2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet   Type of School: (Check all that apply) __ Elementary __X_ Middle __ High __ K-12 __Charter

Name of Principal ___Mrs. JoAnn C. Hutchens___
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name ____Clarksville Middle School___
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address _6535 S. Trotter Road___
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

___Clarksville_____   ___Maryland_____   ___21029-1204_____
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County __Howard_____ State School Code Number*_____0521_____

Telephone (_410_) 313-7057_____   Fax (_410_) 313-7061_____

Website/URL__www.hcpss.org/cms_____   E-mail ____JHutchens@hcpss.org_____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* _____Dr. Sydney L. Cousin_____
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name___Howard County Public School System_____ Tel. (410) 313-6600_____

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

_____ Date_____
 (Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson_____Mr. Joshua M. Kaufman_____
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it 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.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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 with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has not been in school improvement status or 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 2005-2006 school year.

3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has 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 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award.*

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

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district:
       37 Elementary schools
       18 Middle schools
     N/A Junior high schools
      12 High schools
       3   Other (Application & Research Lab - Academies
                   Cradlerock School – K - 8,
                   Homewood School – Alternative Education)
      70 TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: $ 10,451.00

    Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: $ 9,062.00

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 area
    [X]   Suburban
    [ ]   Small city or town in a rural area
    [ ]   Rural

4.   1   Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

      4.5 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
PreK					7	128	116	244
K					8	124	114	238
1					9			
2					10			
3					11			
4					12			
5					Other			
6	132	117	249					
					TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →			731

6. Racial/ethnic composition of   __65__% White
    the students in the school: __7__% Black or African American
                                         _< 1_% Hispanic or Latino
                                        __26__% Asian/Pacific Islander
                                         _< 1_% American Indian/Alaskan Native
                                       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: __< 1___%

    [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.	3
(2)	Number of students who transferred **from** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	731
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.007
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	0.7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: __1__%
                                               __9__ Total Number Limited English Proficient
    Number of languages represented: __3_
    Specify languages: Korean, Portuguese, and Gujarati (a language of India)

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: __< 1_%

       Total number students who qualify: __1__

    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: ___7___%

                            ___47___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.

_0_	Autism	_0_	Orthopedic Impairment
_1_	Deafness	_11_	Other Health Impaired
_0_	Deaf-Blindness	_19_	Specific Learning Disability
_1_	Emotional Disturbance	_12_	Speech or Language Impairment
_0_	Hearing Impairment	_0_	Traumatic Brain Injury
_2_	Mental Retardation	_1_	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	0
Classroom teachers	44	1
Special resource teachers/specialists	6	3
Paraprofessionals	6	2
Support staff	7	0
Total number	65	6

12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: ___17:1___

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. 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 between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	97 %	96 %	97 %	97 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	94 %	97 %	95 %	96 %	97 %
Teacher turnover rate	8 %	5 %	19 %	13 %	0 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school)	N/A %	N/A %	N/A %	N/A %	N/A %

PART III - SUMMARY

Clarksville Middle School (CMS) is located in a rapidly growing suburban area in the Baltimore-Washington, DC corridor. The school primarily serves a planned community with mixed housing, cultural diversity, and a central village concept. The student body and staff of CMS reflect the cultural and religious diversity of the neighborhood: the 35% minority population represents over ten Asian, African, and South American countries, and all major religious faiths. In addition, many minority students are bilingual. Most remarkable is the lack of boundaries created by this diversity and the small effect that world politics has on friendships and social interactions. The mission statement of Clarksville Middle School promotes a caring environment that fosters the personal growth and academic success of students, while encouraging exploration and discovery by developing each student's talents and abilities. The results of this approach are seen in the history of documented excellence, both in school-wide achievements and in the personal successes of students and staff members.

The foundation for the personal growth and academic success of our students is the strong support structure provided by a community where education is highly valued. The positive attitudes of parents and staff, and a supportive, proactive administration have created an ideal collaboration among all adults involved. The result is a safe and nurturing environment in which students' needs come first, teachers are valued, and parents assist as volunteers. Excellent communication is the mortar that holds this foundation together. Multiple resources are available for corresponding and for accessing information, including the school website, an online homework directory (schoolnotes.com), and a school system email and information management system (CLC). This support structure fosters an atmosphere embracing student values with a world view of citizenship, and provides an incredible opportunity to share our resources with others. Projects such as food bank drives, charity basketball games, support of the troops in Iraq, and a fundraiser for Katrina victims have been initiated by CMS students.

The teaching staff at CMS values critical and innovative thinking and places emphasis on a high level of student productivity and a culture of achievement. Teaching strategies such as the Big 6™ Research Curriculum challenge our students in all content areas and place CMS at the forefront of information literacy in the county. Many CMS educators are veteran teachers with advanced degrees who have received numerous awards for their professional and educational achievements. This high level of professionalism results in a staff that is integrally involved in the academic success of their students, from the planning phase to implementation. The School Improvement Team (SIT) has identified specific objectives for growth and improvement in all instructional areas based on assessment outcomes. The School Improvement Plan details strategies that have been implemented in all subject areas to address achievement gaps in reading and math for special education and minority students and maintenance or improvement of current achievement levels for all grades. The needs of special learners are addressed through differentiation of content and presentation, allowing all students to meet their potential with the assistance of teachers and support staff.

Many opportunities for exploration are available to CMS students. Programs that encourage all aspects of development include CMS-TV, Comet's Tale Newspaper, CMS Memory Book, student government, computer classes (THE), book club, GT enrichment program, student ambassadors, academic and athletic intramurals, service learning projects, and twelve different performing arts ensembles in music, theatre, and dance. Opportunities for extra student support include after-school tutoring, homework club, Bringing Up Grades (BUG), and guidance and grade-level focus groups.

CMS has encouraged a high standard of excellence by recognizing students for good grades and citizenship, and supporting individual student achievement in the areas of art, science, math, music, and writing. Consistent excellence on Maryland state assessments has culminated in receiving the 2005 Maryland Blue Ribbon School award.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results in Reading and Math:**

   CMS has been recognized for exceptional performance on Maryland state assessments. Maryland used the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) to measure school and system performance prior to 2003. This program included performance tasks that assessed students in Grades 3, 5, and 8 on Maryland Learning Outcomes in reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The MSPAP measured the performance of Maryland schools by having students, working individually and in groups, solve problems from different subject areas and apply the knowledge to real-world situations. CMS was consistently recognized through monetary awards and county and state citations for their outstanding performance on MSPAPs.

   In March 2003, in response to new requirements from the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (No Child Left Behind), Maryland introduced the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) to replace the MSPAP. This change required schools to shift from the student group to the individual student. Initially the MSA was administered to students in Grades 3, 5, and 8 in mathematics and reading. In 2004, the MSA was administered to Grades 3-8.

   Student, school, district, and state achievement is measured on three proficiency levels: Advanced, Proficient, and Basic. The state of Maryland establishes an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO), which is our yearly target for the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on the MSA. Each year the AMO is raised, pointing toward the ultimate goal of having 100% of our students demonstrating proficiency by 2014. The MSA produces a score that indicates how well a student masters the reading and math content specified in Maryland Content Standards and the Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC). MSA scores are criterion-referenced scores depicting student performance against the Maryland VSC.

   CMS has surpassed the state standard of 70% proficiency each year the MSA has been administered: In 2004, 95% of the 8th graders, 98% of the 7th graders, and 96% of the 6th graders scored advanced or proficient in reading, while in math, 93% of our 8th graders, 90% of the 7th graders, and 94% of the 6th graders received scores in the advanced or proficient range. We are extremely proud of our students' continued success on the 2005 MSA as 97% of the 8th graders and 96% of our 7th and 6th graders scored advanced or proficient in reading. In math, 93% of the 8th graders, 92% of the 7th graders, and 94% of the 6th graders received scores in the advanced or proficient range.

   CMS demonstrates continuous high performance and growth on the MSA and has been recognized for students' performance not only in our overall scores, but also in the student groups of African American and special education. All statistically significant student groups met the standard in 7th and 8th grade for both reading and math. In 6th-grade reading, all student groups met the standard with the exception of our special education students, who scored 69% advanced or proficient, missing the state standard of 70% by only 1%. In math, this same 6th-grade special education student group scored 53% advanced or proficient.

   Additional information on the Maryland State Department of Education assessment system can be found at: www.mdreportcard.org and www.mdk12.org.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Data collection and analysis drive CMS' yearly goals and objectives. Our SIT, composed of staff members from all content areas, parents, students, guidance, and support staff and administration, meets monthly to create these goals and objectives. A working document - the School Improvement Plan, aligned with our goals and objectives - serves as a blueprint of actions and processes needed to produce school improvement. Once developed and shared with all the stake-holders, the School Improvement Plan guides professional development, instructional content and practice, and individual teacher assessment. Numerous sources of data are examined, including the MSAs, local quarterly assessments, report card grades, attendance, and teacher input. Student performance is the foundation on which improvement processes build. Our data are disaggregated according to gender, race, grade level, and special service. CMS teachers focus on the areas of need and develop appropriate interventions and strategies that can then be implemented to support acceleration and success.

A data committee, consisting of staff members in math and reading content areas, meets quarterly with administration to analyze data and decide on interventions and acceleration programs. Various tools are used to better aid in targeting our strengths and areas of need. This committee's decisions center on student performance and focus on targeting students not scoring at a predetermined level. Instructional intervention teams meet weekly to analyze student performance and progress. At these grade-level meetings, students performing in the proficient to advanced range are identified, and strategies are discussed to accelerate these students to all perform in the advanced range. Ongoing data are measured against performance to ensure that the staff is focused on continual improvement and is aligned with our School Improvement Plan.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

CMS works hard to inform the parents, students and community of our activities and academic success. Communication plays a critical role, and we provide parents and the community with information through various means. A weekly newsletter is sent to parents electronically, which contains information about our school goals, county policies, student performance, and programs and activities. The school maintains a webpage, www.hcpss.org/cms, on which pertinent and timely information can be found, including the newsletter, forms that have been sent home with students, pictures of recent activities, and links to homework and county resources. Teachers use a website, www.schoolnotes.com, to inform parents of their child's upcoming assignments, tests, and assessments. Through this site, parents can also send email directly to teachers.

This information leads to a strong home/school connection where both parties work on ways to improve student performance. At mid-point in the quarter, teachers conference with students on their performance, and individual student progress reports are sent home to parents. Each quarter an electronic report card is printed and sent home. These reports provide information in several areas, including attendance, completion of work, academic progress, and participation. Parents are offered formal conferences twice a year, but also have the ability to meet with teachers whenever the need arises. "Good News" postcards are sent home to celebrate students.

In addition, we provide assessment results on a continual basis through the SIT. Each student's individual MSA score reports are mailed to their parents, and MSA scores are published on the Howard County Public School System's website, www.hcpss.org, and in local and regional newspapers.

4. **Sharing Success:**

CMS is proud to share our success with our colleagues and community. Our staff constantly participates in county-wide settings where our proven strategies and practices can be of benefit to our fellow educators. CMS staff members present at workshops across curriculum areas, are guest speakers at meetings of secondary administrators, and also participate in writing curriculum for the county. The local community college values the experience of the CMS staff and regularly rotates student interns through our building during their coursework. Staff members publish articles in curriculum journals, and school successes frequently appear in the local and regional newspapers. The system-wide document repository and email system contain numerous entries contributed by CMS staff members who are eager to share proven work with all school system employees. Presentations to the Howard County Board of Education by administrators, staff, and parents in our community are common occurrences. Our veteran staff are eager and willing to share with new teachers and other colleagues at meetings, whether in our school, at county-wide professional development days, or at state and national conferences. During articulation with our feeder schools, we routinely receive feedback on how well prepared our students are each year, and we share our respected methods. Sharing our achievements with other schools not only gives us an opportunity to assist other teaching staffs, but allows us to examine and reassess our own best practices.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

   The core of the mathematics curriculum at CMS provides knowledge of algebra, patterns, functions, number relationships, and computation/arithmetic. Formal algebra and geometry courses are offered, with technology integrated into all course offerings. Ability grouping is used with the focus on preparing all students to advance; high expectations are the standard. Students may participate in focus groups and homework club to support their needs. Core instructional topics include, but are not limited to, general mathematics skills, rational numbers, probability, statistics, percents, ratio, proportion, algebra, geometry, and real-life applications.

   All students take reading and English as two separate subjects every year, all year long, combining to make up our full English language curriculum. The English curriculum uses literature to teach students how to write, while reading's primary goal is to teach students to be strategic readers and researchers.

   The art curriculum provides students with experiences in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and crafts. Units and lesson sequences are concept-based and often include interdisciplinary components. Creative problem solving is stressed to maximize student responses to visual problems. Students are required to respond to a daily writing prompt designed to stimulate thinking or generate ideas in preparation for the daily lesson.

   The social studies curriculum in 6th grade focuses primarily on geography and world cultures. A brief culture unit begins the year, followed by an intense map unit. The skills learned in these two units are applied to specific areas including North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Australia, where students learn ancient history, environmental issues, political systems, and location names. The 7th-grade curriculum is similar to the 6th, but the focus is on the cultures and maps of Europe, ancient history, the Middle Ages, Latin America, the United States, and Canada. Eighth grade studies the founding of America, with units titled The Road to Independence, Forging a New Nation, Growth of the Nation, and A Union in Disunion. The focus includes, but is not limited to, the social and political changes that led to the American Revolution and the federal government system.

   The CMS foreign language program offers French and Spanish as a whole-year subject for 7th and 8th graders. FLEX (Foreign Language Exploration) is offered to 6th graders to give them an opportunity to experience each language. A county-wide initiative offers foreign language to every rising 7th grader. The program subscribes to a proficiency-based curriculum to develop what students can do in the language and to what degree they can do it through listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

   In 6th grade, the science curriculum is concrete, based on physical observations and measurements. More abstract concepts are taught in the 7th and 8th grades as students mature. The 6th-grade curriculum is Earth Science, where students learn basic skills essential to all science and apply them through the study of meteorology, geology, and astronomy. Classes participate in the Jason Project sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the Green Schools Program through the Alliance to Save Energy, and space missions at the Challenger Center of Space Science Education. Seventh-grade students use technology, tools, and materials of science to study all levels of biological organization in their life science curriculum. Students study structures from the simple cell and the complex human body to dramatically more complex ecosystems and the factors that affect them. The concepts are applied by participating in research on topics such as the health of the Chesapeake Bay. In 8th grade, students explore the physical sciences, chemistry, and physics to explain everyday phenomena. Newton's laws of motion and the kinetic theory are used to help students further understand and extend their ideas about the world around them. The study of forces and their effect on matter is investigated in a hands-on manner, using the students' developing mathematical skills in real-life applications. The kinetic theory is explored as students investigate the nature of matter, the atom, chemical reactions, and the transfer of energy, giving the students an opportunity to discover what makes up our dynamic universe and how it operates.

   CMS also has a meritorious music program with courses in band, orchestra, general music, and chorus. Other courses offered at CMS include family and consumer sciences, software applications, health, physical education, and technology education, which help develop well-rounded students.

2b. **(Secondary Schools) English:**

  The full English language curriculum at CMS is delivered through year-long classes in both reading and English. Our reading curriculum consists of five basic units that build on each other from year to year throughout middle school: Reading Subject Area Text Strategically, Developing Personal Responses, Interpretations, and Critical Responses to Literature (Poetry, Fiction, and Nonfiction), Information Literacy, Following Directions to Perform Tasks, and Career Exploration. Each grade covers three literature-based units in English during the year, including Literary Archetypes, Literary Forms, and Literary Origins. In addition, teachers integrate instruction in grammar, usage, and mechanics throughout the year, primarily through sentence combining and imitating. Because every student takes a reading course in addition to an English course, the English courses focus on helping the students become powerful writers. We believe great writing can be broken down into the following traits: ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, conventions, and presentation. We use these traits for teaching and assessing our students as writers and for discussing our expectations as writing teachers.
  Reading focus groups meet with the reading specialist for 40 minutes each day to assist below-level students. Some groups use our SOAR to Success reading comprehension program concentrating on four main strategies to improve comprehension: clarifying, predicting, questioning, and summarizing. Another group meets to improve decoding strategies using the SRA Corrective Reading Decoding Strategies. Identified borderline and below-level students meet to ensure they are achieving. In this setting, these students are uninhibited and feel free to ask for the assistance they need to meet with success. Special educators at CMS use the Wilson reading program to improve students' reading performance. Students reading below grade level are placed in co-taught classes where a general and a special educator team together to meet the needs of all students. Staff members also teach after-school programs to support our below-level readers, including homework clubs and focused tutoring sessions.

3. **Mathematics, Science, Art, Etc.:**

  To address the information overload students are facing at the threshold of the 21st century, CMS has incorporated a school-wide Information Literacy curriculum that addresses how students locate, evaluate, synthesize, and communicate information. Based on the CMS mission, we are committed to ensuring that every student meets rigorous performance standards and are challenged through special programs incorporating reading in all content areas. On the MSA (spring 2005), 96% of all CMS students scored in the advanced or proficient range and continue to improve.
  Initially taught in 6th-grade reading in the fall of 2001, the Big 6™ process model, its curriculum, and its common vocabulary have since spread through Social Studies, Science, English, and Reading across all grade levels. The process involves six steps: task definition, information-seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. Online database technology access has clearly contributed to student success in research uses of the Big 6™.   For example, the county science curriculum requires students to design an authentic experiment in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, in which we incorporate the Big 6™ steps in the research process.   Our successes reflect the shared understanding of common goals by the entire school community (staff, teachers, students, and parents) and have spread to the rest of the county. Implemented first at CMS, the Big 6™ process model has been written into the essential curriculum for all of Howard County. This curriculum is now being adopted by all schools, sparking a call for a county-wide Information Literacy initiative across all content areas K through 12 as we continue to prepare our students for the future.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

Teachers at CMS employ a variety of methods to improve student learning. Within the classroom, lessons are taught to ensure that the needs of all students are being met. Co-taught classes are designed to give additional support not only to special education students, but also to any students in the class who may need one-on-one help. A majority of our staff has made excellent use of a federal special education grant, which allows time for special education teachers and regular classroom teachers to meet to plan lessons, determine assignment modifications, and coordinate delivery of instruction. The Gifted and Talented (GT) classes take seriously the mandate to teach material two grade levels above; challenging material and advanced assignments encourage students in GT classes to go beyond the obvious and employ higher level critical-thinking skills. In addition, students participate in numerous interdisciplinary learning opportunities such as foreign language/art field trips, reading/science research projects, and English/history Civil War studies. Cooperative learning is encouraged throughout the year through curriculum-based activities such as outdoor education, Chesapeake Bay research, and the Shakespeare residency.

Teachers continually strive to improve delivery of instruction. During in-service workshops and staff development sessions, teachers review recent research and receive training on new methods and approaches to teaching. At faculty meetings, teachers share successful strategies with each other and model exemplary lessons for the staff. Weekly KidTalk meetings provide a forum for teachers from each grade level to review the progress of students and determine any instructional adjustments necessary to help students achieve. Reading and writing across the curriculum is a school-wide emphasis; all teachers incorporate reading and writing into their daily classes and use common language to reinforce skills.

During our daily Comet Time period, students needing extra help are assigned to specific subject area focus groups, where they receive additional support in a small-group setting. Peer tutors, student ambassadors, after-school tutoring sessions, homework club, and weekly notebook organization sessions are other means of ensuring that CMS students are given every opportunity to be successful learners.

5. **Professional Development:**

Ensuring that students perform at proficient or advanced levels requires that educators become proficient in knowing how to reach and support each child. The professional development plan for CMS is aligned with the School Improvement Plan and focuses on increasing student learning. Consensus around clear expectations for what staff members should know and what is needed to help all students learn is reflected in the School Improvement Plan. Professional development is ongoing, interactive, research-based, and data driven. Data inform us not only about strengths and weaknesses in student performance, but also alert us to areas where additional support for staff members is needed. A professional development committee gathers information through a needs assessment at the beginning of each year to identify goals and outcomes. The committee meets to provide information, communicate with participants, and evaluate the readiness of the staff.

Training is provided to teachers through monthly team and department meetings, colleague observations, individual professional development plans, collaboration, and common planning time. Faculty meetings model good teaching strategies, incorporate guest speakers, and invite colleagues to present successful experiences. Teachers share a common planning time so content and grade-level teachers can meet to collaborate, plan, and share ideas. Ongoing support and mentoring for new teachers help to bring all staff members to understand the school-wide initiatives and goals. Monthly meetings for new staff members are useful for explaining school-wide strategies and techniques, update technology training, review safety goals and plans, and learn best practices from experienced staff.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject___Mathematics_ Grade__8___ Test____Maryland School Assessment_____

Edition/Publication Year___2005, 2004, 2003_____ Publisher _____CTB_____

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month March			
SCHOOL SCORES*			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	93	91	89
% At Advanced	48	40	34
Number of students tested	231	222	215
Percent of total students tested	96	95	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	97	98	94
% At Advanced	56	49	40
Number of students tested	59	55	52
2. African American			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	71	75	81
% At Advanced	24	13	6
Number of students tested	17	16	16
3. Special Education			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	58	50	25
% At Advanced	0	0	0
Number of students tested	12	12	12
STATE SCORES			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	55	50	40
% At Advanced	14	10	13

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject___Reading_____ Grade__8___ Test_____Maryland School Assessment_____

Edition/Publication Year__2005, 2004, 2003_____ Publisher _____Harcourt_____

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month March			
SCHOOL SCORES*			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	96	98	75
% At Advanced	68	76	66
Number of students tested	231	222	215
Percent of total students tested	96	95	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Asian			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	93	96	92
% At Advanced	68	71	58
Number of students tested	59	55	52
2. African American			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	100	100	87
% At Advanced	53	50	44
Number of students tested	17	16	16
3. Special Education			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	67	75	67
% At Advanced	25	17	0
Number of students tested	12	12	12
STATE SCORES			
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100
% At or Above Proficient	67	67	66
% At Advanced	28	26	26