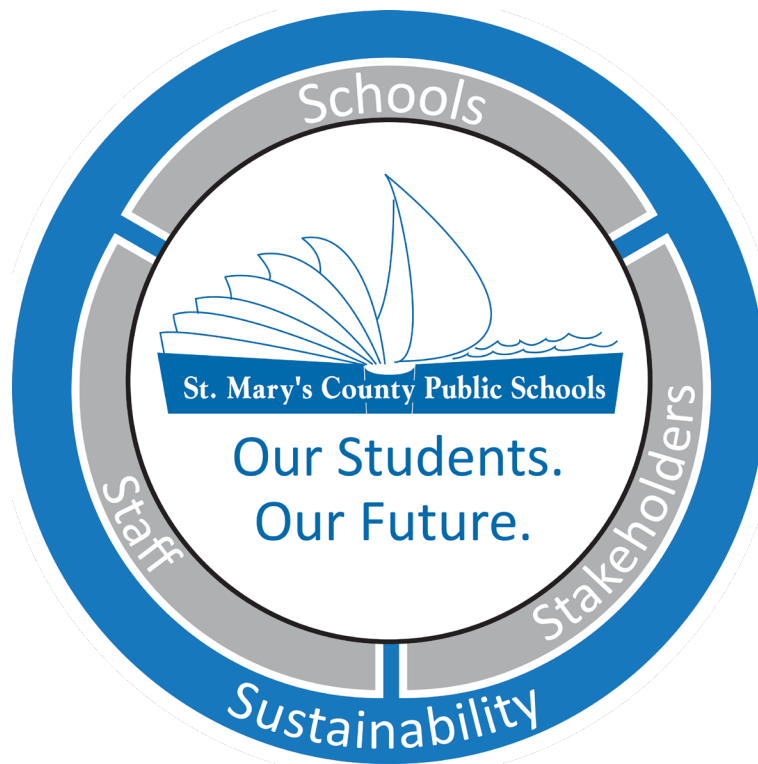


St. Mary's County Public Schools



Local Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated Strategic Plan 2019-2020

Part I

St. Mary's County Public Schools
23160 Moakley Street
Leonardtown, MD 20650

2019 Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan

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

Due: October 15, 2019

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

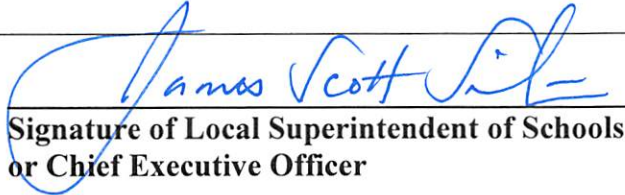
Address: 23160 Moakley Street, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650

Local School System Point of Contact: Dr. Jeffrey A. Maher

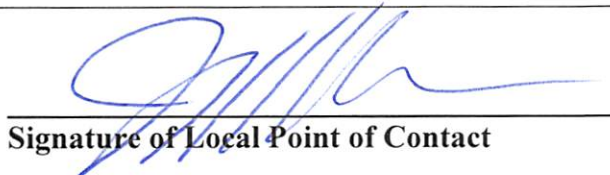
Telephone: 301-475-5511, ext. 32133

E-mail: jamaher@smcps.org

WE HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of our knowledge, the information provided in the 2019 Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan is correct and complete and adheres to the requirements of the ESSA and Section 5-401. We further certify that this plan has been developed in consultation with members of the local school system's current Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan team and that each member has reviewed and approved the accuracy of the information provided in plan.


Signature of Local Superintendent of Schools
or Chief Executive Officer

11/13/19
Date


Signature of Local Point of Contact

11/13/19
Date

Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan Planning Team Members

Use this page to identify the members of the school system's Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan planning team. Please include affiliation or title where applicable.

Name	Affiliation/Title
J. Scott Smith	Superintendent of Schools
Maureen C. Montgomery	Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Tammy S. McCourt	Assistant Superintendent of Fiscal Services and Human Resources
Jeff Walker	Assistant Superintendent of Supporting Services
Lisa Bachner	Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Dale P. Farrell	Director of Human Resources
Kelly M. Hall	Executive Director of Supplemental School Programs
Alexander C. Jaffurs	Assessment and Accountability Officer
Cheryl Long	Director of Student Services
Jeffrey A. Maher	Chief Strategic Officer
Scott Szczerbiak	Director of Special Education
Nicole Ayers	Supervisor of Special Education
Cynthia Kilcoyne	Supervisor of Special Education
Sherry O'Dell	Supervisor of Special Education
Michael Boyle	Supervisor of Instruction: CTE
Todd Burroughs	Supervisor of Instruction: Fine Arts
Jessica Cotugno	Supervisor of Instruction: Elementary Programs/Gifted and Talented
Bridget Dunbar	Supervisor of Instruction: Secondary Mathematics
Cortney Dvorak	Supervisor of Instruction: Reading
Michelle Gallant-Wall	Supervisor of Instruction: English/Language Arts
Colleen Gill	Supervisor of Instruction: Instructional Programs
Jason Hayes	Supervisor of Instruction: Science
Becky Loker	Supervisor of Instruction: Elementary Mathematics
Wendy Tarr	Supervisor of Instruction: World Language/ELL
Michael Watson	Director of Facility Coordination, Physical Education and Health
Kevin Wright	Supervisor of Instruction: Social Studies

Table of Contents

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Finance Section
- III. Areas of Focus
- IV. Additional Reporting Requirements:
 - Targeted Support and Improvement Schools
 - COMAR Requirements:
 - Gifted and Talented Education
 - Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) students for the class of 2019 completed their academic program and graduated on-time with their peers at the highest rate on record (over 94% on time for the 4-year cohort). Moreover, previous gaps between African Americans and other student groups have been closed for this penultimate academic marker, with these students groups attaining the same high graduation rate. Transcripts of our graduates show Advanced Placement Courses, transcribed college credit, and career and technology courses aligned to the needs of employers. As we have increased rigor, our students have responded with their achievement. Last year, SMCPS enrollment in AP courses increased to 2,957 course enrollments and 75% of AP test takers earned a 3 or better. Further, over 1100 students in our three high schools enrolled in courses eligible for dual enrollment credit.

At the same time we recognized the achievements of our graduates, we also focused on how our students start with SMCPS in the early grades. For the 2018-2019 school year, we instituted universal screening of all kindergarten through second grade students. All our educators implementing the screenings had the most up to date professional development so they could act on the data gathered to determine what interventions, supports, or enrichment were needed for each child.

We know that a strong start leads to a strong finish, so we are investing in both. From beginning to end we have been living our twenty-two word mission statement:

Know the learner and the learning, expecting excellence from both.

Accept no excuses, educating ALL with rigor, relevance, respect, and positive relationships.

From our mission statement, we will be focusing on what it means to "Accept no excuses, educating ALL." This is at the heart of educational equity and access. "All" means that for each child to succeed, we must move beyond excuses, break down barriers, and build a system of interventions and support that unlocks the potential in each student. We begin with a renewed commitment to educational equity and through this lens, then examine the performance of our students. It is when we disaggregate our data that we see our persistent achievement gaps.

Addressing Educational Equity

Our work puts students first - focusing on the whole child aligned with the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD's) five tenets of the "Whole Child":

- Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.
- Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.
- Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.

We recognize that student achievement does not simply come from academic support alone. Equity comes when all students get the interventions and support they need to be successful. Just as the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has initiated new policies aimed at educational equity, we, too, are in the process of looking at our own policies and practices. Community engagement is essential in this process. An Equity Task Force is in place to engage in conversations about educational equity. One of the key aims of this group is to develop an Education Equity policy that will address equity and access to educational rigor, resources, and support for all students in our school system. This Task Force is working with school and community stakeholders to assess our policy, practice, and partnerships for the sustainability of our efforts to address educational equity. At a recent county-wide Town Hall meeting on Educational Equity, the community engaged in a collective conversation.

Our work throughout this year is focused on equity and our mission statement. Our work will focus on providing different scaffolds of support and interventions that help to bolster student achievement while also addressing the social and emotional needs of students as we support the whole child in order to foster success.

Aligning to the State's vision to prepare all students for college and career, our goals, initiatives, and strategies consider all subgroups and specialized populations as we promote academic excellence. Performance gaps are analyzed and addressed routinely for the system, for each school, and for each individual student. We have a variety of initiatives focused on teaching and learning to address these gaps. Specifically, we have identified significant gaps with all measurable data points (achievement, discipline, and attendance) between our economically disadvantaged students, minority students, special needs students, English Language Learners, and the rest of our population. SMCPS has experienced an increase in the number of students receiving free and reduced meals, and the achievement gaps for our students living in poverty are persistent.

Student Performance

SMCPS continues to institutionalize the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards/Common Core State Standards, and with the implementation of these rigorous education standards, we established a set of shared goals and expectations for what students should understand and be able to do in grades K-12 in order to be prepared for success in college and the workplace.

The learning outcomes for our students place emphasis on higher levels of thinking, reasoning, modeling, written expression, and conventions of language. To that end, curriculum expectations continue to focus on increasing the rigor and depth of assignments and the inclusion of writing in response to text across all curriculum areas. This focus emphasizes analytical and higher-level thinking and comprehension.

Furthermore, formative assessments used to drive targeted instruction will continue to be a focus in St. Mary's County Public Schools and will provide continuous measures of standard attainment as students move through the curriculum. Teacher teams are involved in ongoing professional development to lead the design of resources.

With the ultimate purpose of assessment to measure students' proficiency and learning in order to make instructional decisions, teachers analyze all aspects of the assessments that students are given in order to provide focused, individualized feedback and instruction.

SMCPS leadership has employed the professional development model of collaborative and peer support to review data and allow for differentiated, individually guided professional dialogue for each school team. System leaders utilized the aggregated and disaggregated PARCC English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics data to analyze trends in both system and school PARCC performance through the dual lens of proficiency and growth, respectively. Coupled with our local formative assessments, the system was able to help schools truly analyze student performance. This ongoing professional learning and collaboration continues throughout the year with a focus on trends with respect to each school's and the overall system's content and classroom performance.

Staff continue to engage in periodic review of data, especially disaggregated data from county level and standardized assessments to make instructional and intervention decisions. The use of Performance Matters as a tool for both formative and summative assessments allows for the instantaneous review of student proficiency as it relates to learning objectives.

In working to eliminate achievement gaps for students who are underperforming, SMCPS has employed targeted instructional interventions aimed at specific content and skill gaps. School teams identify the appropriate intervention and use progress monitoring to assess a student's academic performance that examines the student's rate of improvement (i.e., responsiveness to instruction), through which we evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Of special attention in progress monitoring is the focus on the fidelity of implementation. This includes the selection of evidence-based tools with consideration for cultural/linguistic responsiveness and recognition of student strengths.

Further, our collective efforts revolve around the process of Response to Intervention (RTI). This multi-tier approach, helps with early identification and support of students with both learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning.

Additionally, all interventions are being tracked through RTI/MTSS Report in our data warehouse. Through the analysis of data in this system, school teams can use this information to compare formative assessments and progress monitoring tools to determine the effectiveness of the interventions and supports.

Coupled with formative assessment is the ongoing feedback to students and their parents/guardians about how well they are doing relative to the learning standards. At the elementary school level, we continue our work in transitioning to a standards-based report card to provide students and families with feedback specific to student progress on the MCCR standards. Students in gr. Pre-K through 3 receive a standards based report card. The standards-based report card articulates student progress toward mastery of the identified MCCR standards for the grade level. Through this process, parents, students, and teachers will more clearly understand what is expected, and parents and teachers are better able to work together to guide students, helping them to be successful. Families are provided with a great deal of information to support their understanding of their child's progress.

With a learning centered approach to instruction, student performance, as measured by the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP), reflects continued progress and achievement has shown incremental increases; SMCPS has outpaced the state average performance in terms of the percentage of students earning a 4 or 5 rating.

ELA				Mathematics			
Course	SMCPS	MD	% Difference	Course	SMCPS	MD	% Difference
ELA 3	46.60%	41.20%	5.40%	Math 3	46.80%	42.50%	4.30%
ELA 4	50.30%	43.60%	6.70%	Math 4	48.20%	39.40%	8.80%
ELA 5	50.60%	43.90%	6.70%	Math 5	45.10%	36.70%	8.40%
ELA 6	44.20%	41.10%	3.10%	Math 6	37.90%	30.10%	7.80%
ELA 7	50.20%	47.30%	2.90%	Math 7	38.80%	26.60%	12.20%
ELA 8	49.00%	45.00%	4.00%	Math 8	22.80%	12.50%	10.30%
ELA 10	56.50%	42.60%	13.90%	Alg 1	43.90%	27.20%	16.70%

With this performance in mind, there continue to be achievement gaps for some of our student groups. For example, for the grade 6 ELA, 22.6% of students receiving Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs) earned a 4 or better, compared to the all students performance of 44.2%. Similarly, in math for grade 6, 14.2% of FARMs earned 4+, compared to 37.9% of all students. Similar gaps exist across other grade levels, and wider gaps exist for our students with disabilities, where 6% of students earned a 4 or 5 on those same assessments. When looking at our disaggregated student groups by race, there are persistent gaps, particularly for students who are also designated as FARMs. These gaps are accentuated in the transition grades (i.e., as students rise to grade 6 for middle school and grade 9 for high school), and also compel our work to address issues of educational equity.

Needs Assessment Process:

SMCPS approaches a needs assessment process systemically and builds processes into the fabric of team operations. This process begins from a global perspective of the ESSA accountability measures and reaches out across multiple levels of the school system, with the following steps:

- **Systemic Review of ESSA Accountability Measures:** As data becomes available, the Division of Instruction (DOI) team actively reviews each element, disaggregated by assessment, level, school, and student group. This first level analysis guides discussions for deeper review.
- **Collaborative EdCamps:** Following the release of MCAP data, small groups of school teams gather for data analysis. In these “ed camps” schools are grouped by similar profiles to analyze the following questions:
 - SMCPS Trend Data – Did your school outperform the county in either 2018-9 actual proficiency and/or actual growth?
 - 50-75% Rule – Is your school getting 50% of our students to a “4” or above? Are 75% of our students sitting at a “3” or above?
 - Year to Year – (e.g., Grade 3 ELA 2018 vs. Grade 3 ELA 2019 Performance)
 - Cohort Performance – (e.g., Grade 3 ELA 2019 vs. Grade 4 ELA 2019)
 - Actual vs. Predicted Performance – Are we outperforming/underperforming our projections?
- **School Improvement Plan Review:** The questions articulated above guide the next step in the school improvement process, which has been restructured this year to include all elements of the ESSA report card. For each area of data, schools identify two (2) focus areas. Strategies are

- developed aligned to these focus areas based on the factors associated with disparities in the data.
- **Persistent Areas of Attention:** As a key part of the data analysis, reflective questions are asked about root causes for persistent areas of disparity in the data and areas that need ongoing attention.
- **Equity Lens:** With attention to educational equity, achievement and climate data are examined with the following questions: Are we mitigating the achievement gap for our SWD? AA? ED? Are there barriers to more equitable outcomes that need to be addressed?
- **Public Review of Data:** Information and key takeaways are presented publicly for deliberation at Board of Education meetings and community forums
- **Bi-Weekly Data Meetings:** DOI team members engage in an ongoing cycle of data review, bringing formative assessments forward regularly to track progress and interventions.

Identified Areas of Focus

As a result of the process outlined above, SMCPs has identified three key focus areas

Specifically, we have designed professional development around the three key focus areas, which are addressed in the Goals section of this plan:

1. **Early Childhood Literacy:** The foundation of success begins with early childhood literacy. As students transition from home or childcare to pre-K or Head Start and kindergarten, it is imperative that we close any learning gaps to ensure students have foundational literacy skills. This includes both oral language development and foundational pragmatic language development. This is directly connected to early language acquisition and early literacy. Our work focuses on universal screening to implement interventions as early as possible, thereby working to eliminate learning gaps.
2. **Transition Grades:** As students transition between levels - especially from Grade 5 to Grade 6 (ES-MS), or from Grade 8-Grade 9 (MS-HS) - some face challenges both academically and behaviorally. Academic expectations are increased as the rigor of the content increases. Students also experience greater freedom and different social environments/expectations. Academically, students transitioning from grade 8 to grade 9, face credit bearing classes for the first time. This additional accountability carries with it both stress and lasting educational impacts. During these transitions, it is important to provide students with the supports that they need to be successful.
3. **9th Grade Success:** Student success in 9th grade is paramount in completing high school in four years, and one of the most crucial indicators of success is in the achievement of earned credits - specifically in earning at least five (5) credits to be promoted to grade 10. With the ultimate goal of having all students graduate with their four-year cohort, their initial success in high school is critical. If students can find success in this first year of high school, they are much more likely to graduate on time, thereby opening the doors to post-secondary education and careers.

The analysis and descriptions of these items are further explained in the Areas of Focus section of this Strategic Plan.

Fulfilling Our Commitments

St. Mary's County Public Schools has made a commitment to our students, staff, schools, and stakeholders. Our commitment is our mission: Know the learner and the learning, expecting excellence in both - Accepting no excuses, educating ALL with rigor, relevance, respect, and positive relationships. These just aren't words, they are beliefs that drive our work. They are the very purpose to which we dedicate ourselves each day. To support this mission, we believe in and emphasize both the importance of student achievement and the analysis of the data that explains why and how that achievement is either occurring or being hindered. Our careful review of student learning has enabled us to understand not only what we are doing well, but also the areas in which we can improve. With this as our never-ending focus, we have identified the key areas of early childhood literacy, transition grades, and 9th grade success as our focus for improvement during the 2019-2020 school year. Our budget supports these efforts, as is explained in the Finance Section below.

As we embark on this school year - and beyond - we commit to providing our students with opportunities and supports to prepare for the world beyond the walls of our classrooms. They are the reasons for our work. We feel confident that addressing these areas will assist our students in achieving their full potential.

Responses to clarifying questions are included in the Appendix I.

Finance Section

Finance Section

Fiscal Outlook:

For FY 2019, SMCPS realized a planned net decrease in the fund balance of the Governmental Funds of \$365,028. Budgetary savings were recognized in the unrestricted funds, due primarily to an accrued pharmaceutical rebate of approximately \$3.5 million. The school system invested \$4.3 million in a broad range of capital assets, such as school buildings, vehicles, and equipment, which was offset by \$8.6 million in depreciation expense, resulting in an overall decrease in capital assets of \$4.3 million. The General Fund – fund balance at year end, reflected a balance of \$12.9 million, of which, \$.1 million is restricted for capital projects, \$12.8 million is assigned to health care calls, restricted fund wellness, unanticipated fuel increases, snow or other emergencies, and support of FY20 initiatives.

For FY 2020, with the state aid formula being based primarily on local wealth and change in student enrollment, the major state aid program revenues increased by \$3.5 million to \$109.9 million. The local government funding increased by \$2.4 million. Additionally, \$3.9m was appropriated to SMCPS under The Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan Commission) initiative.

Climate Changes:

As the student population growth has stagnated in SMCPS and that being the basis of the calculation of maintenance of effort (MOE) for local funding, we will become challenged with meeting the needs of our students and staff without funding in excess of MOE. The official student enrollment decreased from 18,053 with 17,153.75 students eligible for state aid in the 2018 school year to 17,999 with 17,038.75 students eligible for state aid in the 2019 school year. We invest in our people, to include both students and staff, and it is our priority to have students feel safe and supported in their academic, social and emotional growth. To that end, we have budgeted for more psychologists, guidance counselors, teachers, paraeducators, and safety & security support to meet the needs of our environment. Our staff are supported, yet accountable in meeting expectations for performance through increased professional development, mentoring and infrastructure support. We are continually assessing ways to improve upon the solid foundation that has been built. We also offer program support for student-centered initiatives and provide support to maintain existing programs and resources.

Current and long term issues include adequate funding to allow for increased teacher compensation to improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. We are in the final year of our 4-year negotiated agreement, which provided stable increases in steps with successful collaboration across all employee groups on health care plans to better manage costs.

Revenue and Expenditure Analysis

- 1. Did actual FY 2019 revenue meet expectations as anticipated in the Master Plan Update for 2019? If not, identify the changes and the impact any changes had on the FY 2019 budget and on the system's progress towards achieving Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan goals. Please include any subsequent appropriations in your comparison table and narrative analysis.**

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County approved a \$6,044,929 categorical budget adjustment for the use of fund balance to fund safety and security measures, maintenance, health insurance holiday, textbooks, and computer hardware as well as an increase of \$165,000 in unrestricted funds from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County fund balance to support safety and security initiatives. With respect to actual realized revenues, unrestricted interest income was \$364,936 higher than budgeted and pension transfers were \$79,627 higher than budgeted. Those increased realized revenues were offset by nonpublic placement income being lower than budgeted by \$387,946 due to decreased actual tuition expenses in the previous fiscal year and the net effect of Department of Defense and impact aid revenues being \$147,592 lower than budgeted. Overall, unrestricted revenues realized were lower than the adjusted budget by \$109,162, with a 99.95% realization of budgeted funds.

Restricted funds budgeted increased in FY19 due to the addition of new federal and state grants including Striving Readers, Safe to Learn, and Opioid Education grants. These increases were offset by fluctuations in carryover funds.

- 2. For each assurance area, please provide a narrative discussion of the changes in expenditures and the impact of these changes on the Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan goals.**

Data Systems to Support Instruction:

The Performance Matters data warehouse that has been institutionalized over ten years continues, with enhancements to facilitate online assessments aligned to PARCC. Grant funding and local funding combine to further this initiative. As this is an ongoing initiative, it continues to be aligned with current ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan goals.

Standards and Assessments

Historically, one of the key programs under this assurance area was the Fairlead Academy, which provides a differentiated pathway for students in a smaller learning environment to achieve the rigorous college and career-ready standards. Fairlead Academies spent more than budgeted by \$16,886. This increase was primarily attributed to increased special education classroom support provided by the contracted temporary agency. These additional funds for special education supports are based on need reflected in our data analysis, as that is our low performing group on local and state assessments. This is a key initiative that continues, aligned with our ESSA goals, particularly the focus area of 9th-grade success. Fairlead specifically provides support for students who may struggle academically to help them find success in high school to earn the required credits to advance and graduate on time with their cohort of peers. This program continues to be successful, with 97% of Fairlead students graduating on time. In continuing this program, supports are in place for underperforming students, working to eliminate achievement gaps.

Great Teachers and Leaders:

St. Mary's County Public Schools spent \$96,734 less on unrestricted recruitment, retention, and orientation of professional staff than budgeted, for total expenditures of \$136,257. We have refined our efforts to attract highly qualified teachers through various recruiting initiatives that included decreasing travel and sponsoring our own recruitment fair that resulted in lower than budgeted actual expenditures. We have continued to increase our teacher retention efforts through professional development and personnel support.

Teachers and leaders are fully utilizing Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as the evidence of student learning that contributes to their evaluation. There is zero cost for this initiative, other than in-kind human resources, as SMCPS utilizes a platform developed in house, and all training is done by in-house resident experts and leaders. These initiatives support our Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan goals and sustainability efforts.

Mandatory Cost of Doing Business:

St. Mary's County Public Schools spent \$10,249,331 less than budgeted in the mandatory cost of doing business for both unrestricted, restricted, IDEA and Title I funds. The primary causes were a decrease of \$4,945,491 related to the unrestricted salaries and benefits and \$3,252,586 in restricted, Title I, and IDEA salaries and benefits in the mandatory cost of doing business. These salaries and benefits were lower than budgeted due to retirements and attrition, a pharmaceutical rebate, health care costs that were lower than projected, and full time employee positions that were vacant. Utility costs were \$22,947 less than budgeted due to the favorable rates attained with the mild weather conditions. Nonpublic Special Education Placements were \$318,728 less than budgeted as we strive to meet the needs locally of our special education students who would otherwise qualify for nonpublic placements. The expense for materials of instruction for all restricted funds were \$1,272,699 lower than budgeted for the current fiscal year due to funds that will be utilized during the carryover period of the 2020 fiscal year and due to the fact that they are expended based on the needs of the individual sub groups.

Other Items:

Unrestricted equipment purchases were \$103,295 higher than budgeted due to the purchase of an additional bus during FY 2019. These purchases could be made, in part, due to the savings in the mandatory cost of doing business. Unrestricted contracted costs were \$917,947 higher than budgeted due to additional expenses related to the repair and maintenance of buildings and additional contracted services to meet the needs of special education students with contracted therapists and through the contracted temporary agency. Restricted equipment purchases were \$9,748 lower than budgeted. Purchases included 3-D mapping devices used for safety evaluations, 3-D printers, Snap-On meter cert kit, a Nursing Anne Simulator for our CTE programs. The expenses associated with unrestricted supplies and materials were \$1,939,137 over the adopted budget primarily due to an approved budget amendment in order to implement foreign language textbook adoption as well as a technology refresh. Contracted Services were \$1,815,138 less than budgeted for the restricted funds, Title I, and IDEA due to the fact that they are expended based on the program timelines and needs of the individual sub groups. Other expenditures will take place during the 2020 fiscal year using carryover funds.

Unrestricted transfers were \$2,963,081 higher than budgeted due to the budget increase approved by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. Included in the categorical increase was \$2,972,929 in Construction in Progress (CIP) interfund transfers to support safety and security and maintenance projects.

Unrestricted other charges were \$152,025 less than budgeted. This is primarily related to decreased conference, training, and travel expenses as well as other transportation costs. Restricted other charges were \$738,952 less than budgeted due to decreased transportation costs and reduced costs relating to conferences and training.

Fairlead Academies spent more than budgeted by \$16,886. This increase was primarily attributed to increased special education classroom support provided by the contracted temporary agency.

To address the instructional areas of continuous improvement, the Goals and Objectives portion of this document addresses specific strategies to address student achievement. Activities are aligned instructionally and approached collaboratively across departments and schools. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction coordinates systemic professional development and curriculum support for all schools, through local and state unrestricted general fund dollars. These funds are detailed in our annual operating budget posted to <http://www.smcps.org/fs/budget/information>.

On the assurances for Data Systems to support, Great Teachers and Leaders, Turning around the lowest Achieving Schools, Mandatory Cost of doing business and Other please describe the impact these will have on the Master Plan.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

As is articulated in our response, the Performance Matters data warehouse that has been institutionalized over ten years continues, with enhancements to facilitate online assessments aligned to PARCC (now MCAP). This is explicitly tied to our accountability measures through the Maryland ESSA report card, and S Performance Matters gives us the ability to disaggregate data so we can track the progress of specific student groups. Further, this data system allows us to see trends and correlations between other assessments, including local formative assessments and other measures, such as the early childhood DIBELS assessment. This data analysis led to our selection of Early Literacy as a key focus area within our Strategic Plan.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Throughout all of our work, highly effective staff is paramount. This includes both our instructional staff and our leaders. We continue to ensure the highest quality professional learning related to our achievement areas. In the Areas of Focus section of our Strategic Plan, specific professional development is detailed associated with these focus areas.

Turning around the lowest Achieving Schools

Based on the Race to the Top assurance area requirements, SMCPs has not had identified schools in this category, and therefore, there are no financial implications for this set of schools. However, as is articulated in our Strategic Plan, there are mechanisms to support our TSI schools. These processes are explained in that section of the Strategic Plan.

Mandatory Cost of doing business and Other

Cost differentials vary based on staffing, materials, and other expenses. All of our work is associated with not only our ESSA Goals, but the broader mission of our school system - educating all students with rigor, relevance, respect, and positive relationships. The achievement of this mission is measured through both

academic lens and the culture/climate lens, as is reflected in our ESSA report card. Our specific focus areas of this Strategic Plan are subsets of this broader system of accountability and our overall mission. In all our work, must make ensuring educational equity a critical priority, and therefore our decisions are made through an equity lens, in measures of achievement, fairness, and opportunity.

1.1A: Current Year Variance Table						
Local School System:		St. Mary's				
Revenue Category						FY 20 Budget
Local Appropriation						\$108,177,791
Other Local Revenue						30,000.00
State Revenue						116,591,353
Federal Revenue	84.388: Title I - School Improvement					-
	84.010: Title I					4,343,057
	84.027: IDEA, Part B					4,534,495
						-
Other Federal Funds						12,021,428
Other Resources/Transfers						4,203,069
Total						\$249,901,193
Instructions: Itemize expenditures by source (CFDA for regular Title I and IDEA, restricted or unrestricted) in each of the assurance areas, mandatory cost of doing business, and other.						
Section B - Standards and Assessments						
Reform Area 1: Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global						
Expenditures:		Source		Amount		FTE
Fairlead Academics		Unrestricted		31,359		
Section C - Data Systems to support instruction						
Reform Area 2: Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction.						
Expenditures:		Source		Amount		FTE
Student assessment and analytics system (Performance Matters)		Unrestricted		110,000		
Section D: Great Teachers and Leaders						
Reform Area 3: Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most.						
Expenditures:		Source		Amount		FTE
Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most.		Unrestricted		243,000		
Section E: Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools						
Reform Area 4: Turning around our lowest-achieving schools						
Expenditures:		Source		Amount		FTE
Mandatory Cost of Doing Business: Please itemize mandatory costs not attributable to an assurance area in this category. Refer to the guidance for items considered mandatory costs.						
Expenditures:		Source		Amount		FTE
Contractual agreements - salaries		Unrestricted		132,110,380		1995.87
Contractual agreements - salaries		Restricted		8,070,535		77.13
Contractual agreements - salaries		84.010		2,597,112		38
Contractual agreements - salaries		84.027		2,697,101		51.1
Contractual agreements - salaries		84.395				
Contractual agreements - benefits		Unrestricted		51,237,571		
Contractual agreements - benefits		Restricted		2,473,431		
Contractual agreements - benefits		84.010		1,068,071		
Contractual agreements - benefits		84.027		1,064,673		
Contractual agreements - benefits		84.395				
Transportation		Unrestricted		15,946,458		
Utilities		Unrestricted		5,027,750		
Nonpublic Special Education Placements		Unrestricted		1,806,960		
Materials of Instruction		Unrestricted		1,157,944		
Materials of Instruction		Restricted		1,765,279		
Materials of Instruction		84.010		199,458		
Materials of Instruction		84.027		40,922		
				<u>227,263,645</u>		<u>2162.1</u>

Other: Please itemize only those expenditures not attributable to an assurance area or mandatory costs in this category. Transfers should be included in this section.										
Expenditures:			Source			Amount			FTE	
Contracted Services			Unrestricted			7,838,736				
Contracted Services			Restricted			4,641,540				
Contracted Services			84.010			278,214				
Contracted Services			84.027			619,012				
Supplies/Materials			Unrestricted			4,665,790				
Supplies/Materials			Restricted							
Supplies/Materials			84.010							
Supplies/Materials			84.027							
Other Charges			Unrestricted			1,047,003				
Other Charges			Restricted			1,470,842				
Other Charges			84.010			116,484				
Other Charges			84.027			47,164				
Equipment			Unrestricted			297,445				
Equipment			Restricted			272,472				
Other Fixed Charges			Unrestricted			248,151				
Transfers			Unrestricted			317,220				
Transfers			Restricted			243,775				
Transfers			84.010			83,718				
Transfers			84.027			65,623				
						22,253,189				
Total						249,901,193				
Tables are not intended to be completed in accordance with GAAP. Add lines if necessary.										

1.1B Prior Year Variance Table (Comparison of Prior Year Expenditures)						
Local School System:		St. Mary's				
			FY2019 Original Budget	FY2019 Final Budget		
Revenue			7/1/2018	6/30/19	Change	%Change
Local Appropriation			104,052,525	110,262,454.00	6,209,929	106%
Other Local Revenue			30,000	30,000.00	-	100%
State Revenue			107,319,299	107,737,936.00	418,637	100%
Federal Revenue	84.010	Title I	4,114,450	3,631,445.00	(483,005)	88%
Federal Revenue	84.027	IDEA	4,389,865	4,466,602.00	76,737	102%
Other Federal Funds			11,745,426	12,808,228.00	1,062,802	109%
Other Resources/Transfers			4,229,800	3,902,078.00	(327,722)	92%
Total			235,881,365	242,838,743.00	6,957,378	103%
Change in Expenditures - Instructions: Itemize FY 2019 actual expenditures and FTE by source (CFDA for regular Title I and IDEA, restricted or unrestricted) in each of the assurance areas, mandatory cost of doing business, and other.						
Assurance Area	Source	Expenditure Description	Planned Expenditure	Actual Expenditure	Planned FTE	Actual FTE
Standards and Assessments	Unrestricted	Fairlead Academies	31,340	48,226	-	-
Data Systems to Support Instruction	Unrestricted	Student assessment and analytics	110,000	110,000	-	-
Great Teachers and Leaders	Unrestricted	Recruiting, developing, reward in	232,591	136,257	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Contractual agreements- salaries	129,599,816	127,438,715	1,991.1	1,991.1
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Restricted	Contractual agreements- salaries	4,527,948	3,007,219	54.3	54.3
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.010	Contractual agreements- salaries	2,373,628	1,793,718	31.0	31.0
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.027	Contractual agreements- salaries	2,676,080	2,259,824	49.9	49.9
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Contractual agreements- benefit	49,636,008	46,851,868	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Restricted	Contractual agreements- benefit	1,727,688	1,148,714	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.010	Contractual agreements- benefit	989,759	801,333	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.027	Contractual agreements- benefit	861,380	893,089	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Transportation	15,169,017	15,027,349	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Utilities	4,613,610	4,590,663	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Nonpublic Special Education Pla	1,875,280	1,556,552	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Unrestricted	Materials of Instruction	1,296,321	1,000,859	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	Restricted	Materials of Instruction	1,766,656	791,367	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.010	Materials of Instruction	266,798	253,667	-	-
Mandatory Costs of Doing Business	84.027	Materials of Instruction	386,276	101,997	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Contracted Services	6,607,369	7,525,316	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Restricted	Contracted Services	3,218,102	1,142,313	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.010	Contracted Services	288,333	287,512	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.027	Contracted Services	379,280	640,752	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Supplies/Materials	3,452,262	5,391,399	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Other Charges	1,075,401	923,376	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Restricted	Other Charges	1,603,555	942,100	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.010	Other Charges	109,664	46,279	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.027	Other Charges	33,866	19,754	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Equipment	130,000	233,295	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Restricted	Equipment	119,042	109,294	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Other Fixed Charges	182,000	171,121	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Unrestricted	Transfers	248,900	3,211,981	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	Restricted	Transfers	154,144	129,679	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.010	Transfers	86,268	49,866	-	-
Other items deemed necessary by the Loca	84.027	Transfers	52,983	62,813	-	-
Other: Carry Over Funds	Restricted	Carry Over Funds		7,000,166		
Other: Carry Over Funds	84.010	Carry Over Funds		399,071		
Other: Carry Over Funds	84.027	Carry Over Funds		488,372		
Increase to fund balance		Unrestricted		6,252,867.00		
			235,881,365.00	242,838,743.00		

Areas of Focus

Areas of Focus

Area of Focus #1: Early Childhood Literacy

Based on the analysis of State and local data, identify the area of focus where the local school system did not meet the goals (areas where the local school system is performing below expectations). In the response, provide the rationale for selecting the area of focus, include the implementation of strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to support student achievement. Describe priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to address disparities in achievement and to improve student performance. As school systems respond to area of focus #1, refer to page 15 to guide your response to address specific student groups.

- a. Description.** Describe *Area of Focus #1* and how it aligns with your LSS educational equity policy (*up to 1,000 characters*).

The foundation of success begins with early childhood literacy. As students transition from home or childcare to pre-K or Head Start and kindergarten, it is imperative that we close any learning gaps to ensure students have foundational literacy skills. SMCPS has emphasized a concentrated focus on social/emotional learning (SEL), which facilitates the development of executive functioning skills that foster language and literacy development. This includes both oral language development and foundational pragmatic language development. This is directly connected to early language acquisition and early literacy. To this end, our work focuses on universal screening to identify interventions as early as possible, thereby working to eliminate learning gaps. Achievement gaps persist, particularly for students from low-income households and children with disabilities. Ensuring students can read on grade level by the end of grade 2 is a critical step for ensuring achievement in English/Language Arts as students' progress. Further, this goal is an equity imperative, as articulated in the Kirwan plan as well as our own goals.

- b. Analysis.** To support student achievement, describe the rationale for selecting the areas of focus (*up to 1,000 characters*).

Performance on MCAP continues to incrementally increase, with 46.60% of grade 3 students, 50.30% of grade 4 students, and 50.60% of grade 5 students earning a score of 4 or 5. Those students who have yet to achieve at these levels have struggled with reading fluency. In reviewing data trends associated with this performance, there is a correlation between underperformance on MCAP and student performance on the DIBELS ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) Words Correct assessment; specifically, student performance on the ORF in 1st grade mimic their results on the DIBELS Words Correct test in 5th grade as well as MCAP Grade 5 ELA Performance. With this strong correlation, we can see our sitting Grade 6 students (50.6% proficient on 2019 5th Grade MCAP ELA) had an average DIBELS DORF Words Correct score of 60 in 2014-5 and our sitting Grade 2 students had an average score of 65 (an improvement of 5 points) on their DIBELS DORF Words Correct in the spring of their 1st grade year during 2018-9. Similarly, our sitting Grade 3, 4 and 5 students had the following DIBELS DORF Words Correct score (during spring of 1st grade): sitting Grade 3- 65; sitting

Grade 4- 65; sitting Grade 5 - 49. By addressing early literacy, and closing gaps to ensure reading fluency in these early grades, this will have a longitudinal effect on student achievement, as measured by MCAP.

- c. **Identify** the root cause (s) for area of focus #1 and **describe** how you intend to address them (*up to 1,000 characters*).

Early literacy foundations are rooted in language development and social/emotional learning (SEL), which fosters executive function. Executive functioning skills are precursors to academic success and will facilitate oral language development including pragmatic language. Language development will drive literacy acquisition. Numerous studies support a need to focus on executive function in order to improve academic achievement. Universal screening (IGDIS) is demonstrating that most students who attend preK or Head Start programs are on track for school readiness. However, students who lack a preschool experience do not have the same level of preparedness, and this is amplified for students who come from low-income households. Providing more opportunities and access for intervention programs, including preK and Headstart programs, helps to address this gap. According to the KRA report, Children who attended PreK (44% demonstrate readiness) were more likely to be ready for kindergarten than those who were home or in informal care (25%). One of the key focus areas is ensuring consistency and fidelity of interventions for all students. While tiered supports are identified at the school level, full implementation is not consistent, and the interventions may not be correctly identified to match the area of need in foundational reading skills.

To address this area, strategies will include:

- Universal Screening and appropriate identification of interventions
- Linking specific reading deficit areas to targeted interventions, including Foundations
- SEL focus - Conscious Discipline training and classroom coaching through Grade 5
- Comprehensive, language rich, early childhood programs using evidence based curriculum materials and intervention programs
- Outreach and collaboration with community partners and resources
- Provide increased family engagement opportunities in other languages
- Child-care provider training in SEL
- Use of lead interventionist to ensure consistency and fidelity of research-based interventions

Responses to clarifying questions are included in the Appendix I.

Area of Focus # 1: Early Childhood Literacy

Using the chart below, identify goals, objectives, and strategies and/or evidence-based interventions that will be implemented to ensure progress. In your response, include how your educational equity policy impacted the selection and use of evidence-based interventions/strategies to address the need. In addition, include timeline and funding source (s). As you consider funding source, take into consideration federal, State, and other available sources.

Goals	Objectives	Identify priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions	Timeline	Funding Source (s)	Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention(s) / strategies. Describe how you will use an equity lens in your evaluation.
Expand access to high quality early childhood programming	<p>By June 2020, the following objectives will be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase programmatic offerings both in-school and out-of-school, to include ECE pursue increased funding for an increase of 5-10% of ECE seats provide increased training for SEL for all staff, preK-grade 5 increase parent and provider training in SEL 10% decrease in the number of students scoring at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Screening and appropriate identification of interventions. Review by universal screening team at each school to determine action steps for tiered interventions. SEL focus - Conscious Discipline training through Grade 5 Comprehensive, language-rich, early childhood programs using evidence-based curriculum materials and intervention programs Outreach and collaboration with community partners and resources Provide increased family engagement opportunities in other languages Focused curriculum supports on components for reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IGDIs screening (Pre-K) and DIBELS (K-2): Fall 2019 Winter 2020 Spring 2020, with team meetings following screening Ongoing grant and budget applications for additional funding SEL/Conscious Disc: Quarterly trainings, Spring 2020 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Title I Part A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title I SIG</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title II Part A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title III EL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title III Immigrant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title IV Part A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Title V RLIS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IDEA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> McKinney Vento</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Funding</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Funding</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (list funding source)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kirwan Funding - SMC Health Dept - AEP grant - Literacy grant (for pilot) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of screening data, including disaggregated and longitudinal review a quantitative and qualitative review of SEL training Assurance of opportunity and access to traditionally underserved populations Student performance levels in DIBELS and formative assessments Consistency of intervention implementation, as documented in RTI data reviews Correlation between Tier II and III implementation and on grade-level instruction

	intensive levels on DIBELS assessment	<p>instruction, e.g., phonemic awareness routines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementing structured supported tiered intervention models to address specific gaps in foundational reading skills ● Use of lead interventionist to ensure consistency and fidelity of research-based interventions 	<p>classroom coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quarterly staff and parent workshops ● Monthly review of Tier I and II supports with IRTs and school teams ● Monthly review of RTI data as well as Tier II and II progress monitoring 		
--	---------------------------------------	--	---	--	--

Area of Focus #2: Transition Grades

Based on the analysis of State and local data, identify the area of focus where the local school system did not meet the goals (areas where the local school system is performing below expectations). In the response, provide the rationale for selecting the area of focus, include the implementation of strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to support student achievement. Describe priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to address disparities in achievement and to improve student performance. As school systems respond to area of focus #1, refer to page 15 to guide your response to address specific student groups.

a. Description. Describe *Area of Focus #2* and how it aligns with your LSS educational equity policy. Describe the rationale for selecting the areas of focus (*up to 1,000 characters*).

As students transition between levels - especially from Grade 5 to Grade 6 (ES-MS), or from Grade 8-Grade 9 (MS-HS) - some face challenges both academically and behaviorally. Academic expectations are increased as the rigor of the content increases.

Additionally, as students move into environments with different expectations and often greater freedom, it is important that they also have the support to be successful. In grade 9, students' transition from graded courses to those that are both graded and carry graduation credit. This additional layer of accountability impacts students' future success. Over the last several years, programs such as the Fairlead Academy have intervened to support at-risk students' transition between grade 8 and 9. This program has had remarkable success in keeping students on track, particularly students who may be economically disadvantaged and struggling academically. In order to ensure educational equity, it is essential that all students find success. Expanding the focus on transition grade success, utilizing a program such as the Freshman Seminar class at the home high schools, assists students in this critical transition year. Similarly, a focus on grade 6 with a middle school appropriate model will assist in that transition.

b. Analysis. To support student achievement, provide an interpretation or justification for data used to identify this need. (*up to 1,000 characters*).

In comparing MCAP proficiency between the conclusion of elementary at grade 5 and the beginning of middle school at grade 6, the percentage of students obtaining proficiency levels 4 and 5 drop from 50.6% to 44.2% in ELA and from 45.1% to 37.9% in Mathematics.

More specifically, average PARCC/MCAP Scale Scores over time (3-year trend) for the sitting 7th grade cohort drop from grade 5 to grade six in both ELA and Math.

Content	Grade 4 scale score	Grade 5 scale score	Grade 6 scale score
ELA	743	746	744
Math	743	747	739

In ELA, 55% of students (sitting grade 7) experienced growth from grade 4 to 5 on their 2018 MCAP ELA Grade 5 exam whereas only 45% of those same students experienced growth on the 2019 Grade 6 ELA exam. Approximately 53% of students (sitting grade 7) regressed (experienced a decline in their Grade 6 Scale Score from Grade 5 Scale Score).

In Math, 57.7% of students (sitting grade 7) experienced growth from grade 4 to 5 on their 2018 MCAP MATH Grade 5 exam whereas only 28.9% of those same students experienced growth on the 2019 Grade 6 MATH exam. Approximately 69% of students (sitting grade 7) actually regressed (experienced a decline in their Grade 6 Scale Score from Grade 5 Scale Score).

Promotion rates for grade 8 and grade 9 reflect an increasing trend of students not earning the sufficient number of credits to progress to grade 10, as is noted below.

c. Identify the root cause (s) for area of focus #2 and describe how you intend to address them (*up to 1,000 characters*).

As students transition to the larger school environment at each level, this transition provides both more independence for students, as well as increased rigor in the content. The expectations and learning standards associated with reading and writing increases each year across all content areas. Coupled with the larger school environment, students who may be overwhelmed with these new structures can face challenges, which could be addressed by offering additional orientation and articulation programs for students, families, and staff. Further, as students' transition between each level, the discipline approach changes from teaching expectations to adhering to handbook consequences. Finally, grading expectations impact students as they transition from standards-based reporting to letter grades to earning credits.

Strategies include:

- Comprehensive orientation for students and parents, such as rising student orientation programs
- Ongoing articulation with teachers/administrators regarding transition areas
- Build communication structures for all stakeholders with transition resources and supports
- Additional staff support, to include the use of literacy coaches for providing interventions and wraparound services to students as they transition from grade 5-6 and grade 8-9
- Comprehensive transition and focus on restorative practices
- Comprehensive intervention programs and supports for students, such as
- Tech Connect
- Freshman Academy
- Summer Bridge programs
- Fairlead Academy
- Comprehensive audit of curriculum as it aligns with standards, particularly for grade level transition

Responses to clarifying questions are included in the Appendix I.

Area of Focus #2: Transition Grades

Using the chart below, identify goals, objectives, and strategies and/or evidence-based interventions that will be implemented to ensure progress. In your response, include how your educational equity policy impacted the selection and use of evidence-based interventions/strategies to address the need. In addition, include timeline and funding source (s). As you consider funding source, take into consideration federal, State, and other available sources.

Goals	Objectives	Identify priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions	Timeline	Funding Source (s)	Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention(s) / strategies. Describe how you will use an equity lens in your evaluation.
Students moving through grade level transitions will experience both academic and behavioral success	<p>By June 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 6 and grade 9 students will achieve at similar levels or above from their previous grade level Comprehensive support programs will be put in place (or continue) to support students in these transition years Staff in all transition grades will participate in articulation activities that include both academic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive orientation for students and parents Vertical articulation with teachers/administrators regarding transition areas Build communication structures for all stakeholders with transition resources and supports Comprehensive audit of curriculum as it aligns with standards, particularly for grade level transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring 2020, and ongoing Winter and Spring articulation activities Fall 2019 and ongoing Monthly analysis of curriculum implementation 	<input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part C <input type="checkbox"/> Title I SIG <input type="checkbox"/> Title II Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title III EL <input type="checkbox"/> Title III Immigrant <input type="checkbox"/> Title IV Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title V RLIS <input type="checkbox"/> IDEA <input type="checkbox"/> McKinney Vento <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Funding <input type="checkbox"/> State Funding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>list funding source</i>) - Secondary transition grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of post-orientation surveys Analysis of articulation reviews of curriculum and instructional outcomes Consistency of communication structures Analysis of student feedback and focus groups Review of formative assessments, curriculum materials, and classroom observations

	SEL components. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ collaborative meetings with school staffs to review strategies ○ asynchronous transitions support team planning and sharing of supports and activities 				
--	---	--	--	--	--

Area of Focus #3: 9th Grade Success

Based on the analysis of State and local data, identify the area of focus where the local school system did not meet the goals (areas where the local school system is performing below expectations). In the response, provide the rationale for selecting the area of focus, include the implementation of strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to support student achievement. Describe priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions to address disparities in achievement and to improve student performance. As school systems respond to area of focus #1, refer to page 15 to guide your response to address specific student groups.

- a. Description.** Describe *Area of Focus #3* and how it aligns with your LSS educational equity policy (*up to 1,000 characters*).

Beyond the transition focus for all students, as defined above, there is a particular focus on 9th grade students earning credits for promotion. Student success in grade 9 is paramount in completing high school in four years, and one of the most crucial indicators of success is in the achievement of earned credits - specifically in earning at least five (5) credits to be promoted to grade 10. For the ultimate goal of having each student graduate with their four-year cohort, their initial success in high school is critical. If students can find success in this first year of high school, they are much more likely to graduate on time, thereby opening the doors to post-secondary education and careers. Using formative and summative data throughout the year to provide real-time interventions and supports for grade 9 students, as needed, helps to mitigate challenges that may prevent students from successfully earning credit to advance. For some students who may not have the support structures outside the school walls, support within the school day is critical to their success in grade 9. Therefore, specialized support for grade 9 students, particularly those who have historically struggled (such as economically disadvantaged and special education students) is not only a focus, but an essential element of our plan for educational equity.

- b. Analysis.** To support student achievement, describe the rationale for selecting the areas of focus (*up to 1,000 characters*).

For the current year, 91.1% of students were promoted to grade 10 (8.9% retained). In raw numbers, this represents an increase in retention rates over the last three years, with 108 students retained in grade 9 in 2017, 135 in 2018, and 148 in 2019. Of this population who did not earn credits in 2019, 74% were identified as economically disadvantaged, and 23% were students with disabilities. These disproportional data set for this critical area of achievement make the focus an imperative.

- c. Identify** the root cause (s) for area of focus #3 and describe how you intend to address them (*up to 1,000 characters*).

One of the key root causes of freshman students' failure to be promoted is a lack of understanding of earned credit for course completion in high school. For students who have historically struggled, the emphasis in grades K-8 has been standards-based achievement, while also encouraging highly structured scaffolds of support. As

students rise in the high school years, those structures are peeled away and students are expected to be more independent in their learning. Some students, however, are not fully prepared for this level of independence.

Additionally, as attendance is a critical factor, for students who miss valuable class time, learning gaps continue to grow. Therefore, we must put supports in place to help them to become more independent in their learning and advocate for their own progress. To that end, the following strategies are in place:

- Freshman Seminar, a comprehensive course that teaches and supports identified at-risk students.
- Use of recovery programs for support in earning credit (Edgenuity)
- Enhanced monitoring and intervention when attendance issues surface
- Deployment of social workers to assist
- Literacy Coaches, who provide differentiated assistance for students based on their individualized needs
- Exploring the use of Math Coaches
- Vertical articulation with teachers/administrators regarding transition areas
- Individualized college and career navigation programs
- Utilization of support structures within the school day, such as one-hour lunch to support freshmen
- Enhancement of Fairlead program to support students who need a small group setting

Responses to clarifying questions are included in the Appendix I.

Area of Focus #3: 9th Grade Success

Using the chart below, identify goals, objectives, and strategies and/or evidence-based interventions that will be implemented to ensure progress. In your response, include how your educational equity policy impacted the selection and use of evidence-based interventions/strategies to address the need. In addition, include timeline and funding source (s). As you consider funding source, take into consideration federal, State, and other available sources.

Goals	Objectives	Identify priority strategies and/or evidence-based interventions	Timeline	Funding Source (s)	Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention(s) / strategies. Describe how you will use an equity lens in your evaluation.
Ensuring all 9th grade students earn the credits needed to advance on time to grade 10	By June 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of grade 9 students will earn the required credits to promote to grade 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freshman Seminar, a comprehensive course that teaches and supports identified at-risk 8th grade students as they transition to grade 9. Use of recovery programs for support in earning credit (Edgenuity) Literacy Coaches, who provide differentiated assistance for students based on their individualized needs Monitoring attendance for early intervention Exploring the use of Math Coaches Vertical articulation with teachers/administrators regarding transition areas Use of school counselors and pupil personnel workers to assist students and build 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation 2019-20 school year with pilot curriculum,; monthly data review Continued ongoing implementation of Edgenuity, quarterly review of recovery units Monthly meetings with Literacy coaches Quarterly data review meetings Grant and budget 	<input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part C <input type="checkbox"/> Title I SIG <input type="checkbox"/> Title II Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title III EL <input type="checkbox"/> Title III Immigrant <input type="checkbox"/> Title IV Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title V RLIS <input type="checkbox"/> IDEA <input type="checkbox"/> McKinney Vento <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Funding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Funding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (list funding source) - Striving Readers Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly and quarterly review of data - both intervention and achievement data Student grade reports - at each interim and reporting period Review of Edgenuity recovery modules Quarterly Naviance reporting for college/career planning Identification of underperforming students and interventions

		<p>connections with families to provide supports and wraparound services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized college and career navigation programs • Utilization of support structures within the school day, such as one-hour lunch and to support freshmen • Enhancement of Fairlead program to support students who need a small group setting 	<p>proposal fall 2019 for staffing</p>		
--	--	---	--	--	--

Additional Reporting Requirements

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) Schools

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) Schools.

- a. For school systems with TSI schools, please list schools identified as a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools and the area of identification *(up to 1,000 characters)*.

Leonardtwn Elementary - Special Education
Dynard Elementary - Special Education
G. W. Carver Elementary - Special Education

- b. Please summarize the local school system's action plan to support all TSI schools based on the root cause analysis. Describe the process the local school system is using to support TSI schools *(up to 1,000 characters)*.

SMCPS support team , which includes staff from Assessment & Accountability, Special Education, Curriculum & Instruction, Supplemental Services, and Student Services, meets monthly with the school improvement team, including the principal/admin team, resource teachers, counselor, general education teachers, and other staff identified by the school, to review individualized student attendance data, academic, and intervention data. Each month, a set of action steps are implemented related to monthly data review findings.

SMCPS is providing staff support based on the specific school and student needs. For example, additional PPW support is provided to address attendance issues, intervention specialists are deployed to assist with screening and identification of appropriate interventions, as well as staff training. Ongoing data review through RTI data in the data warehouse allows for consistent monitoring, support, and accountability. GWCES also 4 special education teacher to support funded through Title I and a consultant to support language development/early literacy for TSI at Carver.

- c. How are you supporting TSI schools by their area of identification? *(up to 1,000 characters)*.

All three schools are identified as a result of similar data sets for small groups. Therefore, the approach, as outlined above, is similar in terms of support.

Gifted and Talented Education

COMAR 13A.04.07.06 specifies that local school systems (LSSs) shall report the following in their Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan. Use the chart below to provide your responses for 1, 4, 5, and 6 for the 2019-2020 school year.

<p>1. The process for identifying gifted and talented students</p> <p>Universal screening is conducted in third grade. All third grade students complete an online assessment (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, 3rd Edition). Additional achievement data including, but not limited to, district content area assessments and MCAP data are collected. All data collected are reviewed to determine gifted and talented student identification.</p> <p>Additional screenings occur in grades 4 and 5 as new students arrive to the district and returning students need to be reconsidered for gifted identification. In grades 6-8, gifted screenings are conducted upon request by guardian, teacher, and/or student.</p>
<p>2. The number of gifted and talented students identified in each school*</p> <p>The number and percentage of GT students in each school and LSS will be calculated from Attendance Data Collections provided to the MSDE Office of Accountability.</p>
<p>3. The percentage of gifted and talented students identified in the local school system*</p> <p>The number and percentage of GT students in each school and LSS will be calculated from Attendance Data Collections provided to the MSDE Office of Accountability.</p>
<p>4. The schools that have been exempted from identification of a significant number of gifted and talented students and the rationale</p> <p>Not Applicable. No schools in St. Mary's County have been exempted from identification of a significant number of gifted and talented students.</p>
<p>5. The continuum of programs and services</p> <p>Students in grades 3, 4, and 5, who have been identified as Gifted and Talented in the area(s) of reading and/or mathematics, begin receiving instruction using supplementary materials. Supplementary materials include William and Mary Units, novel studies, and Challenging Word Problems. This instruction is in addition to regular classroom instruction and may be delivered as part of the flexible grouping, guided reading/math, or a pull out program. Beginning in grade 4, students can apply to participate in The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy.</p> <p>In grades 6-8, the Accelerated English/Language Arts (ELA) classes address the needs of students who require instructional experiences beyond the regular curriculum. Students are provided appropriate levels of challenge through accelerated pacing and advanced content. The content in the accelerated ELA courses is differentiated to provide students with higher-level, more complex texts. Instruction is supported by strategies and tools students need to engage students in active, fast-paced learning to develop the skills, habits of mind, and concepts necessary to succeed in advanced English courses.</p>

grades 6-8, students who demonstrate high levels of achievement in mathematics take accelerated courses. Under the Common Core Curricula for Mathematics, students may be placed in 6th Grade Accelerated Math, 7th Grade Accelerated Math and 8th Grade Algebra I. High school credit is earned for completion of Algebra I. The content in the accelerated Mathematics courses is designed to provide students with higher-level problem-solving skills and to engage them in fast-paced learning to meet their academic needs. Students will examine ratios, proportions, geometry concepts, and statistics and probability to best prepare them for Algebra 1 and advanced mathematics courses as they advance to high school. Middle school students can also continue to apply to participate in The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy.

grades 9-12, a variety of Pre-AP and AP level courses exist for students who are motivated within a particular academic discipline. These courses are designed to develop the study skills, rigor, and academic knowledge necessary to succeed in advanced studies.

In addition to advanced coursework, students can apply to participate in a specialized pathway. These include:

- The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy - Grades 4-12
- The Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA)- Grades 9-12
- The Academy of Global and International Studies (GIS) - Grades 9-12
- The Academy of Finance (AOF) - Grades 9-12

6. Data-informed goals, targets, strategies, and timelines. Additional spaces can be added.

Goal: Increase gifted student identifications to meet the new 10% threshold set for local school systems.

Target:	Strategies:	Timeline:
Identify at least 10% of students in grade 3 for reading and/or mathematics programming.	Collect a variety of assessment data including multiple indicators of potential, ability, and achievement. Review student data collected to identify students for gifted reading and or mathematics programming.	September 2019 - December 2020: Data Collection January 2020: Complete student identifications

Goal: Increase gifted student identifications in each school to meet the new requirement of a significant number of students being identified as gifted and talented in every school.

Target:	Strategies:	Timeline:
Identify a significant number of students in grade 3 in every school.	Collect a variety of assessment data including multiple indicators of potential, ability, and achievement.	September 2019 - December 2020: Data Collection

	Review student data collected to identify students for gifted reading/mathematics programming and/or talent development opportunities.	January 2020: Complete student identifications
Goal: Develop equitable policies for identification and a process for appeals that are clearly stated in writing, made public, and consistently implemented system-wide.		
Target:	Strategies:	Timeline:
Communicate equitable policies for identification and the process for appeals in writing.	<p>Review current identification information and resources used to communicate with the public.</p> <p>Update or create the needed resources/documents to communicate the equitable policies for identification and a process for appeals clearly in writing</p>	<p>September 2019 - January 2020: Review current documents and communication</p> <p>January - June 2020: Create and or clarify written communications.</p>
Goal: Develop a plan for documenting early evidence of advanced learning behaviors, PreK - 2.		
Target:	Strategies:	Timeline:
Create a plan for how early evidence of advanced learning behaviors will be documented in grades pre-kindergarten through grade 2.	<p>Review current instructional materials and determine which advanced learning behaviors are already reinforces during classroom instruction.</p> <p>Determine if information regarding additional advance learning behaviors should be collected, and if so, how.</p> <p>Create a plan for collecting student data and documenting evidence of early learning behaviors in pre-kindergarten through grade 2.</p>	September 2019 - June 2020

Responses to clarifying questions are included in the Appendix I.

Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program

- A. Provide a description of your Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program, including:
- staffing and oversight;
 - orientation programs;
 - ongoing professional learning;
 - organization and schedules for mentor/mentee meetings;
 - opportunities for observation and co-teaching;
 - monitoring of new teacher needs, concerns, ongoing supports, formative review, and follow-up;
 - action plans; and
 - use of relevant and appropriate data.

SMCPS's Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program contains three main components:

1. New Teacher Orientation- 2.5 days in August to welcome and orient new hires to SMCPS. SMCPS's Departments of Human Resources and Instruction work together to facilitate this program.
2. New Teacher Seminar - monthly conference-style sessions where new hires are supported through professional development on general pedagogy, teacher technology, behavior techniques, and system initiatives. Sessions are planned based on NTs self-identified need and through data on county-based assessments. Master teachers representing primary grades, intermediate grades, middle school, high school, special education, special areas, and interventionists lead sessions and support teachers as an additional layer of support.
3. Instructional Mentors - all non-tenured teachers are assigned an instructional mentor who meets with them an average of 40 minutes per week during non-instructional time. All mentors and NTs in a building meet together as a group either weekly or bi-weekly to discuss school-based and county-wide initiatives as well as to collaborate on common classroom issues and concerns. Additionally, mentors and mentees complete one observation per month of either each other or another master teacher in their building (or in another building for singleton courses).
4. An instructional supervisor operating out of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction oversees the new teacher induction program.

- B. Provide a description of your District Mentoring Program. The use of the term “mentor” includes coaches and consulting teachers.
- training for new mentors;
 - supervision of mentors;
 - training for school administrators and school staff as described in .04E of the regulation.
 - process used to measure the effectiveness of the induction/mentoring and the results of that measurement.

SMCPS utilizes instructional mentors. All non-tenured teachers are assigned an instructional mentor who meets with them an average of 40 minutes per week during non-instructional time. All mentors

and NTs in a building meet together as a group either weekly or bi-weekly to discuss school-based and county-wide initiatives as well as to collaborate on common classroom issues and concerns. Additionally, mentors and mentees complete one observation per month of either each other or another master teacher in their building (or in another building for singleton courses). Mentors are supervised by an instructional supervisor assigned to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Annual training takes place through Mentor Supervisor visits to school sites during weekly/biweekly mentor meetings and/or during summer months. Additionally, all new mentors complete the Skills for Coaching and Mentoring course.

The mentoring program is evaluated annually via mentor logs, NT surveys, and mentor surveys. The results of the measurement help shape changes to the mentoring program for the coming year.

Administrators and new mentors are trained both through completion of Skills for Coaching and Mentoring course as well as team mentor training that takes place each summer and early fall.

Additionally, the supervisor of instruction assigned to support induction also works with new administrators to assist them in understanding not only the induction process but also the role of mentor teams in their buildings.

- C. Provide data regarding the scope of your mentoring program. This data may be provided in the form of a chart or other organizer of your choice. Include:

The number of probationary teachers.

is year, SMCPS has two-hundred-fifty-two(252) and three (3) principal mentees.

The number of mentors who have been assigned.

is year, SMCPS has ninty-seven (97) teacher mentors and one (1) principal mentor.

A breakdown of your mentors' roles in the district

(1) FULL-TIME MENTORS: Mentoring is their full-time job.

SMCPS does not utilize full-time mentors.

(2) PART-TIME MENTORS: Mentoring is their part-time job.

SMCPS does not utilize part-time mentors.

(3) RETIREES: Mentoring is done by retirees hired to mentor.

SMCPS does not utilize retirees as mentors.

(4) FULL-TIME TEACHERS: Teaching is their full-time job and they mentor.

SMCPS only uses full-time teachers as mentors.

- D. Provide a description of how your mentoring program is being evaluated. Include evaluation data and data on new teacher retention.

SMCPS's mentoring program is evaluated via empirical data, mostly qualitative but with some quantitative as well. Data comes from weekly mentor logs, periodic surveys of mentees and mentors, and surveys of New Teacher Seminar attendees. Periodically HR shares teacher retention data as well.