2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

[X] Public [ ] Private

Cover Sheet

Type of School (Check all that apply)

[X] Elementary [ ] MIddle [ ] High [ ] K-12
[ ] Charter [ ] Title I [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. P. Gail Connolly
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Hickory Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2100 Conowingo Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Bel Air	Maryland	21014-1824
City	State	Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Harford State School Code Number* 0333

Telephone (410) 638-4170 Fax (410) 638-4172

Web site/URL http://www.hcps.org/schools/elementar E-mail Gail.Connolly@hcps.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date

Principal's Signature

Name of Superintendent Dr. Jacqueline C. HaasEd.D.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Harford County Public Schools Tel. (410) 838-7300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Thomas C. Fidler Jr.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2007-2008 school year.

3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2002 and has not received the No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.

5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.

6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

DISTRICT (Question 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:

32	Elementary schools
9	Middle schools
0	Junior High Schools
9	High schools
4	Other
54	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 8689

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 10371

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban are
   [X] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

4. 5 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

   0 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
Pre K	9	2	11		**7**	0	0	0
K	63	57	120		**8**	0	0	0
1	45	44	89		**9**	0	0	0
2	60	59	119		**10**	0	0	0
3	62	62	124		**11**	0	0	0
4	60	67	127		**12**	0	0	0
5	57	47	104		**Other**	0	0	0
6		0	0					
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL								694

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
3 %	Asian or Pacific Islander
5 %	Black or African American
2 %	Hispanic or Latino
89 %	White
100 %	**TOTAL**

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year 9 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	37
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	25
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	62
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	664
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row	0.09
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1 %

8 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 3

Specify languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 74

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low income families, or the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

62 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

13	Autism	1	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	12	Other Health Impairment
0	Deaf-Blindness	7	Specific Learning Disability
3	Emotional Disturbance	25	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities		

11. Indicate number of full time and part time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-time	**Part-time**
Administrator(s)	2	1
Classroom teachers	33	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	17	12
Paraprofessionals	16	3
Support Staff	7	9
Total number	75	25

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 — 21 **: 1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2006-2007		2005-2006		2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003	
Daily student attendance	95	%	95	%	96	%	96	%	95	%
Daily teacher attendance	96	%	95	%	97	%	96	%	97	%
Teacher turnover rate	2	%	2	%	3	%	1	%	2	%
Student drop out rate (middle/high	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%	0	%

Please provide all explanations below

PART III - SUMMARY

Hickory Elementary School serves over 700 children in kindergarten through grade five. The school also serves as a regional center for a pre-kindergarten intervention program, a primary and intermediate autism program, a pre-school speech and language program, and Child Find Testing. There are 33 general education classrooms with an average class size of 21 students.

A typical school day at Hickory begins in every classroom with Morning Meeting based on 'The Responsive Classroom' (The Northeast Foundation for Children, 2002) approach to teaching and learning. This is a time to intentionally teach social and emotional skills and to establish attitudes and values that set the tone for learning and cooperating throughout each day. A block schedule provides substantial periods of uninterrupted instructional time making it possible to address individual student needs through regrouping, intervention, and enrichment.

The faculty and staff at Hickory Elementary agree that steady gains in academic achievement over the past five years are largely the result of several key factors including high expectations for learning on the part of staff and students, the utilization of collaborative inquiry practices to support student achievement, research-based intervention programs in reading and math, differentiation of classroom instruction for all children, and a high degree of community involvement and support. All agree, however, that primary among these factors is the establishment of Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) in 2003 to continually examine student data, determine instructional implications, and provide appropriate instruction. PLC work also occurs in vertical teams to learn about and apply methods for differentiating instruction.

Hickory Elementary benefits from a strong, well-organized PTA and an active volunteer program of approximately 200 parents. In addition to fundraisers and student recognition programs, the PTA sponsors a variety of community events including ice-cream socials, a non-profit holiday craft sale at which students have the opportunity to purchase gifts for family and friends, and informational meetings for parents on a number of relevant topics. Parent volunteers offer teacher assistance and work directly with students under teacher supervision.

The staff and students at Hickory are actively involved in a number of community outreach projects each year. Third grade students were recognized by the Community Action Agency for their month-long fund raising project to benefit the Harford County Fuel Fund in the spring of 2005. This project continues on a yearly basis. Kindergarten students raise money through their economics project, 'Kindergarten Marketplace', and donate the money to Anna's House, a transitional and permanent housing program for women and children. Each year, the student council makes a significant donation to the Salvation Army Canned Food Drive. Organized by the reading specialist, 'Driven to Read' has become an annual book fair that features a car show and soap box derby for the purpose of encouraging young boys to read.

Throughout the past five years, student and staff initiatives at Hickory Elementary have garnered numerous forms of recognition at the local, state, and federal levels. Fourth grade teacher and science coordinator, Mrs. Verna Hiser, has led the school's environmental efforts to receive four awards including the governor's Green School Award in May, 2006. A fifth grade student received the Carson Scholars Fund award in the spring of 2007 for outstanding academic achievement and humanitarianism. Mrs. Faye O'Brien, instrumental music teacher, was a finalist for the Harford County Public Schools Teacher of the Year Award in April, 2005, and in October of 2006, Mrs. Diana Kolego, fourth grade teacher, received the Star of Teaching Award from the United States Department of Education. The custodial team won first place in the school system's Custodial Recognition Awards program in 2004 and went on to receive a superior rating and a governor's citation by the State of Maryland and the Board of Public Works and the Interagency Committee on School Construction in November, 2006.

Hickory's mission, aptly stated by school mascot, Sylvester the Squirrel, is to continually C-ooperate, L-earn, I-nspire, M-easure, and B-uild the future (CLIMB). We are dedicated to serving every child, every day no squirrel left behind!

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

All elementary schools in Maryland are held accountable to the federal No Child Left Behind Act through a statewide, multi-day test called the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). The MSA is designed to generate a score that reflects each individual student's mastery of Maryland's Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC). The MSA provides both criterion and norm-referenced performance data through multiple choice and short-essay tasks. Students in elementary grades 3-5 take the test over four days (two days for reading and two days for math). Each year the state sets targeted cut scores which classify student performance into three categories: basic, proficient and advanced. The proficient and advanced scores are used each year to determine if the school, each grade level and the eight demographic subgroups are meeting the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) percentage goal en route to the 2014 goal of all students (100%) performing at the proficient or advanced levels. The AYP target rises each year. Additional information on the MSA and every school's performance levels can be found at www.mdk12.org.

Hickory elementary school has demonstrated rapid and sustained increases in student performance levels in reading and mathematics in all tested grades. Since the inception of the test, students performing at advanced or proficient levels in reading increased from 71.7% to 90.3% in 3rd grade, 82.6% to 92.7% in 4th grade, and from 81.3% to 94.3% in 5th grade. These rates of gains in reading scores outpace state averages by 10%, 7% and 18% respectively. Students performing at advanced or proficient levels in mathematics increased from 81.8% to 85.1% in 3rd grade, 83.6% to 94.5% in 4th grade, and from 67% to 96.3% in 5th grade. These rates of gains in mathematics scores outpace state averages by 6.5%, 8.5% and 18% respectively.

Hickory demonstrates superior performance closing achievement gaps in all demographic sub groups. In each tested year, all measurable sub groups made AYP, and when examined longitudinally, gaps between measurable sub groups and the schools' aggregate scores narrowed as students progressed from 3rd through 5th grades. For example, students receiving free and reduced lunches at Hickory (FARMs) demonstrated an 11% gap in reading scores when compared to the highest scoring sub group (white females) in 2005, but by 2007 (5th grade) that gap had closed to 2.4%. African American males demonstrated a 10.9% gap in math scores when compared to white females in 2003 and by 2005 actually outperformed all subgroups at Hickory by 6.4%. Hickory is proud that gender and race subgroups continued to demonstrate statistically negligible gaps in reading and math performance on the 2006 MSA.

Although performance scores for students receiving special education services continue to pose a challenge, new interventions and instructional techniques implemented over the past two years have begun demonstrating effectiveness. By the 5th grade, performance gaps between special education scores and Hickory aggregate scores have closed from 80% to 20% in math and from 76% to 30% in reading. Additionally, Hickory's special education students continue to meet or exceed the cut score for AYP every year in every grade.

Proficient scores are not the target, however, at Hickory. The school is committed to instruction that produces advanced performance on the MSA. In this regard, Hickory has begun outperforms county and state averages by significant margins. In 3rd grade, advanced scores at Hickory are close to county and state averages; however as students move through grades 4 and 5, their performance significantly outpaces their peers. Hickory students scoring at advanced levels in reading outpace state averages by 13.4% in 4th grade and 13.8% in 5th grade. In mathematics, Hickory students scoring at advanced levels top state averages by 13.8% in 4th grade and 8.4% in 5th grade.

An examination of Part VII Assessment Results reveals the percentage of advanced scores in reading and math has, in most cases, more than doubled since the inception of the test.

2. **Using Assessment Results**

Hickory uses a variety of formative and summative assessments in both reading and math in

order to adjust instruction and provide appropriate intervention and enrichments to targeted student populations. The school improvement team uses disaggregated MSA data in all sub-tests in order to reflect on past and set upcoming goals for the year's school improvement plan. The team meets quarterly to monitor progress made toward these goals and adjust the plan for increased effect. More importantly, grade level teams function as Professional Learning Communities and meet a minimum of once per week utilizing the block schedule put in place in recent years. Teams examine quiz and unit assessments, student written responses to reading, and compare skill checklists that teachers compile while students are practicing. This study of individual student performance then leads to actions and plans aimed at closing gaps and maximizing learning with specific groups of students. This process ensures that the greatest effort made to target individual student needs comes from highly qualified classroom teacher teams. In math, for example, assessments are structured to facilitate error analysis. Students then can benefit from weekly (or in some cases, daily) flexible stations designed explicitly for needs apparent from their errors. These collaborative assessments lead to collaborative lessons which result in additional performance information that teams use the following week to design instruction. Initially, teams were meeting monthly, but as the effect such meetings were having on student achievement became apparent, teams began voluntarily moving to weekly dialogs. Students who consistently underperform are identified far earlier than in the past. Students performing a year or more behind their peers receive additional, direct instruction based upon their specific reading needs in research-based, commercially available reading programs. Students demonstrating frustration with grade-level math concepts receive additional direct instruction in another research-based program after school which is facilitated by Hickory teachers and college interns. This practice of grade level professional learning communities differentiating instruction based on frequent, ongoing and varied assessments is what the faculty identifies as the most important cause for the gains demonstrated over the past five years.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results**

Hickory Elementary School uses a variety of methods to communicate assessment and performance data to its customers and stakeholders. Traditional methods include inviting parents and students to November conferences to report students' progress in the first quarter. Written report cards are sent in the remaining quarters. In the upper grades parents and students receive mid-quarter progress reports. Teachers send home test, quiz, and assignment scores as part of students' Friday Folders. Teachers also employ email and schoolnotes.com. Interactive homework assignments in which students are required to read to parents or play a mathematics game further inform parents of students' progress.

Additional methods of communication include student performance opportunities in which parents are invited to school to hear their child read a 'published' piece of writing during an Authors' Tea, see a Readers Theatre performance to showcase students' reading fluency, or attend a Portfolio Picnic during which students share favorite pieces of writing.

Academic goal setting is a growing practice at Hickory Elementary School. Teachers assist their classes and/or individual students to set attainable goals, and progress is accessed during regularly scheduled conferences. Students maintain data binders in which they chart their individual performance and adjust methods for attaining goals as necessary. Students are given clear performance targets and they evaluate their work against those targets. Teachers and students chart and graph class performance, as well as evaluate each individual's performance against the class average. Students and teachers regularly engage in Self-Selected Reading conferencing to evaluate fluency, decoding skills, and reading comprehension, as well as to set new goals. Students who meet specified performance targets are honored quarterly in Good News assemblies.
Maryland School Assessment data for individual students is mailed to parents. School assessment information is published in local newspapers, the school newsletter, and on the state and local school district websites.

Performance information is also shared at PTA meetings, and during events such as Family Math Night and Driven to Read.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Staff members at Hickory Elementary School share successful practices with other schools through involvement in professional activities outside of the school building. Membership on district level curriculum committees, specific roles such as that of mathematics, science or School Improvement Team facilitator, or specific positions such as reading specialist, school

psychologist, or educational evaluator all provide opportunities for individuals to regularly meet with their district level counterparts to share successful practices. Membership in professional organizations such as Phi Delta Kappa and Alpha Delta Kappa also provide sharing opportunities. Staff members have served as presenters at the State of Maryland International Reading Association Conference and at Educational Leadership meetings, and during professional development days meet with colleagues from other schools to engage in Professional Learning Community (PLC) work.
Sharing also occurs by inviting colleagues to Hickory Elementary School. The fourth grade team provides professional development for all new teachers by inviting them to observe in their classrooms, chosen because of the exemplary model they provide. Similarly, new physical education teachers have observed the physical education team, and other members of the staff have presented Every Day Mathematics professional development for regional schools.

Hickory Elementary School is a Professional Development School in partnership with Towson University. Staff members mentor interns through their student teaching experience and those interns become ambassadors for the school as they move to their next experience. The school's PDS Coordinator meets regularly with other PDS Coordinators throughout the state to share successful practices.

Piloting new curriculum and technology have provided many sharing opportunities. The school has piloted the MacMillan McGraw-Hill Mathematics program, interactive white board technology, and the Levels of Service/Gifted and Talented model. Through the pilots, staff members practice and refine their use of the materials or curriculum and communicate with other schools and school system departments regarding their successful use.

Hickory is also piloting the use of SharePoint technology to support the work of PLC's, facilitate professional development and enhance communication. Two other schools in the region have access to this site.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Hickory Elementary School delivers the core curriculum adopted by Harford County Public Schools for all subject areas including reading, writing, math, science, social studies, physical education, and visual and performing arts. Each curricular area is guided by a scope and sequence of skills aligned to the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) standards.

Reading instruction is a component of the district's Integrated Language Arts model, wherein teachers have a two-hour block to deliver whole group, small group, reading application, word work and spelling instruction. Students are taught to monitor their thinking and be strategic readers by applying before, during, and after reading skills. Text selections include the Harcourt Collections anthology, as well as a wide variety of narrative and informational texts. Weekly writing instruction includes Writer's Workshop and direct instruction with authentic experiences in writing for various audiences and for various purposes using the writing process. In addition, Hickory students have a daily allotment of thirty minutes designated for Self-Selected Reading, wherein students choose 'just right' books to read as teachers conference with students to assess their strengths and needs. At Hickory, each classroom received a library collection of leveled texts beyond district standards, coded with published Lexile and/or Guided Reading levels, to support this initiative.

Math curriculum features the Every Day Math series designed through the constructivist approach. Instruction incorporates the use of manipulatives, skill-based game exploration, problem-solving using non-traditional and standard algorithm methods, developing reasoning skills and real-world connections. Each unit of instruction provides an opportunity to reinforce learning by spiraling beginning, developing, and secure skills. Additionally, each unit is supplemented by teacher-created lessons focused on corresponding VSC standards. On scheduled 'flex days', teachers utilize assessment data to regroup students and target instruction for specific areas of need. In an extended day program supervised by teachers, struggling students receive instruction from Towson teacher interns using the Knowing Math intervention program by Houghton Mifflin.

Social studies curriculum is aligned to the VSC standards and includes the major themes of history, geography, economics, political systems, and people of the nation and the world. Students work in cooperative groups to learn how to be responsible citizens and how to interact with one another and the environment. Similarly, the science curriculum features 'hands-on' experimentation kits developed around the major themes of Life Science, Earth Science, and Physical Science. Students work in cooperative groups and engage in behaviors to promote thinking like scientists. Class field trips are scheduled during units of study as extensions to grade-level curriculum.

The special area teachers at Hickory Elementary, health/PE, library media, music and art, work together as a team to help students explore a variety of creative outlets and grow academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. Teachers work together to design cross-curricular lessons to support classroom instruction. Student artwork is regularly on display throughout the school and at our Board of Education building. To celebrate Music in Our Schools month, student musicians perform as soloists and in small ensembles on the morning announcements. In the media center, students and staff show off their prized collections, from Webkins to Nutcrackers, in the showcase. The special area team also hosts Family Fun Night and organizes an end-of-year talent show to promote family togetherness.

2a. **(Elementary Schools) Reading:**

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) selected the Harcourt anthology to be used in grades one through five because of its rich literature and balance of skills and strategies. Teachers also utilize an extensive collection of trade books to provide appropriately leveled books for intervention, enrichment, or application of skills and strategies in the context of an entire book. All students are monitored for progress using running records and Self-

Selected Reading conferences. Early intervention is essential to our program so that we may remediate reading problems early and effectively. The reading specialist also works with grade levels to highlight areas of need and to create lessons and long term plans to facilitate proficiency for all students. Kindergarten students are screened for reading readiness skills along with emergent reading skills and strategies. Data from those assessments identify children who would benefit from an early intervention called L.A.U.N.C.H., which is based on Marie Clay's work. Portions of the Wilson Fundations program are also used to increase phonemic skills. Students in this program receive twenty minutes of instruction from paraeducators in small groups with lessons that are designed to meet their individual needs and maximize their strengths. Intervention for students in grades one and two is based on two research-proven programs: Early Success from Houghton Mifflin and Wilson Fundations. The mix of the two programs creates a strong foundation of phonemic skills and reading strategies. Hickory's goal is to accelerate each child's progress in reading so that they are reading on grade level by the end of the year. Students who continue to require intervention services in third through fifth grades receive instruction that is focused on their needs and strengths. The Wilson Language System program is utilized to improve fluency and phonics skills. Soar to Success is used for students with comprehension deficits. Formal assessment for all intervention students occurs three times per year to identify areas of deficits and strengths.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Hickory's delivery of HCPS' science curriculum has served as the inspiration for extra curricular extensions and motivation for student ownership. Kit- based lessons provide inquiry-based, hands-on experimentation lessons developed around central themes identified in the VSC. Students work in cooperative groups and engage in critical thinking skills in order to build problem-solving skills. In 'thinking like scientists', students hypothesize on a given question, conduct tests, collect data, draw conclusions, and communicate their findings. An interdisciplinary approach is encouraged, wherein students can research science topics during reading and apply math skills to collect and analyze data related to their investigation. In library media class, students learn about print and non-print resources and develop critical researching skills to support information gathering for selected topics. An extended day science club was responsible for creating and beautifying Hickory's nature trail, butterfly garden, and ground landscaping. This student group was also responsible for providing and maintaining a paper recycling bin for each classroom, a revenue raising community paper recycling program, planting trees on school grounds, participating in the Trees Replanting Day at Harford Glenn, cleaning storm drains, creating energy conservation plates for classroom light switches, and coordinating the data tracked 'Waste Free' Wednesday to reduce lunch trash. The club is currently researching to pursue a 'green roof' effort. For the club's environmental conservation efforts, Hickory earned the Green School Award, as well as four other national and state awards. Collegial collaboration among classroom teachers and special area teachers promotes and reinforces science learning through our Green School efforts and planning school wide assemblies to support general curriculum.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

Hickory focuses on the delivery of core curriculum through differentiated instruction in order to maximize students' learning. Hickory has begun to utilize Malcolm Baldrige's systems in order for students to take ownership in their learning. By setting goals, developing a plan to achieve those goals, and collecting and analyzing data to monitor their progress, teachers and students engage in reflective practices about 'what works' to support learning. Each classroom begins the school day by conducting a Morning Meeting to promote a sense of community, set a learning tone of respect, and make time to value individuals. A school wide block schedule was adopted to maximize co-teaching opportunities in the classroom setting with special educators, the reading specialist, and the enrichment teacher.

Classrooms are grouped heterogeneously and students are regrouped as needed into small groups to receive appropriate instruction. Special needs students are educated predominantly in an inclusive setting as it provides general curriculum access and an opportunity for teachers to 'share practices' while building cross-training capacity. Teachers

are trained in differentiation techniques to meet learner needs. Lessons are designed around essential skills, incorporating 'best bet' vocabulary instruction, making relevant connections to the world, and employing the use of tiered assignments, centers, learning stations, contracts and independent projects. It is standard practice for teachers to conduct on-going formative assessments to monitor student progress and plan for in-class enrichments and interventions. It is also standard practice for grade level teams to conduct bi-monthly data meetings to monitor student progress in math and reading. Teams utilize a Plan- Do- Study- Act cycle (Baldrige) to examine results and make instructional decisions. It is this collaborative effort among all staff that has contributed to our student achievement levels.

5. **Professional Development:**

Professional development at Hickory is aligned to our school improvement goals, it is on-going and data driven, and adheres to the National Staff Development Standards. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is action oriented and serves as the guide for staff development. All certified staff complete a professional development plan with goals aligned to the SIP goals. Additionally, Hickory has aligned the teacher observation and evaluation process to teachers' professional development plans in providing high quality instruction to meet diverse student needs. Through regional and faculty meetings, the staff receives training on research-based 'best bet' practices relating to reading and math instruction. Staff also form vertical professional learning communities to 'jig-saw' and study the various topics within differentiated instruction. Grade-level teams work in professional learning communities to share practices, apply differentiated instruction techniques, and engage in collaborative inquiry to study the effectiveness of their actions. Hickory participates in district pilot program initiatives as they provide an opportunity to learn about current trends in research and teaching innovations. Hickory's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) measures teacher learning and skill transfer from workshops through exit tickets and surveys. The ILT differentiates its own instruction based on observed grade-level needs and requests. This includes embedded teacher mentor support in clarifying and strengthening the work of professional learning communities. These efforts have enhanced teacher preparation, increased student engagement, increased the use of instructional technology, and enhanced communication among teachers related to teaching and learning. Hickory serves as the Professional Development site for Towson University's teacher interns as well as the regional training site for fourth grade teachers new to Harford County Public Schools. Teachers also engage in peer visitation as a means to learn from colleagues.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 3 Test Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2002-2006 Publisher Harcourt

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	90	82	94	89	72
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	22	22	34	18	10
Number of students tested	114	98	103	132	99
Percent of total students tested	99	98	95	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	5	2	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	2	5	1	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	92		85	85	50
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	8		23	8	0
Number of students tested	13		13	13	10
2. Special Education					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	64			55	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	9			0	
Number of students tested	11			11	
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 3 Test Maryland State Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2002-2006 Publisher CTB McGraw Hill

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	85	93	92	89	82
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	23	35	39	24	18
Number of students tested	114	98	103	132	99
Percent of total students tested	99	98	95	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	5	2	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	2	5	1	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	69		92	77	70
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	15		39	31	0
Number of students tested	13		13	13	10
2. Special Education					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	64			55	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	9			0	
Number of students tested	11			11	
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 4 Test Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2003-2006 Publisher Harcourt

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	93	95	90	83	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	38	31	16	16	
Number of students tested	110	105	134	104	
Percent of total students tested	99	97	99	98	
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	4	2	2	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	3	1	2	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient		92	73	75	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced		8	0	0	
Number of students tested		13	11	12	
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 4 Test Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2003-2006 Publisher CTB McGraw Hill

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	95	92	84	84	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	52	36	25	22	
Number of students tested	110	105	134	104	
Percent of total students tested	99	97	99	98	
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	4	2	2	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	3	1	2	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient		85	73	67	
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced		31	9	17	
Number of students tested		13	11	12	
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Reading (LA) Grade 5 Test Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2002-2006 Publisher Harcourt

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	94	91	79	82	81
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	44	50	38	42	41
Number of students tested	107	137	107	133	112
Percent of total students tested	98	99	98	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	2	2	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	1	2	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	92	93	30	58	31
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	23	43	20	17	8
Number of students tested	13	14	10	12	13
2. Special Education					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient			27	45	35
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced			18	5	6
Number of students tested			11	20	17
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

Subject Math Grade 5 Test Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year 2002-2006 Publisher CTB McGraw Hill

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards Proficient	96	86	82	83	67
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	27	21	22	18	13
Number of students tested	107	137	107	133	112
Percent of total students tested	98	99	98	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	2	2	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	1	2	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient	100	86	50	42	23
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced	8	14	0	0	0
Number of students tested	13	14	10	12	13
2. Special Education					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard Proficient			46	35	6
% "Exceeding" State Standards Advanced			0	0	0
Number of students tested			11	20	17
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					