

Education

Overview

One of the most important services that the City of Manassas Park provides its citizens is an educational system that meets the highest standards of learning. Manassas Park City Schools (MPCS) enrolls approximately 2400 students in grades PreK-12. Enrollment will grow to approximately 2,650 by the year 2010. The school system for the year 2003-04 is composed of two elementary schools (PreK-3—Cougar Elementary School and 4-5—Manassas Park Elementary School), one middle school (6-8—Manassas Park Middle School), and one high school (9-12—Manassas Park High School).

MPCS employs an “all-city concept” which features all of the City’s children in a particular grade attending the same school.



Figure 9.1 Students in Computer Class

MPCS have achieved a remarkable record during the last ten years of significantly increasing performance in every measure of student achievement. Today student achievement scores compare very favorably to other very successful Virginia school divisions and each of our four schools is fully

accredited by the Virginia Department of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and each school has achieved Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Federal Legislation (NCLB).

The school division has developed outstanding programs and initiatives in the following areas: vision and planning, student achievement, curriculum/instruction, staff development, technology, school design and construction, fiscal management and school-community relations

History of Manassas Park City Schools

Manassas Park received city status in 1975 and began its own school system in the Fall of 1976. Two new elementary schools, Independence Elementary School and Conner Elementary School and one secondary school, Manassas Park High School, were completed in ninety days during the Summer of 1976. All three buildings were constructed of wooden modular trailers with a maximum life span of twenty years. City Council also purchased Manassas Park Elementary School from Prince William County in September of 1976. It was built in 1958 with an addition added in 1960 and located on 12 acres

Schools opened in September 1976, with Independence Elementary School, Conner Elementary School and Manassas Park Elementary School serving students in grades K-6. Students in grades 7-12 attended

Manassas Park High School. Approximately 2,100 students were enrolled in September 1976.

In September 1977, the seventh graders were placed in the three elementary schools and remained there until 1981. In 1981 the seventh and eighth graders were consolidated to form an intermediate school in one wing of the high school.

During the 70's and 80's, Manassas Park High School and Manassas Park Intermediate School had no cafeteria; food was prepared at Conner Elementary School and served in the gymnasium of the high school/intermediate school. The vocational facilities were added to the High School and Intermediate School in 1977 and expanded in 1981. The vocational wing contained facilities and programs in carpentry, cosmetology, home economics, auto repair and business education. Both high school students and intermediate school students shared the library and gymnasium.

In 1990 a cafeteria/multipurpose room and two music rooms were added to the facilities. From 1976 to 1993 school enrollment declined to under 1,300 students. Due to the loss of enrollment, Independence Elementary School was closed in 1981 and reopened in 1984 with one wing serving Kindergarten/Pre-school students and the other as the offices for the School Division/Social Services/Parks and Recreation. In 1985-86 the School Division implemented the all city concept by having Independence Elementary School serve Preschool and Kindergarten, Manassas Park Elementary School serve grades 1-3,

Conner Elementary School serve grades 4-6, Manassas Park Intermediate serve grades 7-8, and Manassas Park High School serve grades 9-12.

As MPCCS entered the 1993-94 school years, several conclusions were evident. First, the City did not previously have the fiscal resource base to appropriately provide for a successful school division. During the previous seventeen years, the lack of resources contributed to below average student achievement, high staff turnover, inadequate school facilities and inadequate instructional materials. The culture and climate of the school division was one of pessimism and defeat.

Most educators saw and used Manassas Park City Schools as a place to gain some valuable experience and advanced their careers elsewhere. To compound matters further, the wooden modular school buildings were deteriorating and with the annexation of the Blooms Crossing area, enrollment could begin to rapidly rise. Interestingly, the successful development of Blooms Crossing depended heavily upon the significant improvement of the School Division. Initial attempts to secure developers for Blooms Crossing were unsuccessful primarily because potential developers were concerned about the relationship of perceived weak schools and residential home sales. Progress toward improving the schools occurred during the mid-90's through the leadership of educators, School Board members and several Governing Body members.

Approval and funding for the new Manassas Park High School in 1997 was the salient issue. With this positive

development came a gradual increase in general fiscal support for MPCs. With construction started on a world-class high school facility, gradually improving funding for schools, and improving performance on many measures of student achievement the development of Blooms Crossing accelerated.

Manassas Park had taken the first bold steps toward improving the quality of children’s education in the public school, as well as providing a partial solution to dealing with the problems of school funding, a rapidly rising enrollment resulting in a critical shortage of capacity, and the critical need to replace the deteriorating wooden school building and renovate or replace the remaining school facilities. The importance of adequate school funding cannot be overstated. It has a direct relationship on the quality of teachers and principals, curriculum and instructional materials, instructional delivery and the level of student achievement. Inadequate funding had hindered the school system during its first 21 years, and would remain a challenge to gradually overcome for the next ten years.

From 1997 to 2006 every major indicator of student achievement showed a dramatic improvement. Gradually the school division developed outstanding programs in vision and planning, curriculum/instruction, staff development, technology, school design and construction, fiscal management and school community relations. Most importantly, the School Division radically reduced staff turnover and recruited and retained the finest educators.

July 1999 was the ground breaking for the new Cougar Elementary School. With leadership from the School Board and strong support from the Governing Body, the second major piece of facility replacement was designed, constructed and opened in January 2001. With the opening of Cougar, Conner Elementary School and Independence Elementary School were closed and Manassas Park Elementary School received a modest renovation and became the home for grades 4-5 in September 2001. Grade 6, formerly housed at Conner Elementary School, moved to Manassas Park Middle School in April 1999, after grades 9-12 moved next door to their new building.

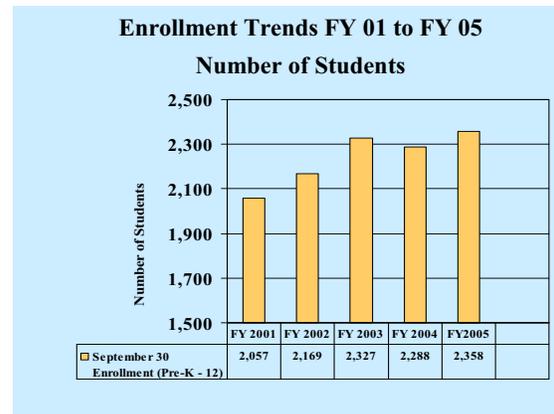


Table 9.1 Enrollment Trends FY01 to FY05

By September 2002, enrollment had increased by 85% since 1992 and by 2006 enrollment had risen to over 2,370 PreK-Grade 12. Along with changes in enrollment came a tremendous increase in diversity. For example, from 1998 to 2006 the Hispanic population increased from 12% to 30%; Limited English Proficient Students from 4% to 21%; and Free and Reduced Eligible Lunch students from 29% to 35%. Standards of Learning Scores revealed that three of the city’s schools were fully accredited

by the Virginia Department of Education. By September 2003, all schools were fully accredited by Virginia Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and enrollment reached 2300 students.

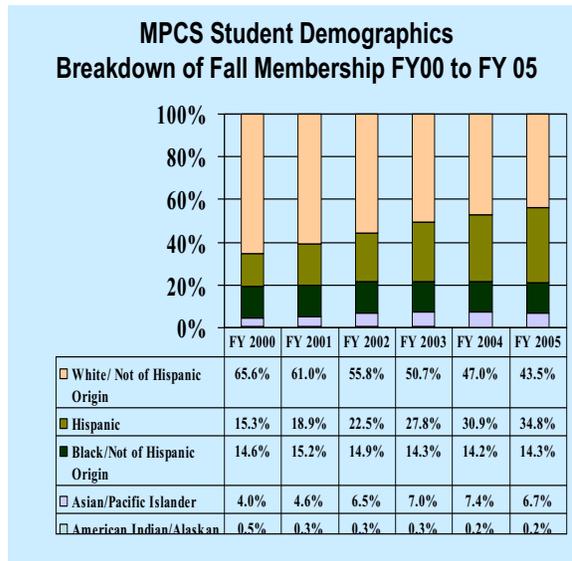


Table 9.2 MPCS Student Demographics

Understandably, the increasing diversity in Manassas Park City Schools is a direct reflection of the changing demographics of our city. It is noteworthy that Manassas Park is a city composed of a high percentage of children and most of these are enrolled in Manassas Park City Schools.

When examining students as a percentage of population, MPCS has the highest percentage (18.2%) as compared to the eight other school divisions in Northern Virginia. During 2003-2004 Manassas Park High School was expanded by 41,000 sq. ft. and two playing fields were added. This improvement increases the capacity of the high school from 650 to 1,025 students.

Through 2007, the most recent facility improvements involve the construction of a new Manassas Park Middle School (March 2005 through October 2006.) This project involves 100,000 sq. ft. of new construction, 46,000 sq. ft. of renovation and the removal of the 100, and 200 wings and the former gymnasium, library and office complex. Significant site work improvements including an additional playing field are also included in this project. These improvements will increase the capacity of Manassas Park Middle School to 725 students. The final components of facility improvement for Manassas Park City Schools involve the replacement of our fourth and fifth grade school; Manassas Park Elementary School and the construction of a pre-school facility. Work on the education program for the Manassas Park Elementary School replacement is now complete with design work scheduled to be undertaken during 2006-2007.

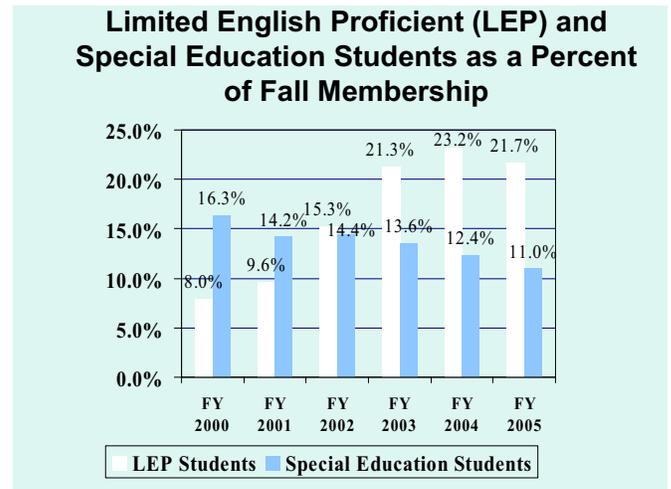


Table 9.3 Limited English Proficient and Special Education Students

Staff members, parents, students and other city residents express great pride in the progress of Manassas Park City Schools. Significantly increasing

student achievement and earning fully accredited status for all four schools provides an excellent beginning for the early years of the new century. With enhanced fiscal resources through the Revenue Sharing Agreement, a solid foundation has been established for delivering exemplary programs, facilities, and student achievement for many years to come!

The school division has developed outstanding programs and initiatives in the following areas: vision and planning, student achievement, curriculum/instruction, staff development, technology, school design and construction, fiscal management and school-community relations.

Standards of Learning Scores and Accreditations Ratings

Standards of Learning Scores show that all Manassas Park City Schools are fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education.

SOL Test Scores and State Accreditation for 2004-2005						
School	Grades	English	Math	History	Science	Accreditation
Cougar	Pk-3	89	96	92	94	Fully Accredited
MPES	4-5	93	93	86	81	Fully Accredited
MPMS	6-8	82	97	80	86	Fully Accredited
MPHS	9-12	97	94	83	98	Fully Accredited

Table 9.4 SOL Test Scores and State Accreditation

Mission and Vision

- **Manassas Park City Schools’ vision is** to foster a learning community inspiring competence, confidence, and commitment.

- **Manassas Park City Schools’ mission is** to motivate parents, community and staff to inspire students.
- **Manassas Park City Schools believes that....**
 All things are possible.
 All children will learn.
 People make the difference.
 Empowered people make good decisions.
 Leadership embodies a mix of personal humility and professional will.
 Data drives decisions.
 Professional development is the cornerstone of our success.
- **Manassas Park City Schools’ values center on.....**

People – We are dedicated to providing personalized attention to individual and group strengths and needs, honoring fairness, dignity, and respect. Personalization allows us to understand and attend to each individual’s potential. Sensitivity is vital when differentiating communication appropriate to individuals and groups. Inclusiveness mandates that everyone is given a fair chance.

Commitment – We persistently and passionately pursue our vision. Persistence – stay the course. Passion – apply yourself with energy and enthusiasm. Promise – dedicate yourself to the Manassas Park City Schools vision.

Community – We work together as a family in the best interest of

Manassas Park. Collegiality – problems are not insurmountable when we work collaboratively to solve them. Cooperation – we all ~ parents, teachers, students, leaders, and governing entities ~ have a stake.

Quality – We meet challenges with creative and innovative solutions; if we do it, we do it right. Competence – we have the most qualified and capable staff, state-of-the-art learning facilities and great student outcomes. Innovation – we find creative solutions to challenging problems.

Clarity – We know where we are going; and we know where we have been.

The Professional Staff

Every organization’s productivity is directly dependent upon the quality of the adults that work in the organization. During the last six years Manassas Park City Schools has been successful in attracting, hiring, and retaining outstanding educators. Improved salary schedules for professional staff and world class school facilities at

Cougar Elementary School, Manassas Park Middle, and Manassas Park High School and coupled with plans to improve the Manassas Park Elementary School were key to this success.

Through these efforts, the school division has seen significant improvement in all areas of the school division with student performance having the most dramatic success. Student performance on the Standards

of Learning tests scores has significantly increased, thus resulting in all schools being fully accredited by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Of the 361 total staff members in the school division, 210 are professionally certified, and fifty-four percent of the certified staff have a master’s degree or higher. The breakdown by category is as follows:

- Doctoral Degrees: 2%
- Master’s Degree: 37%
- 2nd Advanced Degree: 2%
- Bachelor’s Degree plus 15 hours: 11%
- Master’s Degree plus 15 hours: 13%
- Bachelor’s Degree: 35%

School Construction – A New Era

Manassas Park embarked on a school construction program opening a new high school building in February 1999, a new elementary school for 900 students in January 2001, a 41,000 square foot addition to Manassas Park High School in April 2004 and a new Manassas Park Middle School in October 2006. By the close of 2005, Manassas Park High School had received seven awards for architectural excellence and Cougar Elementary School had received four awards. These projects were completed on-time, within budget, but at a square foot cost significantly below any school construction in Northern Virginia and significantly below most all school construction throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. For example, Cougar Elementary School was the second least expensive

elementary school project of fourteen elementary schools placed under contract during the fiscal year 2000. Virginia Department of Education’s statewide average for elementary school building construction costs in fiscal year 2000 was \$92.99 per square foot and Cougar Elementary School’s building construction costs were \$80.30 per square foot.

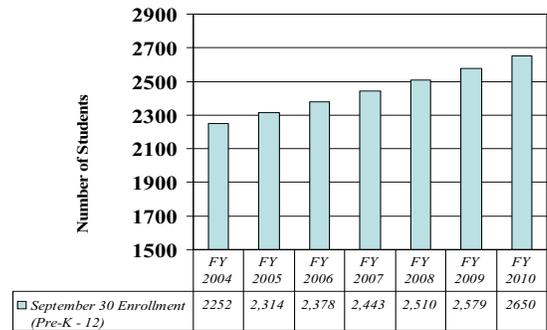
Partial renovations have taken place at Manassas Park Middle School and Manassas Park Elementary School from 2000 to 2003. Major new construction and renovation is scheduled for completion at Manassas Park Middle School by October 2006. Manassas Park Elementary School is scheduled for replacement during 2007-2009 along with the completion of a pre-school facility. A revenue sharing agreement approved by both the Governing Body and the School Board in January 2004 provides MPCS with consistent local fiscal resources equal to our two immediate neighbors, Manassas City Schools and Prince William County Schools – 57% of uncommitted revenue and 43% of proffers. It also moves the responsibility for debt service and capital projects both past and future, from the City Government to the School Board. This agreement will increase the level of fiscal resources to the school division thereby strengthening the School Division’s ability to deliver a high quality education product in modern state-of-the-art facilities.

Facilities & Enrollment

The current projections indicate that the student population will continue to grow at a moderate rate with the

construction of new housing developments. The student population is expected to reach 2,650 actual students by 2010. The timing of this increase is driven in part by the pace of construction and changing residential density in the city’s western sector. The state uses a standard method of

Enrollment Projections FY 2004 to FY 2010*



* Number of student projections based on FY 2004 September count plus assumed growth of 2.75% per year.

Table 9.5 Enrollment Projections

School	Bldg (sq. ft.)	Campus	Capacity
Cougar Elementary	121,000 sq. ft.	22.4 acres	900
Manassas Park Elementary	*32,324 sq. ft.	11 acres	400
Manassas Park Middle School	140,000 sq. ft.	59 acres**	725
Manassas Park High School	144,000 sq. ft.	59 acres**	1,025

Table 9.6 School Facilities & Campus Data

*with 19 modular classrooms MPES has additional square footage totaling 14,822 sq. ft.

**Manassas Park Middle School and Manassas Park High School share a 59 acre campus.

calculating school capacities that is based upon a theoretical maximum number of students in each classroom. In reality, students do not distribute into even maximum numbers so that a schools' functional capacity is approximately 85% of its stated rated capacity. Manassas Park is going to need a state rated capacity of 3,100 to 3,200 to accommodate the actual student enrollment functional capacity expected in 2010 (2,650).



Figure 9.2 Cougar Elementary School

Cougar Elementary School

Opened in January 2001, Cougar Elementary School provides the City's preschool, kindergarten, first, second, and third graders with an exciting, meaningful place in which to begin their academic careers. Programmed by a select group of teachers, school administrators, and regional and national experts in school technology, educational best practices, and facility design, the new elementary school is aimed at developing life-long learners prepared for Virginia's rigorous, Standards of Learning.

At the elementary level, research shows that language arts and mathematics provide the basic building blocks for

learning. A fully developed student, however, must also be exposed to social studies, science, and technology. Too often in schools throughout the country, the latter are forsaken for the former. Even language arts and mathematics may be compromised by the bevy of extracurricular activities that fill the typical school day. The result is children who cannot read at grade level and are unprepared for the challenges they must face in middle and high school. The goal, when designing the new elementary school in Manassas Park, was to first redesign the curriculum to focus on language arts and mathematics while still providing a strong social studies, science, and technology component. The school building was then designed to reinforce this curriculum.

The resulting program, embodied in the parallel block schedule, is one in which student-to-teacher ratios are significantly reduced for four out of seven instructional blocks. Social studies and science are taught in specially designed laboratories by full-time elementary social studies and science teachers, and technology becomes an integral part of classroom learning. Within the parallel block schedule, students have both large group and small group instruction in language arts and math. Small group instruction may be targeted at specific skill development while large group instruction allows for guided practice, discussion, and group projects. Students receive language arts and math instruction in the homeroom setting and change classes for social studies, science, technology and "specials" (physical education, music, art, and library.) This combination lends itself

to a balanced curriculum bolstered by more “engaged learning time” for students. Furthermore, to ease transition to kindergarten for students at risk, preschool was incorporated in this design.

This building’s placement atop an existing knoll allows the middle floor (containing the entrance and most public spaces) to align with the second floor of the academies; thus circulation is concentrated on the middle floor of the school. The constituent academies are located in a radial pattern against the hillside, which both nestles the academies against the public spaces and opens the classrooms to abundant sunlight. The future preschool community building will be centrally located among shared public spaces, outdoor play areas, and parent and bus drop-off zones. A series of prominent indoor and outdoor gathering spaces suggests that this campus is a place of civic importance.

Significant building components include sloped roofs, traditional red brick, and aluminum window systems for copious daylight. State-of-the-art lighting and mechanical systems enhance the comfort of students and teachers alike. Computer technology is an integral part of the new school design, as well. The new elementary school provides a bright beginning for young students who will eventually graduate from the new Manassas Park High School.

Basic Facts

- 121,000 sq. ft., three-story building with large windows and natural lighting
- Accommodates 900 students and is expandable for an additional 450 students.
- Three distinct K-3 academic schools or cities (Sunshine City, Evergreen City and Skyline City)—each accommodates 300 K-3 students in its own three-story academic wing. Each contains 12 regular classrooms, one reading classroom, one specialist classroom, one science lab - 25 students, one social studies lab - 25 students, one technology lab - 52 students, three special education rooms, one instructional leader office and one counselor office
- 22.4-acre campus featuring three large playing fields, three paved play areas and three playgrounds with age-appropriate playground equipment
- Unique student commons or “city square” and fitness center
- Visual arts laboratory, music laboratory, library media center, and TV production studio\
- “Wee Deliver” Post Office, classroom mailboxes and hallways designated as streets, avenues or parkways
- 62 total classrooms
- Three academic 52-computer laboratories, 900 computer ports with Internet access, destination presentation system with 32” monitor, DVD, and video in each classroom and laboratory—each regular classroom features 4 computers and each social studies or science lab features 8 computers
- Six interdisciplinary teacher office complexes

- 600 computers, 25 miles of fiber optic and CAT5 cable
- Total cost \$14.2 million for building, furnishings, technology and surrounding campus improvements
- \$80.30 per sq. ft. for building costs only and \$89.39 per sq. ft. for building and site development costs—this is the second least expensive elementary school project of fourteen elementary schools placed under contract during fiscal year 2000. Statewide average for construction in fiscal year 2000 was \$92.99 per sq. ft. for building costs only and \$107.51 per sq. ft. for building and site development cost. (Virginia Department of Education)
- Extensive cabinetry and provisions for storage of instructional materials throughout the facility
- Innovative and graduated color coding of each academic city and each floor building incorporates the concept of auditory privacy and visual openness

Highlights from the Educational Program

- Educational program and architectural design developed cooperatively by a select group of teachers, school administrators, regional and national experts in facility design, technology and educational practices
- The curriculum designed to place an extraordinary focus upon language arts and

mathematics while still providing a strong focus upon social studies, science and technology

- The parallel block schedule, one in which student-to-teacher ratios are significantly reduced four out of six instructional blocks (11:1 — 12:1)
- The schedule provides more extended blocks of uninterrupted “engaged learning time” for students
- Social studies and science taught in specially designed laboratories by full-time teachers energized to teach their favorite subject area
- Technology is an integral part of all classroom learning
- Students within the parallel block schedule have both large and small group instruction in language arts and math provided in the homeroom setting by their homeroom teacher
- Elementary students change classes for science, social studies, technology, physical education, art, music, and library
- Special curriculum offerings—art, music, physical education and library--are on a 6-day rotational cycle providing for consistency and predictability
- The combination of routine movement and more “hands-on” activities reduces restlessness, decreases disciplinary issues and allows students to form relationships with additional students and teachers
- Collaborative and interdisciplinary planning, teaching, learning and pacing of the curriculum by multiple

teachers ensures that students are learning the appropriate material across grade levels

- Strong emphasis upon the personalization of each student's educational experience; the school within a school concept and instruction in daily small group settings allows for such personalization
- A highly accessible, organized and aligned curriculum
- Library is visually connected to both the city square and academic cities allowing for greater participation and information distribution
- Unique city square and physical fitness center providing a variety of educational functions
- Professional interdisciplinary teacher offices foster collaboration, encourage program development "Wee Deliver" Post Office, Writing and Communication Center that are integral components of the curriculum
- A building of enormous educational importance and community use
- Before and After School Program available to parents and promoted by the Parks and Recreation Department



Figure 9.3 Manassas Park Elementary School

Manassas Park Elementary School

Fourth and Fifth graders formerly housed in Conner Elementary School were relocated to Manassas Park Elementary School in September 2001, a 12 acre campus on Tremont Street adjoining Costello Park. This facility has undergone moderate renovations from 2000-2003, and will continue to receive moderate renovations from 2004-2007. Long-term plans of MPCS call for a replacement of the entire facility one of the two sites on Cougar Elementary School's campus or on the Costello Park Manassas Park Elementary School site. As of July 2006, the Manassas Park Elementary School facility consisted of 32,324 square feet of original building and 14,822 square feet of modular classrooms (19). Two pairs of these modulares are connected to create two large 50-student laboratories. The remaining fourteen modulares serve as individual classrooms with all modulares, including the two technology laboratories, containing bathrooms. The total complex now includes twenty original standard classrooms, fourteen modular classrooms, two 50 student

modular laboratories, library media center, multipurpose room and an adjoining kitchen, clinic, teacher planning area, teacher offices, and offices for the principal, assistant principal and guidance counselor. School leaders estimate the capacity of Manassas Park Elementary School with modulars at 400 students. Manassas Park Elementary School's 2003-2004 enrollment is 375.

Beginning in September 1999, the fourth and fifth grade students participated in a parallel block schedule. This schedule allows each student to have a variety of educational experiences that support student learning. All students have two periods of math, two periods of language arts, one period of social studies and one period of science daily. Students also have physical education, music, library, technology, and guidance weekly. Within the parallel block schedule, students have both large group and small group instruction in language arts and math. Small group instruction may be targeted at specific skill development while large group instruction allows for guided practice, discussion, and group projects. Students receive language arts and math instruction in the homeroom setting and change classes for social studies, science, and "specials" (physical education, music, library, guidance).

Language arts at Manassas Park Elementary School, integrates reading, writing, and speaking. Teachers use a balanced approach to reading, incorporating whole language, phonics, basal textbooks, and trade books. Writing is taught as a process leading to publication of student newspapers,

books, reports etc. Technology is an important part of the writing process and all students participate in keyboarding and desktop publishing. Oral communication skills are included in all classrooms through activities such as oral reports and book talks. Students are expected to master the Virginia Standards of Learning in Language Arts as measured by the end of 5th grade SOL tests.

Mathematics at Manassas Park Elementary School includes instruction in mathematical concepts along with basic computational practice. Teachers are committed to "hands-on" instructional strategies to help students understand number relationships. Math instruction focuses on traditional strands of learning: numbers and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability and statistics, and algebra.

Social studies and science objectives are outlined in the Virginia Standards of Learning. Both social studies and science are taught by teacher/specialists. Instruction in the content areas combines technology, research and experiential learning. Both science and social studies are integrated in math and language arts instruction.

Pre-School Program

Manassas Park City Schools also serve pre-school children through a variety of programs that include Head Start, Four Year Old Kindergarten and Special Education Pre-School. Head Start serves children from low income families within the boundaries of Cougar Elementary School. The Four Year Old Kindergarten serves children who may need additional skills to

prepare for kindergarten while Special Education Pre-School provides educational and therapeutic services to children with disabilities.

World Class Music Program

In a continuing effort to provide quality experiences for all students, Manassas Park City Schools provides an exciting band program for all fifth grade students. Two full-time band teachers implement this program and every fifth grade student is provided an instrument and receives high quality musical instruction in a small group (sectional – large instrument) setting in two fifty-five minute periods every six school days. After school instruction also is provided along with numerous concerts.

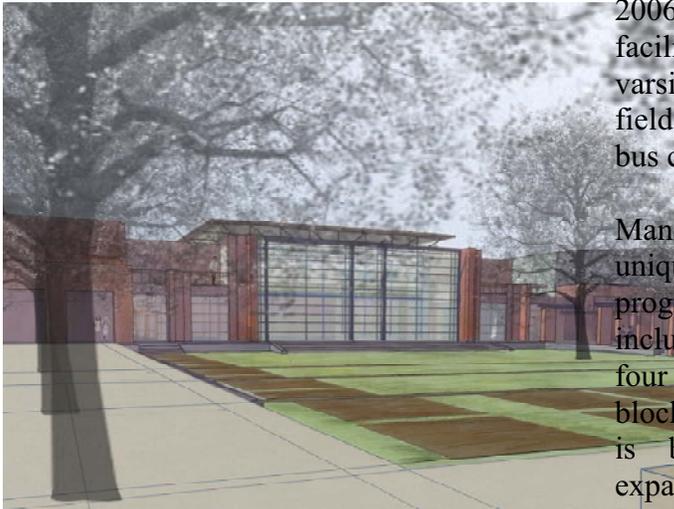


Figure 9.4 Manassas Park Middle School

Manassas Park Middle School

Manassas Park Middle School at 8202 Euclid Avenue shares the 59-acre campus with Manassas Park High School. This new 140,000 sq. ft. building contains 45 standard classrooms, library media center,

student commons, fitness center, gymnasium, administrative offices, wrestling center, multipurpose room, three technology laboratories and two music rooms. The building also contains MPCS transportation offices and maintenance facilities. Significant facility renovations have been completed during the period 2002-2005 and these include reconstruction of five elective laboratories, two computer rooms, one wrestling center, an alternative learning center and transportation office. From 2005-2006, Manassas Park Middle School has undergone a major modernization which includes 100,000 sq. ft. of new construction and 40,000 sq. ft. of renovation. The capacity of the new Manassas Park Middle School is approximately 725 students with 550 students to be enrolled during the 2005-2006 school year. The shared campus facilities include Cougar Stadium, varsity softball field, varsity baseball field, five practice fields and MPCS' bus compound.

Manassas Park Middle School offers a unique and exceptional instructional program for our city's students, including many best practices such as four teacher interdisciplinary teams and block scheduling. The instructional day is based upon the utilization of expanded time in the core subject areas. In language arts and mathematics Manassas Park Middle School students all receive double the daily instructional time allotted in grades six through eight (90 minutes). Each instructional block is ninety minutes with every student enrolled in four blocks each day.

The middle school students attend a math and a language art block every

day. Their third block is either a science or a social studies class. Science and social studies meets every other day on the A/B day schedule for all grade levels. This schedule is utilized in order to prepare the middle school students for the high school alternating day schedule as well as prepare for the 8th grade SOL assessments. The fourth block of the day also employs the A/B block schedule, known as an alternating day block schedule. Some of the blocks are split into 45 minute sections to accommodate a wealth of exploratory choices in addition to remediation classes. Classes are offered for a full year or for a semester. The sixth grade exploratories are physical education (year), Spanish, music, keyboarding, introduction to business, band (year), choir (year), reading remediation, English Language Learner (ELL) support, and art. The seventh grade exploratories are physical education (year), Spanish, keyboarding, computer applications, band (year), choir (year), reading remediation, ELL support, and art. The fourth block for eighth graders is again an A/B block with physical education (year), introduction to careers, art, reading remediation, ELL support, band (year), choir (year) or Spanish I (year). Teen living is offered at during some of the exploratory time for each grade level. Students have the opportunity each year to choose their top three exploratory classes. The guidance department at the middle school honors at least two of the three choices. Remediation classes for reading are offered for students based on need. Students may not remain in remediation for the entire school year. After the first semester, performance data and teacher input allow students

who have improved to move into other exploratories and other students to receive additional needed assistance. Additionally, eighth graders have the opportunity to gain two high school credits in Algebra I and/or Spanish I.

Students with special needs are addressed through several programs. Special education students are served in resource, self-contained and inclusion settings. Gifted students are clustered together on teams or combined in multi-age classes with other gifted students.



Figure 9.5 Manassas Park High School

Manassas Park High School

Manassas Park High School represents an academic complex that maximizes space and resources and serves as a civic focal point. The original building built in February 1999, contains 102,000 square feet, and with a 41,000 square foot addition completed in April 2004, the total square footage is 143,000 square feet. The capacity is 1025 students. There is great pride in

the vision, quality, and innovativeness of the architectural design. A careful planning process has resulted in one of the finest school buildings in the world—a school building designed to house a world class curriculum and educate the students of Manassas Park for the Information Age of the 21st Century.

The educational program and the architectural design promote one another. This feature facilitates the employment and encouragement of a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies, the delivery of a vast set of curriculum offerings, and the extensive use of technology. Every learning space—from classrooms to student commons to informal individual learning spaces—allows access to a wide variety of technology.

The new Manassas Park High School also features:

- technology laboratories preparing students for the future in a wide variety of disciplines;
- an organizational structure which groups students into small, personalized clusters;
- academic spaces arranged in compact houses which allows for flexibility and promotes today's interdisciplinary teaching strategies;
- flexible use of time and space;
- a unique student commons located at the heart of the school which serves as both a gathering place for students as well as a learning space throughout the day
- a media center that is visually connected to both the student commons and academic wings

- corridors and stairs that also function as teaching spaces and informal learning places;
- gymnasium and physical education wing which is devoted to promoting physical fitness and adult wellness;
- Excellent competition and practice fields, which enhance both athletic, physical education and community use.

The area around the building is preserved allowing teaching in the surrounding natural environment. Additionally, the first and second floors, as well as the physical education complex, can be isolated from the rest of the building facilitating extensive community access and use.

The new Manassas Park High School has already proven to be a tremendous asset. Since opening in February 1999 every indicator of student educational performance has increased dramatically with students showing a new enthusiasm for learning.

As of September 2000, our school designed by VMDO Architects of Charlottesville, Virginia has been awarded seven major architectural awards: 2000 National School Board Association Exhibition of School Architecture, Citation of Excellence, 2000 Learning By Design Grand Prize, 1999 National AIA Committee on Architecture for Education Merit Award, 1999 Virginia School Board Association First Place, 1999 Virginia Society Excellence in Architecture Award, 1999 Central Virginia AIA Honor Award, and 1997 Virginia School Boards Association Honor Award.

Basic Facts

- 143, 000 sq. ft. three-story building with large windows and natural lighting
- Original total cost \$14.2 million for building, furnishings, technology and surrounding campus improvements
- Original total cost of \$7 million for the building addition, furnishings, technology, and surrounding campus improvements
- Accommodates 650 students and is expandable to 800 students
- Unique student commons
- Four practice and three varsity competition fields and a gymnasium that seats 1200 people and has two full basketball and volleyball courts
- 56 classrooms with seven academic computer labs
- 1800 computer ports with internet access, 24 computer ports per classroom with

destination presentation system with 36” monitor, DVD and video in each classroom and lab

- 40 miles of fiber optic and CAT 5 cable
- Seven interdisciplinary teacher offices
- TV-production studio

Highlights from the Educational Program

- Educational program and architectural design promote one another and promote the development of a learning organization
- A building of enormous educational importance and community use
- Employment of a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies
- Strong emphasis on technology, fire arts, and physical fitness
- A highly organized and aligned curriculum
- Corridors, stairs, and student commons serving as learning spaces
- The library is visually connected to both the student commons and academic wings allowing for greater participation and information distribution
- Strengthened and expanded student activities program
- Interdisciplinary planning, teaching, and learning
- Unique student commons area or atrium space, providing a variety of education functions
- Professional office spaces for faculty

Graduation					
	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05
Total Number of Graduates	92	91	106	118	120
Advanced Studies Diploma	39	33	68	36	45
Standard Diploma	50	55	37	57	62
Graduates	3	3	1	4	0
Special Diploma	0	0	0	6	10
GED				8	0
GED/ISAEP Certificate				7	3

Table 9.7 Graduation Statistics and Senior Plans

Private Educational Opportunities

MANASSAS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
 Manassas Christian School is situated on a 10-acre site at 9296 West Carondelet Drive, Manassas Park, Virginia. The 18,000 sq. ft. school building with a capacity of 300 students, houses 18 classrooms, a gymnasium, library, computer and science lab, foreign language lab and music room. The current enrollment is 188 students. The campus contains a playground, soccer and baseball fields, basketball court and outdoor pool.

Manassas Christian School was established by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Copeland in September 1965, offering a kindergarten program to the community.

Senior Plans					
	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05
4-Year College	73%	36%	28%	22%	40%
Com. College/Technical School	14%	44%	42%	43.2%	37%
Military/Workforce	13%	20%	30%	33%	23%

Table 9.8 Senior Plans

In 1987, Minnieland Private Day School became its owner and began 15 years of program and facility enhancement. It now encompasses two campuses: Manassas Christian Academy in Manassas, Virginia, the pre-school and kindergarten center, and Manassas Christian School in Manassas Park, Virginia. The new facility in Manassas Park was designed to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of children in Grades 1 – 8. Manassas Christian School has combined academics with character

education by utilizing an enriched curriculum and Bible study.

The Elementary curriculum includes: daily Bible study, phonetically based reading program, English and process writing, spelling, handwriting, math, social studies, and science. The Middle School curriculum includes: daily bible study, literature based reading, English and process writing, vocabulary study, math, social studies and science.

Specialty classes in Spanish, German, music, art, physical education and computer round out the curriculum, and provide the cultural, technical, and physical development of students. The school’s calendar is designed on a six-week grading schedule. Interim reports are issued mid-term to keep parents informed of their student’s progress. The teachers send home a weekly letter to the parents, outlining concepts that will be taught that week.

School hours are from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A creative before and after school program is available to students from 6:30 - 8:30 a.m. and from 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. After school clubs and sports meet daily from 3:45 – 5:00 p.m.

THE FAIRFAX ACADEMY

The Fairfax Academy was established in March of 1977 as a private institution of early learning and development where young children of all backgrounds, races and ethnic heritages could learn and grow together. There are several Fairfax Academy schools throughout the Northern Virginia area and the facility on Manassas Drive, Manassas Park, Virginia opened in Spring of 2003.

The academic program (September through mid-June) encompasses a full educational and developmental curriculum for children ages six weeks through Kindergarten, supplemented by a schedule of enrichment activities, optional language and dance classes, and an organized sporting program. The summer program (mid-June through the end of August) consists of a variety of age-appropriate recreational activities, sports, field trips and arts and crafts.

Curriculum Overview:

The Fairfax Academy's academic curriculum is planned to meet the needs and interest of the very young child. Through play, group participation, individual activities, and experiences; each child is encouraged to grow socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Once the children reach two-years of age, they will follow a designed instructional program. It introduces the child to visual and auditory discrimination concepts and develops skills in listening and following directions. Fine motor skills are developed through using manipulatives and large motor skills are developed through exercises, outdoor play, etc.

Components of the Curriculum:

Infants and Toddlers: An infant and toddler program is offered to children ages six weeks to twenty-three months.

Two-Year-Old Program: The two-year-old developmental skills program has a focused agenda, which includes exercises geared toward the development of self-concept/interpersonal skill, language skills, senses, mathematical patterns,

dramatic play, fine motor, and gross motor skills.

Three-Year-Old Program: The three-year-old developmental skills program builds on those concepts initially introduced in the two-year-old curriculum and helps the three-year-old develop language, math, science, fine and gross motor skills, and socialization skills more proficiently.

Jr. Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old) Program:

The Beginning Readiness program is a carefully sequenced pre-phonics curriculum in which the individual child's success is the key to the program.

Kindergarten (Five-Year-Old) Program:

The reading curriculum is a specialized language arts program which integrates reading, handwriting, auditory and oral language skills for the child.

Hours of Operation for the Jr. Kindergarten and the Kindergarten program, are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Fairfax Academy offers a programmed place for students before and after school, ages six to twelve years old. Children from other area schools can enroll and participate in study hall, arts and crafts, organized games, and enrichment activities.

BULL RUN BAPTIST CHURCH AND SCHOOL

The Bull Run Baptist Church has recently purchased Independence Elementary School building and four and one and half acres of the original 14.775 acre site. The plans call for a private Christian school and church facility. The original building was comprised of 17 rooms and a multi-purpose room/gymnasium and library.