



Harmony Middle School
Loudoun County Public Schools
Comprehensive Needs Assessment - Executive Summary

[LCPS School Profile](#)
[Virginia School Quality Profile](#)
[LCPS Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#)

School Improvement Team:

(Your school improvement team should consist of a variety of stakeholders within your school community including parents)

Name	Position
Eric Stewart	Principal
Kristen Hepner	Assistant Principal
Eric McGrady	Assistant Principal
Jeff Jacobson	Dean
Annette Fincham	Dean
Justin Dailey	Dean
Alysia Brown	Counselor, Parent
Jai Park	Parent Liaison, Parent
Melanie Condon	English SALT
Tracy Holdridge	Math SALT
Catherine Flanagan	SPED SALT
Jennifer Jenkins	SPED SALT
Melissa Espinoza	Social Sciences SALT
Emily Eden	Science SALT
Elizabeth Kursey	Reading Specialist

Chelsey Mattingley	EL Teacher
Michael Blair	Special Education Teacher
Lisa Grapes	Special Education Teacher
Kelly McGrath	English Teacher
Polly Nagell	Special Education Teacher
Christy Pierson	School Counselor
Michelle Schwartz	ITF

Instructional Overview

Provide descriptive information related to the curriculum, instructional programs, professional learning and existing interventions utilizing a Response to Intervention approach to support the academic needs of students.

Provide explicit connections to your school's instructional overview and how it supports and aligns with GOAL 1: Empowered Students of the LCPS Strategic Plan and Goal 2.1 Offer high-quality Ongoing Growth and Development available to all staff; 2.2 Develop dedicated resources to improve Professional Collaboration across schools and the division

Secondary English and Reading:

Curriculum and Instruction: Secondary English and Reading instruction is grounded in the science of reading and utilizes evidence-based literacy practices that reflect three of the five pillars of literacy: fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, in addition to writing. Instruction across all areas of literacy is explicit and systematic and aligns with the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs). The purpose of curriculum and instruction is to develop knowledgeable readers, writers, speakers, and thinkers. **Resources:** All classrooms are provided with state-approved resources consistent with the expectations of the Virginia Literacy Act and VDOE recommendations. Resources include digital content such as No Red Ink, Newsela, and Schoology as well as authentic literature and informational texts. **Professional Learning:** Secondary teachers and reading specialists engage in continuous professional development to support the implementation of best practices for literacy instruction in classrooms and intervention settings. **Intervention and Progress Monitoring:** Each student's literacy progress is monitored through multiple data points including MAP and SOL's, as well as formative assessments. Students who have identified areas of need are provided with differentiated classroom instruction and/or evidence-based intervention. Using the LCPS decision trees as guidance, tiered supports are provided to students that align with expectations outlined in the Virginia Literacy Act.

At Harmony, reading instruction occurs not only through English/Language Arts classes, but in all classes, where students have the opportunity to engage in reading related to specific contents. Professional development for teachers includes how to incorporate reading strategies across the contents. In English/Language Arts classes, students have opportunities to practice fiction and non-fiction reading skills through small groups, book clubs, and intervention time with Lexia. Teachers provide reading instruction that is targeted and responsive to specific student needs.

Math: LCPS Math Curriculum and instruction uses a math workshop structure and focuses on student-centered learning activities that include daily number sense routines and reflection. Teachers plan small-group targeted instruction, varying the groups regularly. Instruction prioritizes hands-on, inquiry-based learning focusing on conceptual understanding using representations and models/manipulatives. Instruction also emphasizes the implementation of the Process Goals and the 5Cs through student collaboration, reasoning, communicating, making connections, and problem-solving. Students who have identified areas of need are provided with differentiated classroom instruction and/or explicitly taught, evidenced-based intervention.

At Harmony, math instruction focuses on making authentic connections to real life to help students connect with concepts. Teachers promote number sense thinking and develop lessons that allow students to collaborate on problem solving. Teachers help students reframe mistakes made in math problems into learning opportunities for the entire class. Through small group instruction and time for targeted students to work on math skills in a math lab setting, students continue to grow in their math and critical thinking skills.

Science: LCPS science programs are designed to actively engage students in the process of science and use reasoning processes that build scientific thinking. These programs teach students to know, use, and interpret scientific explanations of the natural world; to generate and evaluate scientific evidence and explanations; to understand the nature and development of scientific knowledge; and to participate productively in scientific practices and discourse.

At Harmony, science instruction is centered in experiential, project based learning, where students are given numerous opportunities to interact with scientific concepts while promoting higher order thinking. Students engage in labs and stations to have hands-on experiences testing hypotheses and seeing first hand how the scientific concepts they learn about apply to their lives.

Social Sciences & Global Studies: Social Science and Global Studies instruction in LCPS is grounded in a culturally responsive approach to the content in a way that elevates multiple perspectives. Students are empowered through authentic, inquiry-based learning experiences that promote students' development of historical thinking skills and provide opportunities to make their thinking visible. Students demonstrate their understanding, knowledge and skills through authentic performance tasks.

At Harmony, social science instruction engages students in thinking critically about the challenges and decisions made by nations, leaders, and groups of the past. Teachers design experiences that involve student voice and choice, so that students can explore material in a meaningful way. Reflection is an important part of social science instruction at Harmony, as students not only reflect on their learning, but also on the ways in which they are developing as global thinkers throughout the year.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Academic Achievement

A summary providing evidence of analysis of trends, patterns, proficiency, and growth in student academic achievement data. Provide a clear connection between outcomes and contributing factors.

Harmony has worked diligently to help our students achieve academically. This hard work has helped our students show consistent growth in the years following the pandemic. Specific to the 2024/2025 school year, students in reading and math demonstrated mastery on the end-of-year SOL test at rates of 87 and 84 percent, respectively. These numbers are ahead of the division and middle school averages and can be attributed to Harmony's focus on deeper learning, comprehensive support, and continuous professional development. Additionally, 57% of students met their MAP growth

projection in math, with 53% achieving the same result in reading. Chronic absenteeism remained below the level from 22/23 with a 24/25 rate of 14.1%.

Despite these successes, there is still a measurable achievement gap when examining students with disabilities, EL students, and students who are economically disadvantaged, Harmony intends to address these discrepancies through the goals identified in the SIP.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Student Engagement

A summary of trends, patterns, strengths and areas for growth in student engagement data, including attendance, discipline, perceptual data, and graduation data (HS only).

Harmony has a large geographic area that can make connections challenging for parents and students. Harmony continues to offer about 40 club opportunities for students to connect. In the 2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions, Harmony Middle performed equal to or better than the division, region, and state in nearly every area. We will continue to work to increase positive behaviors and educate students on how to eliminate bullying and hate speech through our advisory lessons and school counseling lessons for consistency in language across the school such as honor and respect of others, model responsibility, and show safety. We will continue to increase the numbers of students who feel safe at school. While our overall disciplinary incidents remain low, we continue through our Advisory lessons, PBIS, and bus drivers to address positive behaviors. Our Chronic Absenteeism rating was 10.84% for the 23-24 school year, down from 16.9% the previous year and remained below that level for 24/25 at 14.1%. This is a strong sign of positive change. We credit the work of our UMHT in connecting with students at risk for chronic absenteeism, holding restorative attendance circles, and making sure these students felt connected more at school.

Extended Learning and Engagement Opportunities

Provide information to describe extended learning and engagement opportunities for students, families, and community including what events you have planned or are considering hosting.

Provide explicit connections to your school's extended learning and engagement opportunities and how they support and align with GOAL 4: Engaged Community of the LCPS Strategic Plan, especially GOAL 4.1 Deepen Family Engagement by offering inclusive opportunities for conversation across the division.

Extended Learning and Family and Community Engagement Opportunities:

We continue to focus on establishing connections with students through extended opportunities for students to engage their minds and bodies through clubs. Our clubs allow us to partner with parents and the community to connect with students in meaningful and engaging ways. We strive to extend the community connection by recognizing students for their accomplishments and endeavors outside of schools in areas like athletics, community service, scouting, and more. Clubs include fishing, public speaking, Mad Science, track and field, gardening, Dungeons and Dragons and beyond. As students express a need for new clubs, the staff strives to meet the need. Harmony also engages hundreds of students through our yearly drama presentation, which was Newsies last year. Additionally, we include many opportunities for students to have their voices heard throughout the school, including a Principal's Advisory Panel, Dean's Advisory Panel, and Student Council Association.

Engaging students is an important way to make sure their voice is heard and represented in the school. This is also true for parents. Harmony welcomes parent input and over the past two years has directly contacted over 200 families to seek input and hear about their experience at the school. Music programs host public concerts a minimum of twice per

year and quarterly honor-roll/cornerstone celebrations all provide valuable opportunities for parents to interact with each other and the school while also celebrating the accomplishments and hard work of the students.

Staff professional development centers around the same voice and choice we believe engages our students. Staff are encouraged to set personalized goals for their growth and are encouraged to support those goals through choice in sessions, book clubs, CLT's and more. The master schedule is created so that staff has opportunities two to three times each week to engage with peers in planning and collaborative efforts to increase student achievement.

Climate and Culture

Provide a description of strategies that address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of those at risk of not meeting the challenging state academic standards, through activities such as counseling, social emotional learning and mental health programs, and PBIS implementation.

Make explicit connections to the LCPS Strategic Plan goals of 1.3 Prioritize Care for Students by ensuring a safe and affirming learning environment for all;

At Harmony, we work daily to promote a positive culture that staff, students, and the community can be proud of. Our staff lead about 40 clubs each year, giving students the chance to engage in opportunities and make new connections along the way. As we strive for all students to feel safe, supported, and have a strong sense of belonging, we will continue our efforts through climate initiatives and advisory activities to support all students and eliminate bullying and hate speech.. We believe that happy, supported teachers create happy, supported students.

A success has been our decreased chronic absentee rate, which remains below the 17% of 22/23 at a current rate of 14.1%. We feel that connections intentionally made with students at risk with UMHT members have supported this trend. As Harmony continues to be a place where staff want to work, and we lose only a few staff members each year to retirement, we believe that happy teachers trickle down to create happy students in the classrooms. To that end, we are working to continue successful staff and student recognition programs this year and seeking to add social, climate building opportunities for staff..

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): PBIS is a systemic approach for establishing a safe and supportive learning environment. Through the implementation of a consistent vision, language, and practices, school staff promote social, behavioral, and academic success for all students.

Successful implementation of PBIS can lead to a positive school climate, improved classroom management, increased understanding of schoolwide expectations, strengthened relationships, increased positive behaviors, academic achievement and equitable learning experiences, and decreased office referrals and suspensions. To support implementation, the PBIS team meets regularly to evaluate behavioral data, provide behavioral lessons based on identified needs, and share resources.

At Harmony, we use HMS which stands for Honor and respect others; Model responsibility; Show safety. All students are taught these expectations at the start of the year, through dean talks during the year, and reinforced as needed in Hive Time. Students are provided reinforcement through our Buzzworthy Nominations and Dean's Dozen when displaying HMS behaviors. Monthly MTSS meetings allow us time to analyze behavioral data and inform decision making regarding PBIS and SEL lessons needed in advisory classes.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL): The social-emotional learning framework provides students with explicit SEL instruction, practice and reinforcement of skills through academic integration, and a supportive environment that cultivates relationships, belonging, safety and a student-centered approach. The framework is supported by the involvement of all community members, including staff, students, families and community partners.

In our school we support and teach SEL through the Second Step curriculum during Hive Time, our advisory period.