

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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Type of School: (Check all that apply)     Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Michael Goins

Official School Name: Ellicott Mills Middle School

School Mailing Address:  
4445 Montgomery Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21043-6007

County: Howard    State School Code Number\*: 0202

Telephone: (410) 313-2839    Fax: (410) 313-2845

Web site/URL: www.hcpss.org/emms    E-mail: mgoins@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    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: Mrs. Ellen Flynn Giles

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.*  
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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 2009-2010 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 2004.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
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: (per district designation)	39	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
	18	Middle/Junior high schools
	13	High schools
	2	K-12 schools
	<b>72</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 13320

### 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
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural

4. 9 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position 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	6	119	121	240
K			0	7	126	95	221
1			0	8	125	113	238
2			0	9			0
3			0	10			0
4			0	11			0
5			0	12			0
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							699

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:            1 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
    23 % Asian  
    13 % Black or African American  
    2 % Hispanic or Latino  
    1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
    60 % White  
             % 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: 6 %

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	22
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	20
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	42
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	709
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.059
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	5.924

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 2 %

Total number limited English proficient 11

Number of languages represented: 6

Specify languages:

Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, Hindi, Urdu

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %

Total number students who qualify: 36

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: 7 %

Total Number of Students Served: 52

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

<u>9</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>8</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>16</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>46</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>
Support staff	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>82</u>	<u>10</u>

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%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	95%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	93%	95%	94%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	2%	11%	4%	8%	10%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

In 2007-2008, EMMS experienced five Leaves of Absence by staff during the school year. The 2005-2006 and 2004-2005 school years were impacted by Maternity Leaves of Absence. Additionally, teacher attendance is impacted on a daily basis because it reflects absences due to workshops, jury duty, bereavement leave, professional development opportunities, and personal leave.

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

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

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	%
<b>Total</b>	0	%

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Ellicott Mills Middle School's guiding principle is "Partnering for Student Excellence." That partnership philosophy is the supportive framework for the school improvement model that has brought such success to Ellicott Mills students. Administrators in partnership with the School Improvement Team, Grade Level Team Leaders, and Content Team Leaders have worked diligently to implement the Classroom-Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) model. The model, which is dependent on cohesive and collaborative teaming, uses common planning times, common assessments, and evaluation of student data to improve the quality of instruction in every classroom.

Ellicott Mills has achieved success across its diverse student population. 14% of students receive special services: 2% with Limited English Proficiency; 5% receiving free or reduced lunch; 7% in Special Education programs. Ellicott Mills is a regional center for students with emotional disturbance. Also on-site is an Academic Life Skills program. A Gifted and Talented Program offers students creative enrichment opportunities such as television and film production in association with the American Film Institute, Barnes and Noble Book Club discussions, writers groups, a Debate Club sponsored by Capital Debate, and a financial literacy group sponsored by the Maryland Department of Economic's "Stock Market Game". 60% of our student body is White, 23% Asian, 13% African American, 2% Hispanic, and 2% American Indian/Pacific Islander. Total students currently number 702.

A strong Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is the cornerstone of partnership with our community. Ellicott Mills is proud to be a "National PTA School of Excellence". A parent night for Odyssey Math, a web site for individualized math tutoring and assessment, is one example of a parent outreach activity conducted this year by the Math team. Over 100 parents received training during this highly successful evening event, which invited participation in their children's success.

Other programs serving our community include our annual Toys for Tots campaign, Harvest for the Hungry drive at Thanksgiving, and the Holiday Drive at Christmas time, which assists the families of needy students.

Partnering extends outside our walls to Maryland's educational community through our Professional Development School affiliation with Towson University. Ellicott Mills teachers provide college students with authentic school experiences as they work toward state teaching certification. This collaborative effort enhances student achievement by providing veteran teachers with a forum for improving teaching and learning practices and student teachers with hands-on experience.

Ellicott Mills Middle School is deeply embedded in the history of Ellicott City, Maryland. It belongs to the Howard County Public School System, which consistently ranks as one of the top school systems in the country. The original building was constructed in 1939. A new facility was completed on the site of the old in 2001. A plaque from the old school honoring former students who died in World War II graces the entryway. Bricks from the old building support the current school sign, just as a talented staff supports our students.

Most recent school accomplishments include the Maryland School Performance Program Award for Outstanding Performance on the Maryland School Assessments, 2003-2007; the NAACP Certificate of Excellence in Reading, Math, and Attendance, 2006-2008; and the Governor's Citation: Superior Rating for School Maintenance, 2007-2008.

Two students won the 2009 Maryland History Day competition; three students won the Howard County Public School System's Math, Science, and Technology Fair; four students were winners/honorable mentions in the 2008-2009 Maryland Young Authors Contest. Our band, strings, and choral programs garner numerous awards from musical festivals each year.

Mr. Bracco was the Maryland Art Education Association's New Middle School Teacher of the Year for 2006-2007; Mr. Wood was named Distinguished Middle School Technology Education Teacher, 2006-2007; and several teachers have been Washington Post Agnes Myers Outstanding Teacher Award Nominees.

What makes Ellicott Mills a singular place is not only its awards and statistics but its supportive, safe, and nurturing culture that encourages both students and staff to reach their highest potential.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

Ellicott Mills Middle School is one of the high performing schools in the Howard County Public School System. The past five years have been successful ones with significant gains in subgroups as measured by the Maryland State Assessments (MSA). The MSA is a criterion-referenced test that assesses individual students' reading and math achievement. Results from the MSA are divided into three categories: basic, proficient, and advanced. Recognizing that all schools must report 100% of the students achieving either proficient or advanced by 2014, the Maryland State Department of Education has developed an annual measure of progress toward the goal called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). More information on the Maryland State Assessment program may be found by visiting <http://mdreportcard.org>.

In the past five years, Ellicott Mills Middle School has consistently met and exceeded AYP standards and raised the performance levels of subgroups. Most notable has been the performance of students receiving Special Education services. Five years ago, only 35% of the school's Special Education students performed at proficient or above in Mathematics. This year, 83% reached that standard. The same is true in Reading, where the percentile reaching proficient rose from 50% to 80% over five years. It is important to note that a segment of our Special Education population includes students with emotional disturbance as their handicapping condition. Since Ellicott Mills is a regional site for this program, students transfer into the school at any time during the year. Regardless of when they enroll or the severity of their disability, these students are held to the same high standards.

A cursory review of the Reading MSA data shows a steady increase in the percent of students reaching proficiency. In the year 2005, 90% of students scored proficient in Reading. In 2009, 96% of students scored proficient. The same can be said for student achievement in Math as measured by the yearly MSA. In 2005, 86% of students scored proficient on the Math MSA. In 2009, 92% scored proficient. This steady increase crosses all student subgroups as well. Students receiving free or reduced meals progressed from 50% proficiency on the Math MSA to 81% proficiency in 2009. In Reading, 55% of students receiving free or reduced meals were proficient on the MSA. In 2009, 84% scored proficient. The percentage of African American students who scored proficient in Reading in 2005 was 77%. In 2009, 82% of our African American students were proficient on the Reading MSA. In Math, 62% were proficient in 2005 and in 2009, 79% scored proficient.

Ellicott Mills Middle School has consistently ranked near the top in overall school performance for the last five years. With the development of our Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIP), achievement levels for students in all subgroups have improved. We are continuing to hone our assessment and intervention skills with the aim of having all students meet the highest standards.

### 2. Using Assessment Results:

Each summer the School Improvement Team reviews state and local testing results to create goals for the upcoming school year that are included in the yearly School Improvement Plan submitted to the Board of Education. Areas in need of improvement are identified and strategies to address those needs are developed. Appropriate professional development sessions for staff are planned.

Ellicott Mills Middle School has adopted the Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) as the primary vehicle to analyze data to improve student performance. The School Improvement Team endorsed this model as it allows teachers to focus on each student's individual progress throughout the year.

Grade level content teachers meet on a regular basis to develop common assessments that gauge student progress toward expected outcomes. Through regular collaboration and examination of formative assessment results, teachers identify student strengths and develop intervention strategies to address individual student needs. Twice a

month, grade level interdisciplinary teams meet with the school administration to review student progress from the previous two-week instructional period. This process allows the team to develop timely intervention strategies to assist students who are struggling to meet academic goals. Intervention strategies include additional small group instruction in math and/or reading during the school day, extended day intervention sessions, use of technology resources, tutorial sessions, and schedule changes.

The Instructional Intervention Team (comprised of administrators, Guidance Counselors, School Psychologist, Pupil Personnel Worker, Reading Specialist, and Special Education Team Leader) meets monthly to review student data. Strategies are developed to support students who are struggling in academic areas as well as with social interactions.

### **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

Ellicott Mills Middle School uses a variety of methods to communicate student performance and assessment results. Students and parents receive quarterly Interim Progress Reports as well as quarterly Report Cards. These reports include information about academic progress, attendance, and may contain specific comments highlighting areas of successes, or areas of improvement or need. A weekly newsletter is distributed to all students and an electronic copy is available on the school's website. Weekly email messages are sent to parents highlighting important timely information. All teachers maintain a web-based grade book allowing students and parents/guardians to monitor student progress. Most teachers maintain an additional website to post assignment information, course objectives, calendars, course notes and/or handouts. Parents and teachers regularly communicate through email and by phone contact, as needed. The International Achievement Liaison works to bridge the language and cultural gap with international students and families and school personnel by working collaboratively with administrators, staff, and the community.

The Ellicott Mills PTA sponsors an annual Take Your Parent to School Day to encourage parents to visit the school during American Education week. This activity is well attended and provides parents with an opportunity to see our programs in action.

Twice a year, dedicated time is set aside for parent conferences. Parents are also invited to request a conference at any time during the year.

Maryland School Assessment (MSA) and High School Assessment (HSA) results are mailed to parents. School MSA and HSA results are reported on the Howard County Public School System website and are published in local newspapers.

### **4. Sharing Success:**

Ellicott Mills Middle School staff members have developed workshop sessions for system-wide professional development days including content-based sessions and the annual Howard County Summer Institute for School Improvement Teams. Staff members have also served as presenters at The Council of Educational Administrative and Supervisory Organizations of Maryland (CEASOM), and the Maryland Instructional Computer Coordinators Association (MICCA) conference. Science team members are scheduled to present at the November 2010 National Science Teachers Association conference. Staff members routinely participate in curriculum and assessment writing workshops sponsored by our school system. In addition, staff members have participated in Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) workshops to review and write assessment items for the annual Maryland School Assessments. As a Professional Development School, mentors share successful strategies with student interns throughout their yearlong placement in our school. In addition, a staff member teaches the Social Studies Methods course at the University of Maryland College Park where he shares best practices used in his classroom.

Ellicott Mills has hosted members of the Central Office staff and Towson University to observe our bimonthly data conversation protocol. We will continue to explore other ways to share our success with others in our school system and beyond.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

Ellicott Mills employs the Classroom-Focused Improvement Plan (CFIP) throughout all grade levels and subject areas. The focus here is on ongoing assessment, adjustment of teaching methods to adapt to individual student needs, and collaboration between content partners at every grade level. The implementation of the co-teaching model in all core subjects has coincided with dramatic improvement in the success of special needs students.

**Language Arts:** Our program, following the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum, provides separate instruction in English and Reading. English students in each grade receive rigorous, differentiated instruction in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, and on literature and language objectives. Students maintain developmental portfolios of persuasive, expository, and narrative pieces written in response to units in literary archetypes, literary forms, and literary origins. Reading units are designed to develop skills in reading informational text, information literacy, and research skills using the Big 6® Information Literacy Model, and to create critical, thoughtful readers of both fiction and non-fiction. Each grade level explores a different “voice” in literature: Asian in sixth grade, Hispanic in seventh, and African-American in eighth. Students maintain a reading portfolio through all three grades.

**Science:** Students use inquiry and the Scientific Method to discover scientific principles. In sixth grade Earth Science, they investigate the forces that shape the planet, and learn, through studying the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the impact of pollution on the Earth and overuse of natural resources. Seventh graders look at ecology and biological organization through studying human body systems, and learn how introduction of non-native species and increased nutrients affect the Chesapeake. Eighth-graders use mathematics to investigate how forces affect matter in motion, and use chemistry to perform water and soil testing in support of our Schoolyard Habitat.

**Mathematics:** The program is based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, and the Maryland Mathematics Voluntary State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals. Using communication, problem solving, representation, reasoning, and connections, students are challenged to develop skills enabling them to apply mathematics in both testing and real-life situations, and to develop an understanding and appreciation of the significant role of mathematics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Teachers plan collaboratively to offer instruction in co-taught, on-grade-level, and above-grade-level classes. They access an online resource which provides tutorials, exemplary lesson plans, web-based manipulatives, sample assessment questions, games and videocasts to assist in lesson planning at every ability level. Additional support for struggling students is provided during daily Academic Enrichment periods and in an after-school Academic Intervention program. Advanced students receive instruction in Pre-Algebra, Algebra/Data Analysis, and Geometry. District-level staff from the Howard County Gifted and Talented Program provides small-group instruction in Algebra II, Advanced Topics in Geometry, and Statistics, Matrices, and Discrete Mathematics.

**Social Studies:** Lessons incorporate the theories of multiple intelligences and cooperative interaction. The program uses content, primary sources, and technology to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students at both the general and GT level. The spiral curriculum aligns with the Maryland Voluntary State Social Studies Curriculum. Students explore geography and world cultures in the Eastern Hemisphere in sixth grade, and in the Western Hemisphere in grade seven. In eighth grade, they study US history from the French and Indian Wars up to Reconstruction. Instruction is differentiated, culturally responsive, and academically engaging. GT students participate in an in-depth research investigation for the National History Day Competition, using primary and secondary resources to create presentations on that year's theme. Our students have succeeded consistently at the local and state levels, and some have competed in the National competition.

**World Language:** This is a two-year program offering Spanish or French instruction in seventh and eighth grades. The program develops cultural awareness, as well as proficiency in speaking, writing, reading and listening in the chosen language.

Music: Over 50% of Ellicott Mills students are involved in the performing arts. Band, Choir, and Orchestra are each offered during the school day, and the upper-level groups have consistently performed at the “superior” level at county, state, and regional assessments and festivals. Students are released on a rotating basis from academic classes to allow individual instruction. The effort by music department instructors to develop outstanding music reading, tone-production, and listening skills has resulted in a level of achievement that exceeds the county’s curricular goals.

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

(This question is for secondary schools only)

English classes are designated as general or GT (Gifted and Talented). Reading classes are designated as general or challenge (above grade level). Students with special needs are integrated into general classes co-taught by a general and a Special Education teacher. Grade-level teachers plan cooperatively to address different learning styles and abilities by creating lessons that are differentiated in content, process, and product. The aim is always to engage and challenge all students in a supportive, safe, but rigorous learning environment.

The thoughtful examination of written work forms the basis for all aspects of the English program. Literature units in each grade explore archetypes, forms, and origins through reading and responding to fiction and non-fiction prose, poetry, drama, and essays. Listening and speaking skills develop from regular classroom discussion and from formal oral presentations. Vocabulary objectives and grammar instruction are integrated into each literature unit. The 6+1 Traits of Writing® are used in all grade levels to provide a common vocabulary for peer review and teacher evaluation of written work. All students use the writing process to complete persuasive, narrative and expository writing assignments. Students maintain a writing portfolio from sixth through eighth grade.

Reading teachers at every grade level co-plan four essential units. Students are placed in co-taught, general and above-grade-level (challenge) reading classes according to a variety of criteria. These include results on state tests (MSAs), DRP (Degree of Reading Power), and teacher recommendations. Placement is reviewed regularly and adjusted according to student needs. The Reading Specialist tests any student previously identified as being below grade level, or who performs poorly on standardized tests. Reading support is provided through a variety of programs. Students with decoding difficulties participate in the SpellRead® program. The program Soar to Success® is provided to support students with comprehension problems. Small groups meet for 45 minutes, three to four times per week to enhance fluency. A web-based skills program, Study Island®, is provided during our in-school academic intervention program to students whose MSA and DRP scores are borderline. We also offer support to students through an Extended Day Reading program, which meets weekly. Each program involves ongoing monitoring to ensure that students’ needs are being met.

## **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Science curriculum and instruction at Ellicott Mills brings meaningful experiences to students, supporting the attainment of scientific skills and knowledge aligned with the Maryland State Department of Education Voluntary State Curriculum. Collaboration among science teachers and partnerships with outside organizations enhances student success across grade levels.

Ellicott Mills has a strong commitment to environmental education. Instruction meets and exceeds required essential skills, helping to build scientific literacy for all students. Environmental learning is supported by partnerships with, and programs and grants from, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), Terrapins in the Classroom, Bay Grasses in the Classes, and local “green” businesses. Sixth grade students plan, organize and host an Earth Day celebration for a neighboring elementary school, sharing what they have learned about Earth systems, sustainability, and human impact on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the focus is on interactions among living things within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. During CBF sponsored field trips, students experience hands-on learning, including planting bay grasses, as a means of restoring aquatic vegetation along Chesapeake Bay tributaries. Students at all grade levels contributed to the planning, planting and maintenance of our Schoolyard Habitat area, designed to reduce run-off to, and sedimentation in, the

Chesapeake Bay. The after-school Terrapins in the Classroom program, open to all students, is another authentic experience in applying scientific thinking and skills. Ellicott Mills is applying for the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education Green Schools Certification, to be completed in the 2010-2011 school year.

Many of our students gain invaluable experience in problem-solving and decision-making through the Gifted and Talented Science Experimental Unit. Through design and experimentation, students apply scientific process skills enhancing what they know with investigation and modifying ideas based on acquired evidence. Collaboration among science teachers in all grade levels is key to the smooth implementation of the project, which has led to extraordinary student success in the last five years, with students winning honors at county and state level Math, Science, and Technology Fairs.

#### **4. Instructional Methods:**

Ellicott Mills Middle School promotes academic excellence and instills a desire for lifelong learning in our students. We provide many special programs to challenge our diverse population of students at all ability levels. We help our teachers meet these needs with a range of professional development opportunities, such as cultural proficiency, technology, and intervention instruction. In addition teachers receive training in the analysis and application of curriculum objectives to increase higher-level thinking in students.

Gifted and Talented (GT) courses academically challenge students. In addition, we offer a course designed for students in GT content classes that focuses on advanced level research skills. GT also provides many opportunities for students to investigate areas of interest by providing an array of seminars. These programs include courses such as the Reading and Discussion (RAD) Book Club, the Debate Club, the Stock-market Group, the Writer's Guild, Filmmaking, and the Ellicott Mills Broadcast Corporation.

Additional support is provided for math, reading, and study skills. Students receive specialized instruction designed to meet their specific needs. We use several different programs to improve our students reading skills. Soar to Success® builds comprehension through reciprocal teaching and SpellRead® and Wilson® are used to develop decoding skills. Technologically, we use web-based programs such as Odyssey Math ® and Study Island® to enhance our students' basic math and reading skills. We provide tutorial and extended day programs, during which children are taught study and organizational skills, given homework support, and provided additional reading and math support.

Our school also uses information shared at biweekly data discussions to identify students that demonstrate academic and behavioral needs and monitor whole group academic progress. Our teachers use co-planning and co-teaching to differentiate instruction, provide extension activities, and reteach or modify lessons. Behaviorally, we support students via Students of the Month. Students are publicly recognized for their demonstration of positive attitude, respect for others, integrity, determination, and effort (PRIDE).

#### **5. Professional Development:**

A leadership team was developed at Ellicott Mills Middle School to help determine ways to improve state test scores after the 2006 - 2007 school year. The leadership team is comprised of Content Team Leaders, Grade Level Team Leaders, Student Services staff, and school based administration. This team has worked for the past three years to adopt and implement The Classroom-Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) model. This model is a refinement of the lesson planning process in which content and grade level teams focus on student performance data, analyze the implications for their teaching strategies, then implement the revised strategies, and frequently assess results throughout the quarter. In the CFIP model, content teachers are paired by grade level and content. Each pair works collaboratively to identify the critical objectives and share best practices and activities for the course they are teaching. The partners, using the critical objectives, develop common comprehensive assessments that will produce data on individual and collective student achievement. Once the data is collected, the partners review student achievement results and identify problem areas in which student performance did not meet anticipated proficiency levels. From this point, the partners work to develop in-class and outside-of-class

interventions and enrichments to address those areas. At the final stage in the CFIP process, partners reflect and report to grade level data teams and administration on student performance.

In order to support the CFIP initiative, we aligned our Professional Development objectives to assist with the CFIP implementation process. We use our faculty meetings to bring in outside support to assist teachers with writing effective assessments, differentiating instruction, and sharing data protocols. In an effort to help increase teacher proficiency with integrating technology into lessons to promote student achievement, we created “Tech Tuesdays” after school hours. In these sessions, teachers learn innovative ways to enhance lessons and methods to improve communication between teachers and parents. Our main focus for professional development this year, and for subsequent years, is to discover innovative ways to hold student interventions and enrichments during class time to help accelerate student achievement.

## **6. School Leadership:**

Ellicott Mills Middle School is led by Principal Michael Goins and Assistant Principal Nancy Eisenhuth. Each grade level and content area has an Instructional Team Leader (ITL). The ITLs meet weekly with the Administration Team to review procedures and upcoming events at the school. One example: prior to Parent Conference Week, the leadership group meets with Student Services to develop the procedures for inviting parents to the conferences. Areas discussed include the organization, implementation, and evaluation of the conferences. The group welcomes input from many groups at the school, including parents, in an effort to maximize participation in the conferences.

The School Improvement Team (SIT) is a group that provides direction for school initiatives. To ensure a well-rounded team, Administrators, ITLs, Content Team Leaders, Special Education and Related Arts Team Leaders, and representatives from support areas such as the Media Specialist, GT Resource Teacher, School Psychologist, and Guidance Counselors meet monthly to assess the needs of the school. Responsibilities include evaluating data, discussing improvement strategies, and generating ideas for continuously improving student achievement. The SIT also encourages faculty members who are interested in enhancing their leadership skills to participate.

While attending a two-day Howard County Summer Institute, Principal Michael Goins was inspired by the Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIP). After studying the process and recognizing its potential value for EMMS, he introduced the process to SIT at one of its summer planning meetings. The team enthusiastically agreed to explore the possibility of incorporating CFIP into the School Improvement Plan for the upcoming school year. The leadership team worked diligently to ensure that all staff members felt comfortable with the process and its implementation. Mr. Goins’ vision for CFIP was correct in that the school has begun to see outstanding student performance data that demonstrates the process is working.

Mr. Goins encourages EMMS staff, parents, and students alike to accept appropriate leadership roles at the school. For example, through his leadership, faculty members have developed outstanding professional staff development opportunities. Through a partnership with Towson University, EMMS is a Professional Development School. This program is supervised by EMMS faculty who take great pride in the development of future teachers. Well over 30% of the staff members are pursuing advanced degrees. Student leaders run our Student Council. The Council actively promotes student involvement in programs both within the school and in the broader community.

All of this points to a collaborative environment in which educational opportunities are maximized and where everyone is encouraged to take a leadership role for personal and professional growth.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2006/2006-2009

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill/Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	92	91	83	87
% Advanced	43	52	39	31	41
Number of students tested	214	220	246	169	199
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	75	57		
% Advanced	25	25	14		
Number of students tested	12	12	14		
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	94	67	71	67	69
% Advanced	18	26	17	13	44
Number of students tested	17	27	35	24	16
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	90	71	67	50	48
% Advanced	30	14	8	11	0
Number of students tested	10	14	12	18	21
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

EMMS had no students identified in categories where no data is present.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2004 - 2009

Publisher: Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	96	93	94	90	92
% Advanced	58	64	56	61	67
Number of students tested	214	218	245	168	199
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	83	79		
% Advanced	33	42	21		
Number of students tested	12	12	14		
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	74	86	83	81
% Advanced	47	41	26	50	44
Number of students tested	17	27	35	24	16
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	80	50	67	67	67
% Advanced	30	29	25	33	38
Number of students tested	10	14	12	18	21
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

EMMS had no students identified in categories where no data is present.

Subject: Mathematics  
Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2006/2006-2009

Grade: 7 Test: Maryland School Assessment  
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill/Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	91	89	85	84
% Advanced	34	45	36	40	32
Number of students tested	230	259	186	213	196
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	75	61			
% Advanced	13	22			
Number of students tested	16	18			
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	71	69	82	59	54
% Advanced	10	26	22	32	8
Number of students tested	31	35	27	22	24
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	94	54	56	40	39
% Advanced	18	0	0	5	0
Number of students tested	17	13	16	20	18
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

EMMS had no students identified in categories where no data is present.

Subject: Reading  
Edition/Publication Year: 2004 -2009

Grade: 7 Test: Maryland School Assessment  
Publisher: Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	95	96	93	91	89
% Advanced	74	64	56	54	62
Number of students tested	229	259	186	212	196
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	81	83			
% Advanced	38	39			
Number of students tested	16	18			
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	81	83	82	77	67
% Advanced	55	37	37	41	17
Number of students tested	31	35	27	22	24
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	77	69	60	56
% Advanced	47	39	31	20	17
Number of students tested	17	13	16	20	18
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

EMMS had no students identified in categories where no data is present.

Subject: Mathematics  
Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2006/2006-2009

Grade: 8 Test: Maryland School Assessment  
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill/Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	88	87	86	85
% Advanced	51	57	51	44	50
Number of students tested	267	203	245	203	187
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	79	27	39		
% Advanced	21	9	8		
Number of students tested	14	11	13		
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	61	56	62	59
% Advanced	18	33	26	12	23
Number of students tested	34	33	27	26	22
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		50	30	30	13
% Advanced		31	0	0	7
Number of students tested		16	23	20	15
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

EMMS had no students identified in categories where no data is present.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2004 - 2009

Publisher: Harcourt Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	96	90	85	88	90
% Advanced	57	57	46	51	51
Number of students tested	266	203	244	200	187
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	3			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100	100			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	71	55	75		
% Advanced	14	9	8		
Number of students tested	14	11	12		
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	77	65	76	86
% Advanced	39	38	35	32	23
Number of students tested	33	34	26	25	22
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		56	44	45	33
% Advanced		13	9	5	0
Number of students tested		16	23	20	15
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

**Notes:**

The Alternate Maryland School Assessment, or "Alt-MSA", is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with the most cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics.

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