

Harford County Public Schools

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Robert M. Tomback, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Dear School Community,

For over a decade, public schools in this country have engaged in multiple efforts to improve the quality of service they provide to students. The focus of these initiatives is to improve learning for all students – uplifting the academic achievement of all. The Maryland State Department of Education has been aggressive in its leadership in improving Maryland’s public schools. Our State Superintendent of Schools is known nationally for her leadership in public education.

Since the inception of the Maryland School Performance Program in 1990, Harford County students have performed well on all indicators. As a result of the bi-partisan Federal law, the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and the Maryland law, the *Bridge to Excellence Act*, school systems have been involved in an even more intensive school improvement era. Academic standards have been set requiring all students to meet or exceed proficient or advanced levels of performance.

Following intensive study of the state funding program for public education, the Maryland General Assembly enacted *The Bridge to Excellence Act*, which required each local school system to develop a Master Plan to address the requirements of the federal and state laws. This plan communicates those strategies that will support all students meeting or exceeding academic standards.

The *Bridge to Excellence* Master Plan for Harford County Public Schools has become a living document for improving teaching and student achievement. The underlying principles of *No Child Left Behind* are grounded in helping all students achieve academic success. HCPS updates this Master Plan annually based on performance data. Public input continues to be sought through formal and informal means and comments are welcome regarding student programs and services at any time. This feedback will be used as the plan is updated each year. (www.hcps.org).

As we have moved into a new school year, HCPS has recently completed the sixth annual update of our system’s *Bridge to Excellence* Master Plan. In this update, we continue to report our progress and to identify our challenges. This document continues to be a blueprint encapsulating the programs and strategies that will ensure continued system and school improvement.

We recognize and appreciate the commitment of our Board of Education, County Executive, and County Council in supporting a quality education program for the students of Harford County.

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Harford County Public Schools Bridge to Excellence Master Plan

Vision

Harford County is a community of learners where educating everyone takes everyone. We empower all students to contribute to a diverse, democratic, and change-oriented society. Our public schools, parents, public officials, businesses, community organizations, and citizens actively commit to educate all students to become caring, respectful, and responsible citizens.

Mission

The Mission of Harford County Public Schools is to foster a quality educational system that challenges students to develop knowledge and skills, and to inspire them to become life-long learners and good citizens.

Master Plan Goals

- 1) *Ensure a safe, positive learning environment for students and staff in our schools.*
- 2) *Accelerate student learning and eliminate the achievement gaps.*
- 3) *Ensure the effective use of all resources focusing on the areas of technology, fiscal and budgetary management, and community partnerships.*
- 4) *Understanding that all employees contribute to the learning environment, we will maintain a highly qualified workforce.*

Members of the Board of Education 2009-2010

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Robert M. Tomback, Ph.D.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
102 S. Hickory Ave.
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

Harford County Public Schools Bridge to Excellence Master Plan

Strategies to Manage the Master Plan

Development and Implementation of the Master Plan

The development of the HCPS Master Plan involved a number of stakeholders. The ideas, beliefs, perceptions, and recommendations of representatives of the various groups were collected and assimilated into the Master Plan.

HCPS personnel will continue to communicate and collaborate with the stakeholders with regard to implementation of the plan and progress towards achieving the goals set forth by the HCPS Board of Education.

The list below identifies the variety of forums utilized to gather data from and communicate with stakeholders:

- Town meetings open to all citizens
- Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils town meeting with Superintendent and Senior Staff
- Board of Education's Citizen Advisory Committees
- Harford County Business Roundtable
- Harford County Council of PTA's presentations
- Harford County Council of PTA's monthly meetings with Superintendent
- Superintendent's meetings with Harford County Education Association
- Superintendent and Board of Education's meetings with Harford Community College Board of Directors
- Superintendent's meetings with state delegates and senators
- Superintendent's monthly meetings with County Executive
- Departmental Citizen Advisory meetings
- Internet feedback

Harford County Public Schools Bridge to Excellence Master Plan

Acknowledgements

The Harford County Public School System's Bridge to Excellence Master Plan is the result of the insights and contributions of many Harford County educators and citizens, who came together to envision a strong, viable future for the school system and to identify resources needed to achieve that vision. While it is not possible to cite the names of everyone involved in the preparation of HCPS' Master Plan, special appreciation is expressed to the following individuals who contributed to the 2009 Annual Update:

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**Harford County Public Schools
Bridge to Excellence Master Plan**

Essential Vocabulary

AP	Advanced Placement
AGB	Alternative Governance Board
AS	Achievement Series – Online program for district assessment development and district assessment reporting
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress – The amount of annual progress on academic assessments and other indicators, defined by the state, which will ensure all students are “proficient” by the year 2014
BOE	Board of Education
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closing
BTE	Bridge to Excellence
CFIP	Classroom-focused Improvement Process
CILT	Central Instructional Leadership Team
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CLG	Core Learning Goals – The high school content standards that form the knowledge base for the Maryland High School Assessments
CLS	Classroom Learning System
COMAR	Code of Maryland Regulations
Content Standards	State Board-adopted standards that detail what students should know in the academic areas kindergarten through grade twelve
CSSRP	Comprehensive Secondary School Reform Program
CTE	Career and Technology Education
CWE	Cooperative Work Experience
ELL	English Language Learners
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Federal legislation, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which requires an emphasis on and funding for the objectives and action plans of this report
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages

**Harford County Public Schools
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Essential Vocabulary

ETM	Education That Is Multicultural – Information that offers insights and sensitivity to all cultures so that instruction can be better planned to embrace diversity in classrooms
Formative Assessments	Classroom assessment that assists teachers in planning the next steps for instruction of individual students
GCC	General Curriculum Committee
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HCEA	Harford County Education Association
HCPS	Harford County Public Schools
Highly Qualified Paraprofessionals	Paraprofessionals who deliver instructional services to students and who have either completed two years of study at an institution of higher education, obtained an associate’s or higher degree, or met a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate knowledge through a formal assessment
Highly Qualified Teachers	Public elementary or secondary school teachers who have full state certification or have passed a state licensing examination, are licensed to teach in the state, and have not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis
HSA	High School Assessment
IDMS	Instructional Data Management System
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IF	Instructional Facilitator—school-based position with evaluative duties
ILA	Integrated Language Arts
ILT	Instructional Leadership Team—Principal, Assistant Principal(s), Instructional Facilitator, and Teacher Mentor
Instructional Technology	Software that supports the instructional program
ISTE	International Society for Technology in Education
LEA	Local Educational Agency—the Harford County Public School System
LEP	Limited English Proficient—Program to promote the development of the English language for students who primarily speak a foreign language

**Harford County Public Schools
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Essential Vocabulary

LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
LTDB	Longitudinal Test Database
MSA	Maryland School Assessment
MSAP	Maryland Student Assistance Program
MSDE	Maryland State Department of Education
NAGC	National Association for Gifted Children
NCLB	No Child Left Behind – Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2002
OA	Office of Accountability
OECP	Office of Equity and Cultural Proficiency
PBIS	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
PD	Professional Development
PDS	Professional Development School
Performance Levels	Categories of student performance on state academic tests: Basic, Proficient, and Advanced levels
PI	Programs & Initiatives
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PS	Performance Series – Web-based assessment in reading and/or mathematics to determine student performance levels (scaled scores) and student performance growth over time
RFP	Request for Proposal
Senior Staff	Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, Director of Information and Technology, Director of Public Information, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Secondary Education, and General Counsel
SES	Socio-Economic Status – A measure of a student’s family concerning their financial ability to handle basic and other needs; measured primarily by free and reduced meal qualification

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Essential Vocabulary

SIP	School Improvement Plan
SRI	Scholastic Reading Inventory
SIT	School Improvement Team
SWD	Students With Disabilities
SIP	School Improvement Plan
Visionary Panel	An MSDE-appointed panel of state-wide leaders who considered the vision of K-12 education in Maryland for the next ten years
VSC	Voluntary State Curriculum