U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 90 Church Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Arnold   State MD   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21012-2344

County Anne Arundel County

Telephone (410) 222-1670   Fax

Web site/URL
http://www.aacps.org/aacps/ARNOLDES   E-mail SLKauffman@aacps.org

Twitter Handle
https://twitter.com/arnoldaacps Facebook Page   Google+

YouTube/URL   Blog   Other Social Media Link

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

                                                        Date
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. George Arlotto   E-mail garlotto@aacp.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Anne Arundel County Public Schools   Tel.   (410) 222-5000
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

                                                        Date
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Stacy Korbelak
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.

3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

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

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

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

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district   81 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   21 Middle/Junior high schools
                                      16 High schools
                                      4 K-12 schools

                                      122 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	33	33	66
1	26	45	71
2	37	22	59
3	34	35	69
4	33	23	56
5	30	37	67
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	193	195	388

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
the school: 2 % Asian
    4 % Black or African American
    2 % Hispanic or Latino
    0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    88 % White
    3 % Two or more races
    100 % Total

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 7%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	388
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.072
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
    2 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 13 %
    Total number students who qualify: 50

8. Students receiving special education services: 4 %
    15 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

1	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	2	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	3	Specific Learning Disability
1	Emotional Disturbance	5	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
2	Multiple Disabilities	1	Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>4</u>

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	18
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	3
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   <u>22:1</u>

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes <u> </u>   No <u>X</u>

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

To create a positive learning environment in which children excel academically, socially, and emotionally, as well as develop and apply principles of ethical behavior.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Nestled in the trees of the Arnold Community, Arnold Elementary School (AES) is a unique and delightful school located near the Severn River in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The close proximity to the United States Naval Academy and Washington, D.C. brings families from around the world to our school. This provides an open and diverse culture with rich resources available to the school. Arnold Elementary focuses on all aspects of the child: emotional, with our study of growth mindsets and providing a safe learning environment for students to take risks; physical, with our wellness initiatives; and academic with arts integration and best practices strategies for student engagement and instruction.

The origin of the school can be traced back to the 1840s when there were no public schools, only a group of farmers who hired teachers for local children. Eventually, Thomas H. Arnold, a local farmer, donated the land for a school building. While few farms remain, today Arnold Elementary is a school with a strong focus on academics and a whole community approach to education. Many parents, staff members, and teachers were once students at Arnold Elementary. The PTA and community partners are an integral part to the school's success. Parents, teachers, and community partners have excellent relationships in supporting the whole child and work together in partnership for academic success. They support annual events such as the Arnold Fall Festival, the Father/Daughter Snowflake Dance, and the Walk-A-Thon Fundraiser.

Since 2011, Arnold Elementary has been recognized as a Wellness School of Distinction. As a Wellness School of Distinction, there is a clear focus on helping students and staff being healthy at school and in life. Students participate in nutrition lessons by a local pediatrician and learn drownproofing skills as part of a water safety program. A partnership with the Master Gardeners of Maryland provides environmental lessons and a meditation garden for students and staff. The school also promotes wellness through their outdoor learning classrooms and after school clubs, such as running programs for boys and girls.

Students learn environmental awareness through several Green School programs. The third graders raise terrapins from six week old to seven months of age and then release them back to the Chesapeake Bay in the spring. Fourth graders experience and learn about the local environment by spending two days and one night at the Arlington Echo Educational Facility located on the Severn River. All students participate in recycling and composting daily during lunch.

As a leading Arts Integration school, Arnold Elementary emphasizes strategies to develop critical thinking in conjunction with knowledge of art standards. Arts Integration (AI) encompasses the whole child in the learning process and is great for helping all students learn by engaging them through all modalities. Students experience learning through the arts. They learn reading, writing, and math along with the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre standards. The Visiting Artist program brings resident artists and parent volunteers to the school for additional arts focused lessons. Recently, students worked with a resident artist to learn the culture and science of steel drums and how to play them. During a study of Rome, students communicated with students from another elementary school in Italy via Skype. One of only 20 schools nationwide, Arnold Elementary won a 2015 Crayola Grant Award for developing school leadership in the arts.

Arnold Elementary is committed to sharing its professional expertise with aspiring teachers as a Professional Development School for Notre Dame of Maryland. This partnership with Notre Dame of Maryland involves student interns completing their student teaching and the college's support of school improvement. Student interns plan, teach, and complete a standard-based portfolio with the guidance of their mentor teacher. Together the mentor teacher and the intern work on a data based intervention to improve student performance in a targeted skill. Interns and college supervisors become a part of the school improvement team and are included in professional development opportunities.

Arnold Elementary teachers strive to know each student the best they can and make learning meaningful to each one. They make time for individual instruction, analyze and review student data, and adjust instruction to challenge and support each student. On their own time, teachers often work with students to help them improve in their academic skills. Teachers work collaboratively with specialists to plan lessons to meet the needs of all students. Daily instruction is individualized to ensure success. Teachers are always advancing

themselves as professionals, learning new strategies to increase academic rigor and student success. Currently, three teachers are recognized as National Board Certified Teachers and our school counselor is recognized as a National Board Certified Counselor. This is a reflection of Arnold Elementary School's talented and dedicated staff.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Reading/Language Arts: Arnold Elementary School's (AES) Language Arts program supports our mission of "developing academic leaders and socially responsible citizens." Teachers are empowered to grow students as readers, writers and thinkers. Language Arts is not a separate curriculum unto itself, but rather infused throughout all subject areas. Students are taught to research, analyze and express written thoughts fostered through direct instruction focusing on the reading and writing Common Core Standards which are then applied to the Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math curriculum. Ongoing Informal Reading Inventories including the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, plus County and teacher created assessments, diagnostically guide instruction. Through small group Guided Reading lessons 150 minutes per day are devoted to direct instruction for primary grades and 120 minutes for intermediate grades .The diverse needs of students are met through a compilation of reading sources: leveled text in Scholastic Guided Reading Books, TREASURES McGraw Hill program, Jr. Novels and Advanced Learner Programs (Jacobs Ladder, William and Mary, Integrated Curriculum Model etc.) Teachers, trained in Socratic Seminar, engage the students in higher level discussions. Students are encouraged to express their opinions by providing evidence to support their answers. They learn to evaluate other opinions by active listening. Teaching the Socratic Seminar Methodology requires students to delve deeply into a text. Interventions are delivered with fidelity through explicit and systematic instruction using both research based and evidence based programs. This systematic instruction provides extensive opportunities to ensure meeting the individual student needs.

Mathematics: AES utilizes the Anne Arundel County Public Schools Curriculum. Students build on and master skills beginning at the concrete level to the abstract. Standards for Mathematical Practice are embedded in everyday instruction to develop students into creative problem-solvers. Students are encouraged to make connections with other mathematical topics as well as use real-world exploration. Exploratory and project based learning are utilized to inspire students to solve problems in a variety of ways justifying their answers. The curriculum is extended using programs promoting critical thinking, problem solving skills and communication skills. Examples of programs used are: Art Integration, Hands On Equations, Number Talks, and M3 lessons (Mentoring Mathematical Minds). Instruction is tailored to meet students' unique needs using collaborative planning, technology, and various co-teaching models with both special educators and interns, in flexible small group instruction.

Science: The science curriculum is based on the Maryland State Curriculum incorporating 21st Century inquiry-analysis skills in lessons through explicit instruction. Students conduct hands-on investigations integrating earth, space science, life science, chemistry, physics, and environmental science concepts. A STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) Lab is utilized for classes to collaborate using inquiry-based learning experiences. AES has a meditation garden and outdoor nature investigation area equipped with tools for student exploration of plants, animals, and other organisms. Students master science concepts through the lens of science literacy. Through the Arts they create dances, models, and write dramatic scripts illustrating science concepts. Technology includes several digital databases; iPads, Chromebooks, web-based research, and content specific digital media. AES annually hosts a STEM night for the community. Features of this event include an indoor planetarium and a display of NASA lunar rocks.

Social Studies: The ability to make informed and reasoned decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in the 21st Century is the focus of the social studies curriculum. Students learn economics, history, geography, and political science in relevant ways. Lessons are infused through the arts using primary and secondary sources, as well as text- based, digital, and visual sources. Community awareness is taught through: local fire department visits, Career Day speakers, a Veterans' Day program, and field trips to museums and local historical sites. There are several ways students learn about their country's history and government, including research projects and debates, and Reader's Theater script-writing. Students engage in real world learning about economic and financial literacy to understand the journey to becoming responsible members of a global economy. Third graders plan and establish a Lemonade Stand

during their economics unit and donate proceeds to a local charity. Fifth graders participate in Junior Achievement's "BizTown" program by running an imaginary city.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Music: Students in first through fifth grade receive general music instruction once a week for sixty minutes, while kindergarten students attend music class twice weekly for thirty minutes each. Through the integration of music, movement, speech, and drama, students sing, dance, play instruments, read music, and create their own music as they become confident, life-long musicians and problem-solvers. Students in fourth and fifth grades can participate in chorus class where they prepare music for performance while learning the basics of choral singing and performance etiquette. In addition, students in third, fourth, and fifth grades can elect to participate in instrumental instruction. Over 60% of students play an instrument in the Arnold Elementary band or orchestra.

Art: Once a week all students participate in a one-hour art class. The art teacher demonstrates the elements and principles of art, bringing out the inner artist in every student. Classic and contemporary artists are used as models for students to create unique and relevant works of art that are displayed and showcased throughout the county. The art teacher works in conjunction with classroom teachers to combine art with content standards. Fourth graders create posters to entice viewers to visit an imaginative planet and fifth graders draw their dream bedrooms using rulers to create accurate measurements in one-point perspective.

Physical Education: Physical education (PE), movement, and kinesthetic learning are part of every student's day. Once a week for sixty minutes, students receive instruction in large and fine motor skills, healthy lifestyle, nutrition, and physical well-being. Kindergarten students receive PE instruction twice a week for thirty minutes each. The PE teacher creates curriculum that incorporates classroom content into physical education and health. The annual Field Day also has a curriculum-based theme, where the students' academic learning is enhanced through physical challenges while teaching sportsmanship and teamwork.

Technology: Students today are considered "digital natives" and teachers at Arnold Elementary empower students to excel in the latest technological practices. Students participate in hour-long weekly computer labs where they learn competencies for thriving in a technology-driven world. Students are taught the basics of code through STEM, use fact fluency and math software to enhance their math skills, participate in research-based reading interventions, and utilize tools for writing. Students work collaboratively through engaging projects using Wikis and OneDrive. Technology is infused throughout all subject areas within classrooms and in art, music, and physical education with the use of SMART Boards, Chromebooks, and iPads. At Arnold Elementary technology ensures mastery of standards and preparedness for 21st Century.

Media: All students at AES receive weekly instruction in the media center where the media specialist uses the American Library Association (ALA) Standards for 21st Century learners to scaffold lessons in information, literature, and digital media. Students are taught research techniques, how to access age-appropriate materials, how to evaluate resources, and use both traditional and innovative presentation methods. Research projects and inquiry units are interspersed with instruction to align with and support the core curriculum. Students are encouraged to explore the joys of reading and literature by self-selecting books to suit their interests and reading levels. Other activities include lunchtime book clubs, the Black-Eyed Susan reading incentive program, and a homegrown Media Café Book program which encourages students to read and write reviews. The media specialist works collaboratively with teachers to plan projects and strengthen collection development to align with both curricular and student needs.

School Counselor: The role of the school counselor is to be an advocate for students and to nurture the whole child. The counselor works closely with parents, teachers, administrators, and students to support the educational process to provide safe, creative and challenging learning environments. All students are involved in monthly classroom guidance lessons; individual counseling; and small group counseling with topics including character education, bullying, social skills, test-taking strategies, and cooperative learning. The counselor works with children in the Principals' Council, Human Relations Committee, Sea Perch engineering club, Black Saga Black history club, and the Community Outreach Committee. The counselor works to support the school community to make it a great place to teach and for students to learn.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

What makes Arnold Elementary unique when it comes to instruction is the staff's unwavering mission to coach students to reach their greatest potential. Students at Arnold Elementary benefit from invested teachers through: collaborative planning, Arts Integration, STEM, differentiated instruction, academic interventions, advanced learning, and technology infused instruction.

High quality instruction begins with effective grade level teams who plan collaboratively with special educators, the Art Integration support teacher, related service providers, and resource staff. Teachers constantly review data from formative and summative assessments to ensure that the needs of diverse learners are recognized. Student Individual Educational Plans, 504 Plans, and any other intervention needs are prioritized as well as the needs of the most advanced learners. After data analysis is complete, teachers plan instruction and implement a variety of team-teaching, flexible grouping, and heterogeneous and homogeneous formats.

Arts Integration (AI) and STEM are major components of the school's instruction. Teachers excite learners by using AI techniques as a springboard to create unique approaches to learning. Learners participate in STEM challenges that engage through the scientific process, exposure to computer coding, and encouragement to think deeply and problem solve using approaches beyond the traditional.

Instruction also includes a variety of differentiated methods which actively support approaching grade level and beyond grade level learners. Instruction includes tiered lessons that scaffold and encourage a gradual release of support. To heighten engagement, students can often choose different products that appeal to their unique learning styles. Lesson content is modified providing opportunities for extra practice or deeper thinking. When students need extra support, research and evidence-based programs are utilized toward the benefit of all students. Some programs include Wilson Fundations, Voyager Passport, Do The Math, and FASTT Math. Trained staff implement these interventions with fidelity to maximize student success.

Teachers consistently use advanced teaching methodology and instruction. Blooms Taxonomy, Costa's leveled questioning, and Jacob's Ladder techniques are embedded to guide students to a higher zone of proximity. Students are also challenged through Socratic Seminars, Primary Talent Development lessons, Hands-On-Equations, the M-Squared Math and M-Cubed Math programs, and literature circles. Students are given opportunities to participate in "passion projects" where research, problem solving, and creative solutions abound.

Integration of technology provides opportunities to keep pace with the outside world. SMART boards, chrome books, iPads, plus varied language arts and math software programs enhance instruction. Students with individualized needs are provided with access to assistive technology including specialized personal computers and programs.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Arnold Elementary School Staff set high expectations to meet and exceed each school year for state standardized assessments. Maryland School Assessment (MSA) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) are two indicators of success. Each year, scores are analyzed and compared to scores from previous years, with AACPS and Maryland State averages, and to schools with similar demographics. As a result, successes are celebrated and a plan of action is developed and implemented for further improvements.

Arnold Elementary Teachers examine scores at each grade level. Individual student scores are examined and specific students in need of additional support are discussed. Adjustments to instruction are ongoing and analyzed as needs change. Grade level and vertical teams are utilized to guarantee all content areas and standards are taught and attained. Specific student groups are analyzed for trends, strengths, and weaknesses. After a school wide analysis of standardized test scores, a goal was set to increase scores from proficient to the advanced level for students who qualify for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs). Professional development on strategies for helping and teaching students in poverty were identified and

shared with all teachers. For example, staff attended conferences and trainings on the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program and then shared new knowledge with all teachers.

In addition to MSA and PARCC, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) assessments for Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies are used. To determine individual student reading levels, students are assessed with Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, and the Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) Reading Assessment. Grade level teams provide monthly opportunities for in-depth data analysis of these assessments. For students identified as needing improvement, action plans with specific interventions are created and implemented. Moreover, for students identified as achieving at or above grade level standards, appropriate programs, materials, grouping, and support are aligned with students' needs. Collaboration with the district's Advanced Learner Programs (ALPs) and Arts Integration offices provides support to teachers for planning rigorous and engaging instruction for students needing advanced learning.

Assessment results are shared and explained to parents and other stakeholders. Timely communication is essential, therefore; informative newsletter articles, discussions at PTA meetings, individual student reports, conferencing with parents, and 24 hour access to electronic grades are utilized frequently. This open communication provides a unique level of trust and collaboration at Arnold Elementary.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Arnold Elementary School's motto is "Believe, Achieve, Excel." It is our school-wide goal to identify and reach every student so he or she can achieve their highest potential academically and socially. This motto guides the staff vision and the effects are noticeable in every classroom.

Each staff member creates an environment in which students feels safe, valued and challenged. By emphasizing growth mindset and "growing brains," teachers help students develop their intelligence through persistence and effort. This classroom focus on goals and improvement develops students into enthusiastic, hard-working, persistent learners. In addition, students earn extrinsic individual and class rewards for achieving academic and behavioral goals: "Turtle Tickets" can be redeemed at the school store, "I've Reached My Goal" badges are awarded to individuals, class incentive parties are earned, and "Green Day" celebrations encourage hard work and good choices.

Special programs enhance student interests and growth: Members of the Sea Perch Engineering Club build underwater robots, Social Detectives Club helps students with social skills, Principals' Council and School Safety Patrol develop student leaders, Black Saga Club promotes Black History Month, and 24 Math Club challenges young mathematicians through competitions. Students also benefit from programs such as celebration books, brain gym exercises, dance team and all school assemblies. Special days such as Read Across America Day, Field Day, American Education Week, STEM Week, and Grandfriends Day all create excitement and student engagement. Fridays are school spirit days and all staff and students wear the school colors, blue and white.

Teachers feel appreciated by parents, students, administration, and colleagues. We recognize each other in our weekly memo for support and kindness, monthly at staff meetings, and annually with our teacher-of-the-year nominations. The staff supports each other through many programs such as our Sunshine Committee, Birthday Buddies, and monthly off-site social gatherings. The PTA provides staff appreciation through classroom funding, teacher appreciation week festivities, and monthly lunches with raffles.

Our tight-knit community and neighborhood partners join with the school for activities such as food drives, visits to senior centers, a father/daughter dance, and a mother/son outing. Additionally, the community supports "Arnold Cares," a unique school program which provides food, clothing, field trip funds, yearbooks, dance tickets, holiday assistance, and furniture to our own needy population. Our community often refers to Arnold Elementary as a "hidden gem."

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Arnold Elementary is the academic, family hub for the 27 neighborhoods and greater Arnold community that it serves. Communication and collaboration are key components utilized to achieve strong community relationships and high levels of volunteer participation at the school. Communication occurs in many ways at Arnold Elementary. Information can be found on the school website. Daily events can be viewed on the school's twitter account. The principal sends a personal weekly message to all families via a phone call and an email containing current school activities and important information. Teachers provide weekly newsletters for their grade level and are continually in contact through emails and conferences.

School events for families promote communication and create a positive relationship. At the beginning of the school year Arnold Elementary hosts Kindergarten Orientation, Back-to-School Night, and Sneak-A-Peek where students and parents can drop off supplies and meet their teacher. The school hosts events such as a Veteran's Day Program honoring the many veterans' within the community, a Grandfriend's Day to showcase the student achievements, and a Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast. These events give teachers and families the opportunity to share with each other and become a stronger school.

Community partnerships enhance instruction and school culture. The Naval Academy Midshipmen

volunteer time with the after school girls running club (Girls On The Run) and tutor students needing extra help. The Foster Grandparent program provides the opportunity for senior citizens to spend time in the classrooms. An active and supportive PTA coordinates and sometimes funds instructional, social, and professional programs for our students, families and staff. The PTA sponsors the annual Walk-a-thon, the annual artist in residence program, school assembly programs, and grants for staff development. Students are offered the opportunity to participate in PTA-coordinated afterschool enrichment programs which bring in professional instructors for classes like dance, book club, Lego Building, STEM club, scrapbooking, and nature exploring.

Arnold Elementary helps to improve our larger community in many ways. Parenting forums on topics like childhood nutrition, web and social media safety, and childhood anxiety are offered. Students give to non-profit charities like Harvest for the Hungry, conduct a coat drive for the homeless, and collect supplies for the local animal shelter. The open lines of communication and active collaboration between parents, teachers, and administration gives everyone a voice in setting goals, thus, creating opportunities that would not otherwise be possible.

3. Professional Development:

Arnold Elementary' s professional development is highly valued and planned in conjunction with AACPS goals, data analysis, and the School Improvement Plan. AES staff believes it is imperative for professional development to be constantly revised based on student and staff needs. A distributed leadership model is used to send staff members to professional development opportunities that align with teacher interests and student needs. Staff members present strategies which benefit the entire school. All teachers at Arnold Elementary have either obtained, or are working toward, a graduate or doctoral degree. The partnership with Notre Dame University of Maryland provides additional opportunities for teachers to grow by mentoring interns, attending university sponsored workshops, and including of interns in school-based professional development.

Professional development at AES includes the whole faculty, including our student interns and college liaison. Professional development at Arnold Elementary focuses on creating an environment that fosters the development of the whole child so students can excel academically, socially, and emotionally. The School Improvement Plan's initiatives center on student and teacher growth mindsets, student engagement, and building positive relationships. School leaders attended a school district conference, "Unlocking Our Potential", to learn strategies for empowering all students to achieve and excel. Through the presentation of kinesthetic learning and brain boosting activities during monthly staff meetings, teachers learn new strategies to reach all students during classroom instruction. Teachers are provided the choice to explore targeted school improvement initiatives with on line professional learning groups using Edmodo. Teachers visited NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center for on-site training for STEM lessons.

Teachers and administration participate in both national and local AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) conferences to learn strategies for student success through rigorous questioning, note-taking/organization, and instructional strategies which encourage student independence at both the primary and intermediate level. Teachers take advantage of training of AACPS programs including: Guided Reading, Arts Integration, Socratic Seminar, College of William and Mary Literature, Number Talks, Jacob's Ladder, Mentoring Mathematical Minds, and Hands on Equations. Teacher to teacher classroom visits provide valuable insight to vertical instruction and communication among teachers and between grade levels. Professional development also occurs during weekly collaborative planning. During these meetings staff members analyze students' needs and plan differentiated instruction. Teachers hold valuable discussions that support each other as they implement instruction to meet the needs of all students.

4. School Leadership:

With the complexities and challenges of leading a school, shared leadership and team work are critical to school success. The Principal utilizes Facilitative Leadership and empowers all teachers to lead in their areas of strength. As a result, all teachers are members of the School Improvement Team. Teachers work in teams based on specific areas of school programs and initiatives. Teams work collaboratively to provide

professional development and advisement in their area of expertise.

The Leadership Team at Arnold Elementary is comprised of the primary team lead teacher, the intermediate team lead teacher, the school counselor, the reading teacher, and the principal. As a core team they analyze school wide data throughout the school year to identify trends and areas of need for student achievement, student discipline, and school improvement progress. They also conduct school planning for celebrations, teacher professional development, and teacher to teacher visitations for peer coaching.

The Reading Teacher is not only the reading specialist but an instructional specialist for the school. She plans weekly with all grade level teachers, provides professional development for teachers individually and at large, monitors reading interventions, and teaches reading enrichment groups for students. In addition, she coordinates the reading and standardized state testing for the school and is the 504 coordinator.

Among the many teams at Arnold Elementary, the Equity Team, AVID Team, and Wellness Team specialize in specific areas that affect students, staff, and parents/guardians. The Equity Team supports the school improvement initiative of creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students, specifically by moving thinking to a growth mindset. The AVID Team continues the growth mindset and provides strategies for organization and inquiry. The Wellness Team includes parents, the school nurse, teachers, and the principal. Its primary goal is to support the physical, mental, and emotional health of students and staff.

Teachers are encouraged to grow professionally and develop their own personal leadership skills. For example, the recently awarded Crayola Grant focuses on the second grade teachers teaching other teachers about inquiry skills through Arts Integration. Teachers share their knowledge and pedagogy with other Arnold teachers, teachers from county schools as well as teachers across the country. Local student interns benefit from this professional development too. Leadership at Arnold Elementary is shared to support the mission and vision of the school.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Arnold Elementary is an Arts Integration school. This approach to teaching integrates the Fine and Performing Arts, (visual, dance, music & theatre) as primary pathways to learning. Full integration requires collaboration, research, intentional alignment to the common core standards, and practical application. Through Arts Integration students develop the skills of problem solving, creativity, and perseverance. This style of teaching is engaging for the students as well as the teachers. Teachers collaboratively plan each month with an Arts Integration resource specialist. This process is invaluable. Teachers, also, participate in ongoing professional development to gain knowledge of the Arts Integration standards which include visual arts, drama, music, and dance. This training includes week-long courses through the 21st Century Arts Institute. In addition, teachers routinely share effective Arts Integration lessons with fellow teachers. Each grade works with resident artists to incorporate artistic knowledge, perspective and guidance. Outcome-based instructions are planned collaboratively with the artist and classroom teacher. The residencies are partially funded by the Parent Teacher Association. Arnold Elementary embraces a Guest Artist program run by trained volunteers. Volunteers work with classroom teachers to plan presentations and projects based on state Arts Integration outcomes and the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards.

Testing results show the evidence of student gains through the arts. Teachers enjoy the freedom to develop creative lessons and projects which meet various learning styles. Some examples of Arts Integration lessons include poetry and song writing to teach the multiplication facts. Students work in pairs to develop a song, poem, or rap. Performances are videotaped and shared with the class. The improvement in multiplication automaticity is documented in the post-test results. Other lessons include the Artful Thinking process to examine an artist such as Norman Rockwell. Students read biographical information, and view videos about the artist to learn about the style of the artist. In Norman

Rockwell's art, they learn the story behind the painting. Students examine Rockwell art by applying the strategy of Stepping Into the Painting. Finally, students create a written story about the Rockwell print using details of the painting to develop written details of their own.

Arts Integration lessons can be observed almost daily in our school. This approach to teaching makes a positive impact on all the students and staff and is evident through test results, classroom learning, and smiles on students' faces.