

**Greenbelt Elementary School**

**School Improvement Plan**

**2006-2007**

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**Mission**

***The mission of Prince George's County Public Schools is to ensure that all students acquire information and skills and the ability to apply their knowledge to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in a diverse/global society.***

***This mission is best accomplished through a structure of child-centered learning communities characterized by: equity and access to a quality education that includes strong instructional leadership; high expectations for the achievement of all students; a rigorous curriculum; frequent monitoring of student performance; extending learning opportunities for students failing to meet academic standards; well trained, certified teachers in all classrooms; enhanced resources; families who are empowered to assist in providing a quality education for every child; a school climate conducive to building positive relationships; a safe and orderly school environment fostering enhanced school pride.***

**Prince George's County Public Schools**

## Section I: Executive Summary

### Introduction:

Located in the historic city of Greenbelt, Maryland with a population of 21,500 persons (2000 census), Greenbelt Elementary School is a Comprehensive K-6 School in its sixth year of providing all-day kindergarten and the fourth year of providing an off-site Pre-K program as well as an on-site Before and After School Extended Learning Program (BASELP) that has recently met the rigorous criteria to enter the national accreditation process. Greenbelt Elementary School's vision is to provide a superior education in a safe environment that will enable students to achieve academic excellence. The school opens for students at 9:00 and ends at 3:25. Our classes follow objectives and schedules in accordance with the Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) and county curriculum guidelines for Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, P.E. and Music. These minimum daily VSC guidelines mandate that an uninterrupted Reading/LA block be 135 minutes in Grades K through 2, and 105 minutes in Grades 3 through 5. The mathematics guidelines mandate that Kindergarten through Grade 2 will receive 75 minutes of math instruction, 60 minutes uninterrupted, and Grades 3 through 5 will receive 90 minutes of math instruction, 60 minutes uninterrupted. In Grades K through 5, Social Studies must be taught every other day for 45 minutes. Science must be taught every day in Grades K through 2 for 45 uninterrupted minutes, and in Grades 3 through 5 for 60 uninterrupted minutes. Grade 6 students will receive 90 minutes of uninterrupted instruction in both Reading/LA and Mathematics. Science and Social Studies must be taught in Grade 6 every other day for 90 minutes. Revised ESOL guidelines provide the following daily instructional time requirements for ESOL students: ESOL K, at least 30 minutes; ESOL 1 at least 60 minutes; ESOL 2 at least 45 minutes; and ESOL 3 at least 30 minutes if staffing permits.

Classes at Greenbelt Elementary are self-contained except 3 fifth grades and all of sixth grade, which are departmentalized. In addition to the mandated curriculum, Greenbelt Elementary offers additional programs including Chorus and Instrumental Music for students in Grades 5 and 6, **TAG IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM (TRC)**, LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP/ESOL), and READING RECOVERY, as well as being the only elementary school in the county providing **THE ACCELERATED READER PROGRAM**, and being one of a limited number of non-TAG elementary schools licensed to use the on-line FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 program with all students in Grades 3-6 and qualified Grade 2 students. Greenbelt Elementary also has two classrooms equipped for intermediate science studies, and an extensive technology program with computers in every classroom as well as 3 labs, two of which can accommodate entire classes. Our Media Center has a television studio that allows for closed circuit broadcasting of morning announcements and special programming throughout the building. We are also able to make considerable use of UNITED STREAMING in all areas of the curriculum since every classroom has an Internet accessible computer able to be projected to a television as well as DLP projectors that function with each classroom teacher's laptop computer. Our varied program undoubtedly plays a major part in Greenbelt Elementary School's meeting for the fourth consecutive year, all MSA Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives in Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics and Attendance for all students and all subgroups in Grades 3-6

The City of Greenbelt also takes an active role in supporting education in the community. The ACE Committee, affiliated with the Greenbelt City Council, has an ongoing relationship with our school, promoting reading and writing activities and incentives as well as recognition of both student and staff achievement in their annual awards ceremonies (ESEA Performance Goal 7). The City of Greenbelt offers a variety of amenities to our students and their families including a recreation center with swimming pools, a Community Arts Center, an historic movie theater, a museum that depicts Greenbelt's unique history as one of America's first planned communities, parks that include picnic areas, playground equipment, athletic fields, walking paths and a lake that allows fishing and boating, and a centrally located Prince George's County public library that assists us in promoting our Accelerated Reader program, especially during the summer months, encouraging students to read these A.R. books when school is not in session.

### School Demographics:

The present school enrollment at Greenbelt Elementary in Grades K-6 is 559 students. Approximately 92% of students reside in the community of Greenbelt, and 8% attend as "School of Choice" or other special transfers. Although Greenbelt Elementary became a neighborhood school four years ago, some 76% of students still ride a bus to school. The remaining 24% are either transported by parents or walk within the 1½-mile distance surrounding the

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school. Racial and gender demographics are as follows: 58% African-American; 12% Asian; 8% Hispanic; and 22% White (non Hispanic). Males comprise 50.3% of the student body and females, 49.7%. 60% of both males and females are African American. Females comprise 40% of the White (non-Hispanic) population, and 49% of African Americans. 6% of students are SPED, 9% are LEP/ESOL, and 10% TAG. The Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) program services 34% of the student body. At present, 3% of Greenbelt Elementary students attend the Pre-K program, and 8% participate in the Before and After School Extended Learning Program (BASELP). We are concerned that our high student mobility rate of 61.4% in 2005-2006 may continue to negatively impact future MSA test results and attendance goals.

Greenbelt Elementary has a principal and an assistant principal as well as an experienced teaching staff all of whom are fully certified (ESEA Performance Goal 3). Eight teachers are new to our school in the 2006-2007 academic year, and of these, 5 are new to the county, and one is in her first year of teaching. Twenty-four professional staff members are classroom based, and 16 are not classroom based (vocal and instrumental music, physical education, guidance, special education, reading, speech, media, LEP/ESOL, art, and reading recovery). Support staff members include positions in the main office, technology center, cafeteria, health room, playground, maintenance, Pre K, special education, and the Before and After School Extended Learning Program (BASELP). 5% of professional staff and 50% of support staff are African American, 4 staff members are Asian and the balance White (non-Hispanic).

### **Major Initiatives (and how these efforts will improve student performance):**

On the Maryland School Assessments (MSA) given in March of 2006, Greenbelt Elementary School has for the fourth year in a row again met all Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives in Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics and Attendance for all students and all subgroups in Grades 3-6. In 2003 Greenbelt Elementary was recognized as an "Effective School" and received a monetary award from the Maryland State Department of Education for academic achievement as indicated by outstanding MSA test results in 2003. We were also designated an elementary "School of Choice" for Region II at that time and have continued to serve in that capacity for designated students over much of the past four years. The 2006 MSA test results indicate that all grades tested, with the exception of Grade 3 Math, achieved levels of proficiency well above the county average in both Reading and Mathematics. In addition, the scores in Grade 6 in both subjects exceeded the Maryland State proficiency averages. Only Grade 5 showed a decline in the number of students scoring proficient in both Reading and Mathematics when comparing scores with the previous year or with the same group of students in the previous grade, but even these lower scores exceeded the county averages for Grade 5. Our SRI, CTBS, and STAR Reading and STAR Math testing data has also been consistent with these MSA scores, except for the results from the Grades 5-6 Reading Benchmarks and the Grades 3-5 Math Benchmarks that classroom teachers involved felt did NOT seem to reflect the curriculum and hence demonstrate the actual progress shown by other testing. Although all grades tested did show improvement on the Reading Benchmarks, the scores in Grades 3 and 4 showed impressive growth, as did the Grade 6 Math Benchmark results. We will continue our strategy of carefully monitoring the progress of those students new to the school in this coming year---a strategy that was highly successful in 2005-2006 in preventing a negative impact on our end-of-year testing as indicated by the 2006 MSA proficiency level data for ALL students tested regardless of enrollment date. Although most of our current SIP strategies have been successful with most of our students, we are always in the process of developing additional strategies that will help those students performing Basic on the MSA and/or Below Grade Level on other assessments---especially those scoring below the 25%-ile. To address weaknesses in Mathematics, we will continue to remediate all children by using the packets from **The Home-School Mathematics Connection** strategy (Activity 3 Mathematics Initiative) designed to practice those specific skills not yet mastered that have been identified through testing at the end of each study unit. Classroom teachers monitor and grade the return of completed activities as well as assess student skill progress and improvement (ESEA Performance Goals 1-2-7). This past school year students were also able to access Mathematics activities at home via the Internet using the UNITED STREAMING and FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 websites, and students' progress on these at-home activities was also able to be measured by classroom teachers using the FIRST IN MATH management system. We will also continue to include the highly successful school-wide **Accelerated Reader Program** (Activity 1 Reading and Language Arts Initiative) in our curriculum in all grades (K-6) and make participation and comprehension test results part of each student's reading grade. Appropriate reading

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range levels are determined for each student, computer assisted comprehension testing is ongoing in both technology centers on all books read, and progress and participation are monitored each quarter using AR and STAR Reading testing and management software with results being integrated into the quarterly data utilization process. The Accelerated Reader program encourages students to read both for pleasure and to be informed through a wide variety of library books with built-in comprehension assessment tests, and is designed to improve a student's reading skills and comprehension, vocabulary development and writing style (ESEA Performance Goals 1-2). Computer assisted instruction (CIA) will continued to be available in classrooms and our 3 computer labs for student skill development and reinforcement with a special emphasis on writing, research, and mastery of technology and math content skills (ESEA Performance Goals 1-2). Our school-wide Mathematics strategy this coming year will continue to be the **"Math Stars" Program** (Activity 2 Mathematics Initiative) emphasizing the use of various forms of computer assisted instruction and the TAP method (Time on Appropriate Practice) to enable all students to master both functional and higher level MSA Mathematics skills that are part of their grade level curriculum. Incorporating FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 has made this strategy even more effective. By using STAR Math diagnostic testing and re-testing, the "Math Stars" program can measure the skill level and progress of individual students, sub groups, classes and grade levels at any given time. STAR Math diagnostic tests will be given all new students (2-6) as a pre-test early in September to serve as a baseline along with the June scores of returning students. Re-testing of all students will be administered on a quarterly basis or as needed to monitor progress, Results will show what specific outcomes have been mastered and what objectives need to be remediated to make progress, and can be shared with parents as well as be reviewed in the quarterly data utilization process (ESEA Performance Goals 1-2-7). The on-line interactive FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 program also has a management system enabling classroom teacher's to assess student progress with activities done both at school and at home. **The "Tag in the Regular Classroom" (TRC) Program** (Activity 4 Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics and Science Initiative) will continue to be implemented with TAG and non-TAG students in classrooms where teachers have been trained in this approach. TRC activities include tiered learning, cross-grouping when appropriate, independent study, extended Media Center/ Technology Center time, and participation in the ACE Reading Club, Write-a-Book and Junior Great Books programs. In addition, the FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 program that we are using with all students in Grades 3-6 was originally provided only to TAG magnet schools because of its unique emphasis on higher-level Mathematical thinking. Knowing that the MSA will include the pilot testing of a Science component in 2007 beginning with Grade 5, Greenbelt Elementary will continue to engage all students in weekly activities implementing the county Science Curriculum Frameworks in Grades K-6. Appropriate materials will continue to be used in Grades K-5 including AIMS, Science Expository Tests and the newly revised Science PLUS Units and Assessments with the FFMY United Streaming component. Students in Grades K-5 will begin using the new Scott Foresman Science 06 curriculum. The new Harcourt Health curriculum will also be used in all grades, and the Be Active Kids program will be implemented in all P.E. classes to enhance students' knowledge of health related Science. Grade 6 will continue to use the new middle school Prentice Hall "Science Explorer Series" of texts and supplementary materials emphasizing discovery, skills and lab work. In addition, all students in Grades K-2 will participate in a scientific investigation led by their classroom teacher using the scientific method in constructing a class Science Fair project. All students in Grades 3-6 are required to complete an individual Science Fair project. United Streaming will continue to be used in all classrooms to enhance Science instruction, and those teachers in facilities dedicated to Science instruction for Grades 5 and 6 will continue to be an excellent Science resource for the entire school as we continue to implement the new school-wide Science curriculum. (Activity 4 Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics and Science Initiative) and prepare students for the new Science portion of the MSA. Staff will be in-serviced in strategies effective in all curriculum areas and with all sub groups including the use of differentiated Instruction in small groups in an Inclusion setting, centers that align with the VSC, guided instruction, independent instruction, integrating technology, teaching for learning whereas students evaluate what they've learned and reflect on their learning and assess their progress and goals, co-teaching and collaborative planning as well as fully participating in our above mentioned initiatives, that for targeted SPED and LEP/ESOL groups will include more frequent STAR testing in order to monitor progress and target weaknesses. Staff development will also include further training in the most effective use of **The Accelerated Reader Program**, United Streaming, FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24, Tiered Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI), Soar to Success, Math Enrichment for All Students, Using Grouping and

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Enrichment to Meet the Needs of All Students, Guided Independent Research, and Understanding the Scientific Process.

### Subgroups:

Although Greenbelt Elementary for the past four years has had no subgroups that did NOT meet AYP, we will continue to carefully monitor the progress of all students scoring BASIC on the MSA and/or Below Grade Level (BGL) on other assessments as well as to again focus as a specific subgroup (see Section III. B Activities for Improved Subgroup Performance) on our Special Education (SPED) and Limited English Proficient (LEP/ESOL) students. Our ESOL/LEP population is increasing due to Greenbelt being among the first group of schools to become an Elementary ESOL Center and with all in-boundary ESOL students returning this year regardless of language level. Our strategies emphasized in 2005-2006 seem to be effective as reflected in the 2006 MSA test results. The number of proficient SPED students improved from 35.7% in 2005 to 45% in Reading on the 2006 MSA, and from 42.9% to 60% in Math. The LEP/ESOL improvement on the 2006 MSA was even more impressive with 62.5% of these students scoring proficient in BOTH Reading and Math. Fewer students scored Basic on the 2006 MSA in all grades except Grade 5 in Reading, and Grades 3 and 5 in Math, and with the exception of Grade 3 Math even these increased Basic scores remained below the P.G. County Basic average. However the progress of these students scoring Basic in Grade 3 and 5 WILL be carefully monitored in the coming year as they continue on in Grades 4 and 6. We will also be focusing on the progress in all subject areas of our African-American male students with special attention paid to those in the FARM subgroup. The subgroup strategies we will continue to use include differentiated Instruction of small groups within the classroom, centers that align with the VSC, guided instruction, independent instruction, use of appropriate technology, teaching for learning whereas students evaluate what they've learned and reflect on their learning and assess their progress and goals, co-teaching and collaborative planning, and more frequent testing and evaluation than is done for other students. Staff servicing these students will meet monthly to review IEPs and evaluate student progress using running records, **Home-School Mathematics Connection** Packets, FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24 online reports, STAR testing results, Benchmarks, chapter and unit test results, and performance tasks. Furthermore, these SPED and LEP/ESOL students will fully participate in all our major initiatives that include **The Accelerated Reader program**, **"Math Stars," Tag in the Regular Classroom**, and **The Home-School Mathematics Connection**. In addition to being assigned another teacher to lower class size in Grade 5, we will be getting at least a full-time LEP/ESOL teacher, and we hope sufficient SPED staffing to enable the on-going assessment and instruction in an "inclusion setting" of all our students with special needs.

### Safe and Orderly Environment:

Greenbelt Elementary will continue to focus on ensuring a school climate supportive of teaching and learning in a safe and orderly environment. For four consecutive years we have exceeded the AYP attendance objective, but in 2005-2006 our average daily attendance increased .7% to 94.6%, an improvement reflected in ALL subgroups, and exceeding the 2006 AYP target of 93.9% as well as our 94.4% goal for 2006. This is especially remarkable given our high 61.4 student mobility rate. But regardless of this success, improving attendance will continue to be emphasized. Reasons for absences and tardiness will be requested from parents and tracked by the new MAXIMUS Student Information System (SIS) online attendance program by both the main office and classroom teachers. An attendance committee will meet monthly to evaluate progress. Interventions for unexcused absences or excessive tardiness will include the following actions: (1) The Assistant Principal will send letters to parents of students with six or more unexcused absences or excessive tardiness, requesting that the parent contact the school within 48 hours of receiving the letter. The guidance counselor will meet with parents to determine if the school can help with issues contributing to such absenteeism. In addition, our School Resource Officer, will be asked to investigate students who are identified as playing or loitering in the community during school hours. Prevention strategies will be implemented throughout the school year with parent involvement, awards and recognition as the focus. Our 7-year trend of decreasing formal suspensions continues. In 2001-2002 there were only 3 suspensions, 2 of which involved the same student---a decrease of 66% over the 2001-2002 totals of 9 suspensions. In 2003-2004 there were again only 3 formal suspensions, and in 2004-2005 only 2. In 2005-2006 there were only 5 suspensions, 2 of which involved the same student. In 2002-2003 there were 60 Disciplinary Referrals---a 48 % decrease compared to the 126 referrals given in 2001-2002. The percent of individual students receiving Disciplinary Referrals dropped from 10.8% in 2001-

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2002 to 7.5% in 2002-2003. In 2003-2004 there were only 31 Disciplinary Referrals---dropping from 7.5% in 2002-2003 to 6.5% in 2003-2004. In 2004-2005 there were 18 Disciplinary Referrals or less than 4% of all students. In 2005-2006 there were 21 Disciplinary Referrals, a slight increase, but still less than 4% of all students. We feel this ongoing progress is due to the training of all staff in the Second Step and Positive Discipline in the Classroom programs along with the use of teacher responsibility charts and the training of some fifth and sixth graders as Peer Mediation leaders. We also have school-wide morning meetings in which student and teacher concerns are discussed on a daily basis in each classroom. Our counselor co-ordinates the Honor Roll programs and runs the student council or Greenbelt Advisory Board (G.A.B.) that includes representatives from each class meeting monthly to plan school-wide activities including Hoops for Hearts, Pennies for Patients, a November food drive, and various school spirit days. She also meets regularly with small groups, has a parent connection with a monthly newsletter, communicates with parents through daily phone calls, and sets up behavior contracts with students. The School Instructional Team sets up Individual Functional Behavior Plans to implement behavioral outcomes. At the beginning of each year the principal and guidance counselor meet with each classroom to review the Code of Student Conduct as it relates to the daily lives of the school's population, and brochures of the Code of Student Conduct are distributed to each family. Every student and parent must also sign an Internet Usage Permission Form that outlines acceptable on-line behavior. All staff members are also in-serviced at the start of the school year with a complete review of the Emergency Plan (ESEA Performance Goal 4). During the school year Grades 1, 3 and 5 participate in Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), and Grade 6 in Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.), both programs led by our school resource police officer.

### **Parent Involvement:**

We will continue to seek additional ways to involve parents in the learning process of their children. The use of Friday Folders, Agenda Books, and a weekly "Greyhound Gazette" newsletter, along with the **Home-School Math Connection** program that includes student access at home via the Internet to UNITED STREAMING and FIRST IN MATH/MATH 24, continue to work well. In the 2006-2007 school year, we hope to include even more parents in our volunteer program and after school activities. We also expect that the addition this year of an ESOL Parent Liaison position will increase the involvement of parents of our LEP/ESOL students. Kindergarten Orientation, Back to School Night, Science Fair Open House and Grandparents Day specifically support parent involvement. At present we have parents helping in the cafeteria, providing tutoring, assisting in the Media Center, working with TAG students, and repairing computers as well as supporting special activities such as Art Club, ACE Reading and ACE Writers Groups, Read Across America, D.A.R.E. Essay Contests, Career Day, Science Fair, Honor Roll, musical presentations, and PTA programs. Parents are also part of SBIDM and School Improvement planning and evaluation. Parents meet at the beginning and end of each school year to discuss the School Improvement Plan and develop additional ways to differentiate instruction for students and suggest specific initiatives that they want included in the Greenbelt program. Staff discusses these initiatives and chooses whatever might be feasible to implement or continue during the new school year. Past suggestions include our award winning ACE Writers Group that meets after school with the Media Specialist and a Grade 6 Language Arts teacher, and the after school Fine Arts Club for students in Grades 3-6 that is beginning its second year. Greenbelt Elementary has an active PTA that provides additional funds for materials of instruction and student incentives that this year included the donation of \$4500 in books for the school library. PTA also supports events that include a Labor Day Festival Book Sale Booth, Safety Day & Bike Rodeo, Spring Fair, Multicultural Dinner, special assembly programs, sponsoring 2 students at summer Patrol Camp, performing landscape maintenance at school, assisting at Family Math and MSA Nights, Book Fairs, Teacher Appreciation Week events, quarterly Honor Roll assemblies, and Grade 6 end-of-year promotion activities. PTA also underwrote a "Responsive Classroom" workshop for staff and has secured a grant from Lowe's for additional sound-proofing in the cafeteria. For more than a decade a vital component of our educational program has been an extensive volunteer program coordinated by a member of the Greenbelt community that mainly involves tutoring selected students during the school day in math and reading as well as supporting media and computer activities. We also have special relationships with both Eleanor Roosevelt High School and the University of Maryland. University of Maryland students do their student teaching in our classrooms, and ERHS students assist in classrooms as interns in a Child Growth and Development/Parenthood Education 2 Training Program. It is not unusual for some of these students to be former Greenbelt Elementary students and/or family members of students currently attending our school.