U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) [ ] Elementary [**X**] Middle [] High [] K-12 [] Other

[] Charter   [] Title I   [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Kerry McGowan

Official School Name: Hammond Middle School

School Mailing Address:
8110 Aladdin Drive
Laurel, MD 20723-1166

County: Howard County   State School Code Number*: 607

Telephone: (410) 880-5830   Fax: (410) 880-5837

Web site/URL: HMS.HCPSS.org   E-mail: kerry_mcgowan@hcpss.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Sydney Cousin

District Name: Howard County   Tel: (410) 313-6600

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Frank Aquino

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

Date _____

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

Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.
Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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

2.   The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3.   To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4.   If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5.   The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.

6.   The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.

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

8.   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.

9.   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.

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district:

39	Elementary schools
18	Middle schools
0	Junior high schools
12	High schools
3	Other
72	**TOTAL**

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: __12650__

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: __11398__

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

4. __4__ Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

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

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0	7	109	81	190
K	0	0	0	8	113	101	214
1	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	12	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	Other	0	0	0
6	86	92	178				
				TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL			582

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0	% American Indian or Alaska Native
11	% Asian
13	% Black or African American
3	% Hispanic or Latino
0	% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
72	% White
1	% Two or more races
100	**% Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: __2__ %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	6
(2)	Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	5
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	11
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	582
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.019
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1.890

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: __1__ %

Total number limited English proficient __8__

Number of languages represented: __4__
Specify languages:

Korean, Spanish, Russian, Gujarati

9.   Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6   %

         Total number students who qualify: 33

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

10. Students receiving special education services: 8   %

     Total Number of Students Served: 47

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

4	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	16	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	22	Specific Learning Disability
1	Emotional Disturbance	4	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	2	0
Classroom teachers	42	2
Special resource teachers/specialists	3	0
Paraprofessionals	5	0
Support staff	5	2
Total number	57	4

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 __**20**__ **:1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	93%	94%	90%	93%
Teacher turnover rate	6%	4%	6%	19%	7%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Note: In 2004/05 there were 4 retirements from staff, 2 staff members transferred to high school, 1 staff transferred to elementary, and 1 staff member went on child rearing leave. Also, daily teacher attendance reflects teachers out due to workshops, professional development, jury duty, bereavement, and personal leave.

We are a middle school and students are not allowed to drop out of schools before 16 years of age.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	**100**	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Hammond Middle School is nestled in an unincorporated suburban area called North Laurel along the Baltimore – Washington, D.C. corridor. The school is located just outside the historic town of Laurel, Maryland. The school community is rich in history and opportunity. Originally, this community began as an outgrowth of a flourishing cotton mill on the bank of the Patuxent River. Currently, Hammond Middle School serves a thriving North Laurel community surrounded by residential homes, private businesses, university laboratories, and government agencies. We are a blend of new and old, historic and progressive.

Hammond Middle School has exemplified excellence in education for over thirty-five years. Our school community is proud to be part of the Howard County School System that consistently ranks as Maryland's top school district based on student performance on the Maryland State Assessments. Our school and community share the same positive characteristics and are united in a very effective partnership that is reflected in our mission statement.

We, the Hammond Middle School community, are committed to promoting academic excellence in a safe, nurturing environment, and developing educated young women and men of character to be contributing, responsible citizens in a diverse and ever-changing world.

For the past five years, our school has implemented five initiatives that support our school-wide goal of providing a rigorous academic program within an inclusive welcoming environment: 1) Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), 2) Cultural Proficiency, 3) Designing a Quality Inclusive Educational program (DQIE), 4) Technology Improvements, and 5) Integrated Management Systems (IMS). Each one of these initiatives has played an important role in creating an excellent educational environment. However, none of these initiatives would have been successful without personalizing the learning environment for our students. The conscious efforts of our staff to develop strong, caring relationships have led to the development of positive human connections and structures within the school community. Some examples of the personalized learning that have occurred at Hammond Middle are the following: 1) designing small student focus groups that meet weekly to discuss issues of cultural proficiency that are facilitated by guidance counselors and administrators, 2) collaborating with our community college in setting up a student mentoring program where college sophomores meet weekly with students during lunch or after school, 3) creating a "check in/check out" mentor program at the start of the day and at the end of the day when a staff member meets with three to four students to encourage personal and academic growth, and 4) facilitating service learning groups initiated by students where seventh grade boys and girls act as "big brothers/sisters" to selected sixth graders.

In addition to personalizing the learning process, our students experience a well-balanced academic, fine arts and enrichment program. At Hammond Middle we are proud of our differentiated and rigorous course offerings. Every student receives instruction in five core subjects from sixth to eighth grade: math, reading, English, science, and social studies. In seventh and eighth grade, students may also opt to take a world language --Spanish or French class. The world language class, taken for two years, is equivalent to a one-year world language class in high school. At Hammond, our world language enrollment has increased over the past four years. Currently, sixty-six percent of our students are enrolled in world language classes. In addition to being instructed in the academic core areas, our students are also exposed to a variety of related arts classes such as, physical education, health, technology education, symphonic and concert band, orchestra, music and chorus, art, and family and consumer science classes.

In order to meet the differentiated and personalized needs of our students, we also offer seminar and intervention classes. Our seminar classes are designed to extend and enrich the knowledge base and interests of our students. The students take these seminar classes during the school day where they may be

"compacted" out of an academic class. Following are some of the seminars we offer: research investigations, math Olympiad, book club, writer's guild, TV production, Eco Team, black saga, imovie, and debate. Our intervention classes are designed to accelerate the skill level and provide additional instructional support for students who are performing below grade level in the areas of math and language arts. Our reading specialist and math team leader collaborate with reading, English, and math teachers in identifying students for these intervention classes. Students are identified based on specific criteria such as, scoring "basic" on the Maryland State Assessments, teacher recommendation and poor performance on quarterly report card grades, county quarterly assessments, and other curricular diagnostic tools. Students are only placed in these intervention classes with parental approval.

At Hammond Middle, the staff, parents, and students place a premium on the students' well-balanced educational experience. This is demonstrated by students selecting to participate in many service-learning projects, various jazz, music and drama performances, "Green School" activities, and county and state competitions such as, the French Exam, Spelling Bees, and orchestra/choral/band adjudications. As we progress through our year, our school improvement team (SIT) in conjunction with our PTA will continue to create future plans for school improvement that promote a rigorous academic program within a welcoming, inclusive environment.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

Hammond Middle School is one of Howard County's top performing middle schools, achieving academic success for all of our student groups. In the past five years we have significantly increased our scores on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA), a criterion-referenced test that assesses individual student's reading and math achievement as well as school-wide performance. The MSA, administered annually, holds schools accountable for meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks for all student subgroups. Achievement levels of basic, proficient, and advanced are utilized to determine progress toward the goal of 100% proficiency for all students by 2014, in compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Over the past five years, Hammond has made great strides toward meeting and exceeding AYP standards on the MSA. In the past five years, the number of students scoring at the proficient or advanced levels exceeded the state's AYP benchmarks for reading and math, and all student groups met AYP standards. In reading, we have increased the number of students scoring in the advanced range 11% since the MSA was introduced in 2003, with 66% of our students scoring in the advanced range in 2008. Each year we have exceeded the state's AYP benchmark in reading by an average of 33%. More significantly, we have already met the state's 2013 benchmark of 95% proficiency in reading. Last year, 76% of our Free and Reduced Meal Students scored in the advanced /proficient range in reading as did 88% of our African American students. Hammond has been recognized by the NAACP with a Certificate of Excellence for Grade 6 Reading and Attendance, and 78% of our African American students have also achieved proficiency in math. We have also seen a 37% increase in our Hispanic students' scores, with 87% of them now meeting AYP. In fact, since 2005, the number of Hammond students scoring advanced or proficient in math increased 10%, with 93% of the student body achieving proficiency last year – meeting the state's math proficiency benchmark for 2013. As with reading, we have exceeded the state's AYP benchmark for math by an average of 44% annually. In addition to the MSA, students working at an advanced level in math may also take the Maryland High School Assessment (HSA) in algebra. The HSA exam is a state high school graduation requirement, and our seventh and eighth graders have had an average pass rate of 98% since the test was implemented in 2002.

The significant gains in Hammond's scores attest to our motto, "Making a difference: From good to great." Through collaboration, data-driven planning, and differentiated instruction, our teachers and administrators have worked diligently to provide outstanding instruction to all of our students. By specifically targeting students for enrichment or intervention services and utilizing a solid curriculum that meets the state of Maryland's objectives, we have created an environment in which all students can achieve. Additional information on the Maryland State Department of Education's assessment system can be found at www.mdreportcard.org.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Data collection and analysis drives Hammond Middle School's yearly goals and objectives. Our School Improvement Team (SIT) meets monthly to create, analyze and monitor progress of the annual goals and objectives. The team consists of staff members representing each of the academic core areas — math, reading, English, science and social studies ¬— the interdisciplinary grade level team leaders, parents, administrators, guidance counselors and student government representatives. Beginning in early spring, the team follows the "Plan, Do, Study, Act" model of continual school improvement. In order to develop plans for the upcoming school year, the team begins to evaluate the progress of the current school year's goals/objectives. By June, the goals/objectives are identified and a School Improvement Plan is submitted to our Board of Education for the upcoming school year. Throughout the first semester of the new school year,

the School Improvement Team studies the academic progress of our students by analyzing data from a variety of sources such as disaggregated data from the Maryland State Assessments, local quarterly assessments, report card grades, curricular diagnostic tools, quarterly reports of student progress on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), disciplinary data, and attendance data. The School Improvement Plan is a working document that shapes 1) the professional development of staff, 2) the instructional strategies/structures of classrooms and personalized learning groups, and 3) the implementation of our school-wide initiatives. Ongoing assessment of our school improvement plan occurs throughout the year to ensure that individual and school performance is in alignment with our plan. Based on the examination of this data, the team makes recommendations for further actions that might be needed. Typical recommendations from the team might include 1) implementing subject area or grade level interventions, 2) accessing additional technological resources from the Board of Education, 3) scheduling changes for students, and/or 4) utilizing guidance counselors to facilitate small personalized learning groups for students.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

Hammond Middle School communicates student performance and assessment results in a variety of ways in order to promote student engagement and accountability. Instilling ownership of learning is a priority at our school. We believe that when students are actively engaged in their learning and take ownership of their personal and academic progress, strong foundations for college, citizenship and employment will be developed.

For the past four years, our staff has developed a myriad of communications tools that are easily accessible for students, parents, and our school community. Some examples of communication tools are 1) a biweekly newsletter sent electronically that contains information about school/county/community programs, 2) a school website that communicates student assessment data, 3) teacher-created websites where students can access curricular and assignment information (frequently, teachers will also post students' assignments on line that illustrate excellent student performance), 4) grade level websites posting calendar information about upcoming activities and assignments, 5) electronically produced interim progress reports and quarterly report cards which students receive throughout the year, and 6) a teacher electronic "grade book" so students and parents can closely monitor student performance. In addition, students are encouraged to attend parent/teacher conferences throughout the year, create service learning projects, participate in student government, and participate in various student focus groups which provide opportunities for students to influence school practices/policies/initiatives.

Further historical data on our school's assessment results, as measured by state and county assessments, are published on the Howard County Public School System's website.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Hammond Middle School is proud to share our success with our system-wide colleagues and school system communities. Staff members have been asked to participate in writing curriculum and quarterly assessments for our school system. Hammond teachers have also been asked to design and implement professional development sessions at county workshops and present to faculties at schools. Examples of some professional development sessions are "Co-teaching in General Reading Classes," "Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS)," and "Developing a Support System for Non-Tenured Teachers." In addition, Hammond was selected to host a delegation of educators from China who were investigating how to effectively educate students with special needs.

At Hammond, we continue to explore ways in which we can share our success. Sharing our success with other educators, not only gives us an opportunity to assist other faculties, but also allows us to examine and

reassess our own best practices.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Art: This curriculum is based on the Maryland State Voluntary State Curriculum for Visual Arts. The curriculum is divided between Expressing and Responding, students have experiences in both making art and responding to art verbally and in writing. Students have experiences in the five disciplines of art: drawing, painting, printmaking, crafts, and sculpture.

Language Arts: Our program, grades 6-8, composed of separate English and reading classes offers an integrated program based on the state's Voluntary State Curriculum that emphasizes reading, writing, speaking and vocabulary skills. The four English units at each grade level provide students the opportunities to write strategically in response to literature, persuade in written and oral presentations, and write creative compositions that meet grade level objectives. The reading units at each grade guide students in their development as strategic readers by interacting with literary and informational text, exploring careers, and developing a skills approach to problem solving.

Mathematics: This program is built upon the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Principles and Standards for School Mathematics and the Maryland Mathematics Voluntary State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals. It incorporates problem solving, communication, connections, representation, and reasoning as the essential processes for helping students develop a deep understanding of and appreciation for mathematics in the 21st century. The program also forms a framework in which high expectations are the standard, enabling students to successfully apply mathematics in real life and testing situations. Curriculum resources are delivered through an online tool in which downloads to sample exemplary lesson plans, clarification examples, tutorials, videocasts, sample assessment items, web-based manipulatives, and online games are available for use by teachers, students and parents/guardians. Students participate in intervention, enrichment and acceleration groups to support their instructional needs. Advanced mathematics courses are offered in Algebra/Data Analysis and geometry. Small group instruction is offered in Algebra II, advanced topics in Geometry, and Matrices, Statistics, and Discrete Mathematics through district-level staff from the Howard County Gifted and Talented Program.

Music: Our outstanding program is designed to offer students multiple opportunities for participation. Students enrolled in band, orchestra, chorus, and general music experience a simultaneous combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning enhancing their creative and critical learning skills. Students have the opportunity to build individual and group discipline and increase achievement through both individual and collective effort.

Science: Students in all grades focus on the application of the scientific method and the use of inquiry to experience and discover scientific principles. In sixth grade earth science, students investigate the forces that shape and affect the Earth. In seventh grade life science, students study ecology and the levels of biological organization in the body, from the cellular level to body systems. In eighth grade physical science, students focus on how forces affect matter in motion and concentrate on cultivating mathematical skills as they apply to real-life situations.. At each grade level students also focus on ecological issues: in sixth grade students learn about how pollution affects the Chesapeake Bay watershed; in seventh grade students learn how the introduction of new species can affect an ecosystem; and in eighth grade students focus on water quality testing and sources of water pollution.

World Language: World language instruction in middle school offers students instruction in French and Spanish. The course occurs over a two year period in seventh and eighth grades. The instructional program subscribes to a proficiency-based curriculum to develop what students can do with language and to elevate

what they do through listening, reading, writing and speaking.

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

   This question is for elementary schools only

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

At Hammond Middle School, all students take reading and English daily as separate core courses. Our reading programs, regular and Challenge reading, use data from the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), Degrees of Reading Power, local quarterly assessment results, and teacher recommendations to determine the best placement for each student. Students learn to use before, during and after strategies when interacting with literary and informational text. The Careers Exploration unit provides students with the opportunity to examine future possibilities in the world of work while the Information Literacy unit, based on the Big6© framework for problem solving, prepares students to meet the literacy demands of the 21st century. Teachers use a tiered approach to teach these units. Above level students are offered the Challenge Reading course that includes units of study that promote critical reading and thinking skills. To differentiate the Challenge reading classes, there is a focus on cultural Voices. In 6th grade, the focus is the Asian Voice. In 7th grade, the focus is the Hispanic Voice, and in 8th grade the focus is the African-American Voice. Reading portfolios are maintained throughout middle school and are used to collect reading artifacts and reflect on growth as strategic readers. Below grade-level students receive targeted reading instruction by the reading specialist in a small group setting. The researched-based Soar to Success reading intervention program (Houghton Mifflin) draws upon reciprocal teaching to support comprehension.

English classes are divided into two student groups: gifted and talented classes and regular classes, which incorporate teaching strategies that speak to multiple learning styles and intelligences. Teachers employ students in a variety of classroom jobs (part of our school-wide Integrated Management System initiative), pulling them into the success of our daily routine. All classes begin with a journal or drill that introduces the daily lesson or performs as a grammar mini lesson. Daily objectives are posted in kid-friendly language and lesson plans are differentiated in terms of content, product, and process to meet the needs of the individual classes. Students maintain a writing portfolio that travels with them from the sixth through the eighth grade. County assessments are used along with review tools to help students recognize areas of strength and need. Teachers use the scores to identify student needs and to plan differentiated instruction.

Each student in all subjects at HMS uses the Howard County Middle School Stylebook, a guide for students based on the *6 + 1 Traits of Writing* by Ruth Culham: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. This common language has improved the student-teacher dialogue around reading and writing. Students examine professional writers' use of language through sentence combining, imitating, and diagramming activities. Students are encouraged to use new skills, expected to use the writing process, and are encouraged to "go public" in a variety of ways. Debates offer students a way to share persuasive writing. New technologies engage students in the process of sharing and learning from each other in developing individual or cooperative projects. Success becomes more about peer reaction to published work than a teacher's formal evaluation.

The English and reading teachers analyze data to identify students who need additional support. In the Language Arts Core Intervention classes, reading and English teachers plan and teach together to promote content literacy across all disciplines. Students are grouped into small classes that meet daily. Multi-sensory activities such as flashcards, interactive games, electronic study guides, writing starters, graphic/visual organizers, technology (Study Island©, Kidspiration©, Inspiration©, Alphasmarts), chunking assignments, class creation of rough drafts, and class editing.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Our school is the first in our county to utilize special education grant funds (Designing Quality Inclusive Education, or DQIE) to develop the technological capacity of our teachers. Based upon data points such as quarterly assessments and report card grades, and qualitative anecdotal data, it became apparent we needed to investigate new ways to define our instructional delivery in the areas of social studies. One of those areas was the integration of technology in the social studies classroom. In the article, Technology and social studies: A conceptual model for integration, Chad Fairey, John K. Lee, and Clifford Bennett state, "If meaningful social studies are useful both in and outside of the classroom, and if the twenty-first century is to be characterized by the need for technological literacy among its students, then the computer should be a great vehicle for the promotion of powerful social studies learning." Therefore, we developed a program that brought special educators and social studies teachers together to become mindful of and practice using technology tools in social studies instruction. The teachers have learned to search the local Intranet for the online curriculum tools; use visual tools such as comic book programs for enhancing instruction; search the online databases purchased by the county for documents, maps, primary sources, images, and articles related to topics of study; embed small video clips into classroom presentations of content; implement visual thinking and learning software in lesson planning to help students think, brainstorm, organize, analyze and write; and use wikis to plan collaboratively.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

We at Hammond Middle School strive to instill qualities that promote academic excellence and lifelong learning throughout our diverse student body. Our staff constantly toil to provide effective and timely professional development opportunities (e.g., classroom management, childhood disorders, cultural proficiency, technology), programming and scheduling revisions, and facilitate instructional delivery by locating additional resources.

Student supports have included a number of academic and behavioral strategies. Academically, we offer a wide range of courses that challenge our brightest and simultaneously provide intervention classes for students who struggle academically. Our Gifted and Talent programming provides unique opportunities that go beyond standard curriculum and have allowed students to explore cultural issues, film making, and advanced math concepts.

We offer intervention classes for math, language skills and study skills where automated programs like Wilson (e.g., decoding skills) and Soar to Success (e.g., comprehension) are used. In addition, our school uses grade level problem solving teams that develop behavioral and academic strategies to support students. Students also benefit from our ability to differentiate instruction. Our teachers use a co-teaching model to provide individualize support by providing extension activities and re-teaching/ modifying lessons in a variety of ways. Some of the strategies include the use of social stories, study guides, visual schedules, and the presentation of lessons in multiple modalities. Students are encouraged to take an active role in their education and participate in events such as the annual egg shuttle launch, gallery walks, film making, and Socratic seminars.

Behaviorally, we support students via Positive Behavior Support programming (e.g., PRIDE). We also publicly recognized students' efforts weekly via morning announcements and run a PRIDE store where PRIDE slips are exchanged for prizes. As a result of our efforts, we are able to fully include 100% of our student body in the general education setting.

5. **Professional Development:**

Throughout the last five years at Hammond Middle the administration has focused on aiding teachers to become more culturally proficient and designing a quality and inclusive learning environment for all student groups. The goal of the cultural proficiency initiative is to reach more students by focusing on the needs of all student groups. The initiative began in the fall of 2006 with a core group of teachers that attended a series of workshops run by Brenda and Franklin Campbell-Jones. The facilitators then met with staff during monthly staff meetings and focused on becoming aware of our culture and how culture affects everything we do; knowing that helped us relate to our students differently. During the fall of 2008 Elisa Montalvo was invited to come to Hammond and give a presentation in regards to how Latino/a students learn. In previous years we have had workshops during staff meetings on how to better reach and motivate African American male students. As a result, teachers have volunteered to serve as mentors so we can better service our students. The administration also makes professional journal articles available to staff on a regular basis on best practices of teaching and reaching all learners.

In order to design a quality and inclusive environment for all student groups the administration has also applied for grants and allotted time for special educators and general educators to meet and co-plan lessons designed to reach all learners. Four times a year the administration hires substitute teachers so that those teachers can take a half-day and co-plan. Two of our teachers exemplify this relationship; they have presented both to our staff as well as countywide in-service trainings. English and reading teachers met with Chris Paulis to receive professional development on content literacy. Content literacy is important to the success of our students in all classes because it helps teachers to teach students to become more purposeful in their reading of all forms of literature from novels to textbooks. In the fall of 2003 a parent advocacy group for children with Autism came to Hammond Middle to present information to all staff on how students with autism learn. After the presentation, teams of teachers were given time to ask questions and start discussions on how to better service our students with autism. Also, in the fall of 2008 our school psychologist held a series of workshops to discuss the theory and purpose behind homework. This met the need of educators in the building because we moved from a block schedule to a nine period day. Teacher, parents and students were concerned about the transition to this schedule and how it would affect workload. Additionally the Gifted and Talented Resource teacher meets with each grade-level team to present strategies for differentiation within the Gifted and Talent classroom.

6. **School Leadership:**

Hammond Middle School is lead by principal Kerry McGowan and assistant principal Sam Davis. In addition, each grade level and discipline has an instructional team leader. The grade level team leaders (ITL's) include a leader for 6th, 7th, 8th grades as well as for related arts and special education. They meet with the principal and assistant principal on a weekly basis. It is at these meetings that policy and program decisions are discussed and made. Each team leader then meets with their grade level team weekly to discuss decisions made at the ITL team meetings. Notes are taken at these meetings and sent to staff weekly over e-mail. During grade level team meetings staff can also bring up issues or problems to their team leader to bring back to the ITL meeting.

One reason Hammond has been successful is the stability of the leadership team. The ITL's have held their positions for six years or more, and the department team leaders (DTL's) have held their positions for three years or more. In addition many staff members take a leadership role within their team or within the school. We have staff members that run our PBIS program, student government group, service learning, a SSFS (Students for Safe Schools) program, and Kid Talk meetings.

Each month the ITL's, DTL's, administration, PTA representative, and other staff members attend a SIT (School Improvement Team) meeting. Last year Hammond was deciding whether or not it would be

beneficial to move to the nine period day. The idea was first discussed at ITL and DTL meetings, then the ITL's met with their grade level teams to debate the costs and benefits to moving to a nine period day. The discussions centered on how the nine period day would affect student achievement and teacher planning. The ITL's and DTL's gathered information and opinions from these meetings and eventually met again at a SIT meeting to discuss and make a decision. One concern gathered from the team meetings was the increase in the amount of homework and how it would affect student achievement and motivation. Upon discussion the idea was generated by administration to offer staff development on the purpose of homework and how it can be more effectively used as an assessment tool.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 6   Test: Maryland State Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2003-2004   Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	94	90	93	85	79
% At Exceeds State Standards	54	41	47	33	32
Number of students tested	187	218	204	237	180
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100	100	100	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	68	47			
% At Exceeds State Standards	15	27			
Number of students tested	13	15			
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	94	92	94	85	80
% At Exceeds State Standards	59	42	49	34	32
Number of students tested	140	157	156	184	154
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
% At or Above Meets State Standard	100	100	100	100	90
% At Exceeds State Standards	53	52	64	46	64
Number of students tested	17	23	25	28	11
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	79	74	83	63	64
% At Exceeds State Standards	33	29	11	0	9
Number of students tested	24	31	18	19	11

Notes:

Subject: Reading   Grade: 6   Test: Maryland State Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2003-2004   Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
MSA	94	88	92	92	93
MSA	65	53	64	62	60
Number of students tested	187	218	204	237	180
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	100	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
MSA	69	47			
MSA	39	20			
Number of students tested	13	15			
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
MSA	97	89	95	94	94
MSA	69	55	70	65	60
Number of students tested	140	157	156	184	154
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
MSA	88	100	96	96	100
MSA	65	61	56	64	82
Number of students tested	17	23	25	28	11
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
MSA	88	77	72	68	73
MSA	63	39	39	26	46
Number of students tested	24	31	18	19	11

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 7   Test: Maryland State Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2003-2004   Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	91	86	91	85	82
% At Exceeds State Standards	34	46	38	34	31
Number of students tested	218	210	237	186	220
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	100	100	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% At or Above Meets State Standards					
% At Exceeds State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	94	89	92	90	87
% At Exceeds State Standards	35	48	40	36	34
Number of students tested	159	157	184	155	170
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
% At or Above Meets State Standard	100	90	100	83	100
% At Exceeds State Standards	50	69	58	42	53
Number of students tested	24	29	24	12	15
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	72	67	73	54	61
% At Exceeds State Standards	21	5	5	8	10
Number of students tested	29	21	22	13	31

Notes:

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: Maryland State Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2003/2004 Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	94	94	90	93	91
% At Exceeds State Standards	61	54	42	53	52
Number of students tested	217	210	237	186	220
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	100	100	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% At or Above Meets State Standards					
% At Exceeds State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	96	96	92	95	94
% At Exceeds State Standards	63	57	45	56	55
Number of students tested	158	157	184	155	170
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
% At or Above Meets State Standard	96	97	96	92	93
% At Exceeds State Standards	71	55	50	58	60
Number of students tested	24	29	24	12	15
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	83	71	73	92	81
% At Exceeds State Standards	45	33	5	31	32
Number of students tested	29	21	22	13	31

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 8   Test: Maryland State Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2003-2004   Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	91	82	83	78	73
% At Exceeds State Standards	57	49	40	42	37
Number of students tested	213	238	183	219	224
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	2	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	100	100	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% At or Above Meets State Standards					
% At Exceeds State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	93	83	86	81	73
% At Exceeds State Standards	61	51	42	44	37
Number of students tested	156	185	154	169	190
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
% At or Above Meets State Standard	94	96	92	100	94
% At Exceeds State Standards	72	67	54	67	61
Number of students tested	32	24	13	15	18
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	81	62	40	62	53
% At Exceeds State Standards	19	10	10	21	7
Number of students tested	21	21	10	29	15

Notes:

Subject: Reading   Grade: 8   Test: Maryland State Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2003-2004   Publisher: Maryland State Dept.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	97	85	89	92	90
% At Exceeds State Standards	60	39	42	47	43
Number of students tested	213	237	183	219	224
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	2	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	100	100	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
At or Above Meets State Standards					
% At Exceeds State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White (not of Hispanic orgin)					
At or Above Meets State Standards	98	88	90	95	90
% At Exceeds State Standards	63	42	43	50	44
Number of students tested	156	184	154	169	190
3. (specify subgroup): Asian/Pacific Islander					
% At or Above Meets State Standard	97	92	85	93	94
% At Exceeds State Standards	63	46	54	40	50
Number of students tested	32	24	13	15	18
4. (specify subgroup): African American					
% At or Above Meets State Standards	90	52	80	83	80
% At Exceeds State Standards	52	5	20	38	20
Number of students tested	21	21	10	29	15

Notes:

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