

# Harmony Middle School

## 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan

### Loudoun County Public Schools

**Needs Assessment Summary:** In the 2017-2018 school year, here at Harmony Middle School, we are mirroring the Loudoun County Public Schools' Mission to "Empower all students to make meaningful contributions to the world." To achieve this, we have developed two fundamental goals: (1) Cultivate a safe and positive climate, and (2) Develop knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors. Through these goals, we work to prioritize positive student and teacher interactions, and aim to build a culture that celebrates student-led growth and learning. In an effort to better understand the needs of our school, we conducted a needs assessment to determine those areas to target for improvement in the 2017-2018 school year. The following is a summary of our findings.

#### SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (PERCEPTUAL DATA):

We recognize that kids cannot learn if they do not feel safe. It is for this reason, that we prioritize positive student and teacher interactions and work to build and maintain positive teacher-to-student and school-to-home relationships. The perception data we collected from staff, students, and parents supports our efforts and identifies not only our school safety and security as a strength, but also our successes with building relationships amongst students and staff. Nearly 95% of students feel safe at school and feel as though they have teachers that care for them and treat them with respect.

Consideration of the student perception data did identify "recognizing students when they are being good" as an opportunity for improvement and this year, we will work diligently to recognize staff and students for their positive behaviors. In response to this, we have made some changes to the PBIS and Advisory program to better meet these areas of concern and strengthen those areas in which we are currently successful. The perceptual data also revealed a need for improved communication and feedback between home and school regarding student academic progress. Both parents and teachers would like to increase student responsibility for their learning.

#### PROCESS DATA (TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNING AND PROJECT BASED LEARNING).

Here at Harmony, we are committed to fostering a challenging and nurturing school environment where all students become productive citizens. Together with parents and the community, teachers create a climate of success through meaningful and engaging instruction that meets individual needs and develops lifelong learners with transferable skills. Last year, we facilitated professional development on the LCPS instructional initiatives of Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT), One to the World (OttW) and Project Based Learning (PBL). These concepts embrace the importance of hands on; project based learning experiences as an instructional foundation for students to encourage engagement through choice, inquiry, relevance, and reflection.

Currently, over 90% of our staff have been trained in PBL. Through the PBL and OttW initiatives, our staff has worked diligently to increase student engagement and provide learning experiences that encourage students to use higher order thinking skills (critical thinking, collaborators, contributors, communicators, and creative thinkers) daily. Last year, each CLT worked collaboratively to implement two PBL experiences throughout the year. This year, our staff will aim to increase that to three experiences. While we were thrilled by the work done by our staff, we recognize that there are always opportunities for improvement. This year, we aim to improve our PBL practices by creating a stronger focus on our driving questions, as well as looking at how to make our public products more authentic to assist in sustaining student engagement.

We view technology as an important tool that allows our students to research and present their ideas. Technology has also been integrated into instruction at Harmony. Online skills and multimedia skills are strengths with staff and students. In 2016, Harmony earned

Common Sense Media’s “Digitally Certified School” for our effective integration of digital literacy and digital citizenship. We have been able to redefine how our students have interacted with technology and have focused on educating the students on the behavioral and social issues that stem from their digital lives. Additionally, we have experienced the challenge of having the rigor of our assessments match that of our instruction. It is for that reason we have enthusiastically embraced Performance Based Assessments (PBA) and will be working closely with 2Rev to bridge this gap and learn how to more effectively assess our PBL projects.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (ENROLLMENT, DISCIPLINE, CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM)**

Harmony Middle School, located in Hamilton VA serves nearly 1,089 students that feed from 6 different Elementary schools. We are composed of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students that come from diverse backgrounds. Majority of our students are White and they make up 80% of our population. Sixteen percent of our students are students with a disability and receive Special Education services. One percent of our student population are English language learners (ELL), and close to 10% of the students are economically disadvantaged and receive support. Overall, suspension rates and referrals are very low, and we attribute this to our PBIS program and Harmony staffs’ dedication to building positive relationships with students. While it does appear to be some discipline disproportionality within our special needs, black, and Hispanic populations, and our small subset numbers attributed to a skewed perception of the data. What absenteeism is a challenge at our school; nearly 90% of our students miss less than 10% of the school year. We recognize that our economically disadvantaged students and those students with disabilities are chronically absent at a higher frequency than other students. Our administration meets on a monthly basis to review chronic absentee students. The team meets with parents and the attendance officer as well to address multiple absences. We are working diligently this year to address family needs to combat this challenge as well as working with the LCPS’ transportation department to decrease bus duration in an effort to decrease the frequency of absences for some.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:**

Analysis of the SOL Test and Student Achievement data revealed both areas of strength and opportunities for growth. According to the testing data, overall Harmony students performed well and as a whole met annual measurable objectives in both Math and Reading. While Harmony students proved to be successful in many subgroups, some areas were identified as opportunities for improvement. Last year, we had a decrease in the achievement data in the core content areas in comparison to the previous year. Despite this decrease, we were above county averages in a number of areas. By analyzing this data, we hope to better identify those student groups in need of additional interventions and supports. In the 2017-2018 school year, we are making great efforts to support those identified groups of students through before and after school remediation, building in re-teaching and review opportunities into our instruction, and integrating instructional initiatives like Project Based Learning. With the introduction of “Achieve 3000,” the Harmony English department plans to more effectively assess and support struggling students. Additionally the Harmony Math department will utilize Aleks, and IXL as a tool to provide support and interventions for struggling math students.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>The school focuses on instructional improvements.</b>	
	1. The school leadership team will facilitate differentiated professional development.	
	Action Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration will work with CLT’s and the PBA team (2Rev) to design assessments to evaluate PBL practices.</li> <li>Faculty Meetings during the year will focus on the essential elements of the PBL experience.</li> <li>Staff will be given time during faculty meetings to work with each other and administration. Designing, planning, and reflection we feel are important components of the PBL experience.</li> </ol>
	Quarter 1 Status:	
	Quarter 2 Status:	

	Quarter 3 Status:	
	End of Year Status:	
	2. School leadership will provide ongoing explicit feedback and support to teachers on lesson planning and delivery.	
	Action Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administration will provide feedback through walkthroughs and observations focusing on key elements of PBL and PBA.</li> <li>2. PD will be given to staff on essential elements of PBL and PBA.</li> <li>3. Through CLT meetings, administration will provide supports and resources for staff to engage students in meaningful PBL experiences within the classroom</li> </ol>
	Quarter 1 Status:	
	Quarter 2 Status:	
	Quarter 3 Status:	
	End of Year Status:	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>The school focuses on the achievement of all students.</b>	
	1. The school will support students in need of intervention and enrichment using a multi-tiered system.	
	Action Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PBIS committee will review student behavior data at the conclusion of every month and will design supports for students who receive multiple referrals.</li> <li>2. Math and Reading departments will use Achieve3000 and Alecs to monitor student performance and build in supports for weaker learning targets.</li> <li>3. Students will be provided PBL experiences focusing on public product and student voice and choice.</li> </ol>
	Quarter 1 Status:	
	Quarter 2 Status:	
	Quarter 3 Status:	
	End of Year Status:	