developing higher order questions related to reading selections. Teachers worked in groups to develop a series of higher order questions and related activities that would require students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of text. In addition to planning their own activities, teachers received training on several models of 9^{th} and 10^{th} grade lessons where higher order questioning would lead students to a sophisticated understanding of text.

2. Identify and describe the practices, programs, or strategies designed to address concerns and overcome challenges. Include the corresponding resource allocations in your discussion. Please include timelines where appropriate.

All Levels

- **Professional Development Focused on the Language Continuum** - As students have difficulty expressing their ideas using words that are rich in meaning - particularly in the area of concept words used to support higher order thinking, a well developed vocabulary will help students produce stronger, more expressive written responses.

- **The Partners' for Success Center and the Citizen's Advisory Committee for Special Education** - These two agencies will sponsor a series of workshops for parents in reading. These workshops will provide parents with information relative to how they can support the education of their children at home.

Elementary

- **Focused Approach to Writing -** Because successful writing is linked to successful reading, a more focused approach to writing instruction will take place in grades 1-5. For example, teachers will be given a set of six mini-lessons linked to the literature students are reading in their anthologies. The six lessons will represent the six traits in the *6+1 Trait* writing model. The *6+1 Trait* writing framework is a way to learn and use a common language to refer to characteristics of writing as well as create a common vision of what 'good' writing looks like.
- **Teacher Professional Development -** All general and special education teachers will be provided with additional professional development in the areas of writing instruction, intervention delivery, and guided reading, in order to ensure that the instruction is consistent throughout the district.
- **Systemic Application of Interventions -** Fundations will be used as a K-2 supplemental systematic phonics program, not solely as an intervention. Many students throughout the district will receive an extended period of Fundations which will enable them to master the concepts taught at a slower pace. This year, a planning team will explore the feasibility and value of implementing an intensive phonics review for all students in 4th or 5th grade before exiting elementary school.

Middle

- **Focused Approach to Writing** - Because successful writing is linked to successful reading, a more focused approach to writing instruction will take place in grades 6-8. For example, teachers will be given a set of six mini-lessons linked to the literature students are reading in their anthologies. The six lessons will represent the six traits in the *6+1 Trait* writing model.
- **Systemic Student Screening and Appropriate Placement -** All students not scoring proficient on MSA will have an Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assessment and will be evaluated for immediate intervention in the skills and processes of reading. All students will be assessed using the AIMSweb Maze. Maze reading will be used as a corroborative or supplemental measure to provide a more complete picture of students' reading skills. This comprehension measure will be used to screen students for possible problems with comprehension of written text. Students will be placed in appropriate interventions for fluency, comprehension, or decoding, depending upon the determined root cause.
- **Teacher Professional Development -** All general and special education teachers will receive additional staff development in the analysis of AIMSweb assessment results, intervention delivery, guided reading instruction, and utilization of the language arts block. Special education teachers will team with their general education peers to disaggregate data from *Performance Matters* to collaboratively develop focused instructional groups.
- **Reallocation of Instructional Time to Reflect System Priorities -** All students will continue to receive a double block of language arts in which one half of the block will be dedicated to reading and writing at the students' instructional levels. Scheduling issues that impede time for interventions will be overcome. An additional middle school special education teacher was included in the budget to assist with the provision of interventions.

- **Pacing Guides and Curriculum Maps -** Pacing guides will be provided to increase the number of stories in the anthologies that are covered during the year by an additional unit in McDougal Littell. The rationale behind this is students have indicated anecdotally that they are bored when the stories are belabored. The students are missing various genres or exposure to certain authors when the anthology is not used efficiently and units are skipped.

High

- **Restructuring of Academic Literacy and Embedding of Reading Strategies Across the Curriculum -** One area of concern is our students' ability to read and understand rigorous passages. If students can not understand these passages, it will be difficult for them to respond to assessment items. While the Academic Literacy classes that are currently in place mainly support students who are non-readers or who have difficulty decoding, there remains a need for more reading instruction imbedded in the English and content courses to support comprehension. In the fall 2007, schools will address how to provide support to content area courses, especially in co-taught classes with special education students and in classes with Limited English Proficient students. The Department of Special Education and the Center for Technology in Education will continue its grant focused upon collaboration and co-teaching at two of the high schools. In addition, the Department of Special Education has developed a partnership with the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education to provide professional development to high school general and special education co-teachers who provide instruction to students with Autism. More support by central office personnel and special education resource teachers will be provided to focus instruction and ensure that the interventions are delivered with fidelity. The responsibilities of the supervisor of instruction for reading and language arts have been shifted to allow more time for high school monitoring. Data will be collected regularly, including progress monitoring using lower level oral reading fluency passages as appropriate.
- **Higher Order Questioning -** Another concern was the lack of higher-order questioning observed in classroom instruction. English teachers were often observed asking lower-level recall questions about text instead of asking students more thought-provoking and analytical questions. Having teachers understand the rigor of thinking skills embedded in the assessment limits is critical. In response to this concern, professional development will be provided in September, November, and February.
- **Restructuring of Study Skills Class -** A third concern was the use of the high school study skills class; this class was designed to effectively assist students with mastery of the content areas. It has become a time for students to complete assignments without direct instruction. An intense study skills class targeted on reading and writing would more effectively meet the needs of special education students. This model will be evaluated by a team comprised of Special Education and Curriculum and Instruction supervisors.

*See clarifying responses pages 142-144

Maryland School Assessment (continued)

Mathematics

Instructions:
Using Table 1.2, provide a bulleted list that identifies the school system's areas of greatest success and areas of greatest concern with respect to subgroup performance in mathematics.

Table 1.2 Areas of Greatest Success and Greatest Concern in Mathematics

	Greatest Success	Greatest Concern
Elementary	• African American student performance increased 10.5 percentage points to 70.4% proficiency in 2007; results have increased 18.8 percentage points over two years. • FARMS student performance increased 9.1 percentage points to 71.9% proficiency in 2007; results have increased 14.4 percentage points over two years. • The achievement gap for FARMS students is closing at all grade levels at elementary (-6.8 points in grade 3, -7.4 points in grade 4, -6.2 points in grade 5). • Special Education student performance increased 7.6 percentage points to 67% proficiency in 2007; results have increased 17.4 percentage points over two years.	• The achievement gap for African American students (31.1 points in 2005, 27.3 points in 2006, and 19.7 points in 2007) is narrowing, but is still significant. • LEP student scores vary yearly (81.4, in 2005, 76.0% in 2006, and 80.4% in 2007). • The achievement gap for Special Education students is not closing at grade 3; there is a 27.5 point gap between Special Education and Regular Education student performance.
Middle	• Special Education student performance increased 10.6 percentage points to 38.9% proficiency in 2007; results have increased 19.1 percentage points over two years. • FARMS students achieved 42.9% proficiency with an increase of 2.6 percentage points over 2006 disaggregated MSA results and have increased	• Only 39.4% of African American students made proficiency (which is a decrease of 0.5% over 2006 disaggregated MSA results). • LEP student scores vary yearly. (51.5% in 2005, 61.3% in 2006, and 55.0% in 2007) • The achievement gap is not narrowing for African American students (29.4 points

	10.3 percentage points over two years. • The performance of Asian students reached an all-time high of 86.1% proficient.	in 2005, 30.3 points in 2006, and 34.5 points in 2007). • The achievement gap is not narrowing for Special Education students; in grade 8 there is a 42 point gap between Special Education and Regular Education student performance. • The achievement gap is not narrowing for FARMS students; in grade 7 there is a 40 point gap between FARMS and Non-FARMS student performance.
High	• African American student performance increased 18.0 percentage points to 61.5% passing the Algebra HSA. • FARMS student performance increased 26.3 percentage points to 69.7% passing the Algebra HSA. • Asian student performance increased 14.1 percentage points to 97.4% passing the Algebra HSA.	• Although Special Education student performance increased 8.5 percentage points to 40.4% passing the Algebra HSA, a 46 point gap persists between Special Education and Regular Education students.

Based on the Examination of the Areas of Greatest Success and Greatest Concern in Mathematics:

1. Identify and describe the practices, programs, or strategies[4] to which you attribute the success. Include the corresponding resource allocations in your discussion.

All Levels

- **Curriculum Alignment** - All general and special education teachers were provided with curriculum maps which aligned the VSC and Core Learning Goals with the materials of instruction. The maps also pointed out where the materials would need to be enhanced to meet the demands of the VSC and Core Learning Goals. Curriculum maps provided guidance to teachers in planning focused and rigorous instruction and in developing grade-level aligned IEP goals and objectives.
- **Data-Driven Instruction** - There was an increased focus at all grade levels on assessment data, data analysis and its impact on instruction. The data warehouse, *Performance Matters*, was used extensively by supervisors, administrators, instructional leaders and teachers both collaboratively and individually to analyze data and drive instruction. In addition, through the analysis of the data, special education teachers developed grade-level aligned IEP goals and objectives and targeted specific areas of instruction for special education students.

[4] In this discussion, as applicable, local school systems should reference the key professional development initiatives that are described in the Professional Development section of this document.

- **Collaborative Teams -** The co-teaching model was in place for most classrooms. In addition, Special Education staff was assigned to content area departments/grade level teams in order to facilitate communication between staff members. Opportunities for co-teachers to have common planning times were built into each school schedule to the degree possible.

Elementary

- **Instructional Time -** Elementary schools allotted 90 minutes of instructional time for mathematics each day. Mathematics instruction is hands on and focuses on students doing mathematics. The additional instructional time allows for student involvement and closure, as well as in-class interventions, as necessary.
- **Alignment to VSC and Accountability -** Teachers were provided with pacing guides to ensure that all of the VSC was taught by the end of the year. In addition, VSC benchmark assessments were provided at the end of every unit to assess student progress regarding the VSC. The assessments are loaded to the data warehouse, *Performance Matters*, and the resulting data was used to inform instruction. Beginning, Middle, and End of the Year Assessments were given to all students to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and to identify students in need of differentiation. Instruction was then adjusted accordingly.
- **Core Math Program -** Teachers taught the core math program, *Investigations in Number, Data and Space*, with fidelity and in alignment with the VSC. This was coupled with a focus on the pedagogy of *Cognitively Guided Instruction* to develop computational fluency.
- **Team Planning -** Grade level teams, comprised of both general and special education teachers, had a common planning time which allowed them to plan collaboratively, analyze data, and create Quarterly Team Action Plans based on the needs of their students.
- **Professional Development -** Professional development was provided for all leadership teams and some schools in mathematics content and pedagogy, increasing the capacity of administrators, instructional resource teachers, and general and special education teachers to teach mathematics and lead the schools instructionally.

Middle

- **Instructional Time -** Middle schools allotted 90 minutes of instructional time for mathematics in 6th grade each day. Mathematics instruction is hands on and focuses on students doing mathematics. The additional instructional time allows for student involvement and closure, as well as in-class interventions, as necessary. Intervention materials were provided to special education teachers and school-based instructional resource teachers collaborated, as needed, to implement these interventions.
- **Alignment to VSC and Accountability -** Teachers were provided with pacing guides to ensure that all of the VSC is taught by the end of the year. In addition, VSC benchmark assessments were provided at the end of every unit to assess student progress regarding the VSC. The assessments were loaded to the data warehouse, *Performance Matters*, and the resulting data was used to inform instruction.
- **Core Math Program -** Teachers taught the core mathematics program, *Connected Mathematics* ($20,000), with fidelity and in alignment with the VSC.
- **Professional Development -** Professional development was provided for instructional resource teachers in mathematics content, and teacher work groups were created to revise curriculum maps to better align with the VSC. Special education teachers collaborated with their general education peers regarding the differentiation and modification of these maps in accordance to

students' IEPs. There were monthly professional development sessions offered according to need for building-based instructional resource teachers to provide consistency, rigor, and focus.

- **Team Planning** - Teams planned by grade level at each school. The collaborative planning sessions were facilitated by the instructional resource teacher to analyze student data and students work and inform instruction. Special education teachers were included in team planning.

High

- **Instructional Time** - The most at-risk students, based on historical quantitative and qualitative data, were enrolled in a concurrent "Algebra Acceleration" course that would supplement the normal Algebra 1 course. Basically, these students would receive 90 minutes of instructional time compared to the normal 45 minutes of mathematics. These courses are co-taught by general and special education teachers to address the needs of students in relation to the High School Core Learning Goals.
- **Alignment to VSC and Accountability** - Teachers were provided with pacing guides to ensure that all of the VSC/Core Learning Goals were taught by the end of the year. The assessments were uploaded to the data warehouse, *Performance Matters*, and the resulting data was used to inform instruction. Quarterly Assessments were given to all students to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and to identify students in need of differentiation. Instruction was then adjusted accordingly.
- **Core Math Program** - Teachers taught the core mathematics program, *Cognitive Tutor* ($40,000), with fidelity and in alignment with the VSC.
- **Professional Development** - Professional Development was provided for all algebra teachers to assist in delivering the core mathematics program, (*Cognitive Tutor),* with fidelity. In addition, professional development in the use of SMART Board technology was provided to co-teaching pairs. The increased use of technology such as SMART Boards has allowed general and special education teachers to use alternative modalities of instruction for those most at-risk and historically underperforming students.
- **Team Planning** - Algebra teams planned together at each school. The collaborative planning sessions were facilitated by the HSA Lead Teacher to analyze student data and student work to inform instruction. Special education teachers were included in team planning and the collaboration between general and special education teachers resulted in increased student achievement.

2. Identify and describe the practices, programs, or strategies designed to address concerns and overcome challenges. Include the corresponding resource allocations in your discussion. Please include timelines where appropriate.

All Levels

- **Partners' for Success Center and the Citizen's Advisory Committee for Special Education** These two groups will sponsor a series of workshops for parents in mathematics. These workshops will provide parents with information relative to how they can support the education of their children at home.

Elementary

- **Increased Support for Schools** - St. Mary's County Public Schools has created the position of a K-8 elementary mathematics resource teacher ($82,730) to support schools in the

implementation of their School Improvement Plans. This is to include assessment creation, data analysis, instructional implications, and professional development.

- **Increasing Capacity at Schools -** In addition to the creation of a mathematics resource teacher to support schools, capacity will be built at the schools. The resource teacher and supervisor of mathematics will hold monthly professional development sessions in order to further the content knowledge and pedagogy of school leadership teams comprised of instructional resource teachers and general and special education classroom teachers. These sessions will be differentiated according to needs determined by the Master Plan and School Improvement Plans. Classroom teachers and instructional resource teachers will also be invited to participate in work groups to revise curriculum maps.
- **Computational Fluency and Number Sense -** There will be a more in-depth focus on computational fluency and number sense and defined by flexibility, efficiency, and accuracy**.** Flexibility will be the focus of kindergarten through 2nd grade with a shift in emphasis to base 10 understanding in 2nd and 3rd grades and an increased focus on efficiency in 4th and 5th grades. Professional development will be offered both on the district level and the school level in the pedagogy of *Cognitively Guided Instruction* and the discussion structures of Dr. Stephanie Smith as they apply to computational fluency. Curriculum maps will be expanded to include *Cognitively Guided Instruction* across the units.
- **Data Driven Instruction -** The existing assessments will be enhanced to include the addition of poor performance items based on results of previous assessments. This will drive instruction based on student need in relation to the VSC and provide opportunities for re-teaching and targeted interventions for students with IEPs.
- **English Language Learners -** English Language Learners (ELL) will be provided with supplemental materials in Spanish. In addition, ELL teachers will receive professional development in mathematics content, philosophy, and content specific language in order to better support our English Language Learners academically. Instructional resource teachers at the building will provide content support to the ELL teachers.

Middle

- **Increased Support for Schools -**
  - Implementing extended time blocks of instruction for all 6th and 7th grade mathematics classrooms and for selected 8th grade classrooms that have shown to have the greatest need (8 FTEs-$484,080)
  - Creating the position of a K-8 elementary mathematics resource teacher to support schools in the implementation of their School Improvement Plans to include assessment creation, data analysis, instructional implications, and professional development
  - Creating synthesizing resources, by MSA strand, by grade level, to facilitate the computational fluency of our learners
  - Introducing quarterly grade level benchmarks (per the VSC) that synthesize the instruction for that particular quarter so as to emulate the MSA, additional benchmark assessments will allow for consistent and data-driven monitoring of student progress on their IEP goals and objectives relevant to their progress on grade-level curriculum.

- **Increasing Capacity at Schools -**
  - In addition to the creation of a mathematics resource teacher to support schools, capacity will be built at the schools. The resource teacher and supervisor will hold monthly professional development sessions in order to further the content knowledge and pedagogy

of school leadership teams comprised of instructional resource teachers and classroom teachers. These sessions will be differentiated according to needs determined by the Master Plan and School Improvement Plans. Classroom teachers and instructional resource teachers will also be invited to participate in work groups to revise curriculum maps.
- The supervisor of mathematics will participate in grade-level team meetings at each middle school to help facilitate discussions about student data, effective instructional strategies, range-finding activities, and opportunities to flex-group students to further differentiate instruction.
- Staff will use intervention models to provide access to students who need more or specialized instruction to meet with testing success.
- Teachers will have access to resources online (such as all curriculum maps and resources like the *MSA Consistency Chart)* to assist them with both instruction and item-writing for in class assessments via our county's intranet.
- Special education classes will focus on the most effective co-teaching models and the integration of technology to best differentiate the instructional modality offered to their students. Overhead graphing calculators will be provided to co-teaching pairs in grades 7 and 8 and professional development will be provided.

- **Data Driven Instruction -**
  - The existing assessments will be enhanced to include the addition of poor performance items based on results of previous assessments. This will drive instruction based on student need in relation to the VSC and provide opportunities for re-teaching.
  - We will facilitate the creation of one "data purveyor" at each school that is ultimately responsible for every student in the school and would monitor academic performance throughout the year of those students that may be in danger of not being proficient on the MSA.
  - We are implementing recursive teaching strategies countywide on quarterly and unit benchmarks that reflect non-performance items on previous assessments/benchmarks.

<u>High</u>
- **Increased Support for Schools -**
  - The creation of an algebra curriculum map that will align the traditional delivery of algebra with the more alternative, technologically driven instruction of *Cognitive Tutor* so that all algebra teachers can synergize their efforts.
  - The creation of an Algebra Benchmark Assessment Model that will further and more accurately assess the algebra assimilation of presently enrolled SMCPS students.
  - The creation of a "HSA Algebra/Data Analysis Review Course" that will assist those students that have passed Algebra I or Algebra Course B last year but did not pass the 2007 HSA exam.
  - The supervisor of mathematics will create a synthesizing resource, organized by core learning goal, to help students assimilate and apply all of the Algebra/Data Analysis instruction that they will receive all year.
  - Special education classes will focus on the most effective co-teaching models and the integration of technology to further best differentiate the instructional modality offered to their students. Overhead graphing calculators will be provided to two co-teaching pairs and professional development will be provided.

- **Increasing Capacity at Schools** -
  - The supervisor of mathematics will work in conjunction with the HSA Algebra Lead Teacher at each school to facilitate each school's professional learning community (PLC) for Algebra. Working with the team to create, common assessments, backward mapping, conducting range finding activities, and creating a common repository on our intranet to house common Algebra/Data Analysis lessons and/or resources for all Algebra teachers to utilize.
  - The supervisor of mathematics will work with each HSA Lead Teacher to create additional remediation venues for those individuals that have demonstrated an algebraic deficiency in both the winter and spring semesters on quarterly benchmark assessments, teacher recommendations, and other quantitative and qualitative data.

- **Data Driven Instruction** -
  - The existing assessments will be enhanced and amended to include the addition of poor performance items based on results of previous assessments. This will drive instruction based on student need in relation to the VSC and provide opportunities for re-teaching.
  - We will facilitate the creation of one "data purveyor" at each school that is ultimately responsible for every student in the school and would monitor academic performance throughout the year of those students that may be in danger of not passing the HSA.
  - The supervisor of mathematics will work with the HSA Lead Teachers (1.5 FTEs-$90,765) at each high school to help provide access to students who need more or specialized instruction to meet testing success by helping to analyze data and various student work products to help their teachers at their school to fine tune their instructional delivery.

*See clarifying responses pages 145-146

I.D.ii
High School Assessments

This section is designed to report High School Assessment (HSA) results for students who are required to pass the High School Assessments in order to graduate. School systems are also asked to provide information on the programs and interventions that are in place to support students in meeting this requirement.

Instructions:

1. Complete Worksheet #1 to show how the school system has structured its sequencing of assessed high school courses for the majority of its students (e.g. the grade level in which specific courses are offered, etc.). Please check only one box for each assessed course.

Worksheet #1: Sequencing of Assessed High School Level Courses	
Assessed Course	**Grade Level in which the Course is Offered for the Majority of Students**
Algebra	☐ Prior to Grade 9 ☒ Grade 9 ☐ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12
English 2	☐ Grade 9 ☒ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12
Biology	☐ Grade 9 ☒ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12
Government	☐ Grade 9 ☒ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12

2. Please complete Tables 2.1 and 2.2 which indicate ONLY the passing status of high school students for whom passing the High School Assessments is a graduation requirement. Absent the precise flags in their data management systems, local school systems are asked to provide pass rates for *current tenth graders* or *lower grades*, recognizing that there are some tenth graders who entered grade 9 earlier than fall 2005.

   For each assessment:

   - Provide the passing status of these high school students to the extent to which you know this information.
   - If a school system finds that it does not have a high level of accuracy for this data set, the local school system should designate it as such.

High School Assessments (continued)

Instructions:
Using Table 2.1, provide the passing status of students in tenth grade in 2006-2007.

For each assessment:

- Provide the number of 10th graders who took the assessment while in grades 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10.
- Of those takers, provide the number and percentage of students who passed as of the tenth grade.

Table 2.1: HSA Performance[5] of 10th Grade Cohort

Subgroup	English II			Biology			Government			Algebra/Data Analysis		
	# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
All Students	1067	874	81.9%	1033	946	91.6%	1164	1032	88.7%	1078	946	87.7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3	1	33.3%	3	2	66.7%	4	3	75.0%	4	2	50.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	29	26	89.7%	29	29	100%	29	29	100%	28	25	89.3%
African American	160	103	64.4%	146	110	75.3%	188	138	73.4%	167	108	64.7%
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	856	728	85.0%	837	787	94.0%	925	844	91.2%	860	766	89.1%
Hispanic	19	16	84.2%	18	18	100%	18	18	100%	19	18	94.7%
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)	124	70	56.5%	113	83	73.5%	159	115	72.3%	134	89	66.4%
Special Education	75	26	34.7%	61	38	62.3%	91	53	58.2%	69	35	50.7%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	7	4	57.1%	7	7	100%	7	7	100%	7	7	100%
504 Plans	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--

-- Indicates no students in category

[5] It is possible that local school systems will not have data to report in every column for this cohort.

High School Assessments (continued)

Instructions:
Using Table 2.2, provide the passing status of students in ninth grade in 2006-2007.

For each assessment:

- Provide the number of 9th graders who took the assessment while in grades 6, 7, 8, or 9.
- Of those takers, provide the number and percentage of students who passed as of the ninth grade.

Table 2.2: HSA Performance[6] of 9th Grade Cohort

Subgroup	English II			Biology			Government			Algebra/Data Analysis		
	# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
All Students	N/A			237	218	92%	N/A			820	744	90.7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native				2	2	100%				2	2	100%
Asian/Pacific Islander				14	14	100%				21	21	100%
African American				22	14	63.6%				128	97	75.8%
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)				188	183	97.3%				646	604	93.5%
Hispanic				5	5	100%				22	20	90.9%
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)				18	10	55.5%				114	85	74.6%
Special Education				10	6	60%				29	20	69%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)				0	--	--				2	2	100%
504 Plans				2	1	50%				11	10	90.9%

-- Indicates no students in category

[6] It is possible that local school systems will not have data to report in every column for this cohort.

High School Assessments (continued)

Based on the Examination of Tables 2.1 and 2.2:

1. Describe the practices, programs and/or strategies that the school system has implemented to support students in passing the High School Assessments. In your response and where applicable, please include:

   · What professional development activities are being provided to teachers in assessed areas. Include timelines where appropriate.

Ongoing professional development is provided throughout the year to build the capacity of the staff to provide more effective instruction. Professional days, quarterly data meetings, professional learning communities, and a vertical articulation day are implemented to provide professional development. In addition, many teachers participate in the annual Governor's Academy and other professional development opportunities offered by the Maryland State Department of Education. Special education teachers participate in all professional development along with their content area co-teachers.

Professional Days

- During the 2006-2007 school year, two professional days were built into the school system calendar. A one-half day session was held on August 18, 2006 for central office supervisors and the teachers in each assessed area to review curriculum maps, local assessment procedures, and new instructional resources. A second full day session was held on September 22, 2006 addressing the use of data for effective instructional decision making, providing additional training on *Performance Matters*, accessing online resources available from the Maryland State Department of Education, writing classroom assessment items, and vertically aligning the curriculum across grade levels. Both middle school and high school teachers participated.

- During the 2007-2008 school year, the professional day will be held on September 21, 2007. In addition, central office supervisors held summer professional development sessions using stipends to pay teachers ($2,680). The September Professional Day for 2007 will be used to continue enhancing the instructional delivery in the classroom, training on *Performance Matters*, reviewing the revised curriculum maps, writing classroom assessment items, vertically aligning the curriculum across grade levels, and enhancing the work of the professional learning communities. The summer day was devoted to curriculum mapping and developing local assessments.

Quarterly Data Meetings

- Quarterly data meetings were provided using substitutes and stipends ($8,065.80) from Title II, Part A. The first two sessions held in late October/early November 2006 and February 2007 were full days, while the last sessions were held after school. The full day sessions provided opportunities for teachers in each assessed

area to meet centrally to conduct range finding activities using the local assessments and to analyze the data. The spring sessions were held after school at each school site to analyze the data from the third quarter assessment and map the final weeks prior to the administration of the High School Assessments. Teachers from the assessed courses and teachers from the prior course participated. (For example, both English 9 and English 10 teachers were involved in the sessions.) Quarterly data meetings are planned for the 2007-2008 school year.

Professional Learning Communities

- Teachers meet two to four times per month in their professional learning communities at each school site. The professional learning communities analyze site specific and teacher specific data, identify students not learning, determine interventions, and develop/implement quarterly action plans. Some of the professional learning communities began creating and implementing common assessments for their content area. A person at each high school was identified to chair the professional learning community. An assistant principal from the high school also served on each professional learning community.

- A special training day with the central office supervisors was provided for the assistant principals on January 22, 2007 to facilitate their active participation and leadership within the professional learning communities and to promote administrative walk-throughs. The chief academic officer and director of secondary instruction, administration, and school improvement met with each assistant principal in the spring of 2007 to discuss the progress of each professional learning community and the walk-throughs. Administrators will be participating in a book study this year, *Whatever It Takes*, focused on having the professional learning communities develop a system of interventions. The books were purchased at a cost of $3,300.00.

- Each professional learning community received in August 2007 a revised unit planner to facilitate common planning for each course. A highlight of the unit planner is the addition of a section on evidence of student learning whereas teachers will identify how they are monitoring student mastery of the Voluntary State Curriculum. The planners will be available to parents/guardians through *eSchoolPlus* to enhance the home/school communication. The focus on teacher planning will be monitored and evaluated as part of the *Teacher Performance Assessment System* (TPAS) used to evaluate teachers.

Articulation Day

- A half-day session was held on March 23, 2007 for the teachers at each high school to meet with the content area teachers from their feeder middle schools. The purpose of these sessions was to focus on strengthening the curriculum alignment across the grades. The Articulation Day for the 2007-2008 school year will be April 4, 2008.

Professional Development Available from the Maryland State Department of Education

- Throughout the year, teachers take advantage of the many professional development opportunities offered by the Maryland State Department of Education. Each summer selected teachers attend one of the annual Governor's Academies for Algebra, Biology, English, or Government. Several middle school mathematics teachers attended the summer 2007 mathematics academy. Several Biology and English teachers will participate in the online instructional resources training this fall.

- Progress made toward alignment of curriculum with local and state assessments. Include timelines where appropriate.

The curriculum for each assessed content area is fully aligned with the Voluntary State Curriculum, Core Learning Goals, and local assessments. Curriculum maps are developed by teams of teachers working with the central office content supervisors. Curriculum maps are reviewed and refined annually. Curriculum maps are distributed to teachers at the beginning of each school year and are available on the school system intranet. Curriculum maps and the assessment limits are reviewed and discussed at the professional development days held each year.

Major revisions in English, Biology, and Government were implemented for fall 2007 based upon updates in the Voluntary State Curriculum. The English curriculum maps more clearly focus/target the instruction for each marking period that will be assessed locally each quarter. Major curriculum development occurred in early August 2007 to revise the Biology curriculum map in view of the recent changes provided by the Maryland State Department of Education. The Government curriculum map is focused on the Voluntary State Curriculum and the Core Learning Goals and is back-mapped to grade 6 to vertically align the content.

Only minor revisions were needed for the Algebra curriculum map. Recent local and state assessment data indicate the sequencing and pacing of the curriculum is appropriate given the implementation of *Cognitive Tutor* in Algebra classes beginning with the 2006-2007 school year. *Cognitive Tutor* is a research based instructional resource available from Carnegie Learning that reflects 60 percent classroom instruction with 40 percent computer based learning.

- How students in danger of not passing are identified.

Students in danger of not passing are identified by teachers and administrators using student grades and local assessments collected in the data warehouse system, *Performance Matters*. *Performance Matters* provides individual student data by items/objectives, allowing teachers to target instruction and interventions to student needs. Interventions can include re-teaching, individual tutoring, and/or small group instruction. Multiple intervention materials are provided to school sites to meet student needs using the Maryland State Department of Education website and online resources

and commercially purchased review books. Interventions are provided before, during, and after school by classroom teachers and student tutors. Appropriate interventions are implemented based on student need.

St. Mary's County Public Schools implemented *eSchoolPlus* for the 2007-2008 school year to more closely monitor student learning in each course. The electronic grade book can be used beyond just the grade warehousing to permit the ongoing monitoring of individual student progress by the teacher and the school site administration. Future plans include providing parents/guardians direct access to their son's/daughter's grades.

Teacher constructed unit assessments are fully aligned with the curriculum maps and make use of the High School Assessment released items. In some content areas, such as Biology, common unit assessments are implemented in each high school.

Locally developed quarterly assessments are administered in each High School Assessment course and in some cases, the prior course as well. For example, quarterly assessments are given in both English 9 and English 10 and in grade 9 United States History and grade 10 Government. County-wide assessments model the High School Assessment for that content area and are aligned with the curriculum map and assessment limits. The assessments are administrated at the end of the first quarter, mid-course, and at the end of the third quarter. Grade 9 English, grade 9 United States History, and Algebra also administer centrally developed end-of-course assessments. Both Algebra and Government administer pre-assessments as well.

Students at risk are further identified using the data warehouse, *Performance Matters*, based on the locally developed quarterly assessments. Teachers score the constructed response sections and then forward the scan sheets with the selected responses to the central office for scanning. Item analysis of these assessments identifies how each individual student performed on each item in the assessment. This allows teachers to design instruction to meet the specific needs of each student. *Performance Matters* allows filtering of student groups to identify students within the group and analyze their performance separately. Interventions include co-teachers within special education inclusion classes, reading and writing strategies, peer review of constructed responses, use of graphic organizers, and tutoring. System resources were reallocated to provide people to staff this critical aspect of monitoring student learning. Technical assistance is available to teachers and principals.

3. Describe where challenges are evident. In your response, include specific interventions and remediation in place to support students in passing the High School Assessments, the manner in which the intervention and remediation are provided, and the corresponding resource allocations where applicable. Include plans for students with special needs (i.e., students receiving special education services, Limited English Proficient students, and students with 504 plans) and plans for students who have taken, but not passed the High School Assessments.

Underperforming students continue to be a challenge, both before taking the High School Assessments and after, if the student is unsuccessful in meeting the requirement. *Performance Matters*, the data warehouse system, is helpful in identifying students who are finding the content challenging. Three intervention courses are implemented to assist students before taking the High School Assessments while review courses are in place for students who pass the course, but not the High School Assessment.

Student group performance remains a challenge as we seek to have all students passing the High School Assessments. African American, FARMS, LEP, and Special Education students are showing higher pass rates; however, Special Education students continue to be the student group with the lowest passing rate.

Special Education students are in the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible, based on decisions made by the IEP team. Implementing the co-teaching model in high schools continues to be a challenge as many co-taught classes continue to be taught by the general education teacher with the special education teacher only providing accommodations. There is a commitment at the district level to ensure co-teaching is taking place. The special education staffing plan supports co-teaching; professional development related to co-teaching is provided. The special education supervisors work with the school site administration to conduct observations and evaluations of teachers in a co-teaching environment.

Special education teachers participate in all content related professional development activities, including professional development days, quarterly data meetings, professional learning communities, and the vertical articulation day. In addition, special educators participate in the Governor's Academy and other professional development opportunities offered by the Maryland State Department of Education. Special education students take all local assessments and the results are monitored through *Performance Matters*. Kurzweil software is used to assist students with reading disabilities and all local assessments are available using the software. Other intervention resources are provided as appropriate.

While the Limited English Proficient (LEP) student enrollment in St. Mary's County is low, every student is important. Extensive efforts continue to address the needs of LEP students. One English Language Learner teacher has been designated to coordinate the instructional program among the teachers. A consultant, Katie Arndt, from St. Mary's College of Maryland, is working with the teachers to increase student learning in both the English language and content areas. Student interns from St. Mary's College of Maryland will be working with LEP students this year. The community liaison will expand parent/guardian outreach programs to provide additional information regarding the High School Assessments.

Student grades and assessment data are reviewed and discussed during the PST meetings for each 504 student. The most appropriate placement and interventions are determined to meet the student's needs. The sequencing of the courses is critical to ensure students

with 504 plans have mastered the prior knowledge necessary for success upon enrolling in a course with a High School Assessment.

Academic Literary I and II are designed to help students improve their reading before taking the High School Assessments. Academic Literacy focuses on such areas as decoding, comprehension, fluency, and phonemic awareness targeting the needs of each individual student. Students are identified using MSA data from grades 7 and 8 as well as the AIMSweb comprehension maze and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) tests. Staffing, intervention materials, and professional development are provided.

The Algebra 1 Acceleration Program provides daily extended time to assist students enrolled in Algebra 1 at the high school level. The additional time is to ensure they are properly progressing though the curriculum before taking the Algebra HSA. The program offers targeted intervention and remediation for individual students. In addition, schools use *Accelerated Mathematics* from Renaissance Learning, to provide customized activities based on student learning needs.

Review courses are established for students who pass the course, but fail the HSA in Algebra, Biology, and Government. Teachers use data to identify areas most in need of review and differentiate instruction for each student to support success in passing the High School Assessment on the retest. Students earn one half credit for the course upon passing the HSA. Regarding English, students are strategically enrolled in a grade 11 English class designed to meet both the curriculum and HSA remediation.

Instructional resources are identified for interventions. Algebra and Government students can use the online resources provided by the Maryland State Department of Education. Staff will be attending the fall 2007 training for the online resources for English and Biology. Review books are provided for students as well. Ongoing assessments to monitor student learning are part of the course.

Staffing resources were provided to support the implementation. The school system budget provided two HSA Lead Teachers per high school ($252,060) to assist with interventions and remediation. Two central office instructional resource teachers ($143,375) were also funded to provide more staff resources to coach teachers.

Instruction for the High School Assessments does not wait until high school. The middle school instructional program has also been revised. Ninety minutes of reading is provided in grades 6-8 and ninety minutes of mathematics is now provided in grades 6-7. Ninety minutes of mathematics is also provided in grade 8 at the middle school which experienced the greatest challenge. The instructional program for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies was revised to be more aligned with the Voluntary State Curriculum using locally developed curriculum maps and assessments that vertically align across all grade levels and courses.

*See clarifying responses pages 147-148

I.D.iii
Attaining English Language Proficiency

No Child Left Behind Goal 2: All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 2.1: The percentage of limited English proficient students, determined by cohort, who have attained English proficiency by the end of the school year.

Limited English Proficient Learners Developing and Attaining English Language Proficiency

This section reports the progress of Limited English Proficient learners in developing and attaining English language proficiency. School systems are asked to provide information on Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) I and II:

- AMAO I is used to demonstrate the percentages of English Language Learners *progressing toward* English proficiency.
- The AMAO II is used to demonstrate the percentages of English Language Learners *attaining English proficiency* by end of each school year.

Note: Because progress of Limited English Proficient students in attaining proficiency or better in reading and mathematics is included in Section I.D.i, Maryland School Assessment, and in Title III, Part A, only a discussion of progress toward attaining English proficiency is required here. *Where responses in this section are similar or linked to those provided under Section I.D.i, local school systems may reference with page numbers or copy and paste as appropriate.*

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO I – Progressing Toward English Proficiency

Instructions:

1. Using **Table 3.1** on the next page**,** provide the number of students who are included in the reporting requirement.

   - Refer to Worksheets #1.A and #1.C below to determine which students are to be included.
   - Provide the number of these students who met their target. Refer to Worksheet #1.C on the next page for the target.
   - If applicable, complete Worksheet #1.B to account for untested students.
   - Using Worksheet #1.C, calculate the percentage of students who met their grade-specific target.
   - Is the result at least 40%? In order for each local school system to meet the AMAO I for school year 2006-2007, at least 40% of students must meet grade-specific targets for English Language Proficiency.

Worksheet #1.A Number of Students to be Included in the AMAO I Calculation	
Column 1*	**Column 2**
Number of students who were reported on the October 31, 2006 student data file.	Number of students from Column 1 who were still enrolled as of March 28, 2007 (first day of testing window) **AND** completed the summative LAS test. **Enter the result as "N" in Table 3.1.**
106	94

**The total of Columns 2-4 must equal Column 1*

Accounting for Untested Students

2. Local school systems must assess all English Language Learners.[7] In Worksheet #1.A above, if Column 1 did not equal Column 2, then complete the following:

Worksheet #1.B Accounting for Untested Students	
Column 3	**Column 4**
Number of students from Column 1 who were still enrolled as of March 28, 2007 (first day of testing window) **AND did not** complete the summative LAS test.	Number of students from Column 1 who were not enrolled as on March 28, 2007 (first day of testing window).
4	8

3. Please explain the reasons for students reported in Column 3 above.

[7] Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act, Section 3116 (c)(2).

One student was unable to complete the test due to illness. One student did not return to complete the test. Two students started the test but moved during the test window.

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO I – Progressing Toward English Proficiency

Worksheet #1.C: Number of Students Who Met the Target

Using the students identified in Worksheet #1.A in Column 2, list by grade the number of these students who scored 15 scale score points higher on their overall test score in the Spring 2007 administration of the LAS compared to their scores on the October 31, 2006 pre test score file. **Enter the Total Number Who Met the Target to Table 3.1.**

Grade:	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total (Number who met target)
Number who met target	11	7	6	8	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	2	40

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO I – Progressing Toward English Proficiency

Table 3.1 System AMAO I, 2006-2007			
	N	Number Who Met Target	% ($\% = \frac{\text{Number Who Met Target}}{N}$)
Total	94	40	43%

*Note: In order for a local school system to meet the System AMAO I, 2006-2007, **at least 40%** of students must meet grade-specific targets for English Language Proficiency.

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO II – Attaining English Proficiency

Instructions:

1. Using Table 3.2 on the next page, provide the number of students who are included in the reporting requirement.

    - Refer to Worksheet #2 below to determine which students are to be included.
    - Provide the number of these students who met their grade-specific target. Refer to Worksheet #3 below for the targets for each grade.
    - Calculate the percentage of students who met their grade-specific target.
    - Is the result at least 20%? In order for each local school system to meet the AMAO II, at least 20% of students must meet grade-specific targets for English Language Proficiency.

Worksheet #2: AMAO II Calculations

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Number of students who were reported on the October 31, 2006 student data file **AND** were tested on the summative LAS-Links April 2007	Number of students from Column 1 who enrolled on or before October 31, 2004 (i.e. have received ESOL services for at least two years or more)	Number of students from Column 1 who enrolled between November 1, 2004 and October 31, 2006 and were placed at proficiency Level 3 or higher	Add the numbers reported in Column 2 and Column 3 to get the Total N. **Enter the result in Table 3.2.**
98	30	2	32

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO II – Attaining English Proficiency

Worksheet #3: AMAO II Calculations

Using the students identified in Worksheet #2 in Column 4, list by grade the number of these students who scored greater than or equal to the **overall** target scale score by grade provided below. Enter the Total Number who met the target in Table 3.2.

Grade: **Target Score:**	**K** **463**	**1** **485**	**2** **505**	**3** **513**	**4** **516**	**5** **521**	**6** **525**	**7** **528**	**8** **531**	**9** **533**	**10** **539**	**11** **539**	**12** **539**	**Total** **(Number who met target)**
Number Who Met Target	**1**	**6**	**2**	**5**	**10**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**32**

Note: *These tables represent system-level accountability. A student must be withdrawn from the school system in order to be considered not continuously enrolled*.

Attaining English Language Proficiency (continued)
AMAO II – Attaining English Proficiency

Table 3.2 System AMAO II, 2006-2007*			
	N	Number Who Met Target	%
Total	98	32	33%

*Note: In order for a local school system to meet the System AMAO II, 2006-2007, **at least 20%** of students must meet grade-specific targets for English Language Proficiency.

Based on the Examination of Tables 3.1 and 3.2:

1. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies to which you attribute the progress of English Language Learners towards attaining English proficiency.

   Meeting the needs of the English Language Learners (ELL) continues to be a challenge. Efforts continue to explore a differentiated model of service to more effectively meet the needs of all ELLs. The goal for the ELL program for the 2006-2007 school year was to identify and implement programmatic changes that would provide more effective instructional as well as non-instructional support for ELLs and their families. Specific strategies/activities were implemented. The following strategies and/or activities attributed to the progress of ELLs in attaining English proficiency:

   - Used the results from the LAS-LINKS proficiency test to make decisions about our ELLs instructional needs and their level of service.
   - Increased collaboration with mainstream teachers, test coordinators, and school administrators to ensure that ELLs received appropriate accommodations when needed for instruction and testing.
   - Implemented uniform resources at each level of service for ELLs to increase student learning and increasing the students' chances of a smooth transition relative to teaching and learning when students transferred from one school to another.
   - Increased staff development with a focus on instructional strategies and different models for providing instruction to ELL students.
   - Participated in three Professional Development Workshops with the Southern Maryland ESOL Group (St. Mary's, Charles, and Calvert Counties).
   - Ongoing consultation with Dr. Katy E. Arnett, St. Mary's College of Maryland, on topics relating to effective models of delivery, curricular expectations, assessments, and effective resources for ELLs.
   - Sponsored a community activity for ELLs and their families.

2. Describe where progress of English Language Learners towards attaining English proficiency by each domain in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing is insufficient or where challenges are evident.

Challenges that are evident based on the performance of English Language Learners in the classroom and on specific assessments that remain a concern for ELL teachers are as follow:

- Listening - Rate of speech by the native speaker influences the English Language Learner's ability to process information and to understand what they hear is a concern.
- Speaking - Vocabulary specific to the different content areas is limited and interferes with the ELLs ability to express their thoughts. ELLs experience difficulty with modeling correct pronunciation. ELLs have difficulty manipulating language and understanding grammar concepts.
- Reading - ELLs have difficulty with comprehension which can be attributed, in part, to insufficient knowledge about the culture of the native speaker.
- Writing - Skill level is weak for ELLs because writing exercises, in general, have some relationship to the native speaker's culture. ELLs knowledge about the native speaker's culture limits their ability to write a suitable response. ELLs have difficulty with the writing process because it is different in other countries, which is especially problematic for secondary students.

3. Describe the changes or adjustments that will be made to ensure sufficient progress of English Language Learners towards attaining English proficiency. Include timelines where appropriate.

   The following changes or adjustments will be made to ensure sufficient progress of English Language Learners:

   - Continue working with a consultant, Dr. Katy E. Arnett, St. Mary's College of Maryland, to develop a differentiated model of instructional delivery for ELL students.
   - Identify a lead teacher to provide additional support with instruction, curriculum development, and assessments related to ELLs.
   - Identify and provide intervention materials related to the subject content of the general education courses.
   - Provide online communication resource for ELL families, ESOL teachers, mainstream teachers, and school based administrators to ensure a targeted instructional program for each student.
   - Collaborate with St. Mary's College of Maryland to provide college students to tutor ELL students.
   - Provide a year long series of professional development sessions to address the following topics related to effective instruction for ELLs:
     - Writing and implementing language and content objectives
     - Effective communication with mainstream teachers
     - Effective co-planning with mainstream teachers
     - Effective teaching with mainstream teachers
     - Reporting student progress fairly and accurately
   - Continue participation in the Tri-County Professional Development sessions to provide regional collaboration of professional development related to student learning and services.
   - Conduct quarterly information sessions for ELL families regarding instructional and assessment topics related to learning both the English language and subject area content
   - Fund the software program to translate materials to increase communication with ELL families.
   - Work collaboratively within the tri-county region to provide a list of interpreters who can assist with increased communication with ELL families.

   *See clarifying responses pages 149-150

I.D.iv
Adequate Yearly Progress

The cornerstone of Maryland's accountability system is Adequate Yearly Progress. It is the method by which Maryland tracks academic progress and makes accountability decisions. Schools and school systems must show that students are making Adequate Yearly Progress in reading, mathematics, and another measure.

- In elementary and middle schools, the additional measure is attendance.
- In high schools, it is the graduation rate.
- In addition to student achievement in the aggregate, Adequate Yearly Progress must be made among eight subgroups of students: five racial/ethnic groups (African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and White), students with limited English proficiency, students receiving special education services, and economically disadvantaged students.

Under No Child Left Behind, school performance based on Adequate Yearly Progress is evaluated annually. This section requires that school systems report the percentages of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress.

Instructions:

1. In the tables below, report the percentage of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress each year by content area.

    - The elementary school level should include elementary, elementary/middle, and elementary/middle/high schools;
    - The middle school level should include grades 6-8; and
    - The high school level should include high schools and middle/high schools.

    Note: At the time the Annual Update is due, 2007 AYP data for high schools will not be available.

Table 4.1 Number and Percentage of Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress in Reading

Schools	2003			2004			2005			2006			2007		
	Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
Elementary	16	15	94	16	15	94	16	14	88	16	14	88	16	16	100
Middle	4	0	0	4	3	75	4	2	50	4	3	75	4	2	50
High	3	3	100	3	3	100	3	1	33	3	3	100			
Special Placement	0			0			0			0					

Adequate Yearly Progress (continued)

Table 4.2 Number and Percentage of Schools Making Ade quate Yearly Progress in Mathematics

Schools	2003			2004			2005			2006			2007		
	Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP		Total # of Schools	Schools Making AYP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
Elementary	16	15	94	16	16	100	16	15	94	16	15	94	16	16	100
Middle	4	4	100	4	3	75	4	2	50	4	3	75	4	2	50
High	3	3	100	3	3	100	3	1	33	3	3	100			
Special Placement	0			0			0			0					

Title I Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress

No Child Left Behind Indicator 1.3: The percentage of Title I schools that make adequate yearly progress.

Under No Child Left Behind, local school systems must review the progress of Title I schools primarily to determine (1) if each school has made adequate progress toward all students meeting or exceeding the standards by 2013-2014, and (2) if a school has narrowed the achievement gap. In conjunction with the local school system, the State also reviews the effectiveness of each school's actions and activities that are supported by Title I, Part A funds,[8] including parental involvement and professional development.

Instructions:
In the tables below, report the percentage of Title I schools making adequate yearly progress each year by content area.

Table 4.3 Number and Percentage of Title I Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress in Reading

Schools	2003			2004			2005			2006			2007		
	Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP s		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
Elementary	7	6	86	3	2	66	3	1	33	5	3	60	4	4	100
Middle	0			0			0			0			0		
High	0			0			0			0					
Special Placement	0			0			0			0					

[8] This information is included in Attachment 7 of this document.

Title I Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress (continued)

Table 4.4 Number and Percentage of Title I Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress in Mathematics

Schools	2003			2004			2005			2006			2007		
	Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP		Total # of Title I Schools	Title I Schools Making AYP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
Elementary	7	6	86	3	3	100	3	2	66	5	4	80	4	4	100
Middle	0			0			0			0			0		
High	0			0			0			0					
Special Placement	0			0			0			0					

Based on the Information in Tables 4.1 through 4.4:

1. Identify the challenges in moving schools toward making Adequate Yearly Progress. Describe the changes or adjustments and the corresponding resource allocations that will be made to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

Challenges in moving schools toward making Adequate Yearly Progress include:

- Restructuring the student day to maximize learning by assigning the right students to the right teachers in a deliberate and purposeful manner.
- Determining the right interventions and then securing funding to provide the resources and related professional development.
- Making remedial programs compulsory to reinforce student accountability.
- Meeting the academic and personal needs of economically disadvantaged students, special education students, and African American students.
- Providing additional instructional time for students needing intervention.
- Securing and retaining highly qualified teachers.
- Identifying and implementing an approved list of research based interventions in mathematics.

Changes or Adjustments:

- The implementation of research based reading interventions such as: Fundations, Read Naturally, and Rewards were targeted to increase achievement in the area of reading.
- Professional development provided by Education Trust and Pacific Learning is ongoing, job-embedded, and connected to students' needs as identified through data analysis.
- The Eleven Month School Program provides an additional month of school beyond the regular school year for identified low performing students at the Title I schools that offer school wide programs.
- Additional teachers and increased instructional time in mathematics in grade seven will be implemented this year.

- *Cognitive Tutor* will continue to be used as the instructional program in algebra; additionally the remediation component will be implemented this year.
- Middle School After School Initiative with transportation funded by the Local Management Board will take place at all of our middle schools this year.

Resource Allocations:

- The professional development allocation for the four schools receiving Title I, Part A funding is $580, 994.
- The materials of instruction allocation to all schools receiving Title I, Part A funding totaled $78,405.
- The cost for the Eleven Month School Program at three schools is approximately $224,000.
- After School Initiative local cost $50,000.

*See clarifying responses pages 151-152

Schools in Improvement

This section must be completed by local school systems to satisfy the requirement that schools in improvement, corrective action, and restructuring be addressed in the Master Plan.[9]

Instructions:
Using Table 4.5 on the next page, indicate the number of schools that have been identified for Improvement (Year 1), Improvement (Year 2), Corrective Action, Restructuring (Planning), and Restructuring (Implementation) by grade band level. Also include the number of schools exiting improvement status, and indicate the total number of schools for each status.

[9] Section 13A.01.04.07 of the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Table 4.5 Number of All Schools in Improvement

	Level of Improvement 2003-2004 (based on 2003 AYP)					Exiting in 2003	Level of Improvement 2004-2005 (based on 2004 AYP)					Exiting in 2004	Level of Improvement 2005-2006 (based on 2005 AYP)					Exiting in 2005	Level of Improvement 2006-2007 (based on 2006 AYP)					Exiting in 2006	Level of Improvement 2007-2008 (based on 2007 AYP)					Exiting in 2007
	Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation	
Elementary Schools	1						1						1					1	2						1					1
Middle Schools							1							1							1							1		
High Schools																														
Special Placement Schools																														
Total	1						2						1	1				1	2		1									

Schools in Improvement (continued)

Title I Schools in Improvement

The No Child Left Behind Act mandates local school systems to carry out school improvement activities for Title I schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress for two or more consecutive years as follows:

- If a Title I school fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years, it must be identified as in need of improvement. The state and school system must provide technical assistance to help identified schools improve, allow students in these schools to transfer to schools that are higher achieving, and provide no cost transportation to the new schools.
- If a Title I school fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress for three consecutive years, in addition to the school transfer option, students from eligible families in these schools must be given the option to obtain supplemental educational services from the public or private sector provider of their choice that has qualified for state approval.

Instructions:
Using Table 4.6 on the next page, indicate the number of Title I schools that have been identified for Improvement (Year 1), Improvement (Year 2), Corrective Action, Restructuring (Planning), and Restructuring (Implementation) by grade band level. Also include the number of schools exiting improvement status, and indicate the total number of Title I schools for each status.

Table 4.6 Number of Title I Schools in Improvement

	Level of Improvement 2003-2004 (based on 2003 AYP)					Exiting in 2003	Level of Improvement 2004-2005 (based on 2004 AYP)					Exiting in 2004	Level of Improvement 2005-2006 (based on 2005 AYP)					Exiting in 2005	Level of Improvement 2006-2007 (based on 2006 AYP)					Exiting in 2006	Level of Improvement 2007-2008 (based on 2007 AYP)					Exiting in 2007
	Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation		Year 1	Year 2	CA	Restructuring Planning	Restructuring Implementation	
Elementary Schools	1						1						1					1	2						1					1
Middle Schools																														
High Schools																														
Special Placement Schools																														
Total	1						1						1					1	2											

Schools in Improvement (continued)

Based on the Information in Tables 4.5 and 4.6:

1. Describe the actions that the school system is taking to ensure that the No Child Left Behind and Title I requirements for schools identified for Improvement (Year 1), Improvement (Year 2), Corrective Action, Restructuring (Planning), and Restructuring (Implementation) are being addressed.

    - Describe actions that the school system took during the 2006-2007 school year.
    - Describe the actions that the school system will take once school improvement status is determined for the 2007-2008 school year.

    2006-2007 Actions the school system has taken to ensure that the No Child Left Behind and Title I requirements for schools identified for improvement are being addressed:

    - George Washington Carver Elementary School (identified based upon the 2006 MSA as holding in School Improvement, year 1) and Lexington Park Elementary School (identified based upon the 2006 MSA as entering School Improvement, year 1) complied with all NCLB requirements and offered the School Choice Transfer Option to all students in the schools' attendance areas. Spring Ridge Middle School entered Corrective Action based on the 2006 MSA.
    - Schools in Improvement implemented the required two year School Improvement Plans with all documented requirements reviewed and approved by the St. Mary's County Public School System Peer Review Teams.
    - Technical Assistance Teams were assigned to each school to provide timely support and intervention, as necessary, in the areas of school improvement planning, disaggregated data analysis, identification and implementation of professional development, school organization, and budget review and development.
    - Lexington Park Elementary School continued to have two additional teachers and a full time paraeducator to reduce class size to allow for more individualized instruction.
    - Both elementary schools had a mentor position for new teachers to provide support in areas such as lesson planning and modeling lessons.
    - The middle school in Corrective Action will continue to have an additional administrative position, academic dean, which began with the 2005-2006 school year. One additional counselor had been assigned beginning with the 2005-2006 school year. Both positions address students' academic needs. For the 2006-2007 school year, a very successful veteran principal was moved to this school and two administrative positions were filled with distinguished leaders in our system. The director of secondary instruction, administration, and school improvement, a very successful secondary principal, spends one day a week at the school. He served as the chair of the Technical Assistance Team (TAT).
    - The feeder path of Lexington Park Elementary and Spring Ridge Middle School partnered with *The Education Trust, Inc.* for the 2006-2007 school year. The Education Trust is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to make schools work for all of the young people they serve. The purpose of this partnership is

to address the systemic flaws that prevent rigorous instruction, accelerated learning, and the dedication to student proficiency.

- The two elementary schools in School Improvement conducted an extended year (eleven month) school program. This program provides an extra month of instruction in August, just prior to the start of school. The goal of this "Jump Start" program is to provide an additional month of school beyond the regular school year which focuses on increasing student success and achievement in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Students (100 at each school) are selected based on their status on MSA as well as formative measures of performance in reading and mathematics.
- All three schools in improvement continued to have 21st Century Community Learning Centers' extended day programs. The 21st Century After School Program is a cooperative community partnership serving SMCPS students with after school programs that include intensive instruction in reading and mathematics, plus enrichment activities.

2007-2008 Actions the school system has taken to ensure that the No Child Left Behind and Title I requirements for schools identified for Improvement are being addressed:

- Lexington Park Elementary School achieved AYP based upon the 2007 MSA; however, as a school holding in Improvement - Year 1, the School Choice Transfer Option will continue to be offered to all students residing in the school's attendance area. Spring Ridge Middle School will enter Restructuring Planning based on the 2007 MSA.
- Lexington Park Elementary School and Spring Ridge Middle School completed the required School Improvement Plans with all documented requirements which has been reviewed and approved by the St. Mary's County Public School System Peer Review Team.
- Both schools will have Technical Assistance Teams consisting of representative members from the departments of Academic Support, Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Pupil Services.
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Academies will be implemented beginning this year in the feeder pattern for Lexington Park Elementary School, Spring Ridge Middle School, and Great Mills High School.
- Lexington Park Elementary School has had an infusion of experienced staff including a successful veteran principal and assistant principal. Three of the four instructional resource positions have been re-staffed.
- Lexington Park Elementary School will continue to have mentor and parent liaison positions.
- A commitment to keep class sizes low at Lexington Park Elementary School has been maintained for the 2007-2008.
- Spring Ridge Middle School will convene a restructuring planning team comprised of school system, school, and community members to develop a restructuring plan to implement in 2008-2009, should AYP not be met in 2008.
- There will be a double mathematics period in 8th grade for all students except those accelerated to algebra and geometry at Spring Ridge Middle School.

- Spring Ridge Middle School will have an additional half-time instructional resource teacher (pending grant approval).
- Spring Ridge Middle School will have an attendance monitor funded by the Local Management Board.

*See clarifying responses page 151

I.D.v
Attendance Rates

Instructions:
Complete the table by filling in data from the 2007 Maryland Report Card--Attendance Rate.
Note: The state satisfactory standard for attendance is 94%.

Table 5.1: Attendance Rates						
Subgroups by Level		**2002-2003**	**2003-2004**	**2004-2005**	**2005-2006**	**2006-2007**
All students	**Elementary**	94.6%	94.9%	95.0%	95.2%	95.4%
	Middle	92.8%	92.9%	93.5%	93.9%	94.0%
	High	89.8%	91.0%	90.9%	91.7%	91.5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	**Elementary**	93.6%	94.5%	93.2%	92.2%	92.0%
	Middle	89.6%	88.0%	86.1%	91.2%	90.8%
	High	89.9%	87.9%	86.6%	85.8%	88.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	**Elementary**	97.0%	96.6%	97.1%	96.9%	97.1%
	Middle	96.3%	96.3%	97.1%	96.4%	95.9%
	High	94.5%	94.1%	95.1%	95.4%	95.3%
African American	**Elementary**	94.0%	94.4%	94.4%	94.7%	94.8%
	Middle	91.9%	91.8%	92.4%	92.5%	92.7%
	High	87.0%	89.0%	88.5%	89.1%	88.6%
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	**Elementary**	94.7%	95.0%	95.1%	95.3%	95.5%
	Middle	93.1%	93.1%	93.7%	94.2%	94.3%
	High	90.3%	91.5%	91.3%	92.2%	92.0%
Hispanic	**Elementary**	94.9%	94.7%	94.7%	95.0%	95.5%
	Middle	93.2%	93.2%	95.1%	94.4%	94.7%
	High	90.0%	91.7%	91.9%	93.1%	93.0%
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)	**Elementary**	92.9%	93.3%	93.4%	93.6%	93.8%
	Middle	89.4%	89.4%	90.5%	90.2%	90.5%
	High	84.1%	85.8%	85.9%	86.6%	84.6%
Special Education	**Elementary**	93.8%	94.1%	94.2%	94.5%	94.6%
	Middle	90.6%	90.3%	90.8%	91.8%	92.0%
	High	87.7%	88.9%	87.9%	89.0%	87.4%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	**Elementary**	95.7%	95.0%	95.8%	95.6%	95.7%
	Middle	95.9%	94.6%	95.5%	96.4%	95.6%
	High	95.7%	91.3%	93.7%	94.7%	93.1%

Attendance Rates (continued)

Based on the Examination of the Attendance Data:

1. Describe where progress in increasing attendance rates is evident. In your response, identify progress in terms of grade band and subgroups.

   Progress continues in elementary and middle schools in the area of attendance. At the elementary level, seven student groups have an attendance rate at 94 percent or above. The only exceptions to reaching the goal are the small American Indian group and the FARMS group. Eight groups demonstrated an increase in their attendance rate (all students, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, White, Hispanic, FARMS, Special Education, and LEP).

   At the middle school, the aggregate reached 94 percent for the first time in five years and five groups are at 94 percent or above (all students, Asian/Pacific Islander, White, Hispanic, and ELL). Six groups improved in the middle school (all students, African American, White, Hispanic, FARMS, and Special Education).

   At the high school level, Asian/Pacific Islander students have a 95.3 percent attendance rate and the American Indian/Alaskan Native group improved by 3.1 percent

2. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to which you attribute the progress.

   A number of factors contributed to the improvements in elementary and middle school attendance rates. Specific school system and local agency staff focused their attention on attendance. Differentiated staffing of counselors and pupil personnel workers provided more support for our schools with specific concerns (Lexington Park Elementary School, Spring Ridge Middle School, Great Mills High School). Pupil personnel workers identified students with poor attendance histories and worked with specific families. School nurses each identified two students to mentor who had prior attendance issues. School counselors identified students with attendance concerns and supported them with incentives as well as individual and group counseling.

   Through the Local Management Board, a case manager worked with students and families at Spring Ridge Middle School (our most challenged middle school). The Mental Health Authority of St. Mary's assigned a case worker to our two elementary schools that were in school improvement (George Washington Carver Elementary School and Lexington Park Elementary School). There was also a parent liaison at each of those elementary schools who worked with the Pupil Services Team at each site to address attendance. In addition, our school calendar was changed to allow for a spring break.

Anecdotal data indicates that there were fewer families attempting to take vacations during the days when we were in school which may be attributed to new attendance regulations for lawful and unlawful days absent. The Interagency Committee on School Attendance worked with more families where absence from school was chronic and the State's Attorney's Office supported that effort with referrals to court. The DHMH initiative to provide flu mist to all elementary students was very successful. St. Mary's County had the highest participation rate in the state.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schools included attendance as an important component of building their school climate. Funding for attendance incentive programs and targeted professional development came from the Title V Grant, the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Prevention Grant and the Disproportionality Grant. An attendance video was produced by the TV/Video production class in collaboration with teachers and central office staff that runs on the SMCPS website and on our educational cable channel 96. This video informs parents of the attendance laws and school system policies and connects consistent attendance to academic success.

3. Describe where challenges are evident. In your response, identify challenges in terms of grade band and subgroups.

   Our greatest challenge is in the area of improving attendance for our FARMS students. Their attendance rate is below that of all other student groups. This group did not achieve the 94 percent satisfactory rate in elementary school and the gap widens as students progress through middle school and high school. African American and Special Education students have good attendance patterns in elementary school but the rate begins to decline through middle school and high school. High school is of significant concern as only one group reaches 94 and percent the attendance averages dip as low as 84.6 percent for FARMS students.

4. Describe the changes or adjustments that will be made along with the corresponding resource allocations to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

   While the arrows are pointing in the right direction at the elementary school and progress is being made at middle school, it is evident that a targeted focus is needed for our FARMS students at all levels, our African American students, and our Special Education students as they move to their secondary schools. In addition, the attendance rate at high school must be addressed for all students. We are going into the third year of a new attendance regulation that holds students more accountable for their time. This promises to be very helpful over time, but has attributed to some of the dip in attendance at high school as students test the process. We must stay the course with this regulation and promote it more widely.

   An additional support for all levels is the new student data management system we are implementing this year – *eSchoolPlus.* It is web-based and will allow parents to sign in to look at their child's attendance, grades, homework assignments, and discipline whenever they wish. The attendance data will be live so they may see each day what classes their child is attending and if/when the child came to school. This parent oversight will have a positive

impact on the high school attendance issues. The Local Management Board (LMB) has been funding an attendance mentor at Spring Ridge Middle School and will fund a mentor at Great Mills High School, where attendance is of greatest concern.

The superintendent convened a Middle School Task Force last year and the recommendations from that task force are being implemented in 2007-2008. A High School Task Force will begin meeting this year to address achievement, dropout prevention, and attendance. A .6 pupil personnel worker was added to the FY 08 budget to allow further differentiation of PPW assignments, specifically targeting Lexington Park Elementary School, Spring Ridge Middle School, and Great Mills High School. An LPN has been added to the budget for support at middle school. This position is part time at two of our middle schools.

Spring Ridge Middle School is implementing a house system where students receive instruction with four core content teachers to build stronger teacher/student relationships and a small community feel for greater connections to the learning environment. PBIS efforts at Spring Ridge Middle School have strongly targeted attendance with individual and large group incentives being awarded. Through the next budget cycle we intend to staff our four middle schools with a .5 LPN position to support the work of the RN assigned to each site. Through a grant from the LMB a .6 interagency liaison will participate on the Targeted Case Management Team representing the school system in working with 20-25 of our county's families to keep children at home rather than in out-of-county placements. This person will also work with those high school students who are assigned to drug court. Several other initiatives for the high school (credit recovery, Tech Connect) will be described in the section on graduation rate and dropout prevention. Those initiatives are also expected to have a positive impact on attendance.

*See clarifying responses pages 153-154

I.D.vi
Graduation Rates

No Child Left Behind Goal 5: All students will graduate from high school.

Instructions:
Complete the following tables by filling in data from the 2007 Maryland Report Card--Graduation Rate (comprehensive, by race/ethnicity and gender, and by students receiving special services). [10]

Table 6.1: Percentage of Students Graduating From High School

Subgroup	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Annual Measurable Objective (AMO):	***80.99%***	***80.99%***	***83.24%***	***83.24%***	***83.24%***
All students (Counts toward AYP)	87.19%	87.95%	86.97%	85.83%	87.69%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	75.00%	77.78%	83.33%	90.91%	100.00%
Asian/Pacific Islander	96.30%	100.00%	87.50%	90.91%	96.0%0
African American	78.26%	81.10%	81.55%	83.63%	82.83%
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	88.45%	88.97%	87.93%	85.81%	88.22%
Hispanic	86.67%	100.00%	100.00%	94.74%	95.83%
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)	67.42%	70.48%	81.95%	69.18%	75.00%
Special Education	77.89%	82.29%	84.93%	83.33%	90.91%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	100.00%	--	71.43%	50.00%	100.00%
Male	84.20%	87.23%	83.83%	81.75%	84.68%
Female	89.96%	88.69%	89.98%	89.67%	90.53%

-- Indicates no students in category

[10] Based on current discussions about the calculation of graduation rates, there may be an addendum to this section of the document.

I.D.vii
Dropout Rates

Instructions:
Complete the table by filling in data from the 2007 Maryland Report Card--Dropout Rate (comprehensive, by race/ethnicity and gender, and by students receiving special services).

Table 7.1: Percentage of Students Dropping Out of School					
Subgroup	**2002-2003**	**2003-2004**	**2004-2005**	**2005-2006**	**2006-2007**
State satisfactory standard:	***3.00%***	***3.00%***	***3.00%***	***3.00%***	***3.00%***
All students	2.30%	2.47%	2.91%	3.98%	2.73%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	6.45%	0.00%	2.6%3	5.41%	6.67%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.83%	0.92%	4.07%	0.77%	0.79%
African American	1.98%	2.48%	3.75%	4.88%	4.30%
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	2.41%	2.60%	2.72%	3.90%	2.36%
Hispanic	1.22%	0.00%	0.93%	1.90%	1.83%
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)	2.70%	3.92%	5.62%	6.55%	4.99%
Special Education	0.20%	1.50%	1.38%	5.01%	2.62%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	0.00%	0.00%	10.71%	0.00%	6.67%
Male	2.64%	2.98%	3.45%	5.08%	3.21%
Female	1.93%	1.94%	2.36%	2.87%	2.26%

Based on the Examination of Graduation and Dropout Rates:

1. Describe where progress in moving toward the graduation/dropout target is evident. In your response, identify progress in terms of **subgroups.**

   There is much good news in the progress made this year in terms of graduation rate. The aggregated graduation rate is 87.69 percent, nearly 4.5 percent over the AMO. Nine of eleven groups are above (and in some cases, significantly above) the AMO for 2007. That is an increase of one student group over last year. The groups that made significant progress were: All students, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, White, FARMS, Special Education, LEP and Males. Males have been of significant concern for the last several years and there was nearly a 3 percent increase in that group's rate of graduation. Ten of the groups made progress over last year. Males and LEP students reached the AMO after dropping below the AMO last year. Six groups achieved the 2014 goal of 90 percent or higher.

There is also good news in terms of dropout rate. Eight of the groups made progress. Five of those groups made significant progress (all students, White, FARMS, Special Education, and Males). Six groups met or exceeded the state requirement of 3 percent or lower, an increase of three additional groups over last year's data. The six groups were All students, White, Hispanic, Special Education, Females, and Asian/Pacific Islander.

2. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to which you attribute the progress.

   There was a concerted effort on the part of each high school and our two high school programs (alternative education and technical center) to reverse the recent trend in graduation and dropout rate data. During the 2006-2007 school year an additional pupil personnel worker was added to the budget to allow us to differentiate staffing for schools with specific needs in terms of discipline, attendance, and graduation rate. A mentor teacher worked with new and struggling teachers at Great Mills High School to improve instructional strategies. Each high school nurse identified two students who were at risk of dropping out and mentored those students. Counselors recovered a number of last year's dropouts, enrolled them for the first or second semester and mentored them. Pupil personnel workers interviewed current fifth year students to learn what issues caused them to fall behind and who/what motivates them to stay in school and graduate. The student responses were not surprising. They shared that increased academic support, especially in the area of mathematics and a connection or "hook" at school are key factors in success. The pupil personnel workers created a brochure for families on the importance of high school graduation and made numerous home visits to work with the students at risk and their families.

   Each high school implemented an after school credit recovery program to help students finish the year with the appropriate number of credits to move to the next grade level. Evening high school and our daytime alternative program continue to provide opportunities for students to earn credit in a smaller, less distracted environment. Our system has begun implementation of an articulation day when staff meet in vertical teams to plan for transitioning students from grade to grade and from school to school.

3. Describe where challenges are evident. In your response, identify challenges in terms of **subgroups.**

   The challenges we continue to face include the graduation rate for African American students (82.83 percent). Their rate is below the AMO of 83.24 percent and declined slightly (.8 percent) in a year when other groups made good progress. Our FARMS students made progress (over 5 percent) but are still significantly below their peers with a rate of 75 percent. There is a direct link back to their attendance concerns in that these students are missing essential instructional time and getting discouraged as time goes on. Male student data made significant progress and exceeded the AMO but is still 6 percent lower than their female counterparts.

The dropout rate data is similar in that the concerns here include African American students (4.3 percent), FARMS students (4.99 percent), and males (3.21 percent). There are also concerns for the small, fluctuating groups of American Indian/Alaskan Native and LEP.

Both data points were significantly improved for two of our three high schools. One high school, Chopticon High School, met the 2014 goal of an aggregated graduation rate of 90 percent. The greatest concern for both data points exists at one high school, Great Mills High School, where the graduation rate was 82.66 percent

The focus on saving and recovering dropouts may also account for the decreased attendance rates in high school. This is an area where high school staff struggle to help students and families to make the best decisions for each individual child.

Another area of concern is the retention rate in our high schools, specifically in ninth grade. A middle school task force has addressed academic issues in the middle school and the recommendations should have an impact over the next few years.

A final challenge is the need to identify instructionally appropriate and affordable online courses that can be offered to students for acceleration and credit recovery. We have begun discussions on this and are piloting some of this through our home teaching program for non-HSA courses for this year.

4. Describe the changes or adjustments that will be made along with the corresponding resource allocations to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

The approach for continuing our progress and eliminating the gap for FARMS, Males, and African Americans requires a systemic response as well as individualized attention to those students who struggle. We begin this discussion with our Administrative and Supervisory monthly meetings where we will have a Superintendent's Book Study on the book, *Whatever It Takes* by Dufour, et al. The discussions will be targeted to levels and secondary staff will focus on building the pyramid of interventions for all students who need assistance.

A task force on high school achievement, attendance, and dropout prevention will convene this fall. A number of recommendations of the Middle School Task Force and the Achievement Gap Task Force have been funded (e.g., middle school after school programs) in our budget and are supported with funds from the Local Management Board (LMB). The TV Production class at the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center produced a dropout prevention video that will be revealed to the public this year. The Home Access Center feature of our new student data management system will increase parental involvement in and communication about student progress by allowing parents access to achievement, homework, attendance, and discipline information.

A final systemic initiative is a revision to our career folder and high school portfolio process. Through Perkins funds, we have been using Career Cruising, a web-based career exploration program. This year middle and high school students will receive instruction using this program. Students in grades 6-11 will begin to build their career portfolios on this site and

all portfolios beginning in 2008-2009 will be electronic. This method allows parents to be more fully involved in career exploration and planning.

There are also a number of initiatives that focus on the needs of specific students and staff. The attendance mentor funded by the LMB will work with students at Great Mills High School as they enter from middle school. This initiative will give students a solid foundation as they transition to high school. New positions in our budget include HSA support teachers who will work with staff and students to help students pass the tests on the first attempt. This reduces the discouragement that leads to poor attendance, discipline infractions, suspension, retention, and dropping out.

Another exciting prevention initiative is a new program at the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center called Tech Connect. This program combines aspects of the discontinued MSDE program, Maryland's Tomorrow, with career education. Seventy-five rising ninth grade students were identified this spring who will participate in a program at the center that includes career education beginning in 9th grade and a mentor for each student. A new counselor position at the Forrest Center will devote fifty percent of her time to this project to support these students while at the Forrest Center and in connection with the staff in their comprehensive high schools. A second targeted initiative is being funded by a grant through special education. This grant will fund support to the students in the White Oak Secondary Center alternative program. A nationally known consultant will work with that staff, other secondary staff, and students at the center to increase student success and reduce the number of students who choose to dropout.

*See clarifying responses page 155

I.D.viii
Highly Qualified Staff

No Child Left Behind Goal 3: By 2005-2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 3.1: The percentage of classes being taught by "highly qualified" teachers,[11] in the aggregate and in "high poverty" schools.[12]

Highly Qualified Teachers
The No Child Left Behind Act requires that, by 2006-2007 and beyond, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers. Under this Act, local school systems are required to report the percentages of core academic classes being taught by highly qualified teachers.

Instructions:

1. Complete Tables 8.1 and 8.2 which report data around core academic subject classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers. A set of analyzing questions follows the tables.

Table 8.1: Highly Qualified Teachers		
School Year	% of Core Academic Subject Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers	% of Core Academic Subject Classes Taught by Teachers Not Highly Qualified
2003-2004	70.9%	29.1%
2004-2005	89.6%	10.4%
2005-2006	93.3%	6.7%
2006-2007	94.2%	5.8%
2007-2008 (projected)	100%	0%

[11] Section 9101 (23) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
[12] Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Highly Qualified Staff (continued)

Table 8.2: Number of CLASSES not Taught by Highly Qualified (NHQ) Teachers by Reason

School Year	Expired Certificate		Invalid Grade Level(s) for Certification		Testing Requirement Not Met		Invalid Subject for Certification		Missing Certification Information		Conditional Certificate		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	NHQ Classes	All Classes
2005-2006	17	0.6%	9	0.3%	16	0.6%	47	1.7%	70	2.6%	36	1.3%	178	2670
2006-2007	10	0.5%	0	0%	0	0%	48	2.4%	38	1.9%	22	1.1%	113	2039

Based on the Examination of Highly Qualified Teacher Data:

1. Describe where progress toward increasing the percentage of core academic subject classes taught by highly qualified teachers is evident.

   Progress toward increasing the percentage of core academic subjects (CAS) taught by highly qualified teachers can be seen in Table 8.1. Information pertaining to those teachers in CAS who are not "highly qualified" is further delineated in Table 8.2 for 2006-2007. The data in previous years provided a lens for developing successful strategies and practices which have assisted us in improving the number of teachers who have been identified as "highly qualified" in CAS. Between 2003-2004 and 2006-2007, our school system has increased the percentage of CAS taught by 'highly qualified' teachers by 23.3 percent.

2. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to which you attribute the progress.

   Practices and strategies that have proven successful for teachers within St. Mary's County Public Schools system include:
   - Information and training to administrators in assigning teachers in CAS with respect to teacher's certification;
   - Information about applicants regarding the Maryland requirements for certification prior to a given teacher being hired in a CAS;
   - Trainings for Certification and Authorized Partner (CAP) status and trainings for Certification and Authorized Partner Associate (CAPA);
   - Partnership with the College of Notre Dame in a Resident Teacher Certification program in critical, local shortage CAS;

- Individual conferences with teachers whose certification does not meet the MSDE standards and developing a plan to obtain certification;
- Termination of employment if certification standards are not met;
- Reimbursement for Praxis assessments; and,
- Providing (and increasing) tuition reimbursement.

3. Describe where challenges are evident in increasing the percentage of core academic subject classes taught by highly qualified teachers.

   Challenges that are presented in increasing the percentage of CAS taught by highly qualified teachers include:
   - Recruiting and retaining teachers in critical shortage areas identified by MSDE and locally;
   - Recruiting and retaining Special Education teachers; and
   - Predicting teacher turnover due to military transfers of teachers (or transfer of spouses due to military transfers), leave of absence due to maternity or illness; retirement; unexpected resignations, etc.

4. Describe the changes or adjustments and the corresponding resource allocations that were made to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

   Overall, the strategies and practices that are currently in place and identified in Question 2 have been successful in addressing significant increases over the past five (5) years in the number of teachers who are highly qualified teaching CAS. Refinement of the strategies, increased and timelier notification to teachers with regard to their certification, and developing alternative certification programs will be key in making progress in this area. The Resident Teacher Certification program, in partnership with the College of Notre Dame, has the potential for increasing the number of "highly qualified teachers" during the 2007-2008 school year. Expansion of this partnership and additional higher education partnerships will enable St. Mary's County Public Schools to continuously improve in this area.

Highly Qualified Staff (continued)

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that local school systems report the percentages of classes being taught by highly qualified teachers in the aggregate and in high poverty schools compared to low-poverty schools. High poverty schools are defined as schools in the top quartile of poverty in the State and low poverty schools as schools in the bottom quartile of poverty in the State. [13]

The Act also requires that school systems ensure that economically disadvantaged and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. [14]

Instructions:

1. Complete Tables 8.3 and 8.4 which report data around classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers in high poverty and low poverty schools by level, and by level of experience. A set of analyzing questions follows the tables.

Table 8.3: Core Academic Subject Classes Taught By Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) in High Poverty and Low Poverty Schools By Level

		Total Number of Core Academic Subject Classes in Low Poverty Schools	Core Academic Subject Classes in Low Poverty Schools Taught by HQT		Total Number of Core Academic Subject Classes in High Poverty Schools	Core Academic Subject Classes in High Poverty Schools Taught by HQT	
School Year	**Level**	#	#	%	#	#	%
2005-2006	**Elementary**	331	331	100%	0	0	n/a
	Secondary	703	637	90.6%	42	30	71.4%
2006-2007	**Elementary**	119	116	97.5%	0	0	n/a
	Secondary	720	676	93.9%	42	40	95.2%
2007-2008 (projected)	**Elementary**	130	130	100%	0	0	n/a
	Secondary	725	725	100%	42	42	100%

[13] Some local school systems may not have any schools that qualify as high poverty.
[14] Section 1112 (c)(1)(L) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Highly Qualified Staff (continued)

Table 8.4: Core Academic Subject Classes Taught By Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) in High and Low Poverty[15] Schools By Level and Experience[16]

		Core Academic Subject Classes in High Poverty Schools Taught by HQT with Experience		Core Academic Subject Classes in Low Poverty Schools Taught by HQT with Experience		Core Academic Subject Classes in High Poverty Schools Taught by HQT who are Inexperienced		Core Academic Subject Classes in Low Poverty Schools Taught by HQT who are Inexperienced	
School Year	**Level**	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2006-2007	**Elementary**	0	n/a	108	92.3%	0	n/a	8	6.9%
	Secondary	40	95%	667	98.7%	2	4.76%	9	1.3%

Based on the Examination of Tables 8.3 and 8.4:

1. Identify strategies that are specifically targeted to reduce the gap between high poverty schools and low poverty schools with respect to the percentage of core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers as well as teachers who are experienced. Also identify strategies implemented by the school system regarding hard-to-staff schools.

Strategies that have been identified in Question 2, above, are crucial to reducing the gap between high poverty and low poverty schools with respect to CAS taught by highly qualified teachers. Schools identified by Title I are staffed completely by highly qualified teachers. Principals of high and low poverty schools work closely with a Human Resources representative to identify teacher candidates that meet the highly qualified requirements prior to interviewing those teacher candidates.

[15] Some local school systems may not have any schools that qualify as "high poverty."
[16] "Experience," for purposes of differentiation in accordance with *No Child Left Behind*, is defined as two years or more as of the first day of employment in the 2006-2007 school year.

Highly Qualified Staff (continued)

Teacher Retention

This section is designed to report data on the progress and challenges that school systems are experiencing in retaining highly qualified teachers.

Instructions:

- Use the data available as of September 1st following each of the school years to be reported. Report data for the entire teaching staff or for teachers of Core Academic Subject areas if those data are available. Indicate the population reflected in the data:
  _X_ Entire teaching staff or
  ___ Core Academic Subject area teachers

- Report only teachers who taught in the respective school year (i.e. a teacher hired in June, 2007 for the 2007-2008 school year who resigned in August, 2007 prior to the beginning of school should not be included in the calculation for the 2007-2008 school year).

To compute percentage for each category:

- Numerator: The number of entire teaching staff or Core Academic Subject teachers leaving the system for each category
- Denominator: The total number of entire teaching staff or Core Academic Subject teachers in the system

Table 8.5: Attrition Rates

Attrition Due To (Category):	2006-2007			2007-2008(Anticipated)		
	Numerator	Denominator	%	Numerator	Denominator	%
Retirement	26	1260	2.0%	30	1275	2.4%
Resignation	90	1260	7.1%	95	1275	7.5%
Dismissal/Non-renewal	2	1260	.16%	0	1275	0%
Leaves	34	1260	2.7%	40	1275	3.1%

Based on the Examination of Teacher Attrition Rates:

1. Describe where progress toward retaining highly qualified teachers is evident.

St. Mary's County Public Schools is making progress in retention of highly qualified teachers in the areas of retirement, dismissal/non-renewal, and leaves of absence. Although retirement figures fluctuate from year to year, between 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, retirements from St. Mary's County Public Schools decreased by 0.5 percent (2.5% in 2005-2006). In addition, teachers who were dismissed or whose contracts were not renewed decreased by 0.24 percent (0.4% in 2005-2006). Leaves of absences taken for various reasons also declined by 0.2 percent from last school year (2.9% in 2005-2006).

Our school system anticipates retirements to increase for the 2007-2008 school year due to career educators taking advantage of retirement benefits. Predictions made on the attrition numbers for resignations and leaves are based on national data showing more teachers opting out of the career for private industry, government jobs, and for family reasons. St. Mary's County Public Schools works diligently to encourage our employees to remain with us through professional development opportunities, opportunity to request transfers to other sites or assignments between school years, and a positive morale and working environment.

2. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to which you attribute the progress.

St. Mary's County Public Schools provides numerous incentives to retain its teachers. These include a competitive salary and a long range plan to increase teacher salaries as a system-wide priority, as well as an excellent benefits package including health insurance, tuition reimbursement, and life insurance. In order to build teacher capacity, SMCPS provides high quality professional development for all staff members, and partners with local colleges and universities, as well as the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center, to provide courses locally. New teachers are provided a variety of supports including a three-day New Teacher Orientation program, optional early-bird professional development sessions, a mentor who has been provided training in coaching and mentoring skills, and a two-year cycle of new teacher meetings. Mentors are provided meetings that occur two to three times per year to address the need for ongoing training.

3. Describe where challenges are evident in retaining highly qualified teachers.

The current challenge facing St. Mary's County Public Schools in retaining highly qualified teachers is the percentage of teachers that resign from our school system. From 2005-2006 to 2006-2007, the number of teachers resigning rose 0.6 percent. It should be noted that this number includes teachers that left our school system due to military transfers (and/or military spousal transfer), transfers to neighboring school systems, as well as teachers leaving the profession.

4. Describe the changes or adjustments and the corresponding resource allocations that were made to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

Increased resources in professional development for new teacher induction have been provided. These resources increased the stipend amount for new teachers for their professional development days in the orientation and induction activities. In addition, through Title II, Part A funding, a new resource in the development of model demonstration classrooms was provided. Veteran teachers were hired to develop three weeks of lessons for teachers, provide a full day of modeling, and monthly follow up meetings for new teachers in their content/grade level.

Additionally, a recruitment specialist was added to the Human Resources staff. This position was added with a focus on minority recruitment, but also to provide further support in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff. In addition, this specialist will focus on "grow-your-own" programs (e.g., Future Educators of America) and Professional Development Schools.

Teachers Working in Title I Schools

Instructions:
Complete the following table. Note: Additional information pertaining to Title I schools is included in Attachment 7.

Table 8.6: Percentage of Core Academic Subject Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers in Title I Schools			
	Total Number of Core Academic Subject Classes in Title I Schools	Core Academic Subject Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers Working in Title I Schools	
		#	%
2007-2008* (projected)	**88**	**88**	**100%**

*As of July 1, 2007

Based on the Examination of Data Related to Teachers Working in Title I Schools:

1. Describe the strategies that the local school system will use to ensure that all core academic subject classes in Title I schools continue to be taught by highly qualified teachers.

St. Mary's County Public Schools continues to meet the needs of Title I schools by staffing those schools with only highly qualified teachers. Extensive training of the principals and assistant principals of Title I schools continues to prove successful in hiring only highly qualified teachers in those schools. A close working relationship between the schools and the Department of Human Resources is essential for staffing those schools appropriately. All Title I schools in St. Mary's County Public Schools during the 2006-2007 school year were staffing with 100 percent of the teachers identified as highly qualified. Strategies that allowed our system to reach that goal included reimbursement of Praxis for teachers requiring state tests; tuition reimbursement for individuals needing additional coursework; and opportunities to participate in professional development courses for MSDE credit.

Instructional Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools

No Child Left Behind Goal 3: By 2005-2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 3.3: The percentage of paraprofessionals working in Title I schools (excluding those whose sole duties are translators and parental involvement assistants) who are qualified. [17]

Instructions:
Complete the following table. Count all instructional paraprofessionals, not just those paid with Title I funds.

Table 8.7: Percentage of Qualified Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools

	Total Number of Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools	Qualified Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools	
		#	%
2007-2008* (projected)	**50**	**50**	**100%**

*As of July 1, 2007

Based on the Examination of Data Related to Instructional Paraprofessionals Working in Title I Schools:

1. Describe the strategies that the local school system will use to ensure that all paraprofessionals working in Title I schools continue to be qualified.

St. Mary's County Public Schools provides reimbursement for the ParaPro Praxis test and tuition reimbursement for all paraeducators to reach the standards established by MSDE to be highly qualified. Paraeducators are also provided the opportunity to participate in all professional development opportunities offered for MSDE credit. The eligibility of all of the applicants for vacancies is determined by meeting these standards prior to their being considered and hired.

[17] Section 1119 (c) (1-2), (d), and (e) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

High Quality Professional Development

No Child Left Behind Goal 3: By 2005-2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 3.2: The percentage of teachers receiving high quality professional development.[18]

For purposes of this Update, a professional development initiative is defined as a set of integrated professional development activities that (1) extend over a relatively long period of time, (2) include direct follow-up in schools or classrooms, (3) provide opportunities for practice and feedback, and (4) require a substantial investment of resources.

Instructions:
Identify **four** key professional development initiatives that were designed to contribute to improvement efforts under the Student Achievement section. A key professional development initiative must apply to each school level – elementary, middle, and high school. An additional key professional development initiative must apply to one other area of concern evident in the data. For each of the initiatives identified, answer the questions below.

Based on the Examination of Performance Data in this Document:

1. Identify a key professional development initiative for the:
   - Elementary School Level: **Mathematics - Computational Fluency**
   - Middle School Level: **Partnership with the Education Trust**
   - High School Level: **Targeted Professional Development and Establishment of Biology Professional Learning Communities**
   - An Additional Area of Concern: **Collaborative Team Dialogue**

2. For each Key Professional Development Initiative identified, answer the following questions:

Elementary Mathematics - Computational Fluency

a) What are the underlying student performance needs identified in the Maryland School Assessment section that the initiative was designed to address? (Be sure to include the specific Voluntary State Curriculum standards or indicators for each grade level, as applicable.)

We continue to seek ways to increase our mathematics proficiency in elementary. We have had continued growth in mathematics, grades 3-5, but an area of need for focus was number computation at all grade levels, PreK–5. Our work involved our elementary schools and the involvement of a consultant, Dr. Stephanie Smith, from Georgia State University. Dr. Smith has worked with our mathematics program, TERC *Investigations*, as well as with a process known as Cognitively Guided

[18] Section 9101(34) of Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards.

Instruction. Additionally, we have utilized trainers from TERC *Investigations* to provide a week-long seminar on Building Computational Fluency.

b) What are the specific goals of the initiative in terms of student outcomes and teacher outcomes?

The goals for this initiative were based on our charge for continuous improvement, specifically in the area of mathematics.

Goals for students included:

- Computational fluency, specifically flexibility, accuracy and efficiency

Goals for teachers included:

- Know the 11 problem types students encounter in computation as outlined by Thomas Carpenter's research in the book *Children's Mathematics: Cognitively Guided Instruction* (CGI)
- Know strategies students use and develop when encountering computational problems
- Know the development of Base 10 operational knowledge
- Develop questioning strategies to facilitate strategy development
- Facilitate classroom discussions to promote strategy development centered on accuracy, flexibility, and efficiency

c) Who were the intended participants? (Be sure to include how many completed all the components of the initiative.)

Participants included leadership teams with principals, administrators, and teacher leaders; teacher teams from each grade level also participated. The sessions were set up so that teachers had multiple days, including follow up, to work with the content and discuss instructional plans. Then, leadership teams (with representative teachers from each grade level) from each school met to discuss follow up and coaching, as well as job-embedded collaborative planning.

d) Identify the resources invested in the initiative. (Be sure to include funding, people, and time.)

The funding for this initiative was based on a number of factors. For system-wide efforts, the funding included payments for consultants, as well as teacher release time and materials.
District-wide, consultant services for the year totaled $12,000, with substitute funding and stipends accounting for nearly $9,000. Two days identified, below, were on system-wide professional development days so stipends and substitutes were not necessary. Title II, Part A and the general fund contributed to these activities.

- Summer 2005 - Week long CGI (Cognitively Guided Instruction) summer workshop for teachers, Dr Stephanie Smith and Dr. Marvin Smith
- Spring 2006 - One day workshop with second grade teachers district-wide regarding the development of based 10 understanding

- Fall Professional Development Day with Dr. Stephanie Smith for second grade teachers
- 2007 Spring - Two half-day workshop for instructional leadership teams composed of principals, resource teachers and classroom teachers. Two days were on content, and one half day was set aside for instructional planning for implementation the following year.

The training and follow up at specific schools occurred throughout the year. Specifically, Title I schools took advantage of the site-based coaching and job-embedded professional development.

- Dr. Smith led sessions and provided classroom specific coaching at George Washington Carver Elementary, Park Hall Elementary, and Lexington Park Elementary (3 Title I schools). For the 2007-2008 school year, another school will be added.
- Site specific, differentiated professional development in CGI, including modeling, coaching, small group sessions and large group sessions was provided. Resource teachers on site provided follow up, modeling, and guidance in instructional planning. As teachers are trained in the pedagogy and become proficient, they in turn provide training to other teachers in the district

Follow-up:

- Schools developed School Improvement Plans which incorporated CGI.
- Curriculum maps were revised to incorporate CGI pedagogy
- CGI will be incorporated into system-wide professional days and resource teacher training.
- The math IRT for the county will follow up in schools to assist in implementing their SIP.
- Stephanie Smith continues to work in the district with individual schools.

e) Did the initiative unfold as planned? Did all the activities take place for all the participants? If not, describe any changes to the original plans.

Yes. The sessions were held with high amounts of participation from each school, and schools embedded practices in their School Improvement Plans as a result of this work.

f) What concrete evidence is available to suggest that the initiative achieved the intended outcomes for teachers and students? If the school system's previous plans included an evaluation, indicate whether or not it was completed. If the evaluation was completed, was there a report? If so, what did it tell the reader? With whom was the report shared?

We have seen continued growth from our schools in terms of levels of proficiency. Mathematics scores have increased, and all elementary schools have made AYP (including those that were in school improvement – one exited the list; one needs an additional year of improvement).

g) Does the review of progress under Part I of the Update suggest the need for any modification to the initiative? If so, describe the planned modifications for 2007-2008 and the corresponding resource allocations.

There is no need to modify the plan at this point.

- Include the timeline for the modifications and anticipated dates for achieving the intended outcomes for teachers and students. If this has already been addressed under the Maryland School Assessment section or other area of this document, note the page number. Be sure to include plans for an evaluation.

Middle School: Partnership with The Education Trust

a) What are the underlying student performance needs identified in the Maryland School Assessment section that the initiative was designed to address? (Be sure to include the specific Voluntary State Curriculum standards or indicators for each grade level, as applicable.)

Middle school achievement has been lagging. While achievement in reading and mathematics is increasing in other areas across the school system, growth has been stagnant at middle schools, and in some cases declining slightly. Our trend data for 6th grade is moving in the right direction; however, there are still issues in 7th and 8th grade as we see continued evidence of an achievement gap. For example, in grade 8 mathematics for the 2004-2005 school year, African Americans performed at 24 percent proficiency, while 51 percent of white students were proficient. For the 2006 administration of MSA in mathematics, the data was somewhat parallel with a small increase, 32 percent and 58 percent respectively.

Citing the need to eliminate the achievement gap and increase achievement, the superintendent created two task forces, the Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap and a Middle School Task Force. One of the recommendations included in the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap Report to the Board of Education on June 14, 2006, was to identify a researched based consultant group who would train administrators, teachers and central office staff to be able to critically:

- review student work, assessments, and teacher instructional practices for standard alignment and rigor
- review all content curriculum maps for alignment to standards
- identify additional content or skills that should be taught in order for our students to have a maximum understanding of the standards.

To this end, in June 2006, SMCPS contracted with the Education Trust to provide professional development to school teams and to provide on-site professional development to specific schools. The Education Trust provides assistance to school districts, colleges, and community-based organizations to help their efforts at raising student achievement, especially among minority and poor students. Their model for guiding job-embedded professional development to enhance challenging instruction

reflective of our stated learning outcomes in the Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) is both thorough and supportive of gains in all student groups.

b) What are the specific goals of the initiative in terms of student outcomes and teacher outcomes?

The Education Trust led a process called "Standards In Practice (SIP)." SIP is a quality control tool that can be used to evaluate classroom assignments, projects, courses, curricula, even teachers' and administrators' performances, ensuring that all activities in classrooms parallel those with the utmost capacity. It works by engaging teachers in teams to examine their assignments to ensure they are at the appropriate level for the grade, as well as the resulting student work on a regular basis. These sessions were led and observed by the Education Trust staff throughout the year. The SIP process has been documented as a successful, high-quality professional development process with results in student achievement.

c) Who were the intended participants? (Be sure to include how many completed all the components of the initiative.)

The work of the Education Trust included four (4) days of consultation and professional development with leadership teams. This training occurred throughout the year with leaders from every school focusing on what principals can do to catch underperforming students up with their academically proficient peers. In addition, the Education Trust conducted site-specific training at three schools along a feeder pattern of our lower performing schools – Lexington Park Elementary School, Spring Ridge Middle School, and Great Mills High School. The SIP process was employed as a prevailing process for analyzing assignments and rigor across all middle schools, while specific consultant time was dedicated to Spring Ridge, the lowest performing of our schools, and one in corrective action.

d) Identify the resources invested in the initiative. (Be sure to include funding, people, and time.)

The resources provided included consultant fees, as well as substitute funding and release time for professional development activities. Funding for this initiative totaled $29,700. Much of the professional development was job-embedded, working with both a coaching model and in collaborative planning.

The Education Trust provided all principals and supervisors with an introduction to the Standards in Practice (SIP) process during the spring of 2006. Following the initial training for leaders, there was then a two-day intensive professional development for leadership teams from all schools in June 2006, with a follow-up seminar led by Kati Haycock, nationally-known educational leader and executive director of the Education Trust. The system-wide effort focused the attention of all schools on the priority of eliminating the achievement gap.

Further, the Education Trust led an introduction to the SIP process in September for the faculty members of Lexington Park Elementary School, Spring Ridge Middle School, and Great Mills High School.

e) Did the initiative unfold as planned? Did all the activities take place for all the participants? If not, describe any changes to the original plans.

Over the course of the past year, the Education Trust continued to follow-up with each of the schools. For example, the Education Trust has facilitated monthly and sometimes bi-monthly SIP meetings for grade-level team meetings at Lexington Park Elementary School. With new administrations in place at Spring Ridge Middle School and Great Mills High School, certain organizational structures and instructional efforts needed to be in place to ensure readiness for the SIP model. Spring Ridge Middle School and Great Mills High School have both moved forward with the development of professional learning communities and collaborative planning efforts that set the stage for the SIP model. Therefore, as the new administration emphasized reorganization of teams and new processes, some activities led by the Education Trust were not fully implemented.

At Spring Ridge Middle School, the school adapted the SIP model to match its organizational design. Some meetings did not occur as planned, but were supplemented with the school's "GLSIP" or *grade level school improvement plan*, model. This model has teachers looking closely at data to drive instructional decision making.

Consultants of the Education Trust commented on the growth of the teams who used the process consistently, stating "there have been some very positive changes since the start of the SIP process, as well as agreement about the need for more time for SIP activities."

Some teams started to bring their data to the table as a way to identify exactly which type of assignment they wanted to focus on during their SIP meetings. Other teams wanted to utilize the SIP model with an assignment for each content area to get an idea of how SIP could work across the spectrum. As they went through the process a number of the teams decided to design a common rubric to base their more specific rubrics upon. Near the end of the year, some of the teams started to use end-of-unit SIP assignments towards planning lessons as a group by charting out the skills necessary to complete the assignments and strategizing ways to reach all students. While there were some pockets of resistance to the process throughout the year, by the end there were major differences in the levels of conversations, expectations, and the rigor of assignments at the SIP meetings for most involved teams.

f) What concrete evidence is available to suggest that the initiative achieved the intended outcomes for teachers and students? If the school system's previous plans included an evaluation, indicate whether or not it was completed. If the evaluation was completed, was there a report? If so, what did it tell the reader? With whom was the report shared?

While scores on MSA and HSA will ultimately provide summative results on student achievement at these sites, the outlook has been quite positive. Benchmark assessment data has been on a steady increase. By examining the VSC and utilizing the SIP process, teachers have been able to ramp-up instruction for students. *Performance Matters* has also allowed teachers to make effective use of ongoing assessment data to make instructional decisions. For example, at Lexington Park Elementary, benchmark assessments show a steady increase in the number of students achieving at proficient levels. MSA scores at Lexington Park rose dramatically, making AYP, and closing the achievement gap. While the SIP model is only one contributing factor at Spring Ridge Middle School, the focus on utilizing the rigor of the VSC in examining instruction has yielded that some indicators show students outperforming their counterparts at other schools on the reading benchmark assessments. Spring Ridge Middle School also saw increases, making AYP for 3 of 4 student groups that did not make AYP in previous years.

Perhaps most critical to the success of the Education Trust partnership is the buy-in of teachers in the process. If teachers are willing to utilize the SIP model to analyze their own work and participate in a critical analysis of the work they are providing for students, more rigorous instruction can take place. Therefore, more learning ensues. The following comments by teachers illustrate the impact of the Education Trust model:

- [The SIP process has given me] more awareness of ways to analyze work to see we are helping <u>all</u> children to meet high standards.
- …the quality has improved due to rigorous expectations.
- We focused on writing, giving clear assignments that met the benchmark(s), and our students' written work looks better this year!
- [The process] makes me look at each lesson, worksheet, and assignment with a more critical eye… I am more aware of rigor and student directions.
- I address student needs more than before.

g) Does the review of progress under Part I of the Update suggest the need for any modification to the initiative? If so, describe the planned modifications for 2007-2008 and the corresponding resource allocations.

- Include the timeline for the modifications and anticipated dates for achieving the intended outcomes for teachers and students. If this has already been addressed under the Maryland School Assessment section or other area of this document, note the page number. Be sure to include plans for an evaluation.

Based on the inconsistency of implementation, we will be reexamining the utilization of the Education Trust. Part of the reason for inconsistency is stated above, relative to new administration and priorities for middle school. Other intervening variables, such as change of staff at the Education Trust contributed to inconsistent delivery. However, the process of examining teacher assignments to ensure alignment with the VSC and high levels of rigor will continue.

Recommendations of the Middle School Task Force, which include analysis of data for instructional decision making as well as creating extended blocks of time for students underperforming in content areas (i.e., addition of a double block of mathematics for all of 7th grade), are being implemented. Demonstration classrooms were part of summer induction and involved teachers from across all middle schools. In August, a unit planning framework was developed to embed these processes as well, including alignment to the VSC, as well as unit assessments. These will be implemented for all areas.

Evaluation of our efforts in Middle School continue to be based on levels of student achievement. Teachers will meet collaboratively to review analyses of student achievement on benchmark assessments and unit assessments. Disaggregation by student group, as well as proficiency areas, will lead to the development of intervention and instructional programs.

High School: Targeted Professional Development and Establishment of Biology Professional Learning Communities

a) What are the underlying student performance needs identified in the Maryland School Assessment section that the initiative was designed to address? (Be sure to include the specific Voluntary State Curriculum standards or indicators for each grade level, as applicable.)

A critical need for students to pass the High School Assessments has led us to examine how we deliver professional development at the high school level. A concerted focus on the concept of professional learning communities (PLCs) has helped us to focus our efforts with groups of teachers who share a content with deliberate, clear, and laser-like clarity on the outcomes and teaching practices of that discipline. For purposes of this report, we will describe one area, Biology.

Students must pass HSA Biology for graduation. HSA Biology is based upon Biology Core Learning Goal 3 and Skills and Processes Core Learning Goal 1. As part of this assessment, students must be able to proficiently answer both Selected Response and Constructed Response items. Additionally, students must be able to read and interpret items and scientific passages on Biology HSA, and students must be able to interpret and analyze scientific data in various forms on Biology HSA. These areas reflect the greatest needs among students in Biology based upon teacher needs assessments from PLC and individual Action Plans.

b) What are the specific goals of the initiative in terms of student outcomes and teacher outcomes?
The main goal of all our efforts continues to be the improvement of student achievement among all student groups on Biology HSA. Further goals included:

- To raise teacher competency in instructional strategies that target areas of need among students.
- To improve collaboration and share best practices among biology teachers within and between high schools.

- To develop skills in analyzing student data from district assessments using *Performance Matters*, identifying individual student needs, and using this data to design instruction to address the needs.
- The implementation of a third quarter biology district assessment and continued use of existing classroom and district assessments modeled after the Maryland Biology HSA.
- Formal observation of every biology teacher on summative assessment and informal visits to biology classrooms by supervisor of science and school administrators.

c) Who were the intended participants? (Be sure to include how many completed all the components of the initiative.)

Intended participants were all high school biology teachers, including special educators within biology inclusion classrooms. All biology teachers were involved in all aspects of the initiative - range finding workshop, reading strategy workshop, data analysis and instructional design workshop, PLCs, assessment writing, and review of district assessments.

Approximately fifty percent of special educators in biology inclusion classrooms participated in the range finding workshop, the data analysis and instructional design workshops, PLCs, data analysis, and review of district assessments.

All incoming grade 9 students who were enrolled in Algebra 1 took Concept-Based Physics in grade 9. Previously, many of these students would have taken biology.

One biology teacher from each high school was sent to the NSTA Conference and led a mini-session for biology teachers mid-year. The idea of building capacity of teachers within the discipline to lead each others' learning was an essential component of these PLCs.

d) Identify the resources invested in the initiative. (Be sure to include funding, people, and time.)

Teachers were paid stipends for workshops outside of the school day (reading workshop). Substitutes were provided for teachers for the range finding workshop, the data analysis and instructional design workshop, and the review of district assessments. The total funding for this aspect of the program was $2,000.

In addition, time was provided for PLCs within the duty day. This was ether during a common planning period, common lunch period, or before or after school. The system provided dollars for release time to facilitate collaborative planning as well.

One biology teacher at each of two high schools was given a reduced schedule. At one school, this teacher was able to support other teachers during her extra planning period by pulling groups of students to work with on specific needs

common to the group. Teachers at this school implemented various creative grouping strategies in the weeks just prior to the administration of Biology HSA. At the second school, the teacher with extra planning worked specifically with another biology teacher and a special educator to address the needs among two biology inclusion classes. New physics teachers were hired to teach increased numbers of physics classes.

Further support came from the Maryland Science Supervisors' Association, who provided funding ($120 each) for the biology teachers to attend the NSTA Conference.

e) Did the initiative unfold as planned? Did all the activities take place for all the participants? If not, describe any changes to the original plans.

The initiative unfolded better than expected. The biology teachers at all three high schools have developed highly productive and collaborative PLCs. They generally meet weekly. During the PLC, they review activities and assessments for alignment to the Core Learning Goals, share successful lessons, address reading strategies, write quarterly action plans based upon current data, review student work, discuss strategies to address specific student needs, and other topics as needed.

All of the planned activities took place for all biology teachers. There were one or two special educators that were not able to attend all activities due to specific case loads and a shortage of substitutes. All special educators participated to some extent.

f) What concrete evidence is available to suggest that the initiative achieved the intended outcomes for teachers and students? If the school system's previous plans included an evaluation, indicate whether or not it was completed. If the evaluation was completed, was there a report? If so, what did it tell the reader? With whom was the report shared?

Biology HSA scores for the May 2007 administration are higher in every subgroup. Our recently released HSA data reveal that we have a 91.6 percent passing rate for Biology.

g) Does the review of progress under Part I of the Update suggest the need for any modification to the initiative? If so, describe the planned modifications for 2007-2008 and the corresponding resource allocations.

All workshops will remain in place for this year continuing the professional development that led to productive PLCs. Further, schedules have been created at two high schools that allow collaboration within planning periods or over lunch.

The new Biology VSC has been incorporated into our Biology Curriculum Map. This document includes vertical articulation with concepts addressed in grades 3-

8 related to biology concepts and identifies supplementary topics that are often taught, but are not assessed on Biology HSA.

The transition to Biology 1 as a grade 10 course for all but Biology Honors students will be complete this year. Preliminary science courses in grade 9 will develop skills within the respective content that will better prepare students for biology in grade 10.

- Include the timeline for the modifications and anticipated dates for achieving the intended outcomes for teachers and students. If this has already been addressed under the Maryland School Assessment section or other area of this document, note the page number. Be sure to include plans for an evaluation.

  Administration of district assessments and entering of student achievement data at the end of each of the first three quarters will occur. To ensure consistency, we will conduct a range finding workshop after the first quarter assessment. Data analysis and instructional strategies workshop will also be held following the mid-course assessment. Ongoing observations of teachers and attendance at PLCs will continue; the first visit of the supervisor of science will be in September. Finally, a revision of Biology Curriculum Map according to the new Biology VSC was completed in the summer of 2007.

Collaborative Teams

a) What are the underlying student performance needs identified in the Maryland School Assessment section that the initiative was designed to address? (Be sure to include the specific Voluntary State Curriculum standards or indicators for each grade level, as applicable.)

   During the past year, we wrote about the implementation of our data warehouse as a professional development activity. Our relentless focus on using data about students' progress has moved us forward in incredible ways. The data warehouse allows us to slice through student achievement data by grade level, by content, by student group, and by the objective level in the VSC.

   This year, our utilization of the *Performance Matters* data warehouse is sharpening to the point that we are building on the instructional expertise in our schools. Grade level teams, content teams, and vertical teams engage in collaborative dialogue, collegial conversations, and professional learning communities, targeting needs for improvement, intervention, and instructional planning.

b) What are the specific goals of the initiative in terms of student outcomes and teacher outcomes?

   The major goal of collaborative teams is to provide focus for our teacher teams to design instruction based on clear and objective evidence of student learning. To this end, these collaborative teams utilize data from *Performance Matters*, analyzing down to the objective level the benchmark assessments students take in

each content area. These benchmarks are correlated with MSA and HSA achievement levels, and provide essential information to teachers on levels of student performance.

Throughout the year, teams have been provided resources and guidance delivered by school-based leadership teams and have engaged in collaborative planning.

c) Who were the intended participants? (Be sure to include how many completed all the components of the initiative.)

Leadership training for administrators, supervisors, and school-based leadership teams included principals, assistant principals, instructional resource teachers, department chairs, and team leaders. Professional development included an understanding of how to utilize the data to determine areas of focus for collaborative planning, as well as key questions to pose in collegial dialogue sessions.

d) Identify the resources invested in the initiative. (Be sure to include funding, people, and time.)

Consultant funding was utilized for leadership training follow up. In sum, four days of professional development for leadership teams was utilized. Consultant funding totaled $7,000, while teacher stipends for leadership training totaled $12,000.

By far, the greatest investment was in providing funding for release time and stipends for teachers to engage in collaborative planning. Title II, Part A, funding was utilized to fund this initiative, focused on teacher professional development in core subject areas. Thirty-five thousand ($35,000) in collaborative planning was expended during the 2006-2007 school year.

e) Did the initiative unfold as planned? Did all the activities take place for all the participants? If not, describe any changes to the original plans.

Yes. All professional development activities took place as planned. At the school level, collaborative team meetings' success varied based on each school's processes and team structures. In some schools, common planning time was not the norm, or release time was not provided; however, schools where this was the case have worked with their schedule for the 2007-2008 school year to correct this issue.

f) What concrete evidence is available to suggest that the initiative achieved the intended outcomes for teachers and students? If the school system's previous plans included an evaluation, indicate whether or not it was completed. If the evaluation was completed, was there a report? If so, what did it tell the reader? With whom was the report shared?

Our MSA results have been the banner of success for this initiative. Schools that utilized the collaborative planning process and engaged in professional learning communities saw exceptional results on MSA. *All elementary schools made AYP*. Our high schools have seen growth on HSA (i.e., Biology passing rate is 91.6 percent; Algebra, percent; Government, 88.7 percent; English, 81.9 percent) and our middle schools have made progress where these collegial planning processes were implemented (e.g., at 6th grade where student achievement rose 7.1 percentage points for reading, closing the gap with a 13.1 percentage point increase for African Americans and a 15.4 increase for Special Education).

g) Does the review of progress under Part I of the Update suggest the need for any modification to the initiative? If so, describe the planned modifications for 2007-2008 and the corresponding resource allocations.

We will be providing further monitoring and guidance on the implementation of collaborative teams at all levels. The use of funding will be a benchmark of implementation for which each school will submit a plan of action, as an addendum to their School Improvement Plan.

- Include the timeline for the modifications and anticipated dates for achieving the intended outcomes for teachers and students. If this has already been addressed under the Maryland School Assessment section or other area of this document, note the page number. Be sure to include plans for an evaluation.

In August, a review of School Improvement Plans included the identification of strategies for data analysis and collaborative planning as part of the review rubric. Additionally, a template for resultant plans for collaborative teams was presented. At the beginning of the school year, budget allotments for collaborative teams are provided for each school, and an action plan is required for this school year. Finally, quarterly updates to the director of professional and organizational development are required.

Evaluation of this initiative consists of site visits to schools by the superintendent, chief academic officer, and appropriate director. Through these visits, an examination of processes and protocols occur. Collaborative team implementation is an essential element of these visits. Our teacher evaluation system includes collaboration as one element of evaluation. Finally, the ultimate evaluation rests in the results from our students' achievement.

The Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards and the Maryland Teacher Professional Development Planning Guide may be helpful in completing this section. Both documents are available at www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/divisions/instruction/prof_standards.

I.D.ix
Safe Schools

No Child Left Behind Goal 4: All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 4.1: The number of persistently dangerous schools, as defined by the state.

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that local school systems report the number of persistently dangerous schools.[19] A "persistently dangerous" school means a school in which each year for a period of three consecutive school years the total number of student suspensions for more than 10 days or expulsions equals two and one-half percent or more of the total number of students enrolled in the school, for and of the following offenses: arson or fire; drugs; explosives; firearms; other guns; other weapons; physical attack on a student; physical attack on a school system employee or other adult; and sexual assault. Schools are placed into "persistently dangerous" status in a given school year based on their suspension data in the prior year.

Instructions:
Complete Table 9.1 which reports the number of schools identified as persistently dangerous.

Table 9.1: Number of Persistently Dangerous Schools

2003-2004 Status (Based on 2002-2003 Data)	2004-2005 Status (Based on 2003-2004 Data)	2005-2006 Status (Based on 2004-2005 Data)	2006-2007 Status (Based on 2005-2006 Data)	2007-2008 Status (Based on 2006-2007 Data)
0	0	0	0	0

Note: Issues associated with Safe Schools are also discussed in Additional MSDE Requirements: Safe Learning Environments and Attachment 11: Title IV, Part A – Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities.

[19] Section 13A.08.02.18B(4) of the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Safe Schools (continued)

Schools Meeting 2-1/2 Percent Criteria for the First Time

A school must be placed on "probationary status" if each year for a period of two consecutive school years, the total number of student suspensions for more than 10 days or expulsions equal to 2-1/2 percent or more of the total number of students enrolled in the school, for any of the following offenses: arson or fire; drugs; explosives; firearms; other guns; other weapons; physical attack on a student; physical attack on a school system employee or other adult; and sexual assault.[20]

Instructions:
Using Table 9.2, identify all schools that met the 2-1/2 percent criteria for the first time at the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

Table 9.2: Schools Meeting 2-1/2 Percent Criteria for the First Time

School	2006-2007 Enrollment	# of Suspensions and Expulsions	Percentage of Enrollment
None			

Based on the Examination of Table 9.2:

1. Where first-time schools were identified, what steps are being taken by the school system to reverse this trend and prevent the identified school(s) from moving into probationary status?
   N/A

[20] Section 13A.08.01.19A of the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Safe Schools (continued)

Probationary Schools

Instructions:
Using Table 9.3, identify all schools that met the criteria at the end of the 2006-2007 school year for placement on "probationary status," as defined above, in the 2007-2008 school year.

Table 9.3: Probationary Status Schools			
School	**2006-2007 Enrollment**	**# of Suspensions and Expulsions**	**Percentage of Enrollment**
None			

Safe Schools (continued)

Suspensions and Expulsions for Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying

Instructions:
Using Table 9.4, provide trend data for suspensions/expulsions due to sexual harassment, harassment, and bullying.

Table 9.4: Number of Suspensions/Expulsions for Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying

Offense	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Sexual Harassment	14	35	32	15	26
Harassment	17	30	21	21	24
Bullying				7	18
TOTAL	31	65	53	43	68

Based on the Examination of Table 9.4:

1. What actions is the local school system taking to prevent/reduce incidents of sexual harassment, harassment, and bullying?

St. Mary's County Public Schools employs a multi-pronged approach to prevention and intervention relative to bullying and harassment. Students in grades 3-9 receive instruction in one of two research-based curriculums: Steps to Respect (elementary) and Second Step (secondary). Seventh grade and ninth grade students continue to demonstrate an increased knowledge of sexual harassment and assault issues after receiving skills-based training. Classroom discussion is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons. Additional training was added in 2006-2007 for all middle school and high school students and staff that outlines the difference between sexual harassment and sexual assault and the importance of reporting these infractions. Through the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Prevention Grant, a commercial company provided a program at Great Mills High School on the role of bystanders in preventing bullying.

PBIS initiatives include a focus on respectful behaviors among different groups. The Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Prevention Grant supports PBIS school incentives.

All school system staff members, including all bus drivers, are trained annually on bullying, harassment and sexual assault prevention and reporting requirements. Targeted professional development is provided to key prevention and intervention staff such as counselors, pupil personnel workers and assistant principals.

Brochures are made available to all schools for distribution to students and parents relative to bullying and sexual harassment. The school system website provides strategies for prevention that parents may implement to help their children. This information includes a

section on cyberbullying. The Board of Education members were updated on cyberbullying in a Board of Education update.

Each school implemented the bullying reporting law by providing the reporting form in the front offices and in the offices of administrators, teachers-in-charge, school counselors, school nurses and pupil personnel workers. This year the form was included in the student calendar/handbook and is available on the website. The link to the form is included in the student handbook as well.

The Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Prevention grant was utilized to fund the program at Great Mills High School, to support PBIS initiatives that address safe environments and to provide materials to all schools as needed. Title II supports the training of teachers-in-charge.

In 2006-2007, there was an increase in the number of suspensions for each category and an increase of 25 incidents of suspension overall. This can be partially attributed to the attention given to this important area of student safety. The additional training for both students and staff has established an environment where students feel safe in reporting. The availability of forms allows parents to communicate their concerns in a concise and effective manner that encourages administrators to follow through on their investigations with complete information. Completed investigations are then reviewed by the Executive Director of Student Services and Supervisor of Pupil Services to ensure appropriate follow-up and intervention. This information is also used to assist in identifying appropriate professional development topics.

Elementary Schools with a Suspension Rate That Exceeds 16 Percent

Each county Board of Education and the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City must require elementary schools that have a suspension rate that now exceeds **16** percent of the elementary school's enrollment (for the 2006-2007 school year) to implement a positive behavioral interventions and support program (PBIS) or an alternative behavioral modification program in collaboration with the Department (Section 7-304.1, Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland).

Instructions:
Using Tables 9.5.A and 9.5.B, provide the number of elementary schools that had suspension rates that exceeded the identified limits for each year (18% in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, 16% in 2006-2007).[21]

Table 9.5.A: Schools With Suspension Rates Exceeding Identified Limits, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006

2004-2005		2005-2006	
Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%	Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%
16	0	16	0

Table 9.5.B: Schools With Suspension Rates Exceeding Identified Limits, 2006-2007

2006-2007	
Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded **16%**
16	0

[21] Section 7-304.1, Positive Behavioral and Interventions and Support Program, of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Safe Schools (continued)

Instructions (continued):
Using Table 9.6, provide the following information for those schools identified in Table 9.5 that have NOT implemented PBIS or an alternative behavioral modification program as required by law.

Table 9.6: Non-PBIS Schools			
School Name	**School Year in which the suspension rate was exceeded**	**State reason for noncompliance**	**Provide a timeline for compliance**
N/A			

Based on the Examination of Progress Toward Establishing and Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment:

1. Describe the progress that the school system has made toward establishing and maintaining safe learning environments.

Again this year, St. Mary's County Public Schools experienced numerous successes with regard to establishing and maintaining a safe learning environment.

- Suspensions were reduced by 8.5 percent. Fourteen of the 25 schools had reduced suspensions from the previous year.
- Eight schools participated in PBIS. Three schools earned exemplar status under the revised, more stringent criteria. Two schools earned banner status under the new criteria. The criteria now looks at data trends in both discipline and academic achievement. Seven PBIS schools had fewer suspensions than the previous year.
- Suspensions are declining for Students with Disabilities and African American students in our PBIS schools.
- No schools are identified as persistently dangerous.
- No elementary schools have suspension rates that exceed 16 percent.
- There was a significant reduction of suspensions in key categories that interrupt instruction such as class disruption, fighting, refusal to obey school rules, inciting/participating in a disturbance, physical attack on a staff member and disrespect.
- The elementary school of concern last year (two years of increased suspensions) had 47 fewer suspensions in 2006-2007.

2. Identify the practices, programs, or strategies and the corresponding resource allocations to which you attribute the progress.

PBIS continues to demonstrate its success in the eight schools where it is being implemented. This initiative is funded through several grants and is led by school psychologists and pupil personnel workers. Monthly reviews of discipline and attendance by Pupil Services Teams have resulted in reductions to suspensions, improved behavioral plans and increases in attendance rates. At the secondary level, Saturday School and after school detention are implemented in place of out-of-school suspension in order to keep students participating in high quality instruction while still having consequences for behavioral infractions. Each school has an in-school suspension program which allows students to continue with instructional materials under the direction of a staff member while experiencing consequences for minor negative behaviors that disrupt instruction. Funding for Saturday School is through the Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant.

Intervention initiatives include the inclusion of a behavioral specialist who works with students, their families, and staff in an early intervention model to prevent behavioral problems that may later lead to special education placements. In addition, the General Fund supports an Evening Counseling Center that is staffed by school psychologists and counselors to provide individual and family counseling services on academics, behavior, and attendance. Differentiated staffing of pupil personnel workers, counselors, assistant principals, hall monitors, and academic deans addresses the needs of those schools where discipline and attendance data indicate a more significant concern.

Character education continues to support our goal for a safe and orderly learning environment. We have engaged the business community in this initiative by distributing posters that alert all patrons of the business that the owner hires persons of character.

The White Oak Secondary Center provides an alternative educational program for those students who cannot succeed in larger comprehensive high school settings. Three of the students who participated in the program graduated from high school this year. This center is funded through local dollars as well as with some federal special education funds. Title V supports the program with funding for materials and supplies.

Professional development initiatives also support our safe learning environment. Bullying and harassment prevention and identification training was provided for all staff with a focus on counselors and assistant principals. Child abuse, sexual harassment, and suicide prevention and reporting training is provided to all staff annually. Assistant principals and teachers-in-charge receive annual training on student discipline and legal requirements. Annual presentations and training for staff include de-escalation strategies for all staff and targeted professional growth activities for restraint teams, crisis teams, Pupil Services staff and school-based administrators. Based on the recommendations of the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap, St. Mary's County Public Schools conducted a Cultural Proficiency book study and training for administrators.

With regard to direct instruction, research-based materials are used to support classroom activities. Our school system has used Safe and Drug Free Schools and the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment (SASH) prevention funding to purchase items such as *Steps to Respect, Second Step, Bullyproofing your School,* materials for violence free dating,

engaging the bystander, and group therapy materials for working with students that are frequently bullied. Lessons are provided by counselors as needed in prekindergarten through grade 2. A minimum of three to five lessons are required at grades three through nine and are taught by either the counselor or the health education teacher. Through the SASH prevention funds, a brochure on harassment was created and distributed to all students in grades seven and nine.

The Pupil Services section of the system website continues to be enhanced in order to provide parents and students with information and access to important documents such as the bully reporting form.

3. Describe the challenges that exist and the school system's plans for overcoming those challenges along with corresponding resource allocations.

Student with disabilities, males and African American males, in particular, continue to be suspended at a disproportionate rate. Students in grades 7 through 10 account for more than half of the suspensions. Interventions that focus on individual students' academic and social needs will increase our success in keeping these students engaged in learning. The 2008 budget funds a number of initiatives that will directly or indirectly address the reduction of suspensions in the targeted areas.

A new position of coordinator of safety and security will analyze data and provide education and technical assistance to schools. Recommendations from a recent Middle Schools Task Force will be implemented. HSA support teachers will be working at each high school to set up early intervention programs for students who are at risk of failing HSA and thus becoming discouraged and potentially disruptive. A new student information system will allow parents easy and immediate access to their students' discipline records as well as easier access to school staff via e-mail, enhancing parent/school communication on instructional, attendance, and discipline successes and concerns. An additional Title I elementary school will implement PBIS (funded through the Disproportionality Grant). The principal who agreed to implement PBIS left the system this summer and the new principal was not named in time for the team training. She has made a commitment to the program but will need individualized support to ensure implementation with fidelity.

There was an increase in bullying/harassment/sexual harassment suspensions. Additional training for staff and students as well as parent awareness and intervention will focus on early identification of potential perpetrators and appropriate intervention strategies. Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment Prevention grant funds will support initiatives in PBIS schools that tie bullying and harassment prevention to character education and the climate-setting components of PBIS. Great Mills High school will implement the U.S. Department of Justice SPIRIT program to empower student leaders in improving school climate. This school had the highest number of suspensions for the 2006-2007 school year.

In collaboration with the Local Management Board and the Sheriff's Office, SMCPS is participating in an assessment of the emergence of gangs in our community. Preliminary data indicate that while we do not have a significant gang problem in our community, it

would be prudent for us to institute a community effort to discourage gangs from establishing a stronghold here. To that end, SMCPS will host a Youth Forum on Community Safety and will collaborate with the community plan as established by the task force. The Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant fund will partially support this initiative. Assistant principals were trained on gang prevention strategies at their annual meeting in August, 2007. The sheriff is funding D.A.R.E. in 6th grade and this new DARE program includes lessons on gang resistance.

Our capital improvement plan and local budget will support the construction of safety vestibules in the schools where they have not already been implemented.

4. Describe the changes or adjustments that will be made along with the related resource allocations to ensure sufficient progress. Include timelines where appropriate.

   Pupil Services staff increases are all targeted to supporting safety, discipline, dropout prevention, and attendance system initiatives. A pupil personnel worker will work closely with students at White Oak Secondary Center, our alternative program. Pupil personnel workers will also support students involved in wrap around services, drug court and juvenile court. A coordinator of safety and security will focus attention on prevention and education efforts relative to staff and student safety. He will focus on emergency preparedness and analyzing discipline patterns with a charge to develop a strategic plan for reducing infractions. An additional school psychologist will support PBIS and behavior intervention plans, with a focus on the new PBIS school.

   Our new student data system will increase parent-school communication by allowing parents to access attendance and discipline data via the internet. It will also allow staff to more carefully analyze behavioral data and trends. Data will be available to staff and parents in the fall.

   All of the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment grant will support PBIS. The Sheriff's Office will provide staff and materials to implement D.A.R.E. and will ensure that all secondary schools will have at least a part-time school resource officer.

   In collaboration with the Local Management Board, SMCPS will work on gang prevention initiatives for the community and support their initiative relative to Youth Asset Development. Two SMCPS counselors will become trainers in order to broaden the implementation of youth asset development. Assistant principals were trained in August and a youth summit will be conducted in the fall.

I.E
Addressing Specific Student Groups: Career and Technology Education, Early Learning, Gifted and Talented Programs, Special Education

The Bridge to Excellence Act requires local school systems' Annual Updates to address the following specific student groups: Career and Technology Education, Early Learning, Gifted and Talented, and Special Education.

In responses to the previous questions, local school systems may have addressed these student groups. Use this space to report on progress toward outcomes and timelines established in the district's Master Plan and further elaborate on any revisions or adjustments pertinent to these student groups that the school system has made to the Master Plan.

Addressing Specific Student Groups

Career and Technology Education

The *Bridge to Excellence* legislation requires that the Master Plan "shall include goals, objectives, and strategies" for the performance of students enrolled in Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs.

Instructions:
Please respond to these questions/prompts:

1. Describe the school system's progress on the plans to implement Career Clusters and the CTE Pathway Programs as a strategy to improve Career and Technology Education readiness for college and careers.

   Local funding, including Bridge to Excellence funding combined with the federal Perkins grant, is available to support the following specific actions to ensure success to CTE Pathway Programs with industry certification or articulated credit from local institutions of higher education.

   The Local Advisory Council and specific program advisory councils provide direction for state sponsored FAST TRACK programs that have received critical review for statewide implementation in local districts. These councils are active and help conduct required industry reviews and facilitate submission of updated or new program proposals for Pathway Programs. Members of these councils serve to ensure appropriate curriculum, materials, tools, and equipment procurement using the available funding. In addition, these advisory council members offer donations of time, equipment, and materials as supplemental to local funding.

   Recently, renovation funding has been provided for our local Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center as well as home school classrooms and labs. These funds have ensured that industry requirements are met as described in FAST TRACK proposals sponsored by MSDE. All CTE programs have been reviewed to determine if an updated proposal is required or a new program proposal should be submitted which includes articulation with an appropriate institution and an industry certification, if available. All new programs have achieved both for significant value added as required by MSDE program proposals which are aligned to the Maryland State Career Pathway Model. For example, the following programs have both articulated credit and an approved industry certification as part of the program or proposed via a MSDE FAST TRACK submission:

   - Automotive Technology - NATEF/ASE
   - Auto Refinishing - NATEF/ASE
   - Diesel Technology - NATEF/ASE
   - Aviation Technology - FAA
   - Culinary Arts - CAI
   - Graphic Arts - PRINTED
   - Computer Networking - CISCO

- Building Trades (Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Masonry) - NCCER
- Telecommunications - BICSI and HTI+
- Fire Rescue/EMT - MFRI

Regarding articulation, there are over 50 CTE programs with most having articulation agreements that offer over 140 college credits from local institutions.

In addition, staffing for both instruction and administration has been supported via appropriate funding to plan, implement, refine, and manage programs that meet local labor market needs. These positions include teachers, VSST support team, instructional supervisor, CTE resource teacher, site based administrators, and CTE counselors. These professional positions have ensured program compliance with the state required Career Pathway Programs.

The Maryland State Career Framework is the document by which our local system plans and implements all new CTE programs. The combination of organization and direction provided by that document and our local advisory councils and program advisory councils generates the foundation by which all existing programs are updated or new programs are developed, funded, and refined. State FAST TRACK proposals are used to guide all new program implementation.

All academic achievement programs described to facilitate achievement for students in our local school system do include CTE students. The programs that are available through home schools provide both preparation for state assessments or remediation if required for any student who does not successfully pass a required state assessment. These programs are described under Goal 1 and specifically in other areas as appropriate in the plan.

In addition, the CTE section of the Master Plan includes very specific strategies for identifying and assisting any CTE student who might not be successful with one or more state assessments. Specifically, professional positions have been added to the VSST staff to provide individual and small group sessions for any CTE student who needs assistance with any core subject area. Each VSST professional has certification and expertise in one or more core subject areas. Also, each CTE teacher has participated in special high school assessment training events to help them realize the need to include core subject content as part of their technical training. This training helps to ensure a more rigorous blend of academic and technical content in all programs.

Special consultants (ASCD, HSTW, state specialists) that can offer strategic staff development for all CTE teachers are contracted to plan and implement appropriate blended instruction training for academic and CTE staff. This training helps to enhance the instructional options and expertise of CTE teachers that directly improves student performance on state assessments. VSST staff participate in the local IRT training that focuses on high school assessment preparation and test implementation. This approach also helps ensure a direct instructional connection with students at all levels with respect to mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies content.

Finally, VSST staff and all CTE teachers mentor students as part of the system-wide mentoring and advisory program linked to the Career Portfolio graduation requirement. One

section of this required document is academic achievement. Periodic review and counseling and, if required, remediation is scheduled to ensure all students, including CTE are assisted appropriately with respect to each high school assessment. The combination of all these direct strategies provides a comprehensive program to ensure academic success both in course work and state assessments.

2. What actions are included in the Master Plan to ensure access to CTE programs and success for ALL students in CTE programs, including students who are members of special populations?

   Bridge to Excellence funding is available to ensure that CTE programs and students receive appropriate funds for program maintenance and improvement has been an appropriate formula amount. This funding helps to ensure our maintenance of effort in all programs. This funding will be used for staff development and specific program inservice training as well as the procurement of industry standard equipment and supplies to ensure the most contemporary program delivery. Specifically, these funds will address academic and technical GPA as well as retention within specific programs as students realize that they are receiving a state of the art technical training experience. Special education and disadvantaged students also benefit from local funds that support staff development events that focus on differentiated instruction and assessment techniques.

   Consultants will be used to plan and implement appropriate training to address the critical needs of special education and disadvantaged as well as other minority groups who are consistently low performing. These events will help teachers become more skilled at addressing specific instructional situations required to facilitate success for these challenged subgroups.

   Our local school system has clearly defined a rigorous and targeted professional development plan as part of the local Master Plan for school improvement. All elements in this plan have been designed to address federal requirements defined in the NCLB federal legislation and articulated through MSDE requirements in Maryland.

   VSST staff are constantly trained and updated via the special education division in our system which ensures highly trained and capable professionals are available to assist special education students as defined in each IEP.

   All special population students benefit from the special education strategies described in the Master Plan. Examples of these include, but are not limited to, specialized software programs to assist with vision and hearing challenges; inclusion training for special education professionals, and CTE professionals, and paraprofessionals available to assist teachers with highly challenged individuals at our Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center as well as the home schools. All CTE teachers can attend or participate in all specialized training provided and appropriate for special education professionals.

Addressing Specific Student Groups

Early Learning

The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* requires the establishment of performance goals, objectives, and strategies for prekindergarten and kindergarten.

Instructions:
Using the Maryland Model for School Readiness Work Sampling System ™ (WSS) Data, complete Tables 10.1 and 10.2 and respond to the subsequent prompts.

Table 10.1: Percentage of All Kindergarten Students at Readiness Stages

Domain	% Fully Ready			% Approaching Readiness			% Developing Readiness		
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Social and Personal	80	71	73	17	25	22	3	4	5
Language & Literacy	69	56	60	24	37	34	7	7	6
Mathematical Thinking	75	66	67	19	29	27	5	5	6
Scientific Thinking	63	45	44	32	49	50	5	6	7
Social Studies	66	57	57	29	38	39	4	4	4
The Arts	80	66	67	17	30	29	3	4	4
Physical Development	84	77	67	13	21	29	2	2	4
COMPOSITE	80	70	70	17	27	25	2	3	4

Table 10.2: Percentage of Kindergarten Students with Previous Prekindergarten Experience

Domain	% Fully Ready			% Approaching Readiness			% Developing Readiness		
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Language & Literacy	61	72	59	33	25	35	6	3	6
Mathematical Thinking	68	79	68	27	19	27	4	2	5

Addressing Specific Student Groups

Early Learning (continued)

Based on the Examination of the Performance Data:

1. Describe the school system's plans for ensuring the progress of students who begin kindergarten either not ready or approaching readiness as determined by the **Maryland Model for School Readiness** Work Sampling system.

   The following activities/strategies have been developed to ensure the progress of students who begin kindergarten either not ready or approaching readiness:

   - Assessments, such as DIBELS, are administered and students' needs and individual progress tracked through the *Performance Matters* data warehouse system. Intervention programs are designed to meet the students' individual needs.
   - All schools have instructional resource teachers to provide support to teachers and intervention to students based on need.
   - A Three Tier Model for Reading Interventions has been developed which includes identifying scientifically research based reading interventions.
   - The Houghton Mifflin Reading Series has been aligned with the VSC and adopted by SMCPS for use in elementary grades, including prekindergarten and kindergarten, to ensure consistency.
   - *Investigations* has been aligned with the VSC and adopted by SMCPS for use in elementary grades, including kindergarten, to ensure consistency.
   - Intensive staff development in literacy/language development, mathematical thinking, and differentiation of instruction has been delivered and is planned for the coming year.
   - The schools designated as Title I schools have Technical Assistance Teams which include principals, school staff, supervisors, consultants, and central office staff who provide ongoing assistance to improve school performance.
   - After school programs for extended-day programs and tutoring are provided at selected schools.
   - SMCPS have partnered with other agencies, such as the libraries, Head Start, Southern Maryland Child Care Resource Center, and the Tri-County Youth Services Bureau, to provide collaborative workshops and programs for children and families.

2. Describe the changes or adjustments that will be made to address those challenges, along with the corresponding resource allocations. Include timelines where appropriate.

   - Continue training of staff on the implementation of the MMSR and collaboration including enhancing participation of the Department of Special Education to assure participation of preschool special education teachers. Training will take place between August 2007 and February 2008. Funding will be provided through the Maryland State Department of Education MMSR Staff Development Grant.

- Expand the number of children and families receiving support services through the Judy Center Interagency Grant which serves schools in the Lexington Park area. The program will operate year round from July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008. Funding is provided through a MSDE Judy Center Grant, county funds, agency grants, and in-kind contributions from community agencies.
- Judy Center Program strategies include: providing classes for three-year olds, prekindergarteners, and kindertgarteners; increasing the number of dually placed students in Head Start; enhancing services for children from birth through three years of age, providing home visits and parent training opportunities, and providing staff development.
- Identify young children needing English as a Second Language services, identify existing services, identify gaps in services, and collaborate with community partners to assure provision of those services to meet the needs.
- Train prekindergaten and kindergarten teachers to implement the Primary Talent Development Program strategies. Training will begin in July 2007 and implementation will continue throughout the year. Funding will be provided through the MSDE Primary Development grant.
- Enhance collaboration with community agencies/partners to address children and family needs.

Continue assistance and support to schools through the instructional resource teachers, staff development program, the Technical Assistance Teams, the Mentoring Programs, and implementation of the School Improvement Plans.

Addressing Specific Student Groups

Gifted and Talented Programs

The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* §5-401 requires that the updated plan "shall include goals, objectives, and strategies regarding the performance of gifted and talented students, as defined in §8-201."

The *Annotated Code of Maryland* §8-201 defines a gifted and talented student as "an elementary or secondary student who is identified by professionally qualified individuals as: (1) Having outstanding talent and performing, or showing the potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other students of a similar age, experience, or environment; (2) Exhibiting high performance capability in intellectual, creative, or artistic areas; (3) Possessing an unusual leadership capacity; or (4) Excelling in specific academic fields.

Instructions:
The focus of the 2007 Master Plan Update is on progress of student performance, means of accelerating student performance, and adjustments made to overcome challenges. In accordance with this focus, local school systems are expected to provide a cohesive, stand-alone response to the prompts outlined below.

1. Describe the school system's process for identifying gifted and talented students. If applicable, you are encouraged to provide data on the numbers and percentages of students identified in each grade band: elementary, middle, and high school.

   SMCPS has developed a process for identifying gifted and talented students entering the third grade using data available through the Primary Talent Development program, as well as data from the SAT-10 and OLSAT assessments that were given in April 2007. During this process, REPI data from the Primary Talent Development cumulative checklists is entered into a database. This data is then cross-referenced with Total Reading and Total Math percentiles and Reading and Math stanines from the Stanford-10 test administration. Also included in the database are the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) SAI scores, which are used as an IQ measure and OLSAT percentile score. Student scores are color coded to make the process visual for teachers and administrators. The color blue represents the highest scoring students, next is green, then yellow, orange, and red.

   When making decisions about student services for gifted and talented students, school teams, comprised of the principal, assistant principal, counselor, teacher, and IRT, look for a preponderance of evidence in the blue and green areas. These students will qualify for full time inclusion in the gifted and talented program, while others will receive specific services only as needed.

   The data cut-off scores for each grade level are included below.

	Blue	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
Grade 3 Identification					
Report Card grades in Reading	S				
Report Card grades in Mathematics	S				
90th percentile or higher on Reading SAT-10	85-99th percentile	75-84th percentile	65-74th percentile	55-64th percentile	Below 54th percentile
90th percentile or higher on Mathematics SAT-10	85-99th percentile	75-84th percentile	65-74th percentile	55-64th percentile	Below 54th percentile
OLSAT SAI Score of 116	116 +	84 – 115	68 – 83		Below 68
SAT-10/OLSAT Stanine	8 or 9	5, 6, or 7	3 or 4		1 or 2
Other Available Data *Please describe:*					

Grade 4 Identification					
Advanced Level on previous year's MSA in Reading	Advanced on MSA	5 points away from Advanced	10 points away from Advanced	15 points away from Advanced	More than 15 points away from Advanced
Advanced Level on previous year's MSA in Mathematics	Advanced on MSA	5 points away from Advanced	10 points away from Advanced	15 points away from Advanced	More than 15 points away from Advanced
Report Card grades in Reading	A	B			
Report Card grades in Mathematics	A	B			
Other Available Data *Please describe:*					

Grade 5 Identification					
Advanced Level on previous year's MSA in Reading	Advanced on MSA	5 points away from Advanced	10 points away from Advanced	15 points away from Advanced	More than 15 points away from Advanced
Advanced Level on previous year's MSA in Mathematics	Advanced on MSA	5 points away from Advanced	10 points away from Advanced	15 points away from Advanced	More than 15 points away from Advanced
Report Card grades in Reading	A	B			
Report Card in Mathematics	A	B			
Other Available Data *Please describe:*					

While much of this data can be obtained for the students enrolled in SMCPS, it is recognized that there are a number of students who enter the school system each year as part of a military family and may come with scores from other assessments. This data may include Johns Hopkins CTY Assessments, DIBELS, End-of-year Benchmark Assessment data, Teacher Recommendation, Out-of-State Testing, IQ Scores, etc.

Data from the 2007-2008 identification process is not available yet.
Middle school students have been identified using MSA scores as well as other formative assessments that are conducted throughout the year. These criteria are reviewed by the

school based team comprised of the principal, assistant principal, counselor, teacher, and IRT. A preponderance of evidence is considered, and decisions are made accordingly.

Honors Reading/Language Arts/Literacy Criteria:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 4 and 5 **AND** 90th percentile on MSA **AND** Teacher recommendation based on DIBELS, SRI, IRI, and other formative assessments	Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 5 and 6 **AND** 90th percentile on MSA **AND** Teacher recommendation based on DIBELS, SRI, IRI, and other formative assessments	Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 6 and 7 **AND** 90th percentile on MSA **AND** Teacher recommendation based on DIBELS, SRI, IRI, and other formative assessments

Honors Mathematics Criteria:

Grade 6 Honors	Grade 7 Honors	Grade 7 Algebra 1
Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 4 and 5 **AND** 90th Percentile on MSA **AND** Teacher recommendation	Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 5 and 6 **AND** 90th Percentile on MSA **AND** Teacher recommendation	Advanced score of 3 on the MSA for grades 5 and 6 **AND** Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test score of 165 *(equates to 85th percentile)*

Grade 8 Algebra 1	Grade 8 Geometry
Proficient scores of 2 on the MSA for grades 6 and 7 **AND** Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test score of 165 *(equates to 85th percentile)*	Successful completion of Algebra 1 and a passing score on the High School Assessment (HSA) in Algebra/Data Analysis

The program options for highly able students are outlined in the high school program of studies and include Honors and Advanced Placement courses. These courses are available to all interested students, and all students are encouraged to enroll. In the case of mathematics and science courses, guidance counselors work closely with students to be sure that prerequisite courses have been completed.

2. Identify the programs and services that the local school system has in place to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. If applicable, please provide this information for each grade band: elementary, middle, and high school.

   All students in grades K-2 participate in the Primary Talent Development program. This program has been funded through a federal Javits sub-grant and MSDE. Students identified

as gifted and talented in grades 3-8 participate in reading/language arts units developed by the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary. These units focus on literary analysis as well as reasoning, writing, research, and the concept of change. A complete list of units and their placement within the curriculum is provided below.

Grade	Title of Unit
2	Beyond Words
3	Journeys and Destinations
4	Literary Reflections
5	Autobiographies
6	Patterns of Change
7	Persuasion
8	The 1940's: A Decade of Change

In addition to the William and Mary curriculum units, the Junior Great Books Shared Inquiry model is used in grades K-8 with different texts as a way to incorporate higher level questioning into literature analysis. At the middle school level, each Reading/Language Arts teacher has been provided a copy of the Pre-AP Vertical Teams Guide for English. Published by the College Board, this manual outlines high-level strategies that can be used to prepare students for the rigor that is associated with Advanced Placement courses.

All students in elementary school are instructed through the *Investigations* program. This program supports an inquiry-based approach to understanding mathematics. Students who have been identified as needing additional support through increased challenge are provided the components of the program that have been designed to meet their needs by introducing additional variables and various other hands-on learning opportunities. In addition to the *Investigations* program, these identified students are supported through the adoption of simulation activities through the Interact Company. The units include *Game Factory*, *Challenge Math Projects*, and *Geometry Challenge*. Individual students who show a mastery of the grade level content have been introduced to the Descartes' Cove program, designed by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth program.

Middle schools offer Honors classes in Reading/Language Arts and mathematics. Middle school mathematics instruction uses the *Connected Mathematics* program, building on the inquiry-based approach implemented at the elementary school level. In grade 7, Algebra I is introduced as an option. In grade 8, Algebra I and Geometry are offered as program options. In addition to placement in specific courses, the students are introduced to the Descartes' Cove program, designed by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth program. This program builds on beginning algebra skills and develops them through completion of a computer-based simulation. Honors Reading/Language Arts instruction incorporates the use of the William and Mary curriculum units and the Junior Great Books shared inquiry models, as well as Pre-AP vertical teams strategies.

Summer programs, such as the Summer Space Camp, have been very effective in nurturing students' curiosity about science and mathematics. This ten-day camp is offered in July and

focuses on five themes: Earth Science, Space Science, Engineering, Rocketry, and Space Citizenship.

3. To the extent possible, please identify school system resources allocated to programs designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

   SMCPS has continued to allocate resources through the general fund, and has increased these resources as necessary to cover grant roll-overs, increasing needs of the expanding program, the addition of a summer Space Camp, and the implementation of the (Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics) STEM Academies. The school system has committed one full-time employee (FTE) to oversee the identification of students and the implementation of the program. In 2007-2008, STEM Academies will be implemented at the elementary, middle, and high school levels to support high achieving science and mathematics students. In addition to the existing central office administrator, one full time STEM coordinator has been hired through STEM grant funding.

   Additional gifted and talented funding is available through the Primary Talent Development and the Project NEXUS grants through MSDE.

4. As you move towards increasing the performance of all students, please describe the school system's long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for accelerating the achievement of gifted and talented students.

   Goal: Ensure that gifted and talented programs are supported by the school system and that adequate funding is available for continuation of program initiatives.

   Both the Primary Talent Development grant and the Project NEXUS grant are in the final year of implementation, and the school system will need to commit to providing these resources starting in the 2008-2009 school year.

   Goal: Student participation in the gifted and talented program should mirror the system demographics.

   With the implementation of the gifted and talented identification process in 2007-2008, continuous monitoring of the GT identification process will need to occur to ensure that the demographics of the program match those of the rest of the district. Criteria may need to be adjusted to become more inclusive. Continued monitoring of PTD implementation will occur to ensure that REPI coding is administered fairly, and focuses on the demonstration of behaviors, not achievement. Professional development will include an increased emphasis of building an understanding of how PTD affects the identification of and available services for highly able elementary school students.

   Goal: Increase student achievement in Reading/Language Arts, and English Honors/Advanced Placement courses.

Use of Pre-AP strategies in middle school Reading/Language Arts will ensure that instruction is appropriately rigorous and that students are introduced to strategies that will lead to success in Advanced Placement courses at the high school level.

Goal: Increase program options available to highly able mathematics students.

In addition to the Investigations and Connected Mathematics programs, continued emphasis needs to be placed on the identification of and service to highly able mathematics students. With the collaboration of the Supervisor of Mathematics, curriculum maps and program options will be updated to include more specific strategies and timelines for meeting the needs of highly able students. Addition of a Pre-Algebra class at the sixth grade level is being considered and is a long-range goal of both the mathematics and gifted and talented offices.

Goal: Increase student achievement in Honors and Advanced Placement courses.

This will be achieved through the formal identification of student support systems, such as the Advanced Course Support class at Great Mills High School. These systems will need to be identified and implemented with fidelity to ensure that underserved and underrepresented students are supported through rigorous course work. MSA, HSA, and AP scores should reflect the dedication to rigor and support in all schools.

Goal: Increase parent and community awareness of the gifted and talented program options available in the St. Mary's County Public Schools.

This will be achieved through an update of the system gifted and talented website and the development of a gifted and talented handbook which describes the identification process as well as program options.

Addressing Specific Student Subgroups

Special Education

The *Bridge to Excellence* legislation requires that each updated Master Plan "shall include goals, objectives, and strategies" for the subgroup of special education. Both Federal and State legislation require that states have accountability systems that align with academic content standards for all students. In addition, the Federal special education legislation commonly known as IDEA also requires that a child's needs resulting from a disability be addressed "so that they may be involved in and progress in the general curriculum." Information requested about special education aligns with reporting requirements of the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Therefore, each school system's annual submission that is aligned with Federal and State law will document and support with evidence the progress in academic achievement for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) as well as update plans to accelerate performance to ensure that the special education subgroup makes Adequate Yearly Progress at the system and individual school level. Changes to strategies or specific areas of progress that have improved performance should be discussed in the Update, particularly for schools or systems in improvement.

As you complete the 2007 Master Plan Update, you may wish to consider the following Special Education issues <u>within</u> your responses throughout the document. This section is not to be completed as a stand-alone section.

- **Access.** How are students accessing the general education curriculum at elementary, middle and high school levels and across various content areas?

- **Collaboration with General Educators**. How is the local school system ensuring collaboration between general and special education staff, including such opportunities as joint curricular planning, provision of instructional and testing accommodations, supplementary aids and supports, and modifications to the curriculum?

- **Professional Development and Qualified Staff**.

    - How is the local school system ensuring the participation of special education teachers and leadership in content-related professional development to promote student achievement?

    - How is the local school system ensuring that professional development of general education staff incorporates sufficient special education pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions to enable educators to make the general education curriculum and environment accessible for all children?

I.F
Cross-Cutting Themes:
Educational Technology, Education That Is Multicultural, Fine Arts

In responses to the previous questions, districts may have addressed the following cross-cutting themes. Use this space to report on progress toward outcomes and timelines established in the Master Plan and further elaborate on any revisions or adjustments pertinent to these cross-cutting themes that the school system has made to the Master Plan.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Educational Technology

The Bridge to Excellence legislation requires that the Master Plan "shall include goals, objectives, and strategies" for addressing how technology will be integrated into curriculum, instruction, and high quality professional development in alignment with the objectives of the Maryland Plan for Technology in Education and local technology plans. The five main objectives of the State plan are as follows:

- Objective 1: Access to high performance technology and its rich resources is universal;
- Objective 2: All educators will be highly knowledgeable and skilled, capable of effectively using technology tools and digital content;
- Objective 3: Technology tools and digital content that engage our students will be seamlessly integrated into all classrooms on a regular basis;
- Objective 4: Technology will be used effectively to improve school administrative functions and operational processes; and
- Objective 5: Effective research, evaluation and assessment will result in accountability and continuous improvement in the implementation and use of technology.

Instructions:
In addition to including technology strategies across the Master Plan aligned to State and local technology plans, the local school system Master Plan Update should outline specifically how it will use all sources of funding in meeting No Child Left Behind Statutory Goals:

- Improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary schools and secondary schools.
- To assist every student in crossing the digital divide by ensuring that every student is technologically literate by the time the student finishes the eighth grade, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, gender, family income, geographic location, or disability.
- To encourage the effective integration of technology resources and systems with teacher training and curriculum development to establish research-based instructional methods that can be widely implemented as best practices by State educational agencies and local educational agencies.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Educational Technology (continued)

Provide data from the Maryland Technology Inventory, local data and data from any other relevant sources to address the following questions:

1. Describe the progress that was made in 2006-2007 toward meeting educational technology goals.

   SMCPS was effective in providing technology to meet the goals outlined in the Master Plan (Goal 1) for both students and teachers. SMCPS provided online resources, software, and professional development for students and teachers. The library Media specialists are the technology contacts for most schools so information is disseminated through them and the SMCPS website.

   SMCPS continued to require that each school has an active technology committee that is a subgroup of the School Improvement Teams. These teams are co-chaired by the principal and school library media specialists.

2. Identify the key practices, programs, or strategies to which you attribute the progress. Include supporting data and evaluation results as appropriate.

   Data Warehouse: The data warehouse is a web-based tool that allows SMCPS to delve into a wide variety of data in order to make informed decisions about students. SMCPS uses the data to identify strengths and weaknesses in student, teacher, and school performance. This year additional assessments (math unit assessments and four quarterly reading assessments) were administered as well as end-of-course assessments for all non-HSA courses.

   The data warehouse remains the central repository of data from various sources, e.g., MSA/HSA, CTBS, Stanford 10, DIBELS, SAT, ACT, local formative assessments, attendance and discipline, and is used for the storage, retrieval, and management of such data. It provides a snapshot of a student or class at a particular time as well as providing trend analysis. The reports allow the user to filter by various subgroups and qualifiers in order to drill down further into the data.

   In 2006-2007 one of the most positive changes that occurred across the system was that most teachers took ownership of their students' data K-8 and in the HSA courses in order to articulate specific discussion of students' needs during grade level/department meetings and county content assessment review meetings. These data review meetings have been instituted at each building in order to create collaborative professional learning communities. (Goal 3) In order to successfully put data into the teachers' hands, professional development was provided in a variety of methods. Central office personnel visited schools during grade level/department team meetings as well as the instructional resource teachers/HSA lead teachers continued to provide direct assistance at each building.

Cognitive Tutor: SMCPS continued to provide *Cognitive Tutor* to Algebra 1 students in high school. (Goal 1) All new Algebra teachers were provided training opportunities in the use of the application.

Online Access: SMCPS did form a partnership with the local cable company and St. Mary's County government to gain access to its Internet backbone.

Online Resources: All SMCPS are wired and have access to a variety of sources from which to gather information. SMCPS (centrally) provided online resources for students and staff through participation with the MD K12 Online SIRS, WorldBook, DIBELS, Science Resource Center, Science Online, and UnitedStreaming. Professional development was provided through the library media specialist or central office at various times throughout the year. Additionally, the SMCPS intranet has become an electronic repository for SMCPS curriculum maps, units, and lesson seeds. (Goal 1)

Each elementary building provided direct access for teachers to the University of Oregon DIBELS data web site. Teacher's access to this web site (http://dibels.uoregon.edu/data) provides detail reports of a student's progress or deficiencies in a particular area of reading (oral reading fluency, phonemic awareness, word use fluency, etc.) Each school's IRT offers professional development to staff under the direction of the Supervisor of Reading Language Arts.

Communications: SMCPS continued to expand its communication with the community through the *ParentLink* telephone notification system and the Channel 96 education programming channel. Schools provided additional programming for Channel 96. One hundred percent (100%) of SMCPS administration has access to the voice broadcast system. (Goal 4) Additionally the SMCPS attempts to provide students, parents, and the community with current information.

Electronic Grade Books/Report Cards: SMCPS continued to provide electronic grade books for all grades (Easy Grade Pro). SMCPS fully implemented a new primary report card (Pre-Kindergarten through grade 2) which eliminated the use of the NCR reports. The primary report card is currently a word document that the county is converting to a full electronic version for rollout in the 2007-2008 *eSchoolPlus* student information system. (Goal 1 and 4)

Professional Development: First and foremost, the implementation of the data warehouse across the system provided a means for content area supervisors to be able to analyze data down to the individual student level in order to make data driven decisions about students. Supervisors provided differentiated professional development about the data analysis of county-wide formative assessments in order to impact instruction in a timely manner. (Goal 3) Additionally, SMCPS content area supervisors have embraced the need to integrate technology into their content area professional development. Approximately 72 percent of the staff has received focused technology integration professional development.

TestPilot: Professional development was provided for this online testing program in the spring of 2007. Teachers and administrators were provided an overview of the system with follow-up support offered on a request basis. SMCPS will continue to provide professional development in order to encourage staff to provide online testing for students. It is our intent to use TestPilot as a method for allowing students to practice for the Science Online MSA. TestPilot data can be imported into the data warehouse so that it can be an alternative/substitute for some of the scanned assessments.

Technology Integrator Trainer: SMCPS added a technology resource position that allowed the system to provide ongoing, differentiated technology training during the school day as well as after school hours. The trainer can help support SMCPS' goal to have 100 percent of all teachers and administrators "technology literate" according to the MSDE Teacher Technology Standards. (Goal 1)

STEM: SMCPS used its planning grant to determine which technology would be included in the new Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics programs in grades 4, 6, and 9. The STEM program will integrate the use of wireless and SMART technology in the classrooms. (Goal 1)

Smart Technology: Elementary schools were targeted for the integration of InterWrite Tablets and TurningPoint Response Pads (Educational Technology Title IID) into the classrooms. One set was purchased for each school and professional development was organized in spring 2007 for four staff members at each site. These staff members participated in 2 two-hour trainings led by the company as well as provided an opportunity in June 2007 to receive one additional day. Since the training in the spring, some of the elementary schools have used other funds to purchase additional sets of the smart technology.

Special Education and Technology: SMCPS continues to provide support for hardware and software necessary to meet a student's Individualized Education Plan and 504 plans. (Goal 1) Multiple opportunities for professional development were provided to prepare Special Education teachers for the use of the online IEP program provided by MSDE and JHU. In the high schools where co-teaching is occurring SmartBoards were purchased through a Special Education grant.

eSchoolPlus: SMCPS began migration in January 2007 to *eSchoolPlus*, a new student information system with a go-live date of Fall 2007.

3. Describe where challenges in making progress toward meeting educational technology goals are evident.

Staffing: SMCPS falls below the state staffing recommendations to support technology. (SMCPS Framework for Technology Objective 1 and Appendix A) Currently SMCPS is staffed at 50 percent of the state recommended support technology personnel.

Digital Learning: SMCPS targeted a committee to look into the use of online learning our Home Hospital Students and summer school program. The committee was given access to some of the programs but was unable to find the funds to support the implementation of the programs. (Goal 1)

Online Access: SMCPS would like to have high speed at all its elementary schools and increased bandwidth to the Internet backbone. (SMCPS Framework for Technology Objectives 2-3)

Life Cycle Replacement: Although the SMCPS student to computer ratio is 3:1, funding to sustain adequate lifecycle replacement continues to be a challenge for life cycle replacement which is currently at a ten year cycle. (SMCPS Framework for Technology Objective 1)

Data Warehouse: Every teacher was provided access to the data warehouse by providing an upgraded computer on the teacher's desk. (Goal 1) The increase in additional assessments added strain to the central office personnel. Each content area has only one supervisor to oversee the creation of assessments although SMCPS teachers are paid to participate in item creation, review and editing of assessments. Additional human resources are needed for both the assessment creation, review and the scanning process and software/hardware will help SMCPS meet the teachers' demand.

Primary Report Card: SMCPS intends to provide a fully electronic tool in Fall 2007 that will allow all primary teachers to have full electronic access to their report card as currently provided to teachers in grades 3-12. (Goal 1)

Online Learning: SMCPS needs to aggressively investigate access to digital learning. Access, cost, and alignment of the digital content with Maryland curriculum are challenges to our system. (Goal 1)

4. Describe the plans for addressing those challenges and include a description of the adjustments that will be made to the Master Plan and local Technology Plan. Include timelines where appropriate.

   With each budget cycle, SMCPS continues to request additional human/financial resources targeting technology in our Master Plan. Funding continues to be a challenge.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Education That Is Multicultural

The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act* requires that each school system's *Master Plan and Master Plan Annual Update* include goals and strategies for the cross-cutting theme **Education That Is Multicultural** (**ETM**). The ETM Regulation[22] defines Education That Is Multicultural as a "continuous, integrated, multiethnic multidisciplinary process for educating all students about commonality and diversity. It prepares students to live, learn, interact and work creatively in an interdependent global society." Education That is Multicultural supports academic achievement and positive interpersonal and inter-group relations and encompasses five areas – curriculum, instruction, staff development, instructional resources, and school climate. ETM initiatives rely on parent involvement and community support.

Instructions:
Discuss the progress toward meeting Education That is Multicultural goals by responding to the following questions:

1. Identify the major ETM goals that were addressed by the school system during the 2006-2007 academic year. In your response, be sure to address the following areas:

    - Curriculum
    - Instruction
    - Staff Development
    - Instructional Resources
    - School Climate

    The Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap
    St. Mary's County Public Schools created a task force to respond to the ESEA Goal 1 in the Master Plan, "By 2013-14, ALL students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics."

    At a Board of Education meeting on November 29, 2005, the Superintendent's Task Force chairs presented school system data illustrating the gaps in student achievement in all content areas. Although the recommendations were made in school year 2005-2006, efforts to implement these recommendations occurred in school year 2006-2007. The following objectives were set for the task force:

    - To develop a plan of site-based, targeted interventions and acceleration programs designed to increase student achievement and eliminate achievement gaps.
    - To develop a process for the community and the school system to share ideas and communicate strategies to increase student achievement, especially for underperforming students.

[22] Code of Maryland Regulations13A.04.05.

- Each school was charged with the task of implementing the task force subcommittee's recommendations for the 2006-2007 school year. The following subcommittees' recommendations were implemented for 2006-2007:

    - Quality Workforce
    - Quality Instruction
    - Cultural Diversity
    - Interventions & Specialty Programs
    - Parent-Student-Community-Business Partners

National Network of Partnership Schools

The National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) provided support and guidance for fifteen (15) schools in St. Mary's County to implement parent involvement activities to comply with the *No Child Left Behind Act.* Schools and teams worked together as action teams to develop school action plans and to implement some of the NNPS tools and approaches. As a result of being affiliated with this initiative, St. Mary's County Public Schools receives ongoing technical assistance from the NNPS staff.

The National Network of Partnership Schools Six (6) Types of Involvement are as follows:

1. Parenting: Assist families with parenting and childrearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.
2. Communicating: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.
3. Volunteering: Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.
4. Learning at Home: Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
5. Decision Making: Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, action teams, and other parent organizations.
6. Collaborating with the Community: Coordinate community resources and services for students, families, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.

Study Circles

The Study Circles process helps schools and school systems address racial and ethnic barriers to student achievement and parent involvement. A Study Circle consists of a small group of approximately 12-15 stakeholders from different ethnic and racial groups in a school or community. The group meets for six 2-hour sessions and they are led by two trained facilitators who are responsible for ensuring that everyone is actively involved in the process.

At the end of the six sessions, participants will have:

- Stronger relationships based on trust

- Learned about each other's culture
- Talked honestly about racial differences
- Confronted racial and ethnic barriers to student achievement and parent involvement
- Found common ground
- Created action steps for change

In addition, parents were given more information on how to help their children. Teachers were given a greater understanding of cultural differences and the effect of race and culture on teaching and learning. The St. Mary's County Public School System along with St. Mary's County Government and St. Mary's College of Maryland collaborated to implement the Study Circle process in St. Mary's County for school system leaders, elected officials, parents, and community stakeholders.

Cultural Proficiency

St. Mary's County implemented Cultural Proficiency training for principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and other school leaders through the school system's Administrative and Supervisory (A&S) meetings. Cultural proficiency is an approach to addressing issues of diversity, inclusiveness, and entitlement; it provides tools and help for a diverse school and work environment. Cultural Proficiency is a way of being that enables both individuals and organizations to respond effectively to people who differ from them.

Each A&S school leader was given a copy of the book *Cultural Proficiency: A manual for School Leaders*. As a result, there was a book discussion at each A&S meeting. In addition, there was cultural proficiency training at many of the monthly A&S meetings. School principals and leaders were expected to facilitate similar discussions and professional development at their respective schools.

Community Partnerships

St. Mary's County Public Schools expanded its initiatives and partnerships with community groups and organizations. The school system, community organizations, and groups collaborated on many community initiatives. Some of the partners included: the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, the St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce, the Local Management Board (LMB), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Faith Leaders, St. Mary's College, the College of Southern Maryland, and the St. Mary's County Government. These partnerships enabled the school system to collaborate with community leaders and organizations for the benefit of the children in our school system.

The Education Trust, Inc.

The partnership with the Education Trust proved to be very beneficial for St. Mary's County Public Schools. Although the Education Trust provided professional development for each school in the school system via the Administrative and Supervisor meetings, their primary work and focus occurred within three of the school system's schools that required the greatest academic need.

2. Describe the progress that was made toward meeting these goals and the programs, practices, strategies, or initiatives to which you attribute the progress.

The Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap

As the Task Force entered its second year, the focus of the Task Force's work shifted from making school system recommendations to a focus on individual school needs. In addition, the Task Force continued to implement the recommendations made during the 2005-2006 school year. The chairpersons of the Task Force provided the superintendent and the Board of Education with an update on the progress the school system made toward the implementation of the recommendations and the progress toward the elimination of the achievement gaps.

The school system successfully implemented many of the Task Force's twenty two recommendations. The following are some of the recommendations that were implemented during the 2006-2007 school year:

Quality Workforce Recommendations

- A recruitment specialist position was added to the Department of Human Resources. The primary responsibility of this position will be to recruit candidates of color.
- The Human Resources Department continues to visit Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's), for quality candidates of color.
- Each new teacher has been provided with a mentor teacher who will meet with them throughout the school year to provide ongoing support.
- Professional Development will move away from random professional development toward job-embedded, continual professional development opportunities.

Instructional Quality Recommendations

- The school system has placed greater emphasis on ensuring that more African American and Economically Disadvantaged students are taking the PSAT, SAT, and AP exams. In addition, more African American students are being targeted to take more Advanced Placement (AP) classes.
- The MSDE/Reginald F. Lewis Museum "An African American Journey" curriculum has been placed on the school system's intranet for all schools to access.
- The Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center is allowing greater access to African American and Economically Disadvantaged students through the Tech Connect program. These students will have an opportunity to experience courses at the Career and Technology Center in their ninth grade year.
- More grade level teacher collaboration centered around student achievement than in previous years.

Cultural Diversity Recommendations

- The SMCPS is providing ongoing Cultural Diversity training for principals, supervisors, and other school system leaders.
- The MSDE/Reginald F. Lewis Museum "An African American Journey" curriculum has been placed on the school system's intranet for all schools to access.

- Study Circles is a community-wide initiative that is providing an ongoing structured discussion around race, class, and ethnic differences.
- The school system was able to secure a teacher from China to provide Chinese language courses to students in SMCPS.

Intervention and Special Programs Recommendations

- The school system has placed additional resources in the 2007-2008 Proposed Budget for after school initiatives for Tutoring and Mentoring opportunities.
- Through the recommendation of the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force, each school has been asked to create a School Based Task Force to focus on students in need of additional academic support.
- Additional schools in the district have initiated the Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports (PBIS) program to reward positive student behavior.
- Southern Maryland College Access Network (SoCAN) provides a support person at the high school level to help first generation students prepare for college/post-secondary education.
- The school system is providing schools with an Academic Literacy program for all students reading below grade level and not performing at proficient levels on MSA reading.

Parent-Community-Business Partnerships Recommendations

- The superintendent created the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap to address the academic achievement gap between certain student groups - African American, Economically Disadvantage, and Students with Learning Disabilities.
- Through the Department of Academic Support, SMCPS is meeting with student leaders to solicit recommendations on issues confronting students in St. Mary's County.
- The superintendent has hosted a meeting of approximately twenty faith leaders to solicit their support and recommendations on how we can work collaboratively to support students in St. Mary's County.

National Network of Partnership Schools

To increase the effectiveness of parent involvement, St. Mary's County Public Schools became a member of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS). This is a collaboration with Johns Hopkins University. The majority of the schools in the school system have signed up to be members of NNPS. As a result of their membership, the schools were provided ongoing professional development and support through district level meetings. School teams worked together as action teams to develop school action plans.

Study Circles

As a result of collaborating with St. Mary's College and the St. Mary's County Government, this collaboration was able to facilitate three successful study circles in the county. The three collaborating institutions were able to successfully train approximately ten facilitators who were able to coordinate and initiate this process.

The organizers of the Study Circle process promoted this initiative at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Celebration at St. Mary's College. At this event, the organizers were able to sign up approximately seventy volunteers. Of this initial group that signed up, more than half participated in one of the three circles. This process has allowed key stakeholders from the school system, county government, local colleges, and the community to discuss matters of race, culture, and class that impedes progress in St. Mary's County.

Cultural Proficiency

At each Administrative and Supervisory (A&S) professional development monthly meeting, school system leaders led directors, principals, supervisors, and coordinators in a book discussion of the book *Cultural Proficiency: A manual for School Leaders.* Each A&S school system leader was given a copy of this book and they were expected to read and discuss portions of the book at the A&S meetings.

After principals were trained and equipped with the skills and knowledge to lead cultural proficiency discussions, they were expected to provide their staffs with professional development in this area as well. In addition, each school's Education That is Multicultural (ETM) representative was provided with similar training so that they would be able to assist their principal with the implementation of this work back at their respective schools.

Community Partnerships

As a result of expanding community partnerships, the school system was able to collaborate with key stakeholders and influential community organizations on a number of projects. In addition, the projects created additional academic and enrichment opportunities for St. Mary's County students.

The Education Trust, Inc.

The partnership with the Education Trust allowed St. Mary's County to assess how we use our resources - including time and talent. The Education Trust used school level artifacts to examine the alignment between time, effort, and standards. Artifacts such as teacher assignments, student transcripts, and the master schedule provided critical information into the educational experience available to different students within St. Mary's County. This partnership allowed St. Mary's County to address the systemic flaws that prevent rigorous instruction, accelerated learning, and the dedication to student proficiency.

3. Describe where challenges in meeting ETM goals are evident.

To effectively meet the challenges of the ETM goals, St. Mary's County Public Schools must confront the following challenges:

The Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap

As the focus of the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force shifts to each school's School Based Task Force, each school must focus on the monitoring of their student data and the implementation of the recommendations at their schools. In addition, the following will be concerns for the Task Force:

- Implementing the necessary Blue Ribbon Task Force's recommendations at each school.
- Ensuring that each school properly monitors the progress of their student groups who have demonstrated academic need.

National Network of Partnership Schools

The following challenges exist for St. Mary's County Public Schools as we attempt to implement the National Network of Partnership Schools initiative:

- There is a lack of parent involvement at the Middle and High School level.
- There is a need to have every school in the school system become an active member of NNPS.
- The need to organize more effective, goal-oriented partnership programs at the district level and in all of our schools.

Study Circles

The school system partnered with St. Mary's College and St. Mary's County Government to offer the Study Circle process to the St. Mary's community. The challenges for the 2007-2008 school year will be as follows:

- Instead of focusing on the community Study Circles, the school system will offer the Study Circles process to select schools within the school district.
- There will be a need to continue to train additional facilitators.
- The facilitators of the Study Circle process must assist the schools with the recruitment of students, parents, and staff.

Cultural Proficiency

School system leaders were provided Cultural Proficiency training during the 2006-2007 A&S monthly meetings. The following will be challenges for the 2007-2008 school year:

- Finding opportunities to continue the Cultural Proficiency work from the previous school term.
- Providing Cultural Proficiency training for new employees to the school system.
- Ensuring that school principals and ETM representatives are providing teachers at their schools with Cultural Proficiency training.

Community Partnerships

School system leaders have invested significant time in building relationships with community leaders and collaborating with community organizations:

- School leaders must maintain the current partnerships that have been developed.
- School leaders must continue building relationships and partnerships with community leaders and organizations.
- School leaders must continue to assess partnerships to ensure that they are meaningful and beneficial for children.

The Education Trust, Inc.

The Standards in Practice (SIP) work of the Education Trust is designed to create school leaders who are trained to provide training to other staff members:

- The primary challenge for staff members will be to maintain the progress that was made last school year with the SIP process.
- Ensuring that school leaders implement the SIP process with fidelity as they attempt to train others in the SIP process.

4. Describe the changes, adjustments, or revisions that will be made to programs or strategies for 2007-2008 to address the identified challenges and ensure progress.

For the 2007-2008 school year, St. Mary's County Public Schools will continue to implement the following initiatives to meet the goals of ETM:

- The Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap
- National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS)
- Study Circles
- Cultural Proficiency Training
- Community Partnerships with the business community, the County Council of Parent Teacher Associations, the St. Mary's County NAACP, the faith based community in St. Mary's County, and other community stakeholders
- The Education Trust

The work of ***the Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Task Force to Eliminate the Achievement Gap*** will continue into the 2007-2008 school year. The task force's focus will continue to be on the implementation of the recommendations from the 2005-2006 school year. Although many of the recommendations have been implemented, many of the other recommendations will take additional work and resources. In addition, the task force will continue to provide monitoring and a greater focus at the school level.

St. Mary's County Public Schools will continue to strengthen its partnership with the ***National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS)*** by enabling more schools to join the network. We will make it more feasible for schools to attend district level meetings by reducing the number of meetings and by holding the meetings at a time that is conducive to school representative schedules.

Given that cultural and racial differences can negatively impact student achievement, St. Mary's County Public Schools will continue to institute the ***Study Circles Program***. The Study Circles process has allowed our school system and community to discuss cultural and social issues that impact student achievement.

St. Mary's County Public Schools will also continue to initiate ***Cultural Proficiency*** training for students and educators. In addition, we will provide intense Cultural Proficiency training for new teachers and staff members. The Cultural Proficiency approach has helped staff members understand the importance of building positive relationships with students, parents,

and colleagues. It has also helped educators understand the importance of having high expectations for all students. The Cultural Proficiency training has provided our educators with the tools to respond effectively to children and adults who differ from them.

The superintendent and the superintendent's leadership team will continue to meet with and establish ***Community Partnerships*** with groups and organizations. There are a series of partnerships, events, and meetings scheduled for the 2007-2008 school year for Patuxent River Naval Air Station, the business community and the Chamber of Commerce, the Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), the faith based community, student groups, and many other civic and social organizations. In addition, the superintendent along with school leaders will continue to meet with community members and stakeholder groups to discuss pertinent matters that impact St. Mary's County Public Schools.

St. Mary's County Public Schools will continue a limited partnership with ***The Education Trust, Inc.*** for the 2007-2008 school year. Given that the Education Trust has provided district-wide training for the 2006-2007 school year, St. Mary's County educators who have been provided training with the Standards in Practice (SIP) process will provide training to other educators in the school system.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Fine Arts

Note: The questions for addressing this cross-cutting theme are included as part of the Fine Arts Grant application, located in Part II of this document, to be submitted by August 15, 2007

Clarifying Questions and Responses

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.i Maryland School Assessment	**Reading** Grade Band Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs): E = 67.2%; M = 66.3%; H= 52.2%	Did the LSS thoroughly analyze student performance data including subgroup and grade level data in identifying areas of greatest success and areas of greatest concern? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for achievement?	There is no mention that African Americans did not make AMO as a group. (p.28) It is unclear how SMCPS will address this subpopulation. **Response:** A variety of data, drilled down to individual students, provides useful information related to skill deficits and allows individual children to be systematically matched with research based, MSDE approved, reading interventions that address their areas of identified need. DIBELS' oral reading fluency results identify students in need of fluency intervention and phonics support. Based on DIBELS results, students are selected for inclusion in intervention groups using Read Naturally for fluency and Fundations, a derivative of Wilson Reading, for fluency and phonics development in the primary grades. In addition, we are providing REWARDS to our intermediate level elementary students to support phonetic decoding of multi-syllabic words. Our system level quarterly reading benchmark assessments also provide useful performance information regarding students' ability to read grade level materials with adequate comprehension skills. After an analysis of quarterly benchmarks, students are placed in intervention groups that address comprehension and use programs such as the below-level-readers from our core Houghton Mifflin reading program and Soar to Success. It should be noted as well that students with extreme deficits, including those students with IEP's, are included in these research based programmatic intervention groups. Increased levels of academic need warrant additional instructional time in small intervention groups. As a result, students are saturated with targeted instruction and are having multiple intervention groups throughout the day taught by numerous service providers. Some students receive a "double" or "triple" dose of intervention instruction. Middle school does not address specific interventions, reading core program or positions that may have been provided to yield smaller class sizes. **Response:** Students in middle school use *The Language of Literature* by McDougal Littell as their core program. *Bridges to Literature* by McDougall Littell is also used by some students, but as a supplemental program, not a replacement for the

			core program. *Bridges to Literature* is a reading program designed for struggling readers, and reinforces the skills and processes of reading at a lower instructional reading level. The students also use a variety of trade books and novels for their guided reading. The following interventions are in place for those students who are not on grade level for reading: • Wilson Reading System - for severe decoding difficulty • REWARDS - for decoding multi - syllabic words • Six Minute Solution to Fluency - to increase fluency • Read Naturally - to increase fluency • Soar to Success - to increase comprehension No additional staff was required to yield smaller classes; only the allocation of current teachers was revised to reflect student need. The structure of the 90 minute reading/language arts course allows for smaller class sizes. During the first 45 minute period students are heterogeneously grouped; during the second 45 minute period students are grouped by skill level. Above and on grade level groups are larger, while students who are below grade level and require intensive intervention are in small groups afforded by the larger groups at the higher skill levels. Please clarify the data on p. 29 which lists an increase for special education students. It is unclear from where this came. **Response:** The increase in special education student performance refers to the English II HSA. * Attached please find a list of approved research-based interventions for SMCPS.

Overview of
Scientifically Research Based Reading Instruction in
St. Mary's County Public Schools

	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Fluency	Vocabulary	Comprehension
Assessment Skills and Process of Reading	DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency DIBELS Phoneme (ES)Segmentation Fluency (ES)	DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency AIMSweb Oral Reading Fluency(MS)	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency AIMSsweb Oral Reading Fluency (MS)	DIBELS Word Use Fluency(ES)	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency(ES) DIBELS Retell Fluency(ES) AIMSsweb MAZE(MS)
Instruction	Houghton Mifflin Reading K-6	Houghton Mifflin Reading K-6	Houghton Mifflin Reading PreK-5 The Language of Literat ure 6-8	Houghton Mifflin Reading The Language of Literature 6-8	Houghton Mifflin PreK-6 The Language of Literature 6-8
Approved Interventions	Phonemic Awareness for Young Children by Marilyn Jager Adams et. al Road to the Code Earobics	Fundations Grades K-5 Rewards Program Grades 4-9 Wilson Reading System Grades 6-9 (intensive need)	Read Naturally Grades 1-12 Six Minute Solution to Fluency Grades 3-12 Other program or fluency practice with any text is acceptable	Continue exposure to new words through the core reading program Provide professional development to enhance instructional strategies (Isobel Beck strategies and other highly regarded experts)	Bridges to Literature Grades 6-8 HS Academic Literacy Approved Materials Soar to Success Any grade
Reading Benchmark Assessments Quarterly Grades 3-8 Bi-yearly Grade 2		Grades 2-4		Grades 2-8	Grades 2-8
State Assessment (MSA)		Grade 3 Selected Responses		Grades 3-8 Selected Responses	Grades 3-8 Selected Responses Brief Constructed Responses

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.i Maryland School Assessment (continued)	**Math –** Grade Band Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs): E = 63.9%; M = 50.0%; H = 38.6%	Did the LSS thoroughly analyze student performance data including subgroup and grade level data in identifying areas of greatest success and areas of greatest concern? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for achievement?	. .

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- On page 9, for African American elementary students the Executive Summary lists a 10.9 percentage point gain which differs from the data contained in the percent proficiency table that was sent to local school systems. Why is there a difference?

Response: Based on the data in the proficiency table, the Executive Summary will be revised to reflect the 10.5 percentage point gain.

- The core Math program, *Connected Mathematics* (p.35), does not indicate how it is monitored and whether professional development is provided. Please elaborate.

Response: The *Connected Mathematics* program is monitored after each unit of instruction using common assessments; the results of which are loaded into the data warehouse. Teachers and administrators are able to drill down to the particular grade level VSC indicator to measure two things: proficiency and value-added growth for each student. Professional development for teachers is provided throughout the year through the support of Mathematics Instructional Resource Teachers, assigned to each middle school. The resource teacher provides support at grade level team meetings and/or teacher planning time. Full day/half-day substitutes are provided for teachers to receive additional professional development regarding the instruction of *Connected Mathematics,* specifically with the *"Investigations"* that begins each new unit. Additionally, full day paid summer workshops are offered to all middle school teachers to further their understanding of *Connected Mathematics.*

- Please describe how data is used to link interventions to identified student needs by subgroups. Please describe the interventions used.

Response: Student data is used in two ways: to evaluate proficiency and their value-added growth. *Student Proficiency* is quantified by various thresholds determined by longitudinal data on particular VSC indicators. *Value Added Growth* is assessed by the difference between a student's most recent performances on a particular VSC indicator and where that particular student began the year according to results of their grade level mathematics diagnostic exam. Based on these two quantifiable measures of student performance, combined with the ability of our data warehouse to filter from noticeable grade level deficiencies down to individual student deficiencies, teachers and administrators can focus on particular subgroup needs. Teachers and administrators use professional learning community (PLC) planning time and data dialogue to generate common assessments and construct flex grouping assignments to address particular student strengths and weaknesses across the entire grade level. Tailored interventions include the use of flexible groups based on remediation and/or enrichment, constructed response problems of the week assignments, and extended day programs for the most at-risk students using synthesizing resources such as Study Island. Recursive items of non-performing VSC indicators are included on subsequent common assessments to measure growth.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.ii High School Assessments		Did the LSS thoroughly describe the practices, programs, and/or strategies that the LSS has implemented to support students in passing the High School Assessments? Did the LSS identify challenges and articulate plans for ensuring all students pass the High School Assessments?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- Please describe what plans are being put in place to ensure that effective co-teaching occurs between special education teachers and general education teachers?

Response: Structures are in place to allow co-planning for co-teachers. Co-teaching teams are also members of professional learning communities. The new student information system's electronic grade book allows access for both the general education teacher and the special education teacher. Deliberate effort has been made to keep successful co-teaching teams in place from year to year. Special education teachers attend all content area professional development.

Through the auspices of Johhs Hopkins University, SMCPS was awarded a grant from MSDE to build teacher capacity in co-teaching at each of our three high schools. Due to unforeseen circumstances in the Department of Special Education, SMCPS was unable to implement the grant. We appreciate that MSDE has extended the grant period to the 2007-2008 school year. Implementation will provide professional development to build the capacity of our co-teaching teams.

- It is unclear exactly what interventions are being used for what students and the specific content area. Please clarify exactly which interventions are being used for what student groups in the assessed areas.

Response: Students are matched to appropriate intervention specific to HSA content using student performance data. Specific interventions for each of the HSAs are provided in the table below:

High School Assessment Interventions

	Interventions	Student Groups
Algebra/Data Analysis	• *Cognitive Tutor* • *Accelerated Mathematics* • Modeling using Overhead Graphing Calculators • Reteaching • Individual Tutoring • Small Group Instruction • Algebra 1 Acceleration Course for Extra Time • After School Sessions	American Indian/Alaskan Native African American FARMS Special Education (1)
Biology	• Reteaching • Individual Tutoring • Small Group Instruction • After School Sessions	American Indian/Alaskan Native African American FARMS Special Education (1)
English 10	• Reteaching • Individual Tutoring • Small Group Instruction • After School Sessions	American Indian/Alaskan Native African American FARMS Special Education (1) LEP (2)
Government	• Reteaching • Individual Tutoring • Small Group Instruction • Review Courses • After School Sessions	American Indian/Alaskan Native African American FARMS Special Education (1)

(1)Co-taught class with special education teacher.
(2)Extended time/daily pull-out instruction with LEP teacher.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.iii Attaining English Language Proficiency	**AMAO I & AMAO II**	Did the LSS identify the practices, programs, or strategies contributing to progress? Did the LSS identify challenges by sub score? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for achievement?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- Describe where the challenges are evident in each of the domains. Domains are listed but do not address challenges in terms of SMCPS student performance or the instructional program. Please clarify exactly which interventions are being used for what student groups in the assessed areas. Activities seem to indicate a future state and not what is being implemented currently.

Response: Challenges that are evident in each of the domains based on the performance of English Language Learners (ELL) were determined using the cut score of the lower intermediate skill level of the 2007 *Las Links* assessment results. The domain that was most challenging for students was speaking with 57 percent at the lower intermediate skill level or higher. This was consistent at elementary and secondary levels. The second most challenging domain for students was writing with 65 percent at the lower intermediate skill level or higher. Again this was consistent across grade levels. In the listening domain, 71 percent of students were at the lower intermediate skill level or higher and in the reading domain, 72 percent of students were at the lower intermediate skill level or higher. Students struggled most with these domains at the primary grade levels.

The Hampton Brown series *Avenues* for prekindergarten through elementary grades, and *High Point* at the secondary level, are used as the guide for providing instruction to our English Language Learners. This program offers multi-level strategies that are more appropriately aligned with the students' language and literacy skills. For example, at the beginning level, the focus is on listening and learning which is supported by visuals to help build comprehension. The more advanced students are able to keep reflection journals as an option for building comprehension while increasing their ability and opportunity to write in English, which is clearly an identified weakness in the reading and writing domains. In addition, the series offers opportunities for daily writing activities. Each lesson provides time for literacy and language strategies to improve phonemic awareness and build content specific vocabulary.

In addition, the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers increased instruction for students who were not making progress and increased co-planning with the regular classroom teacher to ensure targeted, aligned, and direct instruction. Assessment data, such as DIBELS, available through the *Performance Matters* data warehouse, was used for progress monitoring throughout the year. Interventions include an emphasis to teach vocabulary in context, build on student's prior knowledge using graphic organizers, and implement *Fundations* to focus on phonics instruction.

Currently the ESOL program is a pull-out model except for at high school where it is a course. We are exploring the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model which is a push-in approach.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.iv Adequate Yearly Progress (School and System)	100% of Schools Making AYP 100% of Title I Schools making AYP	Did the LSS articulate strategies to support all schools in making AYP? Did the LSS articulate actions addressing the regulatory requirements for all schools in any phase of improvement are being addressed? If the LSS is in any phase of school system improvement, did the LSS articulate plans to make AYP and exit school system improvement?	What specific steps will SMCPS take to ensure the implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment to make AYP in the schools in improvement? **Response:** Each school in improvement is assigned a Technical Assistance Team to assist with data analysis, curriculum implementation, professional development, school organization, and budget. Content area supervisors work closely with school instructional management teams and teachers, conducting classroom observations, monitoring curriculum implementation, providing curriculum maps and pacing guides, developing benchmark assessments, and providing professional development. Extensive data analysis is available through our data warehouse for progress monitoring to ensure that each student receives the appropriate intervention to achieve proficiency.

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- There is much concern over the lack of progress for all middle schools meeting AYP since 2003. Pg. 61 indicates that a list of research based interventions in mathematics are being identified and implemented. From where did the list come or how is it being developed? How will/does SMCPS determine which interventions will be/are used with what student groups?

Response: The fact that there are not lists of researched based interventions is a concern for our county. SMCPS sent representatives to the Math Expo in the spring of 2007 and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Teachers (NCTM) Regional Conference in the fall of 2007 seeking intervention materials that align with our core programs. As a result of the conference, the Mathematics Resource Teacher is developing a list of interventions for schools. Individual

schools will be given the opportunity to select from these to assist in small group instruction based on student performance data from the *Performance Matters* data warehouse and decisions made by teachers and specialists in collaborative planning. The effectiveness of the programs will be monitored throughout the year based on student growth.

SMCPS is using highly sequenced curricular maps and assessments that uniformly assess students across the county. Using student performance data from the data warehouse, teachers and administrators are reading the results in two ways: proficiency thresholds and value added growth metrics to drive small, flexible group instruction based on student strengths and weaknesses. Teachers and administrators use professional learning community (PLC) planning time and data dialogue to generate common assessments and construct flex grouping assignments to address particular student strengths and weaknesses across the entire grade level. Tailored interventions include the use of flexible groups based on remediation and/or enrichment, constructed response problems of the week assignments, extended day programs for the most at-risk students using synthesizing resources such as Study Island. Recursive items of non-performing VSC indicators are included on subsequent common assessment to measure growth.

SMCPS has implemented extended time (i.e., 90 minutes of consistent mathematics instruction) for most 6^{th} and 7^{th} grade middle school mathematics students across the county and has provided additional mathematics time for on and below grade level 8^{th} graders at two of the county's most in need middle schools.

- No interventions are mentioned for the special education subgroup for schools in improvement. Interventions are generic in nature geared to the entire school. The role of the additional half time teacher at Spring Ridge Middle School is unclear. Specifically, what will the technical assistance teams assigned to each school be doing?

Response: Special Education supervisors have been assigned to each technical assistance team for all schools in improvement. Their role is to provide support for data analysis of special education students. They will review AIMSweb progress monitoring data and compare with benchmark data. The results of the analysis will determine where collaboration with general education partners is appropriate to determine instructional support and/or change. Instructional schedules are developed to provide direct targeted skills instruction with scientifically, research-based instructional interventions. Lexington Park Elementary School had Study Island in place at the end of last school year and will continue its implementation this year. It is currently being considered for implementation at Spring Ridge Middle School.

The half-time instructional resource teacher will focus on the second 45 minute period of the reading language arts course where students are grouped according to skill level. Specifically, she will be providing enrichment for highly able students, thus reducing class sizes and freeing up classroom teachers to provide targeted small group skill-based instruction.

Technical Assistance Teams (TAT) assigned to both Lexington Park Elementary School and Spring Ridge Middle School meet monthly with the instructional management team at each school. The TAT works with the school team to conduct a needs assessment to identify root causes and a plan of action for the school year. Each TAT meeting involves a thorough data analysis for progress monitoring, drilling down to the student level. Classroom walkthroughs are also part of every TAT session. Based on classroom observation any teacher capacity issues are identified; appropriate professional development is identified and delivered in a variety of ways-consultants, peer modeling, workshops. The TAT assists with resources allocation, both personnel and financial.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D. v Attendance Rates	Attendance Rate **AMO** = 94%	Did the LSS thoroughly analyze data, including subgroup data in identifying progress and challenges in improving attendance rates? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for achievement?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- Specific roles are not delineated for the additional staff hired. Please elaborate on this.

Response: The additional staff that supports our attendance initiatives includes a .6 FTE of a pupil personnel worker (PPW) and a 1.0 FTE of an LPN at middle school. As a result of the additional .6 PPW, the PPW's assigned to our most challenged schools (Great Mills High School, Spring Ridge Middle School, and Lexington Park Elementary School) have reduced case loads to allow them sufficient opportunity to work directly with the neediest students and their families. They assist teachers and the administration in these schools in monitoring attendance for those students who have a past history of attendance concerns. They meet with students, hold parent conferences, make home visits, and connect families to local agencies for support that empowers these families to make better educational decisions. The GMHS PPW also works with the Department of Juvenile Services and Drug Court to ensure that students in these programs are supported in the schools to encourage regular attendance and academic improvement. The middle school LPN is split between two middle schools to support the RN's caseload. This allows both the RN and the LPN to provide health counseling to students and their families. They also intervene when students report to the health room with illness or injury. With these two staff members working together we are able to return over 82 percent of students to class rather than send them home.

- Given the magnitude of the system-wide attendance issue as indicated by the data, please describe the systemic approach to this problem, including the actions taken and the solutions proposed.

Response: The systemic approach that SMCPS takes relative to making continued progress in attendance is that we begin by identifying the areas of need. Our

data shows that we are making good progress at elementary schools, even for our specific student groups. Our school of most concern reached 94 percent attendance in the aggregate in the past year. We begin to see our greatest concerns materialize in middle school in certain groups and become more universal at high school. Our belief is that consistent attendance is a community concern so we have a multi-pronged approach to the issue. Overall, we begin with stakeholder awareness of the importance of attendance.

Awareness activities include a public information campaign, such as poster contests in recent years, videos on local TV and on our website, radio ads, information in our student handbook, and presentations to students and staff at the beginning of the school year. Our superintendent of schools talks about the importance of attendance at every opportunity he can such as staff or parent gatherings, his State of Education address, board of education meetings, etc.
The next component is prevention. We have instituted stricter policies and regulations with consequences for our secondary schools. We have changed our school calendar to include a winter and spring break that allows families vacation time. We have a Tech Connect Program at our technical center for incoming 9th graders to transition them successfully to high school. This will reduce or eliminate truancy as students become discouraged and fall behind. We have PBIS programs in e 9 schools, including our challenged sites. This initiative has reduced suspensions from school which interrupt instruction and encourage more absences.

The next component is intervention. We have automated phone calls to parents about attendance. Nurses, counselors and others have taken on mentor duties with students who have had attendance concerns in the past. Parent contact through letters, calls and conferences put all parties on the same page to help the child. Tri County Youth Services Bureau also provides therapeutic support at Spring Ridge Middle School and Great Mills High School while the Core Service Agency provides therapeutic support to Lexington Park Elementary School. These interventions are targeted to our schools with greatest need based on our data and provide an opportunity to work with families as these are schools in a feeder pattern. Our agency partners meet monthly with Student Services and school-based staff to address the needs of particular families who need multi-agency support for consistent attendance. Our state's attorney's office is also trying to become more involved in intervening and has taken approximately one resistant family to court each year.

Monitoring is the next component. In addition to the parent contact above, we have a new web-based student data system that allows parents to check attendance each day, even each period of the day, at high school. Teachers are also better able to identify potential class skippers through this system. Our school improvement teams and our school-based pupil services teams look at data monthly. Through these data review, programs and strategies are identified for implementation or revision. Individual student cases are discussed in the pupil services team meetings and targeted strategies are put in place that will support that student. At Great Mills High School, our technical assistance team is specifically addressing attendance, discipline and dropout prevention as these issues are all connected.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.vi Graduation Rates I.D.vii Dropout Rates	Graduation Rate **AMO** = 83.24% Dropout Rate **AMO** = 3.00%	Did the LSS thoroughly analyze data, including subgroup data in identifying progress and challenges in ensuring all students graduate from high school? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for achievement?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

- Identify the practices, programs and strategies that resulted in improved graduation and dropout rates for special education students. How will SMCPS extrapolate this to other groups, such as graduation for African American and FARMS and dropout for African American, FARMS and LEP?

Response: There has been a concerted effort to provide individualized support for students at risk of dropping out of school. Specifically, individualized support was provided for students with disabilities through their case managers and the IEP process. Similarly, a less-formalized approach was implemented for other students identified by staff at each school. These students were identified for specific, tailored actions. One of the key actions schools are taking is to develop a pyramid of interventions, identifying programs and practices for students at various levels of need. For example, mentors are being assigned for one-on-one mentoring. White Oak Secondary Center, our alternative center, will be implementing the *Check and Connect* dropout prevention strategy, which provides targeted mentoring for students in the identified student groups. St. Mary's County Public Schools was awarded a state discretionary grant to align the Maryland Bridge to Excellence priority and St. Mary's County Public Schools strategic plan of decreasing the dropout rate for students with disabilities to less than 3.81 percent. White Oak Secondary Center was targeted for Year 1 implementation based on its diverse population which includes students with disabilities, discipline issues and lower socio-economic status.

Further, through the White Oak program, the SMCPS family involvement specialist is assigned to this program one day per week to provide parents support and resources that will keep them and their students involved in school. Through the newly-developed Tech-Connect program, at-risk students are provided a unique instructional program in collaboration with the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center. This program offers a tailored pathway and a motivating program designed to keep students interested and focused in school.

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.viii Highly Qualified Staff % of core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers in high and low poverty schools and by level of experience Teacher Retention		Did the LSS thoroughly analyze data in identifying progress and challenges in ensuring all academic subject classes are taught by highly qualified teachers? Did the LSS articulate strategies for recruiting and retaining a highly qualified workforce? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.viii Highly Qualified Staff Paraprofessionals working in Title I schools		Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring that all teachers working in Title I schools continue to be highly qualified? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring that all paraprofessionals working in Title I schools continue to be qualified?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all student*s*).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.viii Highly Qualified Staff % of Teachers receiving high quality professional development		Did the LSS did the LSS identify four key professional development initiatives? Did the LSS describe each of the key professional development initiatives based on the analyzing prompts?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

Section I.D	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.D.ix Safe Schools: Schools Designated as Persistently Dangerous Schools meeting 2 ½% criteria for first time Suspensions and expulsions for sexual harassment, harassment, and bullying Elementary Schools with a Suspension Rate that Exceeds 16 Percent, without a PBIS program		Did the LSS thoroughly analyze data in identifying progress and challenges toward establishing and maintaining safe learning environments? Did the LSS articulate strategies for ensuring continued progress? Did the LSS fully articulate plans for overcoming challenges – including identifying specific strategies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for improvement?	

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).
• SMCPS is commended for the comprehensive strategies for Safe Schools, including addressing cyber-bullying and training for bus drivers. • The evening counseling center is unique and SMCPS is to be recognized for this. • The expansion of PBIS is commendable.

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):

Section I.E. and I.F	State Standards	Gauging Progress	Comments:
I.E. Specific Student Groups: Career and Technology Education, Early Learning, Gifted and Talented education, and special education. Section I.F. Cross Cutting Themes: Education Technology and Education that is Multicultural	Not applicable	Not Applicable	Program or Content Area Specialists provide information to the panel through the Program Review Summary Report.

Commendations (based on areas of the master plan annual update where performance meets or exceeds state standards or where the LSS presents a unique or innovative approach to improving learning opportunities for all students).

Clarifying questions (associated with the LSS's plan for addressing performance in the areas where State standards have not been met):