



Amherst County Public Schools
Comprehensive School Improvement Plan For:

School Name: AMHERST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Address: 156 DAVIS ST. AMHERST, VA. 24521

Phone Number: 434-946-9704

Webpage or Email Contact: <http://aes.amherst.k12.va.us/>

School Year: 2021-2022

The following individuals assisted in creating this plan:

**List the names and titles of each stakeholder who participated in developing this plan.*

Individual	Title
Jennifer H. Crews	Principal
Amanda Cassise	Administrative Team- Virtual Lead Specialist (AES)
Stephanie Eckenrode	School Counselor
Amherst Elementary Leadership Team	K-5 Leadership Team Members
Amherst Elementary Reading Specialists Team Members	K-5 Leadership Team Members
Special Education Leadership Team Members	Special Education Teachers



"You will go **FAR** when you are **FOCUSED, ACCOUNTABLE, AND RESPECTFUL.**"

School Profile/Demographic Information

Status for Most Recent School Year		Student Population Percentages			
Total Enrollment	235	Poverty	108	Other	26
Attendance Rate	88%	White	152	Special Education	38 IEP 8 504
Graduation Rate	N/A	Black	37	English Learners	7
Accreditation Status	Fully Accredited.	Hispanic	18	Gifted	10
Title I Model <small>Schoolwide Program (SWP) Targeted Assistance (TA) Not Applicable (N/A)</small>	SWP	Asian	2		

Faculty & Staff						
		Years of Experience by Content / Grade Level				
Grade Level/Content	Number of Teachers	0-3 Years	4-7 Years	8-15 Years	>16 Years	New To School (for most recent SY)
PreK	1				1	
Kindergarten	2				2	
1 st	3	1			2	
2 nd	3	1			2	
3 rd	3				3	
4 th	2			1	1	

5 th	2				2	
Special Education	3		1	1	1	
Resource (art, music, library, PE, remediation)	5	1			4	1
Reading Specialists	2				2	1
School Counselors	1				1	
Total:	27	3	1	2	21	2

Executive Summary

Division Demographic and Curriculum Overview

Amherst Elementary School is a fully accredited primary school that is located in the town of Amherst, Virginia. Amherst Elementary continues to show an extremely low turnover rate with faculty/staff as shown through consistency within its instructional staff and administration. We have two new teachers to our school for the 2021–2022 school year, and two teachers in the 0–3 year experience range this school year. The principal is in year three at Amherst Elementary, but has previous administrative and teaching experience in the division for the last ten years as well as additional teaching experience in Virginia school districts prior to Amherst County Public Schools. We have additional Administrative and Instructional Coaching positions that are housed in the building in order to provide additional support that will enhance student learning and address learning loss gaps for the 2021–2022 school year. Over 93% of the teachers in the building have four or more years of experience, and 89% have 16+ years of experience.

Amherst Elementary has been fully accredited for the last ten years with the exception of the 2013–2014 school year. During this year, Amherst Elementary was Accredited with Warning in math (65%). The 2018–2019 school year showed a great improvement in the math area with a 94% overall rate.

The number of student involvement has shown improvement since the 2019–2020 school year as we have increased the number of students in the gifted program grades 3–5 and we have over 10% of our students participating in the enrichment program within TAG.

Amherst Elementary continues to implement small group instruction opportunities, remediation, and additional support to students especially targeting the areas of Reading and Math to enhance student learning opportunities and address learning loss gaps due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Extended Learning Opportunities – Before, During & After School (Component 3)

- *Students in grades K-5 have the opportunity to receive additional support in reading and math during our before school remediation program.*
 - *Students have the opportunity to access online programs, e.g. IXL and Extra Math, outside of school hours to focus on standards of learning skills and fact fluency.*
 - *Students have the opportunity to access online reading programs outside of school hours.*
 - *For the 2021-2022 school year, students in grades K-5 will have the opportunity to participate in additional small group/remediation activities during both school and after-school hours with support staff.*
 - *For the 2021-2022 school year, students in grades K-5 will have the opportunity to work with specialized Reading staff on and below grade level to enhance skills in reading and develop confidence in the area of Reading.*
- Small-group instructional opportunities for Math and Reading will be offered before and after school for remediation purposes for identified students.*

Needs Assessment Process (Component 1)

Domain: Math

- *During the 2018–2019 school year, the overall SOL pass rate increased from 77.9% to 94.9% (+ 17%).*
- *During the 2018–2019 school year, SOL pass rate for the Black subgroup increased from 53.8% to 86.2% (+32.4%).*
- *During the 2018–2019 school year, SOL pass rate for the SWD subgroup increased from 63.6% to 78.9% (+15.3%).*
- *Data shows that Amherst Elementary has consistently performed on average 10 points or higher than the division on assessments.*
- *Data shows that Amherst Elementary has consistently maintained or increased scores for the 2018–2019 school year.*

Domain: Reading

- *During the 2018–2019 school year, the overall SOL pass rate increased from 85% to 88.3% (+3.3%)*
- *During the 2018–2019 school year, the overall SOL pass rate for the Black subgroup increased from 74% to 77.4% (+3.4%)*
- *During the 2018–2019 school year, SOL pass rate for the SWD subgroup increased from 68.4% to 73.6% (+5.2%)*

- For the past several years, data shows that Amherst Elementary School has scored higher than the division in grades 3–5 on Assessments.

Domain : Safe and Orderly Environment

- Overall the results from the school surveys continue to indicate that all stakeholders overall (parents, students, and staff) perceive the school as a safe and supportive learning environment.
- During the 2021-2022 fall parent-teacher conference, we had 135 parents participate in virtual conferences that met with teachers in regards to students' academic and behavior performance.
- Omitting the attendance from the last two school years, the previous four year average of absences per student have remained consistently low.
- Amherst Elementary School maintains an attendance incentive program for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Amherst Elementary also has a behavior program that we utilize through the VTSS team for students during the 2021-2022 school year.

Domain : Family and Community Engagement.

- Sign-up sheets and information shared to encourage participation in parent committees.
- Participation has shown a slight increase with new members to the PTO/ VTSS parent committees.
- Communication strategies through outlets that are more conducive to the parents/guardians such as social media, etc. to improve communication between the school and community.
- Improved communication regarding strategies to enhance the Parent Resource Center knowledge and utilization provided by parents on the Title I parent committee.

Needs Assessment Findings – Areas of Strength (Component 1 & 4)

Domain: Math

- ***Data from previous SOL's (Spring 2021), MAPS (2020 & 2021), and growth assessments (Fall 2021) indicate that all students are in need of supports with that being a primary focus for AES*.**
- During the 2018-2019 school year, the cumulative three year SOL pass rate for the Black subgroup is at level two at 66.2%.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, the cumulative three year SOL pass rate for Students with Disabilities subgroup is at a level two at 68.7%.
- During the 2021 Fall Growth Assessments for Grades 3-5, data supports areas of weakness in several areas.

Domain: Reading

- ***Data from previous SOL's, MAPS, PALS, and growth assessments indicate that all students are in need of supports with that being a primary focus for AES*.**
- During the 2018-2019 school year, the SOL pass rate for Students with Disabilities subgroup is at a level two at 73.6%.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, the cumulative three year SOL pass rate for Students with Disabilities subgroup is at a level two at 70.9%.

- During the 2018–2019 school year, the cumulative three year SOL pass rates for the Black subgroup is at level two at 73%.
- During the Fall of 2021 PAL’s testing , Amherst Elementary currently has 68 students active in Title I with approximately 1 more students that are under monitor.

Domain: Safe and Orderly Environment

- The number of attendance review meetings continues to increase. In analyzing this information due to new state requirements regarding attendance guidelines and regulations for accreditation.
- The overall attendance concerns for the 2021–2022 school year rate have increased from previous years.
- The attendance team will reach out to parents/guardians with a phone call for students who are absent two or more consecutive days to ensure improved communication in regards to attendance.
- For the 2021 school year we have doubled our previous years of students considered chronically absent by the state criteria. The attendance team has identified the students that were considered chronically absent last year and remain at AES to monitor attendance throughout the school year.




Domain : Family and Community Engagement

- Sign-in sheets collected to determine needs for students and parents.
- More participation in PTO/ VTSS meetings is needed.
- Improved communication strategies through outlets that are more conducive to the parents/guardians such as social media, etc.
- More family events offered during the school year.


Needs Assessment Findings – Areas of Improvement (Component 1, 2, and 4)

School Quality Indicators

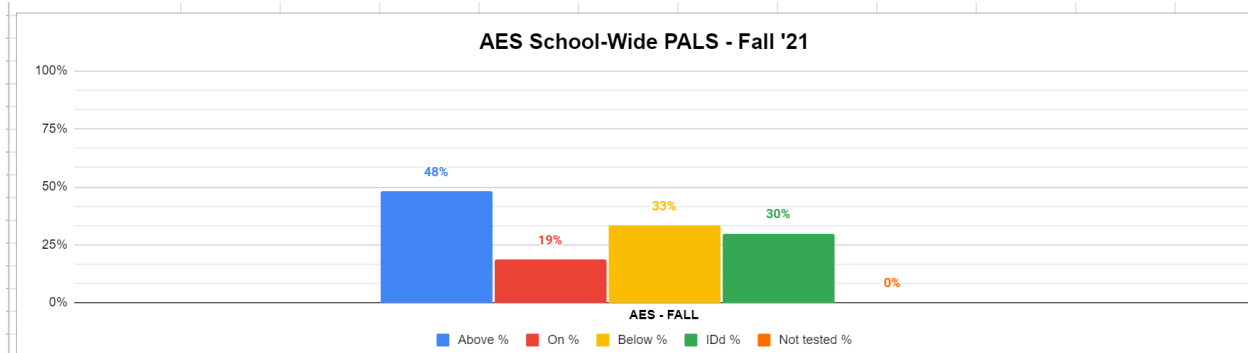
Last available information is from the 2019-2020 Accreditation Ratings based on data from the 2018-2019 school year.

Academic Achievement	
English	Level One 
Mathematics	Level One 
Science	Level One 

Achievement Gaps	
English	Level One 
Mathematics	Level One 

Student engagement & Outcomes	
Chronic Absenteeism	Level One 

Accredited: All indicators at Level One or Level Two or Waiver
 Accredited With Conditions: One or more indicators at Level Three
 Accreditation Denied: Under State Sanction



*The school-wide Fall PAL's data for the Fall of 2021 indicates significant concerns for the number of students that are identified as well as on/ below grade level. Data supports the need for instructional changes and skill specific identification with students in the area of Reading to increase student achievement. *

AMHERST					
Grade	Percentage ID - Fall 2017	Percentage ID - Fall 2018	Percentage ID - Fall 2019	Percentage ID - Fall 2020	Percentage ID - Fall 2021
K	16%	13%	2%	25%	16%
1	3%	8%	15%	35%	35%
2	19%	21%	17%	24%	55%
3	13%	16%	18%	27%	37%
4	13%	3%	4%	13%	8%
5	31%	25%	15%	13%	19%
TOTAL	17%	15%	12%	23%	30%

The Fall PAL's Identification Trend Data above indicates significant deficits in first, second, and third grade students as indicated through the number of students that ID'd. Students in grades one and two are participating in phonemic awareness and have an opportunity to participate in skill specific activities such as remediation with instructional staff to support learning loss gaps from the COVID-19 Pandemic Reading specialists collaborate with staff to enhance skills in primary areas of deficits such as word recognition for students based on the Fall PAL's data*

Math

Based on current Growth Assessment data, previous SOL data, MAP's data, VKRP, and assessments, Amherst Elementary will continue to focus on specific skill development with students based on assessment data and fact fluency(number recognition, number sense, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) to close achievement gaps and enhance learning opportunities for all students.

Attendance/Behavior

There was a decrease in negative behaviors and attendance during the 2020-2021 school year with less students and less days in the building. During the 2021-2022 school year, we have noted an increase in negative behaviors and

attendance concerns with an increased student population participating in face-to-face attendance, reacclimation to the school environment, and reestablishment of face-to-face instruction/interactions from 4 days a week back to 5 days a week. It is our goal to address these behaviors through establishing our VTSS system as a school-wide initiative throughout the school year.

Schoolwide Reform Strategies (Component 2, 3, and 4)

During the 2021-2022 school year, **Amherst Elementary School's Teaching for Learning areas** of focus are in the subject areas of **Reading and Mathematics**.

To facilitate improving student achievement in math, the following approaches are being implemented:

- Instructional time for math has been increased for all grade levels.
- Remediation Opportunities during the school day have been increased with specified staff to address skill/content area concerns for students.
- Teachers in grades K-5 are being trained in guided math to effectively integrate small group instruction during math blocks with instructional support staff and resources
- Students in grades K-1 are engaged in math centers/rotations. One rotation may be with the teacher where clarification/review, based on need, may occur. Other rotations may include independent practice and activity. The activity rotation often includes partner or collaborative group work.
- Students are participating in concrete-pictorial-abstract practice. Students are engaged as they physically manipulate objects to anchor their understanding; draw pictures to represent their thinking; and complete "paper-pencil" math with an understanding of the concept.
- Students are engaged in higher level thinking. Students solve problems with multiple steps; with more than one answer; and that requires interpretation of graphs or charts. As early as Kindergarten, students create their own products such as a pattern of their choice using manipulatives or create their own word problems.
- Instructional technology (**i.e. one-to-one chromebooks**) is used to enhance student learning. As appropriate, students actively participate in YouTube videos that combine a targeted math concept with movement. Students interact with math websites that support targeted standards of learning. Online programs, such as IXL and Extra Math, are used to focus on fact fluency and/or targeted standards of learning skills based on individual needs. In addition to school accessibility, students have the opportunity to access these programs outside of school.
- Based on 2019 SOL data (**pre-pandemic**), 94.9% of students passed the Math Standards of Learning assessment. However, the data indicates a need for additional targets in all subgroups with strategies that lessen the achievement gap and increase overall scores due to learning loss and achievement gaps.

To facilitate improving student achievement in reading, the following approaches are being implemented:

- Updated English Curriculum Maps are driving our language arts instruction.
- Implementation of Literacy Plans
- Reading Chart Data Collection

- Resources included in the ACPS English folder are being used to assist teachers as they plan and deliver content.
 - Teachers are provided professional development opportunities to learn new strategies for reading instruction.
 - Students are engaged in creating and maintaining Thinking Maps to increase the level of thinking, students respond to the following questions when completing the frames of reference for their Thinking Maps: “Where did you get the information in your map? What is influencing the information in your map? What conclusions can you draw from your map?”
 - Teachers implement Laura Robb strategies which include using a grade level anchor text (instructional read-aloud) to model strategies; building vocabulary before reading text or read-aloud; and connecting reading and writing.
 - Teachers differentiate by readiness for small group instruction.
 - Students in upper grade levels are engaged in StoryWorks which is a Scholastic literary magazine that includes fiction and nonfiction paired readings, poetry, etc.
 - Instructional technology is used to enhance student learning. Special education students in grades 1-2 have access to the Explode the Code reading program; special education students in grades 4-5 have access to the Reading Plus program; Title I reading students in grade 5 have access to the Reading Plus program; special education students in grades 2-5 have access to the Really Great Reading program.
 - Heggerty’s Phonemic Awareness Strategies K-2
 - The Really Great Reading Program to address reader’s that are below grade level in small groups and 1:1 settings within the classroom.
 - Based on the spring 2019 SOL data (**pre-pandemic**),88.3% of students passed the Reading Standards of Learning assessment. However, the data indicates a need for additional targets in all subgroups with strategies that lessen the learning loss and achievement gaps and increase overall scores based on the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Grade level teams meet collaboratively each week during professional learning communities (PLC). During these meetings, teachers review and analyze data from formative and/or summative assessments to create lesson plans, determine and discuss needs remediation, intervention and enrichment. Teachers share instructional strategies they have found effective and implement those plans to discuss. Teachers are provided additional resources and opportunities to work with Content Specialists for additional support and instructional strategies each week.

During the 2021-2022 school year, Amherst Elementary’s School Environment focus is Safe and Orderly School Environment with an emphasis on attendance. To improve attendance and instructional opportunities, Amherst Elementary School will:

- Continue to inform parents and students of attendance procedures and strategies to help with attendance when students are absent consecutive days.
 - Update and implement an Attendance Incentive/Acknowledgment Program which includes recognizing students for improved attendance; providing interclass competition by recognizing classes with most improved attendance; and recognizing students with good attendance.
 - Provide guidance and feedback to parents and families regarding synchronous learning opportunities when students are quarantined.
- Work with families regarding documentation such as doctor’s notes and parental notes.

- Improve notification process for increased communication between parents and staff regarding attendance including but not limited to phone calls, emails, etc.

During the 2021-2022 school year, one of Amherst Elementary's School Environment focus is Family and Community Engagement. To improve family and community engagement , Amherst Elementary School will:

- Continue to provide opportunities for parents to engage in student learning including Back-to-School Night, virtual conferences, Love a Good Book Night, Game Night, VTSS parent meetings, and PTO meetings, etc.
- VTSS parent meeting participation through virtual platforms .
- Various opportunities are provided for parents to engage in student learning.
- Newsletters and Social Media outreach has increased for the 2021-2022 school year to involve and communicate with all stakeholders within the community.
- Parental involvement with the VTSS parent group for behavior acknowledgement opportunities.

Budget Implications (Title I Parental Involvement)

As a part of our budget, Amherst Elementary provides two highly-qualified Reading Specialists and access to a Math Support Specialist. Amherst Elementary will host a *Love A Good Book* event in February 2022. Each student at AES will be provided with a book and activities to complete with a parent and showcase within the school and/or classroom. This event was completed last year through a virtual format with great success and parental involvement/participation with students. Amherst Elementary also utilizes the Parent Resource Center as monitored through our Reading Specialists. This resource center provides students with additional opportunities to progress in the area of Reading through materials at home. This opportunity also allows parents the opportunity to utilize resources with students at home to encourage improvement and additional practice in the areas of reading. Through communication and parental feedback, it is the goal of Amherst Elementary to increase usage of these resources to enhance parental involvement opportunities. Parental involvement funds will be used to supply materials such as books during the February event and to support any additional literacy events/ materials to enhance parental involvement and understanding for learning and development.

Goals and Action Steps

To gain clarity or further understanding of the goals and action steps referenced in this document for Amherst Elementary school specifically, please contact Ms. Jennifer Crews, School Principal via phone or email.