

U.S. Department of Education
2023 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. Carrie Mitten

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

Official School Name Matapeake Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 651 Romancoke Road

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

City Stevensville

State MD

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21666-2637

County Queen Anne's County

Telephone (410) 643-3105

Fax (410) 643-3711

Web site/URL <https://www.qacps.org/mes/>

E-mail carrie.mitten@qacps.org

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. Patricia Saelens

E-

mail patricia.saelens@qacps.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Tel. (410) 758-2403

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 Mr. Marc Schifanelli

(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- ☐ Urban (city or town)
☐ Suburban
☒ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Students
PreK	19
K	73
1	74
2	67
3	60
4	71
5	62
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	426

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 84 % White
 - 8 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 7%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	9
(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, 2021	409
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
2 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28 %

Total number students who qualify: 118

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 11 %
Total number of students served 45

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>4</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>1</u> Developmental Delay	<u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>20</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 4 %
Total number of students served: 18

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

12. 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 18:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	93%	97%	95%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes ☐ No ☒

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

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

Matapeake Elementary School, in partnership with families and community members, fosters a learning environment to educate and empower students academically, socially, and emotionally to prepare them for career, college and life success. Our students will graduate with the skills necessary to pursue their professional pathway and be empathetic contributors to society.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT: In accordance with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Board of Education, QACPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, age, religion, disability, genetics, ancestry/national origin, marital status, sex or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing educational programs and service and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. QACPS operates equal opportunity and affirmative action programs for students and staff. The Board of Education of Queen Anne's County Public Schools is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Employee inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or Title IX issues such as gender equity, sexual harassment and sexual discrimination should be directed to Michael Noel, Director of Human Resources, michael.noel@qacps.org or 410-758-2403 ext. 176. Student or parent inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or Title IX issues such as gender equity, sexual harassment and sexual discrimination should be directed to Matt Evans, Director of Student Services, starke.evans@qacps.org or 410-758-2403 ext. 154. Inquiries regarding ADA and Section 504 should be directed to Joeleen Smith, Supervisor of Special Education, joeleen.smith@qacps.org or 410-758-2403 ext. 131. Inquiries regarding Title II should be directed to Michael Noel, Director of Human Resources, michael.noel@qacs.org or 410-758-2403 ext. 176. Inquiries may also be addressed in writing to the appropriate office at Queen Anne's County Public Schools, 202 Chesterfield Ave, Centreville, Maryland 21617.

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Matapeake Elementary School is located near the Chesapeake Bay on Kent Island in Stevensville, Maryland. Our school opened in 2004 to accommodate the growing population that exceeded the capacity of Kent Island and Bayside Elementary Schools. Our island is home to a diverse socio-economic group of people. We are a tight-knit community of teachers, staff and families collaborating together to provide a supportive and personalized educational program for all of our Pre-K through 5th grade students. Students are all taught the core subject areas of Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies as well as Music, Art, Physical Education, Technology and Media.

Our staff is dedicated and goes above and beyond every single day. This did not change when we moved to distance learning in 2020. Matapeake teachers and students have worked together to try and fill in gaps from previous years of online learning. When Matapeake initially shut down, many teachers chose to continue to go above and beyond online school, which resulted in students not falling behind as severely as they could have. For example, we had teachers drive to students' homes to get schoolwork to them and collect schoolwork. We also used paraeducators to help support Zoom rooms for small groups. We recognized the gaps created due to schools being shut down and have actively worked to fill in those gaps the past two years so that our students' academic future will not be impacted. Make no mistake, COVID-19 has had an impact on our students, teachers and families. We have added counseling, coping strategies, help for families with basic living needs, and mental health resources to our box of tools. More than ever, these resources are needed in order to help our kids survive and strive to learn. These tools are needed to help teachers navigate a new way of teaching and how to manage their own self-care.

Due to the impact on our staff and students, Matapeake Elementary School made Social Emotional Learning a focus, not only through direct instruction, but through our daily interactions with students. We foster a community of acceptance, empathy and inclusion, and aim to be a space where children feel safe, understood and appreciated. Through our use of Zones of Regulation and Changing Perspectives, we implement Social Emotional Learning lessons, which have helped foster school and classroom communities where students are learning to be aware of how they are feeling. We have fostered a schoolwide focus on identifying our emotions so that we can choose the correct tools to help self-regulate. Through the use of these lessons and tools, students are becoming more confident, self-aware, and empathetic.

Matapeake Elementary School currently has a 5-star rating and is in the 95th percentile according to the Maryland Department of Education Report Card for 2022. Prior to the Pandemic, we maintained a 4-star rating. Teachers at Matapeake Elementary School are outstanding in their field with 76% of our teaching staff holding Advanced Professional Certificates and two of our staff members also holding National Board Certification. We had 69.1% of students meet or exceed standards in Reading/Language Arts and 55% meet or exceeded standards in math on the 2021-2022 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). In addition, we continue to make great progress in improving the achievement of students in many different demographic areas while maintaining an attendance rate of 93%.

Our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program celebrates children when they are making good choices in respecting themselves, others, learning and property. Students are given Mariner Stamps when they demonstrate respect and they have the opportunity to spend their stamps at the Mariner School Store or purchase special event tickets (i.e., Winter Olympics, Movie & Popcorn, etc.). Students are also given Positive Referrals for displaying extraordinary actions and following our school rules. Students receive a certificate and parents are called to celebrate their success. In addition, students are recognized at our monthly STAR Student assembly during lunches. Student names are announced, and their picture is taken to display for the month in the main hallway.

Our school community believes in educating the whole child in order to meet their academic and socio-economic needs. We meet our students at their level and provide the support and resources needed in order to help them reach their full potential. Tiered interventions, classroom differentiation, explicit teaching, the use of gradual release model, and regular monthly analysis of our formative and summative data inform and

drive our instruction. Student performance is monitored, and instruction is adjusted based on formative and summative assessments in order to meet the needs of our students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Matapeake Elementary School's Reading/Language Arts (RELA) curriculum supports Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Frameworks for the standards identify the essential skills and knowledge that students need to master at each level. The rigorous program addresses the needs of the whole child. Essential skills and knowledge are explicitly taught and integrated into reading lessons that support the comprehension of informational or literary text. Each grade level's standards support fundamental skills such as phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and speaking, listening and writing. Lessons are crafted so that students understand key ideas and details, craft and structure of texts, and integrate ideas and knowledge from multiple texts. Our district uses the McGraw Hill Wonders series, allowing teachers and students to access multiple literary and informational texts of different complexities, either digitally or through a print copy. The Reading/Language Arts block begins with whole-group instruction. Students in grades K-2 receive 150 minutes and grades 3-5 receive 120 minutes of uninterrupted instruction. Classroom teachers, special education teachers, specialists, paraeducators and tutors support and coteach during this time. Teachers utilize the gradual release model and also engage students in analyzing close reads for an author's craft or integrating ideas. Students are given appropriate scaffolding and differentiation to meet success, and students have access to text through both their Chromebooks and print copies. An hour of this block is geared towards small group instruction, utilizing texts that meet other instructional needs. The last half hour is geared to explicit writing/language instruction integrated into whole group/small group reading instruction. Students receive Tier 1 instruction and support in their classroom by their homeroom teacher and/or the special education teacher. Students can also receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 support in an intervention classroom by the Reading Specialist, special educator, or reading tutor during our FLEX block or additional time in their schedule, which is above and beyond core instruction. Students are placed in intervention groups based on identification as reading below grade level. Interventions are research-based programs (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's System 44 and Read 180) which are explicit, have multisensory components and incorporate print and digital practice. Multiple formative and summative assessments are given throughout the year. Daily formative assessments are given with each lesson including exit slips, annotated notes and written responses. Checklists and student-friendly rubrics, developed by teachers and the state, help with the evaluation process. Teachers also utilize weekly Wonders assessments which are aligned to the curriculum. I-Ready assessments are given at the beginning, middle and end of the year. This assessment is aligned to state standards and assesses various aspects of reading. The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program assesses students' knowledge and proficiency on grade-level standards. Individual, grade-level and subgroup data is examined by our School Improvement Team in order to guide instruction, develop programming, place students in appropriate interventions and/or in classrooms with appropriate supports.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The mathematics program provides quality learning experiences that promote math understanding while building students' confidence in the ability to reason and communicate mathematically to become productive members of a global society. The staff promotes the teaching of the growth mindset, a belief that students' most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This view supports perseverance and a resilience that is essential for mathematical achievement. The curriculum is aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and Math Practices, which focuses on addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and problem solving related to real-world situations in order to prepare students for secondary school success. Teachers collaborate on standards-based lessons that include activities involving student collaboration and small groups, and assessments such as exit tickets that serve as formative assessments. The standards demonstrate a progression of skills reinforcing the infusion of operations in real-world problem solving. Each grade utilizes scaffolded instruction with concrete models, drawings, place value strategies, and properties of operations to build mathematical understanding. Conceptual understanding, procedural skills, fluency, rigor and application are integrated within the

curriculum. Instructional approaches include repetitive, spiraled, tiered, and differentiated through explicit instruction with manipulatives, games, and centers which incorporate open-ended activities to support independent strategic learners. Students utilize oral and written communication through real-world situations to explain their reasoning. Students use Chromebooks daily to assess and reinforce previously learned concepts and to practice and extend new skills. This technology application is a learner-centered approach that promotes natural differentiation at each learner's ability and allows real-world problem solving through the use of interactive presentations and other means to construct knowledge to ensure a digitally proficient society. Assessment tools, aligned to the standards, are utilized to assess learning and to plan next steps through professional development. Teachers receive weekly professional development through digital communication to build their capacity with the interactive math curriculum platform and receive professional developments throughout the year on using multiple data sources to drive instruction and plan for data discussions. These professional developments enable teachers to acquire strategies to help students achieve a higher success rate on summative assessments. Formative assessments (exit tickets and daily practice) and diagnostics (pretests and observations) provide data about student strengths and weaknesses to support the use of structured peer assistance and cooperative groups to fill gaps and provide extension activities. Students use feedback to reflect upon their own learning goals. Grade level teams meet regularly to discuss student needs, next steps to further student growth, and reflect on their instructional practice. Data from formative and summative assessments promote the evaluation of curricula, instructional methodology, and intervention programs. The math specialist and tutor provide daily Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for students with more intensive learning gaps to assist in closing the achievement gap. To assist in closing the achievement gap, boost groups are also held daily for students who received a score of 3 on the math MCAP. In conjunction with classroom teachers, the math specialist also provides tasks for high-performing students. Summative assessments (end of unit, state mandated assessments, CogAt) provide data for student accountability and placement in later math classes.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Our science instruction is aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade begin to develop an understanding of the four disciplinary core ideas: physical sciences; life sciences; earth and space sciences; and engineering, technology and applications of science. Teachers are guided in their planning for these core ideas through NGSS and are able to integrate RELA and mathematical standards that align with science standards. For 55 minutes, three days a week, MES students receive science instruction through a combination of content knowledge and hands-on learning. Teachers provide lab experiences through the use of hands-on materials in kits provided by our county's science department. Also, we have a wetlands area students helped create several years ago, which is utilized regularly as an outdoor classroom and to reinforce lessons and concepts in the Environmental Literacy standards. Students work together in small groups to complete hands-on projects following the engineering design process. Projects are introduced in the form of a problem that needs to be solved. Groups are given specific criteria and constraints for solving the problem. Following the engineering process, students study the problem, brainstorm possible solutions, test a possible solution and determine if the solution works, needs to be adjusted, or can be improved. A rubric is often used to guide the students in completing the project and informing them of how they will be assessed. Students are also assessed through formative assessments such as exit slips, and teacher observation/annotated notes that are aligned to standards. The Maryland Integrated Science Assessment is a cumulative test of science knowledge from the elementary years that is given to 5th graders. Matapeake students have consistently performed very well in the state. Currently we are number 1 in our county for MISA 2022 test scores according to the Maryland Department of Education Report Card.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Elementary social studies focuses on developing students' understandings of key content and skills that build awareness of self within a community, nation and world. In grades PreK-3, content is organized within units of study that introduce and reinforce knowledge of the six Maryland State Social Studies Standards. In grades 4-5, the state social studies standards are integrated into an overview of the history of the United States, and how Maryland factors into that history. Elementary social studies prepare students with the skills and content needed to meet the challenge of secondary social studies content and supports literacy

development across subject areas. The elementary framework is designed to highlight opportunities in which the English language arts, reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards can be integrated into the social studies class. For 55 minutes two days a week, Matapeake Elementary School students receive social studies instruction through a combination of content knowledge and interactive experiences. Teachers also utilize Social Studies topics for project-based learning and virtual field trips/webinars in order to make the content authentic and relevant for students. Pre-assessments are available to determine background knowledge and instructional needs. Formative assessments in the form of questioning, observations, exit tickets and quizzes are quick check-ins and are utilized to measure student knowledge. More formal tests and performance-based tasks are used for summative assessments. Rubrics are used for performance tasks and writing assessments. Students also have the opportunity to complete projects or reports to share what they have learned about a given topic.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

The overall goal of the PreK program is to help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary to be successful in school. MES provides PreK for all economically disadvantaged and homeless students that reach age four by September 1 in accordance with COMAR requirements. After the initial enrollment of these children, remaining vacancies are filled by children who exhibit a lack of readiness in one or more of the following areas: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical and scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development of health.

Our program is designed to prepare students for school readiness and success in the primary grades. Our program uses the Frog Street curriculum which is a dual language program designed to meet the needs of diverse learners across all content domains of learning. Our program emphasizes the importance of a strong social-emotional foundation by using the Conscious Discipline approach as well as the need for a strong academic foundation, by utilizing the Maryland State Common Core Standards which align with the rest of the school age students in our building. Matapeake Elementary's program allows students to have an in-school experience that build and develop the skills necessary to be successful in kindergarten and throughout their learning career.

Children enrolled in our PreK class learn to interact with people, places, and things in appropriate ways; use a variety of modes to express experiences and thoughts and interpret messages; engage in information-seeking behaviors; develop confidence in oneself; integrate prior knowledge in the learning process; use movement and play in the learning process and acquire positive, effective social habits.

Our program is currently going through the Accreditation Process. MES has made a commitment to a continuous quality improvement, to benefit children, families and staff. The Maryland Accreditation Standards are written and provided to define quality program practices to assist the school in the process of continuous improvement.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

In visual and performing arts, students from PreK through fifth grade participate for one hour each in both art and music classes once a week. Students explore big ideas of; I am an Artist, Artists Imagine, and Artists Connect.

Within these categories in art, students focus on how artists create, communicate, build responsibilities, explore imagination, take risks, invent ideas, interact, and influence the world around them. The essential

questions guide students' acquisition of essential skills in fine motor development, knowledge of composition, vocabulary, art processes and techniques using media, collaboration with others, decision-making, problem-solving techniques, connections through artwork and reflection.

In music, students use these big ideas to understand how musicians get inspiration to create, refine their craft and relate to the human experience. While exploring these avenues, students get opportunities to create, move, listen and talk about music in a space that allows for them to take risks and make mistakes while working towards a larger goal.

Throughout the years, students connect music and art to reading, math, technology and science through various different activities from grades Prek through 5th.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Physical Education and Health is provided to each of our students in grades PreK through 5th grade. Students participate in physical activity for one hour every five school days. The primary goal of the Physical Education classes is to help students build a positive association with exercise and develop healthy lifestyle habits while supporting the general education content. Students learn to master content standards through a variety of games and activities, while simultaneously developing teamwork and problem-solving strategies. Grades PreK-2 focus on understanding space and movement, balance, and locomotor skills. Grades 3-5 take these skills and transfer them to small games and activities that focus on building team concepts and strategies.

Matapeake Elementary creates an atmosphere where students see value in health and find enjoyment in physical activities. This helps to build a foundation toward a life-long appreciation for healthy habits and choices. Health lessons range from understanding emotions to nutrition and are always based on the health objectives from the Maryland State Department of Education. Observations and skill tests are used as formative and summative measures to determine students' growth and progress, and subsequently to adjust instruction to best meet the needs of all students.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

2d. Technology/library/media

Matapeake Elementary currently has a computer lab that has thirty desktop computers available to our students. Our students, in grades Pre-K through 5th grade are provided one hour of instruction in the lab per week. This class includes twenty to thirty minutes of keyboarding practice, as well as timed typing tests to assess progress and accuracy and identify areas of weakness. Topics that are explored during the hour include cyber-safety, data analysis, algorithms and programming. Google Education tools and Microsoft Excel are utilized in the instruction. Students are introduced and guided through responsible practices regarding the use of social media and the importance of a positive Digital Footprint. Our lab facilitator consistently collaborates with each grade level in order to embed curriculum and technology promoting critical thinking skills and project-based learning. Students' work on specific assignments or projects are assessed and anecdotal notes are also taken, which guides the planning for future lessons.

Students in Pre-K through 5th grade are also provided an hour per week in Media. In these classes, students are immersed in education that promotes life-long learning and supports growth in reading for enjoyment while challenging them to think critically. They build foundational skills in reading, research, technology, critical thinking, design process and creation of products. They connect with literature using Makerspace activities and other engaging activities. Each year, the curriculum spirals and builds upon these concepts with the goal of creating life-long learners.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Matapeake Elementary School conducts monthly meetings for the purpose of monitoring our student performance/progress. Monitoring Exceptional Students (M.E.S.) is a collaborative team approach where grade level teams meet to discuss any student concerns and provide suggestions for academic improvement. Once the strategies are tried, the teacher requests for the M.E.S. team, consisting of the leadership team, special educators, school psychologist, and other stakeholders, to meet. The team reviews data, strategies and progress for each student. This process serves as the pre-referral team for special education.

In addition to M.E.S. meetings, the leadership team analyzes student assessment results frequently. This data analysis is shared with the staff through the School Improvement Team (SIT) during our monthly meetings. SIT consists of a classroom teacher from each grade level or academic team, specialists, parent, and administrators. After analyzing school data, the team brainstorms ways to close the achievement gaps that exist.

Grade level teams plan weekly to adjust and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of each student. Review of formative and summative assessments provides teachers the opportunity to differentiate their instruction and flexibly group students in small groups, based on need. Teachers encourage students to learn from each other and highlight each other's strengths to assist one another's academic growth while engaging in content-rich discourse. Student schedules in grades 3-5 have a designated part of their day dedicated to filling academic gaps called FLEX. Teachers meet the varying needs of their learners during this block of time to help close achievement gaps.

The math and reading specialists deliver research-based tiered interventions to students that are performing below level according to diagnostic assessment results given three times a year. Intervention data is reviewed throughout the school year and student progress is communicated to teachers and families.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Primary Talent Development (PTD) lessons are taught to ALL students in grades K-2 to provide all students the opportunity to think at a higher level. This process allows teachers an opportunity to see how students rise to meet challenging tasks. Enrichment activities are prepared for students that are ready for enrichment lessons. Students in grades 3-5 take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to identify enriched or gifted students at various domains. The school uses these scores along with other data points such as Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) and county test scores to identify students that could use enrichment in either the classroom or with the reading and math specialists.

Enrichment is also provided to all of our students through classroom teachers' core instruction, but our dedicated FLEX block enables teachers to provide instruction that goes beyond the regular curriculum. Teachers use the PTD lessons and CogAT scores to identify student strengths and flexibly group students within their own classrooms or within a grade-level cohort. Projects and investigations that involve critical-thinking, problem-solving, STEM activities and investigation/research enable students to extend their thinking and apply their skills to these higher-level thinking tasks. Some examples of these activities/experiences are novel studies, higher-level novel literature circles, independent research projects, and STEM based projects. Challenging activities are planned to include the content areas of Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science, and our Media, Art and Music teachers have worked with individual students to challenge them in the areas of advanced art, music and independent research projects.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The special education program at MES includes 13% of our student population. Our special education students receive a wide range of services based on the student's academic, behavioral, and/or developmental

needs. Teachers, including special educators, use a co-teaching model to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom. Special educators collaborate with general educators and paraprofessionals so that special education students have appropriate access to the state standards and curriculum. Our special educators are conscientious with tracking student progress with the standards and consistently sharing the results with families.

Students with disabilities that require additional academic support receive double or triple doses of intervention in challenging standards. Special Education teachers help students access the grade level curriculum by tailoring instruction in many ways. They modify the content, methodology and the delivery of instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. For example, they may provide literary materials at a level students can read independently in order to practice a given grade level skill or standard. They pre-teach vocabulary or prerequisite skills to prepare students for an upcoming lesson. Many of these modifications are delivered in a small group while targeting instruction based on formative and summative assessments. All staff uses flexible grouping and partner work to provide appropriate peer modeling. Students who qualify are also provided additional research-based interventions for thirty minutes per day.

MES takes great pride in its open communication and partnership with our families. All stakeholders have the belief that every student deserves the same opportunities for success, utilizing teaching methodologies that promote closing the achievement gap. Consistent collaboration between the educators and families is the key to our success.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen an increase of emotional, behavioral and anxiety concerns. Our entire staff remains committed to accommodate and help students with special needs reach their full potential in a safe, supportive environment.

3d. English Language Learners:

The English Language program of Queen Anne's County Public Schools works toward the goal of preparing college and career ready students. The number of students who speak another language in our school community is very low, with 1% of the student population identified as English Learner. Despite the low numbers, we continue to take measures to ensure that their academic needs are being met. The tutor meets with students to assess needs and assess stages of language acquisition. The WIDA assessment is utilized, as well as classroom, state and county assessments. In addition, the English Language tutor works collaboratively with the general education teachers in order to effectively convey academic material through proficiency level-based instruction and close any achievement gaps. The teachers and tutor collaborate in order to provide English Language students with appropriate accommodations during classroom instruction and county and state assessments. Some of our English Language population receives reading and math intervention during our FLEX block.

Our staff utilizes technology resources in order to aid English Language students. We work with the tutor to utilize technology in order to bridge the gap between languages. Students are provided focused lessons that build essential vocabulary which will provide them the conversation skills. Professional development was provided to staff in order to help them deliver instruction based on the learner's needs while boosting the EL student vocabulary. Matapeake Elementary School shares an EL tutor with other schools due to our low number of students. It is with the assistance of our district-level bilingual interpreters that we are able to deliver native language parental notification of services available to our EL learner. In addition, the interpreters are used to provide information to families regarding conferences and school-wide events.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The counseling department and our Social Emotional Learning committee at MES are dedicated to providing resources and services to students and staff to foster self-esteem, acceptance, resiliency, inclusivity and connectedness to one another. The delivery of these services takes on many forms, including one-on-one counseling, small group, whole group guidance lessons, and referrals for specialized counseling services. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competency framework is utilized and provides the outline for the content of lessons, emphasizing Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making.

The staff and families at MES are very adept at responding to the unique needs of each child, and seek appropriate resources to address those needs. Small group counseling is established through identified needs such as friendship issues, divorce, grief and loss of a loved one problem solving and conflict management. If the situation warrants, individualized counseling is set up, as well as referrals to outside agencies. We have an open line of communication with families and emphasize the importance of informing us immediately of any concerns regarding their children so that appropriate interventions can take place. We have a multi-tiered level of support that reflects the diverse nature of the needs of our students so that no child lags behind academically or behaviorally.

The CASEL competencies of Self-Awareness and Self-Management take center stage in the guidance curriculum. At the elementary level, it is essential for students to have a firm grasp of their uniqueness, including their strengths, weaknesses, interests, values, personality styles, responses to conflict, emotional triggers, and coping strategies. Once these elements are established, students can begin to think about how their uniqueness fits into the world around them, and start the process of exploring careers.

At MES we have made Social Emotional Learning a focus, not only through direct instruction, but through our daily interactions with students. We foster a community of acceptance, empathy, and inclusion, and aim to be a space where children feel safe, understood and appreciated.

We are a highly energetic and enthusiastic staff. Our teachers, secretaries, custodians, and nurse are happy to see our students every day. There is a philosophy at MES that all students are our students and every day is a new day! When a student is struggling inside, or outside of school, grade level teachers, Unified Arts teachers and the leadership team lean in to provide support. Whether it's a friendly smile, a hug, lunch with the counselor or a bit of one-on-one time with a staff member. We all work together to help our students achieve their fullest potential.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The families and community members involved with MES are extraordinary! For example, we recently had a STEM fair and not only was the student participation outstanding, but the amount of family members that attended in order to support their student was exceptional. With the same event, the STEM projects were judged by community members, which was a huge help on behalf of those organizing the STEM fair itself. Another example is how involved our PTA is with organizing events, supporting our teachers, and fundraising for our school. There was recently a Family Game Night organized by the PTA. This allowed for students and their families to come to school and have some fun bonding and playing games. In April we will hold our Mariner Math & Reading Night. For the first time since the pandemic, we are thrilled to provide excellent resources to our families to help our children. Another way we are connecting with our community is bringing local food trucks to our school-wide events. When families come to school for events after hours it is normally close to dinner time, so the food trucks are readily available to serve dinner. This allows for our local businesses to get their names out in the community and it gives our families a chance to enjoy what the local businesses have to offer and the convenience to enjoy an after school event and dinner simultaneously.

In addition to the events, MES maintains excellent communication with families through our monthly Principal's Newsletter and the weekly or bi-weekly teacher newsletters to our classroom families. Community fliers and participation opportunities for our students are also advertised in our monthly newsletter. MES parents have the opportunity to engage through our School Improvement Team, the Equity Committee, STEM Fair, PTA sponsored events, Mariner Math & Reading Night, family conferences, PBIS events and lunchroom volunteers.

Community partnerships is key to our success. The Jake Sloan Foundation provides funding for math resources. We also partner with multiple local businesses throughout the year where they provide incentives and/or donations for our staff and students. For example the Kent Island Elks Lodge #2576 and the American Legion Post #278 donated a large amount of money to help our fifth grade students go to Philadelphia to study the founding of our nation. The Kent Island Rotary provides backpack food for children in need of food for evenings and weekends. Our wonderful food trucks that come out for our school-wide events are incredible. We are thrilled to continue our relationship with our community members in order to support families, staff and students.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Matapeake Elementary teachers and staff are fully committed to the professional culture of our building. Our instructional leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principal, reading specialist, math specialist and the school counselor. It is our goal to make each member of our staff feel valued and supported. We value our staff's opinions and seek their input on any major decision-making that impacts our school. We are mindful of all the responsibilities and tasks that our classroom teachers contend with on a daily basis. Therefore, we strive to minimize the impact of time-consuming and non-instructional tasks and assist in every way possible to limit the time it takes teachers to complete these types of tasks.

Positive recognition and staff appreciation is important at MES for staff and students. We appreciate and value each staff member. Luncheons, snacks, spirit wear and notes of appreciation are just a few ways we recognize their hard work and dedication. Our staff truly enjoys the Chick-Fil-A breakfast provided before some of our faculty meetings.

Our team believes that professional development should be meaningful and relevant. In order to create our plan, we survey the staff to identify their needs and wants. We also invite district supervisors to conduct program walkthroughs and our administrators conduct informal and formal observations. Our School Improvement Team then synthesizes the information and collaborates on what professional development aligns with our School Improvement Plan. It is our goal to identify and help our teachers further develop their capacity in order to best contribute to student achievement.

In addition to professional development, there is a plan to provide support for our novice teachers. Each new teacher is brought in prior to the staff returning in fall and they are assigned a mentor. The goal of the mentor program is to enhance their skills and knowledge of novice teachers so that student achievement is increased and new teachers experience the job satisfaction necessary to inspire them to a successful career in our school. Full-time teachers serve as mentors and a key component of the program is the weekly interactions so that the novice teacher has timely support.

Finally, at MES, our leadership team believes that all staff are leaders. We learn from one another, and teamwork is at the heart of our school culture. We work together to ensure our students achieve academic and social-emotional growth.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership team at MES is based on the servant leadership philosophy. The leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principal, math specialist, reading specialist and the school counselor. We are successful because of the shared belief of "We are Family". Our leadership team believes that we all need to work together in order to ensure all our students are reaching their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. The team meets regularly to review student performance data, trends from previous year's

data, survey results, and observations from the administrators and district supervisors. In addition, the leadership team contributes to the budgetary decisions making sure they align with our School Improvement Plan.

Evidence of our "We are Family" philosophy can be found throughout our school environment. Our leadership team plays an important part in supporting our instructional staff. They seek instructional materials, provide guidance in planning and implementing lessons, as well as informal feedback and model lessons. Our Monitoring Exceptional Students team works collaboratively with teachers to problem solve and plan interventions for students who are not meeting with success in the classroom. The focus of the team is to provide strategies or resources for classroom teachers that have exhausted their toolkit.

Our principal consistently shows respect and appreciation towards the entire school community. She demonstrates the work ethic and level of professionalism that she expects from her staff. The staff stated on a recent survey "she views the staff through "human eyes" and supports us whenever needed". Another staff member shared, "When we didn't have enough custodians, my principal went around and changed the bags in the trash cans - she demonstrates that she is willing to work hard and sometimes outside her given role and this inspires teachers to do the same." She provides adequate time to complete extra tasks like completing surveys, report cards, and preparing for conferences and she respects and honors the uniqueness of each individual staff member. This attribute is reflected in her efforts to build on opportunities for growth and channel strengths.

MES also values the development of leadership skills in our students. Our assistant principal and school counselor work with our Student Government Association to provide leadership experiences for student leaders. They meet at the beginning of the year and create a plan for the school year. This has resulted in multiple opportunities for our students to donate to charity organizations within our community. For example, students donated hats, gloves and mittens as well as canned food to a local food pantry. Student leaders collected donations and made sure each classroom was aware of where the donations were going.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Matapeake Elementary provides an environment that is inclusive of children from a variety of cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, children who require supports such as Individualized Education Plans (IEP), and children who are identified as gifted/talented within curriculum areas. Our school is dedicated to providing resources and services to foster self-esteem, acceptance, resiliency, inclusivity and connectedness to one another. We assist families anyway we can, whether a family needs a translator at a conference, is new to the community and needs resources or needs social services resources. We strongly believe we need to nurture and then teach!

Matapeake Elementary's staff believe it is important for all stakeholders to meet the teacher and get a chance to walk the building before school starts. MES provides that opportunity on a day prior to school opening in the fall. This Meet & Greet event lessens the anxiety some students may exhibit prior to the first day of school. During the visit, families are provided information regarding curriculum, transportation, daily schedules, food services and some policies on attendance and behavior. MES always has a very large turnout for our Meet and Greet. Our EL tutor and the leadership team remain available to answer any questions or assist families. We also have tables available for our families which provide resources from our local health department, Character Counts coaches and our PTA.

Our focus on socio-emotional health and positive relationship building between students, staff, families and our local community is the foundation upon which our success is built. We recognize that fostering a sense of safety and trust in our students, and developing their willingness to take risks, is the cornerstone of new learning. Each week our principal sends out her weekly update for staff. At the very end of every update is "Make sure you reach every kid, every day!" This important phrase reminds staff to check in with each of their students daily. Lessons are taught by teachers who strive to create an inclusive classroom environment which empowers all students to share their thoughts.

Our amazing teachers provide lessons to discuss topics including respect, responsibility, trustworthiness,
NBRS 2023 23MD103PU Page 19 of 21

fairness, caring and citizenship. These lessons support our positive school climate and culture of kindness. Many guests that visit Matapeake Elementary state they enjoy walking through the doors and feeling the happy, positive and energetic environment. This is a true testament to our school philosophy of "We are Family".

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

One practice that has been instrumental in Matapeake Elementary's success is the alignment of objectives, procedures, and assessments for every lesson that is delivered to our students. Matapeake teachers have continuous professional development, discussions, coaching and modeling to learn how to align our lessons. This has been extremely beneficial to our students' growth and achievement, especially in closing the achievement gap.

To begin, teachers write objectives using verbs that are specific, measurable, and observable. The objectives state what students will do, how they will do it, and the rationale for learning the objective. Teachers are serious and thoughtful in their objective writing, and at times, rewrite an objective to truly perfect it and make sure it matches with the activities and assessment for each lesson.

Teachers at MES are masters of creating engaging lessons that are meaningful, connect to the real-world, differentiated for all levels of learning, and sequenced well among other related lessons. Students are highly interested in learning and build long-term knowledge and process skills by engaging in these lessons. Units of learning are shared with families in weekly or biweekly emails written by most teachers to further engage families in their child's learning process as well. Teachers are very cognizant of building in brain breaks every 20-30 minutes while students are engaged in lessons. In doing so, the students have a chance to do stretches, yoga poses, quick social activities, dances or any other activities that get them up and moving to reset their brains for continued learning.

Once lessons are taught, teachers assess student learning in a variety of ways that align with the activities and objectives. These assessments can be journal reflections, quizzes or tests, performance assessments, short-term or long-term projects, student interviews, exit slips, or quick checks. Teachers work collaboratively with special educators to ensure that students with individualized education programs (IEP) are having their needs met and being assessed in a manner that best works their goals and objectives in their IEP. Teachers may use the data from their assessments to reteach objectives that have not been mastered yet and to drive future lessons.

In closing, working hard every day to align objectives, procedures, and assessments have helped students to be actively involved and engaged in learning. Matapeake Elementary is very successful and will continue this practice to help all students be the best they can be!